DECOLONIZING THE CURRICULUM IN CHILE

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Notion of Human Being and Citizenship as Presented in the Subject of History Geography and Social Science in the Elementary Level Curriculum

By

Ximena Cecilia Martínez Trabuco

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Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto

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Abstract

Through an analysis of History Geography and Social Science subject matter in the elementary level curriculum in Chile, this thesis highlights the role of official education in constructing a notion of human being that gravitates toward Whiteness. The law of education and the curriculum are analyzed to examine the way in which official curriculum operates as a mechanism for oppression, exclusion, and marginalization. It is argued that through the curriculum, a national ideology that incorporates a hegemonic notion of “ideal human being and citizen” is promoted. Using an anti-colonial and anti-racist discursive framework, and techniques from Critical Discourse Analysis, this work locates Chilean official education and curriculum as the culmination of colonial and racist notion of human and citizenship values supported by the neoliberal state. The researcher advocates for equity and justice in the education system that acknowledges Chile as a multicultural country where different ways of knowing coexist.
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Chapter I

Introduction

The current education system in Chile is the epitome of colonial and racist notions of human and citizenship values that have come to be advanced by the current neoliberal state; a state that has never considered the characteristics of the population that live in the Chilean territory in terms of its diversity (González, 1999; Mascareño, 2004). In Chile, the schooling system is used as a homogenizing dispositive; and an instrument of the state to conquest fidelities towards the hegemonic project of the nation (Aylwin, 1995). Chile as a nation-state has historically sought for a modernization that is defined in relation to Whiteness; grounded in a hyper admiration of White values while devaluing, marginalizing and discriminating what is non-White. As a consequence, a series of education policies culminate in the establishment of a strong neoliberal education that, in accordance with the values of individualism and competence. These policies influence management of education and transcends all it facets. What Chilean schools teach, how they teach it, and what they intend to accomplish through the curriculum.

Within this milieu knowledge production, dissemination and legitimization is problematic. In this thesis the official curriculum will be examined with a view to understand how content is selected, taught and perceived by different power groups within the Chilean society. My intention is to see what elements are considered and disseminated as part of the ideal notion of human being that is portrayed through the schooling system and that constitutes also the subject of the nation; the ideal citizen. In this task, I assume that the official school curriculum summarizes the hegemonic discourses which seek to shape a notion of human being that fits with the discourse of national identity and citizenship, both in accordance with hegemonic, cultural, political, and economic interests. I will look at the subject matter of History Geography and Social Sciences (HGSS) at the elementary level, as long as this presents the narratives that explain, in the national context, the conformation of notions such as human being, national identity, and citizenship. Looking at the subject matter of History Geography and Social Sciences provides the possibility to observe how these conceptual constructions are presented as intertwined and as the hegemonic memory of Chile. In this
sense, I will argue that the discursive construction of an ideal human being, which is pivotal for the national identity, has been signified in relation to the national project that has historically sought to achieve modernity, progress, and development; all values defined in relation to Whiteness.

Through my work I intend to see the operation of the schooling system and the curriculum in Chile as mechanism that installs a political hegemonic historiography that acts as a pedagogical version of a propagandistic, racist, and ethnocentric vision of the past that seeks for the construction of a homogenous national community.

The motherland and her heroes, the big battles, the arrival of the colonizer, the construction of the notion of state in Chile, are elements loaded of an essentialism that is transmitted as “the selective tradition” the official memory of the country that seeks to construct the national identity of Chile and thus identify who belongs and are the friends of the nation while distinguishing who does not belong and are the potential enemies of the nation. I will argue that those enemies, which have acquired different shapes along the two hundred years of independence, have as a backdrop the barbarism, savagery, and obsolescence that represent the presence indigenous populations in the Chilean territory, condition that extents over the mixed blood individuals who are the so-called mestizos, and nowadays represent the numeric majority of the country.

This research is connected with the idea that the hegemonic groups have tried to erase the indigenous roots of the Chilean population while highlighting the connection and inheritance that the population has received from the colonizer as a mechanism that creates the necessary conditions to pursue the hegemonic project of modernization of the nation (Bengoa, 2008; Isla, 2012; Rubilar, 2003). Thus, in order to achieve this task the school has had a salient role in so far as it is one of the modern institutions that receive more legitimacy by the population. My argument will point that by means the school and the curriculum, has been installed and disseminated a discursive construction of human being that gravitates toward Whiteness. The dissemination of this ideal notion of humanity seeks to create consent among the Chilean population in order to achieve the project of modernization of the nation by the own individual´s will.
In the following sections, there will be developed a discourse analysis of the subject matter of HGSS and of the complex of axioms that are attached to the curricular content. During the analysis, will be applied the concepts of “hegemony” and “selective tradition” both coined by Gramsci and deepened by Raymond Williams; the conceptual construction of the “descriptive statement and overrepresentation of man” developed by Silvia Wynter; and conceptualizations related to national identity. These constructions constitute the analytical core which will inquiry the curriculum. The goal is to identify the elements that participate in the “selective tradition” that is circulated by means the curriculum, and guess how those elements could influence people in order that it is created a common sense about reality that hyper admire the white world.

This work is done through an anti-colonial and an anti-racist lens and is organized in seven sections. The first section is the introduction where the problem that guides this investigation, in conjunction with the main questions, objectives of the research, and the methodology that is used to address this investigation are presented. A second section presents the discursive framework of the study. The third sections explains the curriculum in terms of its scope, its major philosophical streams, and also explains why the curriculum is a document that provides key information to understand the dynamic of power that interplay in a specific society. This section also presents and briefly explains the different rationales that underpin curriculum in order to see, in later chapters, which and how these tendencies have influenced the official curriculum in Chile. In the fourth section, a brief historical contextualization of the education system and curriculum in Chile is conducted and the categories observed in the previous section are applied to the historical contextualization. The fifth section contains an explanation of the legal framework that turns the official curriculum into a legal instrument that standardizes knowledge and pedagogical practices at the national level. In the sixth section, I present a description of the curriculum in terms of the values and information embedded within it. I also reflect upon the analytical categories described in the discursive framework in relation to the curriculum. Finally, in my conclusion to this work, I present the possible directions that this study could follow in the future.
Statement of the Problem

Chile itself as a nation is a product of the colonizing territorial logic that operated in the mind of the colonizer who settled in what himself called America. Soon after the independence of the nation from Spain, the education system in Chile was born as part of the consolidation of freedom recovering (Isla, 2012). In one of the most important media at the beginning of XIX century (El Monitor Araucano), public education was declared as the “First citizen of the nation” (Ibid, 2012:70). In a Chile that is ruled, since its conformation -by the elite-, the school has been the first instrument for the transmission of a hegemonic discourse that has been naturalized recalling the notion of nation and nationality (Bengoa, 2008). As a result the schooling system, as will be seen, that has mainly adopted foreign schooling and curriculum models, have acted perpetuating colonial and racist approaches to education hitherto dominating educational discourses. A good example of this is the treatment that Indigenous peoples who historically remain within the different institutions of the Chilean society. In the case of the schooling system, they have been excluded at all, having the state to create later some policies to include some cultural aspects under the umbrella of intercultural education. However, these policies have only accommodated these communities in a very marginal space within the curriculum and the schooling practices.

The proposed study aims to identify the characteristics of the ideal notion of human being that is portrayed in the official curriculum; a notion that manifests in the discursive construction of national identity and materializes through the complex of rights and responsibilities that entails citizenship. There is a focus on the axiological basis of the curriculum and in the content and structure of the subject of history and geography at the elementary level of schooling.

Main Objective

To analyze the discursive construction of ideal human being embedded in the subject matter of HGSS at the elementary school level in the Chilean national schooling curriculum in order to unveil the complexity of oppression that operates through it and that manifests by means the Chilean national identity and citizenship.
Research Questions

Major Research Question

What is the notion of ideal human that intertwines with the national identity construction and with the notion of citizenship embedded and articulated in the official curriculum document of the Chilean education system?

Subsidiary Research Questions

1) What is the rationale of the notions of humanity embedded in the curriculum through the subject matter of HGSS?

2) What are the larger and local power relations that support this notion of being human, and what are its social, political, and economic consequences?

3) What are the historical pillars that support these notions?

4) How is it reproduced within these subjects at the elementary level of education?

5) What are the ethical and aesthetic elements that constitute the national identity that accompanies the notion of the Nation-State in Chile?

6) What elements are overlooked and why?

7) What are the social implications and benefits related to the notion of citizenship and humanity embedded in the curriculum through the subject matter of HGSS?

8) What are the axioms that support the curriculum, how are they determined, by whom and how are those articulated?

9) What are the possibilities in the Chilean schooling system for non-hegemonic knowledge of being incorporated in the curriculum?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine the notion of human being and the characteristics of the ideal citizen that is developed through the curriculum of the Chilean schooling system and that relates with the notion of national identity and citizenship in Chile. It deals with efforts to determine what are the power relations that underpin the construction of
this historic Chilean subject through the HGSS subject matter, and how during that exercise is it defined who is at the center of it and who is at its margins within the Chilean society?

Lately, the educational system in Chile has been denounced and fought because it operates as a neoliberal private undertaking that sell “educative” services that finally enhance the economic inequity that characterizes the population of Chile. Admittedly, mitigating these injustices is important in addressing the improvement of the overall conditions of the population. However, along with economic issues, is the political problematic that often goes unaddressed in conventional planning of education in countries such as Chile. This work seeks to open a largely avoided discussion around schooling policies and curriculum’s contents that act as power mechanisms that reproduce racial, economic, cultural, and class segregation and marginalization in the Chilean society.

In the process, it is hoped that this work will unveil and pinpoint the oppressions that underlie the curriculum in the development of a basic education learning area with particular reference to the use of HGSS in Chile. The study also expects to show who have been left out of this notion of subject at the elementary level of learning and how this has impinged on them, epistemologies of official or legitimate learning.

**General Considerations Around the use of an Anti-colonial and Anti-racist Discursive Framework**

An antiracism and anti-colonial discursive framework constitutes the pillar of the analysis developed in this work. Both theoretical perspectives intertwine explaining and vindicating actions of subordination, domination, and silencing as a result of historical processes of colonization and racialization. Colonization is not an event, it is structural, and in its searching to install itself has operated through the construction of an institutionalism that replaced the former pre-colonial order (Wolfe, 2006). Thus, to work from an anticolonial discursive framework, as Dei and Azgharzadeh have pointed, allows us to “…acknowledges the role of societal/institutional structures in producing and reproducing endemic inequalities” (2001: 301), specially, when those inequalities are the result of colonization processes. It is important to note that “colonial in this sense is not conceptualized simply as foreign or alien,
but rather as imposed or dominating” (Ibid, 2001:301). Following this logic, assuming that education, and specially the schooling system, is one of the main instruments that legitimizes the institutionalism that accompanies colonization, it is unavoidable to address this work from an anti-colonial perspective. However, the study also involves the analysis from an anti-racism discursive perspective, as it goes along with anti-colonialism in an intent to unveil the structures of power that punish a specific targeted population while it rewards and situates certain groups in a hegemonic position. As Wolfe warns, “settler colonialism has typically employed the organizing grammar of race” (2006: 388).

Anti-colonialism and anti-racism, as discursive frameworks, no matter dynamically relate with each other, constitute themselves different theoretical perspectives, therefore, offers different approximations to a phenomenon as well as different outcomes of that approximation. According to Dei (2006) anti-colonial discursive framework situates knowledge, in its social context; recognizes that knowledge is politically loaded. Learning is thus an inquiry that enhances the salience of certain kind of knowledge while it blurs other forms of knowing. This situation inevitably conducts certain dynamics of identity that are constructed under the logic of colonial oppression and that determine the way we relate with each other. But moreover, the anti-colonial discursive framework situates itself in a colonial relation of power which is challenged, contested and resisted. Therefore, the framework implies also an agenda for liberation from colonial and oppressive education practices. In this regard an anti-colonial discursive framework entails a political position which materializes through action, through a commitment to disrupt a social order that perpetuate the subjugation of nonhegemonic or oppressed groups.

From an anti-racism analytical perspective, it is possible to address the different sides that oppression has such as race, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, and see how all these components of an oppressive phenomena act to create self-exclusion, and marginalization. However the anti-racism analysis locates race at the center of oppressions in an intersectional relation (Dei in Gismondi, 1999).

Taking in consideration that this study focuses in the portrait of an ideal human being that students acquire through the curriculum, it is interesting to critically assess how this portrait fits within the perspectives of antiracism and anticolonial education. Besides the
discourse of an ideal human being straddles over principles that guide diverse social agencies including the state and the civil society. In its elaboration has been privileged some features, axioms, and structures in which this ideal individual fits and ergo reproduces. The superlativization of certain characteristics involves, at unison, the exclusion of certain other features that have not been chosen in the construction of this ideal human being.

Through the anti-colonial discursive framework, it is possible to “[interrogate] the power configurations embedded in ideas, cultures, and histories of knowledge production, validation and use. [An anti-colonial and antiracism theoretic perspective], examines our understanding of indigeneity, pursuit of agency, resistance, and subjective policies” (Foucault, 1983; Moore, 1997 in Dei, 2001: 300). In the case of Chile, a colonial structure defines schooling, which undermines any alter education system that does not correspond to the hegemonic one. In this light, to work from an anti-colonial framework and the anti-racist discursive approach (Dei, 1996), allows me to peep into the dispositive through which schooling system operates installing certain rationale of humanity that influences cultural and social relations. Education and the schooling systems are spaces where culture and society are re-produced with all their strengths and vices (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Also, the work that is realized through an anticolonial and antiracism discursive perspectives, leads us to suspect the “genuine intentioned” actions behind any idea or action that intent to take over society at expenses of the so called “minorities”. At the same time, it also addresses the reflection of the self. In this sense I look at my work as a teacher and as a citizen in my complicities and resistances to the system.

The analysis considers the Gramscian notions of “hegemony” and “selective tradition” both worked by Raymond Williams (2009); the conceptual construction developed and so-called by Silvia Wynter as “descriptive statement and overrepresentation of man”; and the notions of identity and national identity. These concepts help us to think about the consequences of perpetuating, through the official institutions, exclusion and discrimination. These concepts when applied from an anti-colonial anti-racism discursive framework- provide agency to marginalized groups to subvert the colonial social order as long as they help to unveil oppressive relations while open spaces to marginalized groups “to be subjects of their

The use of this conceptual framework responds to the central research question that inquires the curriculum in its vocation for humanization. During the research it is inquired the notion of ideal human that intertwines with the national identity construction and with the notion of citizen embedded and articulated in the official curriculum document of the Chilean education system.

It is irrefutable that it is not just race the oppression that operates through the discursive construction of ideal human being, national identity, and citizenship. There is a complexity of stereotypes, assumptions, axioms, aesthetics, and ethics that impregnate the ideal discursive construction of what it means to be a “good Chilean” and, therefore, to be able to embrace a project of nation that addresses, as in the national anthem is declared, a “splendorous future”. However, race is at the bottom of the complexity of exclusions, grounding the terrain for a dynamic of discrimination that acts in an interlocking way.

The conceptual framework is applied from an anti-racist and anti-colonial perspective in order to distinguish how the hegemonic ideas of ideal human being operate through the curriculum installing a ‘selective tradition’ that contents the hegemonic memory of a society ‘the only memory’. The ‘selective tradition’ and the ‘hegemonic memory’ provide the cement for the construction of the national identity that is materialized through feelings of belonging and as a set of rights and responsibilities that are expressed through the Chilean citizenship.

The ‘selective tradition’ presented in the subject matter of HGSS in the Chilean schooling curriculum, is the memory that contends the epic narrative of the conformation of the nation. The events that contribute to the construction of the collective imagination have their origin in an exclusionary logic. It has been the dominant oligarchy, compounded by the intelligentsia and the economic and racial elite, the group who arrogated the task of constructing the national subject (Isla, 2012). Isla, has identified three foundational exes presented in the construction of a homogeneous and homogenizing subject of the nation, which correspond to the common logic that operates over most of Latino-American nascent nations
and that applies to Chile: “a) a common language (Spanish); b) a unique race; c) a common territory which implies an only community of destiny” (2012:54, own translation).

Subercaseaux, points out that the nascent states and the elites of the XIX century in Latino America, were founded under an assimilating ideal. The search for a homogenized population promoted negative ideas around cultural differences, thus, it boosted the disintegration of local cultural particularities that were subordinated to the logic of a homogeneous centralism (2003). This homogenization was done at the expense of racial and ethnic minorities like elsewhere with a similar historical background. Although the starting point of an idea of homogeneous population was the existence of a common ancestor, the existence of racial and cultural difference was perceived, following a liberal logic, as a threat and in consequence applied –in the best of the cases- a politic of assimilation while in several nation states a politic of extermination (Bello, 2011).

In the case of Chile, the narratives around the ideal of human being, the one that is expected to be an exemplar Chilean, has been constructed based on a lineal positivistic idea of progress and civilization. Thus, social subjects who would not fit in this progressive vision underwent disqualifications and were targeted as the population that had to be transformed into civilized human beings. This situation can be corroborated through the works of Vicuña Mackenna (1868) and the works of Vicente Carvallo and Goyeneche (1876). These works describe explicitly, for instance, indigenous people as indomitable, uncivilized, enemies of civilization, lazy people, drunkards, liars, traitors; all constituent characteristics of savagery that had to be corrected through the civilizing project of the nation. These subjects along with mestizos, peasants, common people, women, were not part of the portrait that was created by the oligarchy, but were targeted by the civilizing undertake (Isla, 2012).

The process of the discursive construction of national identity, citizenship, and human being has been formulated under the logic of exclusion, subjectivation, and subordination of an individual that was recognized either as in process of humanization or as not human. Although, these marginalized subjects, from time to time reappear in the narratives mostly essentialized and instrumentalized by the hegemonic groups, however, never as protagonists, or as the center of the citizenry (Pinto, 2010).
The subject matter of HGSS works as a kind of map where it is possible to see how these narratives that intertwine (human being, national identity, citizenship) are presented as the formal truth, as the hegemonic memory of Chile. It can be said that the schooling curriculum operates as a dispositive, in Foucauldian terms, that disseminates and legitimizes the “hegemonic” notion of human being. The curriculum acts naturalizing this ideal of human being, but at the same time, also naturalizes certain social order that has been created in conjunction with this individual definition. In this social order are assigned different social positions to different socio/cultural/racial categories that move away or closer to the ideal of being a Chilean. This ‘selective tradition’ that is disseminated through different governmental agencies is exalted in the schooling curriculum, introduced in an early age to the new generations; the hegemonic ideal of citizen that is expected to be reproduced. The curriculum, to say, becomes a dispositive that intends to correct any deviation to the norm, i.e. homogenizing the intrinsic difference that compounds the Chilean population.

The set of concepts which have been named (‘hegemony’, ‘selective tradition’ ‘descriptive statement’) are exerted over the content of the curriculum. It is assumed that the curriculum content is written to the image and likeness of the hegemonic group, the information that is provided through the curriculum entails a selective tradition, i.e. a historical memory that is arbitrarily chosen from a wider spectrum of possible interpretations of a specific phenomenon. In fact, the very act of choosing certain events instead of others, talks about certain arbitrariness. The idea of having an ideal citizen that embodies and represents the values attached to the Chilean national identity, manifests the existence of an ideal of human being that is desired as the subject of the modernized nation. In relation to this category, invested with an aura of perfection, are also constructed other categories that deviate from the norm in different degrees. In this sense, to work with Winter’s ‘descriptive Statement’ allows to read from an anti-colonial and antiracism perspective, the social order inherited from the colonial times in Chile.

The consequences of the colonial racial order are nefarious. “…racialization structures the visual sphere and the imaginary self, and can block the development of coherent body-images” (Martin, 1999:18). The racial embodiment that acts at a subject level, cause what Fanon has conceptualized as “alienation” and “mimicry” says Martin (Ibid, 1999). The
oligarchy has discursively constructed an ideal of citizens; the subject of the national identity that also recalls an ideal of human being –through the official history- has allocated within the margins the numeric majority of Chilean population. When Frantz Fanon says that “I am over determined from without, I am the slave not of the idea that others have of me but of my own appearance” (2008:116), he clearly points out the idea that those discursive constructions that create the otherness erode the mind of the colonized triggering processes or psychological and physical dislocation. “The dilemma, turn white or disappear” (Fanon, 2008:184) is presented tacitly in the national Chilean schooling curriculum through the subject matter of HGSS.

Material and Method

Why Curriculum Documents and Why the Subject Matter of HGSC at the Elementary Level of School?

The data used in this research is Chile’s current official curriculum programs for grades 1 to 6 which corresponds to the elementary level of the Chilean schooling system. This research is focused in the subject matter of History, Geography and Social Sciences (HGSS). The documents have been collected from the official website of the Ministry of Education of Chile. The main reason for choosing these documents is because the content in the documents reveal important aspects of people, culture, history, and social order of Chile. Besides the curriculum, the documents are also considered as the declaration of values that is done by the Ministry of Education through the so-called Curricular Bases; an educational document that provides the guidelines for the elaboration of the national curricular documents, and the Chilean General law of education.

Broadly speaking, Chilean elementary education is made up of seven main learning sectors which are presented as the following subject matters: (1) Language and Communication; (2) Mathematics; (3) Natural Science; (4) History, Geography and Social Sciences (HGSCs); (5) Physical Education; (6) Foreign Language English; and 7) Arts. This study focuses on the forth sector because the importance that the subject matter of HGSS has for the reproduction of the Chilean social order but also for the possibilities that it offers to impact social transformation from school to life for generations in Chile.

In the subject matter of HGSS are deposited a wide range of symbolisms that are used to present reality to students. This symbolic presentation is at its zenith in HGSCs where
notions such as state, citizenship, social structure, and values of community are addressed. Under these types of topics, students learn attitudes and behaviors that underpin the colonial state and its vestiges concerning citizenship and humanity. Despite the importance that this kind of researches have, there is limited empirical work on the currently role of the curriculum in facilitating the establishment of the status quo, notion of the state, citizenship and humanity in Chile. There is need for critical studies that develop strategies to undermine and ultimately, replace the currently established formal and “scientific” knowledge with other more progressive and equitable notions of knowledge. This proposal seeks to analyze the subject of HGSS in the curriculum of Chile’s elementary education in order to develop ways and means of establishing a more transformative education. It is hoped that this study could open possibilities to re-think education from an anti-colonial and antiracist perspective in order to re-create school not as a place that has to include what is out of norm but as a place where diversity is the main element of the curriculum.

The reason why I have narrowed down my focus on the elementary level is because the knowledge that children acquire during these formative years define their lifetime perceptions. The Chilean system of education is made of four levels namely: kindergarten, elementary, high school and higher education. Elementary education is of foremost importance in realizing the educational goals in Chile because it is available to widest cross-section of the population. Documentary evidence, for example, shows that though a large proportion of the relevant age group attain elementary education in Chile, a significant part of this do not proceed to higher levels of learning.

**The Method: Critical Discourse Analysis**

The research here addressed, lends techniques from the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), as this sees the language and the communicative act –whichever dimension it acquires—as having effects over reality. Veron (1998) calls the effects that discourse has over reality as “the materiality of signs” (Santander, 2001) idea that proposes that there is a direct effect of discourse over the way reality is presented to us and we experience it.

CDA “…studies the way social power, abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (Van Dijk,
In this sense CDA, is an appropriate and significant technique to decipher and understand the power relations that interplay in the production of the notion of human being that is promoted, and constitute part of the public discourse of national identity and citizenship. In this specific research, CDA provides analytical tools to scrutinize the text and public documentation that constitutes the schooling curriculum.

One of the premises that guide me to work from a CDA is the awareness of the ideological value laden of knowledge; value laden that is manifested in all forms that knowledge acquires and which is “part and influenced by social structure, and produced in social interaction” (Van Dijk, 2001:353). Michael Foucault attributes to power the characteristic of being exercised from different places (Foucault, 1978, in Paetcher, 2000) therefore, inhabiting “everywhere” (Paetcher, 2000). Power –as a circulating force- is enacted by everybody (at different degrees and depending on contingency) and is part in the discursive production. Considering this important point, to utilize techniques from the CDA is appropriate and pertinent as long as its main consideration is to understand who participates in the discourse production, which and how certain discourses with specific ideas and perspectives have more saliency while considering the implications of discourse in the reproduction of domination and inequity (Van Dijk, 2001).

Power is exercised and circulates everywhere says Foucault, however, in modern societies, it is the state and the hegemonic groups who own the public official discourse which is exerted through the different agencies of the state. Among the state agencies, education along with police and health, are the best places to put in place the ideas of the hegemonic groups. In this regards CDA offers tools to analyze the discourses of power that are exerted by the state through its state agencies as long as the CDA works on the following premises: “discourse constitutes society and culture”; “There is a relation between the macro and micro levels of discourse”; “Power acts as control”; and “discourse as an effect of mind control” (Van Dijk, 2001). Discourses with state agencies thus, percolate into individual and family level perspectives. Two key questions naturally emerge out of these hegemonic discourses that according to Van Dijk act as guidelines in an exercise of CDA: (1) “How do powerful groups control public discourses?;( 2) How does such discourse control mind and action of (less) powerful groups, and what are the social consequences of such control, such as social
inequality?” (Ibidem, 2001:355) These questions reflect the principles that support CDA which directly connect with the objective of this research. CDA aims to analyze, to look at social and political problems.

Besides the pertinence that CDA offers for this research, this methodology applies a multidisciplinary approach which provides the possibility of addressing the data presented in this study from different perspectives. This is possible because CDA addresses discourse from the comprehension, trying to visualize what elements participate in social interaction and social structures.

In the CDA, power is defined as control; this control is expressed through people, groups, actions, processes, minds. One way that power is exerted is through persuasion. Firstly, power controls the production of discourse and then influences people’s mind. This research aims to look at schooling curriculum content, a documental corpus that is not value-free, on the contrary it represents certain view, a kind of ideology, of tendency, but not of any sort, it represents the vision of hegemonic groups of society which through the schooling curriculum tries to install “the selective tradition” that constitute the “official national memory”; thus it tries to persuade (less) powerful groups to establish a sense of reality that seeks to appear as the “real reality”.

**Methodological Considerations**

The research looks to articulate three axis of analysis around the curriculum content of the subject matter of History, Geography, and Social Sciences (HGSS) in the elementary level of the Chilean schooling system. The first axe is related to the selection of analytical, conceptual, terminological categories which have been selected from cultural studies, philosophy, social and political theory, and -as already explained- from CDA. These categories are applied to understand how the notion of human being in the Chilean society is re-produced through Chilean schooling system, what characterizes this notion, what the consequences of this notion are, and how this is incorporated to the discursive construction of national identity and manifests or materializes in citizenship.

The second axis looks at the system of axioms that operate through the curriculum. This complex of values is manifested tacitly along the narratives told in the curriculum which
consequently also connects with the narratives that participate in the subject of HGSS. Finally, the third axis looks at the content of the subject matter of HGSC itself. The content is subjected to an interdisciplinary analysis, are applied the analytical categories mentioned to the historical discursive construction of ideal human being, national subject and citizen that is portrayed through the curriculum content. In the analysis are taking in considerations discourses of time, space, identity, Otherness and nation.

The concurrence of these three axes allow to identify what elements are present in the construction of hegemonic discourses of being human which pays in favor of a social, cultural, racial and economic order.

b) What are the historical pillars that support these notions? c) What are the ethical and aesthetic elements that constitute the national identity that accompanies the notion of the Nation-State in Chile? What elements are not considered and why? d) What are the axioms that support the curriculum, how are they determined, by who and how are they articulated? e) What are the possibilities in the Chilean schooling system for non hegemonic knowledge of being incorporated in the curriculum? f) What are the goals or ends of our curricula proposals? g) What are the effects of those ends in our national identity? h) Who determines what these goals are? And moreover, who writes our curriculum?

The primary sources are often quoted in the text itself in order to explicitly show the curriculum content and to perform a CDA.
Chapter II

The Theoretical Discursive Framework: Considerations Around Hegemony, Selective Tradition, Identity and the Modern Descriptive Statement of Being Human

Clarifications around Hegemony and Selective Tradition

There is a certain way of seeing and experiencing life that is extended to most of population and is disseminated through the different institutions which operate in a society. This way of seeing and experiencing life, is exerted through “political society” but also through “civil society”; both terms coined by Antonio Gramsci, are part of the most salient conceptualization developed by him through his work: “Hegemony”.

The concept of “hegemony” in Gramsci’s work is part of a theorization that tries to understand and explain the dynamics of power that take shape between the groups which constitute the dominating stratus and the subordinated one within a specific society. For him, there is a function of culture in perpetuating the social order. Gramsci, acknowledges that there is a dialectical relationship between culture and economics. For him the reproduction of social order –however connected to certain economic roots- is exerted by people’s behavior, ideas, and values on a daily basis, which is expressed through society’s institutions (Apple, 2004). The establishment of certain order and its reproduction is not just a matter of coercion and imposition; instead, the main instrument of its continuity is the manifested will of those who are in subordinate position to keep it. This subordination has been named as “consent”. Probably, one of the main contributions of Gramsci is his ability to go beyond the economic relations which condition distribution of power. ‘By distancing cultural criticism from a ‘vulgar’ overemphasis on economic relations, Gramsci’s work opens up the possibility of considering other forms of social and cultural relationships (gender, ‘race’, sexuality, religion, environmentalism, and so on) as matters for analysis in their own right’. (Jones, 2006:4-5)

Jones (2006) -recalling Gramsci- conceptualizes “Hegemony” as “…the ability of a ruling power’s values to live in the minds and lives of its subalterns as a spontaneous expression of their own interests” (2006:3). An important Gramscian argument that is exposed by Jones is the incommensurability of relations of power which go much further than just the simple dialectic of the master versus the slave and power versus resistance. According to
Jones, Gramsci sees the base for the reproduction of power relations in the grade of *consent* that ruled people lend to the hegemonic social organization.

Thus, a relevant question that arises here addresses the origin of this *consent:* How is it possible to conquer that grade of acquiescence that the subordinated provides to the establishment? Antonio Gramsci answers this question saying that “the maintenance of that consent is dependent upon an incessant repositioning of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. In order to maintain its authority, a ruling… must be able to reach into the minds and lives of its subordinates, exercising its power as what appears to be a free expression of their own interests and desires” (Jones, 2006:4).

“Hegemony” as a conceptualization has been very well developed through the work of Raymond Williams, who defines it “[as] a concept that includes ‘culture’ and ‘ideology’ but that goes beyond that. On the one side, culture is defined as the ‘whole social process in which men define and shape their whole lives’ while on the other side, ideology -making allusion to its Marxist significance- appears as “the system of meanings and values [that are] expression or projection of a particular class interest” (2009:108).

When Williams says that hegemony goes beyond the meaning of culture, he is saying that the whole social process in which the people define and shape their lives is just a system of distribution of power and influence. So in this case, the sense of shaping the own life, is just a delusion. The main reason is that in all societies there are inequalities which act against the possibility of achieving the own human realization. In this case, dominance and subordination goes beyond ideology and become hegemony which is a whole process that goes over the conscious level of ideas and beliefs; it involves the whole system of practices, values, ideas, that constitute the “live social process” (Ibid, 2009).

Thus, the social order appears as something natural, extra temporal, and continuous. It is lived through the “civil society” and the “politic society”. The civil society can be described as all those organizations that are born as part of the state such as political parties, schooling system, justice system, religious system, but also those that emerge from the daily experience of people such as excursion trips, celebrations, sport associations, etc; all political
organizations that function through the mechanism of consent. The politic society, on the contrary functions through coercion. It corresponds to the set of mechanisms that exert power to discipline those groups that do not consent with the hegemonic social order and that takeover society when periods of consent have been broken (Jones, 2006).

It is through “civil society” and “political society” that circulates hegemony, which manifests through individuals’ behavior and believes. According to Gramsci, the effect of hegemony can be seen when the individual is able to govern himself in accordance with the hegemonic values by his own will. This economy of hegemony is explained by Gramsci when he says that the individual has to “govern himself without… entering into conflict with political society – but rather becoming its normal continuation, its organic complement” (Gramsci, 1971: 268 In Jones, 2006:62). Is in this point, Jones argues, that the notion of “civil society” intersects with “common sense”, as long as this notion of normalcy, of complex of relations, values, behaviors, that manifest in institutions are given for granted. Everything that is present in society recalls an order that creates a “consciousness” of what is normal, expected, acceptable, and desirable.

Gramsci describes common sense as ‘the folklore of philosophy’- alluding to the fact that common sense is connected to praxis, materiality and reality. However, “unlike philosophy,… common sense is unsystematic, heterogeneous, spontaneous, incoherent and inconsequential, a ‘chaotic aggregate of disparate conceptions’ that holds together ‘Stone Age elements’, the principles of advanced science and ‘intuitions of a future philosophy’ (Gramsci, 1971:324; in Jones, 2006:67).

Consent is the angular stone of hegemony, and common sense -a perception that interprets reality from experience-, is its main ally. The naturalization of this normative common sense is the expression of an order that become of a congenital nature. How is it created the understanding of reality that is “common to a social group, or common to society as a whole”? (Jones, 2006:67). A very good answer is given by Raymond Williams (2009) through the way in which he addresses the concept of “hegemony” and connects it with the notion of “Selective Tradition”.
Raymond Williams describes “hegemony” as “the whole substance of lived identities and relationships…a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values-constitutive and constituting -which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming” (Ibid. 2009:110). Williams describes “hegemony” as a sense of reality that almost does not give place to distinguish how it operates; it is just experienced. Hegemony becomes the tout court says Apple (2004) alluding to Williams interpretation of Gramsci’s concept. Williams, explains through the notion of “Selective Tradition” the process of reproduction of hegemony within society. For him the first element to consider is the experiential nature of the concept that differs from the abstract dominium in which ideology inhabits. Thus, “hegemony”, is always a process, says Williams and ‘it has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified’ (Ibid, 2009:112).

The maintenance of the hegemony by a particular group in a society is not fixed, it is a dynamic process of continual renovation, and this process, says Williams (2009) is done through the creation and recreation of tradition. For Williams, tradition constitutes a kind of memory that fixes the limits of what is real in society. Thus, it is a dispositive of incorporation of the hegemonic order. Within this process of incorporation, has a salient place history which acts promoting this incorporation. So, history, is not just an “inert and historicized segment”, it is the most powerful practical means of incorporation” (Ibid. 2009:115). However, when we talk about tradition in this context, it is not just to say any memory connected to certain ritualism. For Williams, “hegemony” is connected to the “The Selective Tradition” which corresponds to “an intentionally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present, which is then powerfully operative in the process of social and cultural definition and identification” (Ibid.,2009:115). The concept of “Selective Tradition” visualizes and denounces that exist an official memory, and official truth that narrates the conformation and functioning of the current social order. From an extensive area of events, meaning and practices that are part of the past and present of a particular society and culture, are just chosen some of them while others are left out of the official discourse. Williams describes this notion of selective tradition in the following passage:
“From a whole possible area of past and present, in a particular culture, certain meanings and practices are selected for emphasis and certain other meanings and practices are neglected or excluded. Yet, within a particular hegemony, and as one of its decisive processes, this selection is presented and usually successfully passed off as ‘the tradition’, the ‘significant past’. What has then to be said about any tradition is that it is in this sense an aspect of contemporary social and cultural organization, in the interest of the dominance of a specific class. It is a version of the past which is intended to connect with and ratify the present. What it offers in practice is a sense of predisposed continuity” (2009: 115-6)

The importance of “selective tradition” rests in its ability to ratify the current hegemonic order by means connecting the present with a selected past in a particular society. Williams, attributes to this “selective tradition” a tremendous power for the legitimization of the social order inasmuch as there is a connection between the chosen past with current ordinary practices. It is established certain sense of continuity that provides to the social order with a certainty of reality; a feeling that this order comes from an ancient past.

The “selective tradition” disseminates discursive practices that consolidate an organization and administration of power that circulates through different social institutions. In this regard Williams points out that “…the effective establishment of a selective tradition can be said to depend on identifiable institutions” (2009, 116). The argument presented by Williams connects with the concept of socialization which is defined as the process “through which norms, customs and ideologies are inherited and disseminated, that is to say “the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained” (Macionis, 2010:104). In this sense, the socialization process itself involves learning. However, what is learned relates to the “selective tradition”, i.e., from a wider range of possibilities there is a knowledge that is transferred and reproduced; “meanings, values, and practices which, in the very closeness of their association with necessary learning, constitute the real foundations of the hegemony” (Williams, 2009:116)

Hegemony acts “saturating” our consciousness says Williams, and education -one of the most saliencies social institutions- acts as a main instrument in this process of saturation (Apple, 2004). “Education transmits necessary knowledge and skills, but always by a particular
selection from the whole available range, and with intrinsic attitudes, both to learning and social relations, which are in practice virtually inextricable.” (Williams, 2009:117-8). Following the same idea, Apple (2004), explains the role that education plays (in all the forms that it adopts: working place, family, church, etc.) in society is the dissemination and installation of the ‘dominant culture’; while at unison transmits culture and economic ideas. This point is meaningful for the purpose of this study as long as it acknowledges that there is a cultural dimension which accompanies the economic project, so there is an idea of human being that attaches a tandem of social relations and a specific economic project.

Within Education, schools have a privileged power position for legitimizing the social order. Schooling system, through all its components, acts contributing to the perpetuation of hegemony. Within schools the “selective tradition” that circulates through different social institutions acquires a performative character. The ‘selective tradition’ is put on stage through civic rituals, administrative organization, policies, disciplinary system, values, norms, and curriculum. An idea of normalcy, of perennial nature of the social order is consecrated through this schooling performative character. “[schools] act as agents of cultural and ideological hegemony…they not only are one of the main agencies of distributing an effective dominant culture; among other institutions…they help create people” (Apple, 2004:23)

Schooling systems have a preponderant role in the maintenance of the hegemonic order through the very act of transmitting the “selective tradition”. Curriculum is, for antonomasia, the place where this tradition materializes acquiring legal normative force. Curricula are legal instruments that reflex a logic and content of knowledge that support a hegemonic system.

As Apple (2004) asserts, schools “help to create people” and Williams maintains that the “selective tradition” shapes a past and pre-shaped present. In this task history has a main responsibility. A particular official history that has the memory of the “selective tradition” is presented by means of the knowledge that is disseminated through the curriculum.

However, curriculum is not the only dispositive through which hegemony operates; it also acts through an official language, an official institutionalism, an official religious system, and an official memory, all components that participates and crystallizes in a discursive
construction of national identity. As Thobani says, “The figure of the national subject is a much venerated one, exalted above all others as the embodiment of the quintessential characteristics of the nation and the personification of its values, ethics, and civilization morals” (2007:3)

“The true condition of hegemony is effective self-identification with the hegemonic forms: a specific and internalized ‘socialization’ which is expected to be positive but which, if that is not possible, will rest on a (resigned) recognition of the inevitable and the necessary” (Williams, 2009:118). The self-identification is always done in relation to someone external to us, i.e. other subject, community, nation, groups, etc. Within the schooling system, the “selective tradition” is always presented in relation to the tradition of the nation, to the memory and history that narrates the conformation of our present and an expectation of a searched future. This “selective tradition” -as already said- is expressed in the official language, legal, political and religious systems; it conforms the “spirit of the nation” and materializes through a feeling of mutual belonging that develops certain type of loyalty to a project of society that is experienced on a daily basis without being consciously perceived; it also entails a project of future that is discursively embraced by the Nation-State.

**Identity: a Complex Discursive Practice**

Identity is defined as a relational category of identification that arises whenever an individual, group, community or nation is exposed to another subject category with which it does not share membership. Identity is a social human experience that is built in the relation of the individual with his/her surrounding environment (Berger and Luckmann, 1969). As a social experience, it has an individual and a plural dimension which connects and nurtures each other. In terms of its plural dimension; identity is a collective experience as long as the self definition is done always in relation to others (Guibernau, 2009). The concept of identity springs up from the question who I am, at an individual level; or who we are, in terms of a group that can be an ethnic group, a national group, or even continental. Thus, the answer is always plural. “The problem of identity” is always of identities.
During the exercise of self definition the individual seeks for the recognition of him/herself in others that s/he considers similar and with who constitute an “us” (Melucci, 2001). As well, the constitution of the collective identity is grounded in a symbolic basis that supports a set of social norms which operates in a group of individuals. Those individuals get together in a process of mutual identification that places them in the same category (Hall, 2003). However, collective identity, the feeling of belonging to a certain group does not mean in reality the same social position. It is just a discursive creation that helps to bring people together while at the same time expels out the outsider to marginal positions that are peripheral and devaluated (Passerini et al., 2006). Despite the homogeneity that has been tried to install through identity discourses, have emerged their counter-parts which are based on experiences of marginalization, oppression, discrimination, and of non-participation at all as part of the hegemonic identity discourses, thus questioning the legitimacy of extended identity projects. These contesting streams have crystallized in the emergence of the so-called politics of identity.

During the second half of the XX century, arose a bunch of social and political movements which inquired the homogeneity of identity in its nature, origin and future (Heyes, 2012). Sonia Kruks characterizes “identity politics” as a movement that claims the recognition of those identities which have been denied and subordinated such as sexual, racial, ethnic, gender identities, and subordinated to main stream identities; however, Kruks´ demands are not for inclusion “in spite of one´s difference. Rather, what is demanded is respect for oneself as different” (Kruks, 2001:85, in Heyes, 2012).

Following the same argument, Taiaiake Alfred accuses colonialism of imposing government systems and identities which nothing have in common with traditional ways of being (Alfred, 1999). For him, to go back to traditional ways of beings, i.e. to certain traditional politics of identity is imperative to resolve the “political, economic and social problems that beset [First Nation peoples]” (Alfred, 1999:5 in Heyes, 2012). This identity politics represents a politic of subversion that seeks to subvert the imposition of homogeneous and homogenizing identities which legitimize the hegemonic social order. The identity politics “… despite the disagreements of many defenders of identity political claims… they share the
view that individual’s perception of his/her own interests may be systematically distorted and must be somehow of their misperception by groups based transformations” (Heyes, 2012).

However, it is reasonable to acknowledge the impact of assimilationist politics in the construction and expansion of hegemonic identities. Probably, within the discourses of identity, the most effective one has been the discourses on national identity that emanates and is served from and by the myriad institutional agencies of the state. Nation and state depend upon each other, nation with no state that provides a normative and prescriptive frame risks the continuity of its existence, on the other side, a state without a national narrative lacks legitimacy (Bauman, 2003). In this regard, Thobani (2012) acknowledges the “national subject” as the locus of a state’s power. The national subject is the exalted subject of the historical national modernizing project; “…exaltation has been key to the constitution of the national subject as a particular kind of human being, a member of a particular kind of human being, a member of a particular kind of community, and, hence, ontologically and existentially distinct from the stranger to this community” (Thobani, 2012:5), regarding this same argument Thobani follows asking: “What disciplinary and regulatory practices enabled the reproduction of this particular kind of human subject?” (Ibidem, 2012:5). In this regard it can be said that for the function of a collective identity, it is necessary its naturalization. Then it is imperative the operation of certain mechanisms that last in time so the difference between “they” and “us” can be perceived as something natural. Some of the mechanism that act in a visual way are a set of axioms, behaviors, artifacts, norms, and the memory that demonstrate what “we are” (Isla, 2012). The discursive construction of an “us” v/s an “other” is a hegemonic practice as long as what is being said about “us” and the “Others” corresponds to the “Selective Tradition”; it is within this “selective tradition” where are consigned the limits of who shares membership and who are the outsiders, foreign, and the enemies. The very act of defining the boundaries of membership manifests an act of imposition that subjectivizes/objectivizes certain individuals and groups to specific spaces or directly relegates them to nowhere becoming outsiders. In this sense, the act of self identification is an act that is imposed by others who have the power.
Memory is a pillar for Identity, however, the act of remembering does not happen in isolation; we remember with other’s help, and also our memories are often others’ memories (Ricoeur, 1998). Memories are part of collective narratives that are reinforced by commemorations and the public celebrations of certain events considered important and part of cultural, social, political, and religious identities (Rubio, 2007). Memory and identity relate and enhance a feeling of belonging (Isla, 2012).

The construction of the national identity is probably the best example of the distinction between “they” and “us”. It is also the best example of how the hegemonic forces act building a feeling of belonging that is configured within the frame of a Nation-State. A particular national identity is a discursive practice that “narrates a process of inclusion/exclusion which is related to a physical space (the territory), a specific time (national historiography), a group of people (national community) a symbolic order (the motherland) and a normative order (legal system)” (Isla, 2012:10, own translation). All of these components that participate in the construction of a national identity’s narrative are filled by a “selective tradition” that represents and supports the hegemonic social order; a hegemonic order that is contested which itself opens gaps for contestation and the rise of a multiplicity of counter-hegemonic identity discourses.

**National Identity: a Hegemonic Discursive Construction**

The discourse of national identity is always a hegemonic discourse that operates over certain group of people which at the same time reproduce and distribute it. National identity is often built from an essentialism that rests on the selection of certain features considered fundamental and important while some others are excluded (Larraín, 2001). This is the prevalent interpretation within the conservative currents that conceive national identity as an ethical and moral nucleus that contains the “essence of a particular nation” – the “selective tradition”-. Larraín indicates that essential conceptions of identity are constructed over the idea that every nation has “a collective soul, a shared experience of unity that provides a group with stable meanings, codes, and frameworks, and that stays as a continuous subjacent reality in the middle of historical superficial changes” (2001:144 [own translation]).
In a similar sense, Armstrong (2005) says that the conformation of a national identity involves the interaction of specific symbols. These symbols allow the reproduction and transmission of certain images of the world, from a specific *locus*. “There is no nation without the creation of certain identity roots” (Isla, 2012:13[own translation]). Then, the creation of these roots is also the creation of certain national mythology. The national mythology acts interpreting the world says Armstrong (2005). Through the national myth the distinction between “they” and “us” is objectified, it acts keeping and reinforcing feelings of cohesion among members of nation but at unison produces the distinction with no members (Ibid. 2005).

The national mythology always goes along with a ritualistic tradition that puts in place some normative content (Armstrong, 2005). There is no identity without memory; in this sense the national history strengthens the feeling of cohesion, thus, the historical events and the national myths intertwine and become ephemeris from the perspective of the cultural and political hegemonic groups (Isla, 2012). Latter, to remember those ephemeris reinforce imagines that speak about a past, a present, and a future (Hobsbawn, 2000) of the conational community. What do we remember? What do we perform and what for? What is considered as that foundational past of a nation? What does receive the category of myth and how it gets that condition?, are some of the inquires that one could pose in order to find out the origin of the memory that is passed as the “selective tradition” which appears as the only memory that deserves to be reminded and that constitute the cement for the functioning of a national project which mostly represent the interests of the hegemonic dominant groups of society.

**National Identity, Nationalism and Nation-State**

Nation, nationalism and nation-state are concepts that can be traced in modernity (Anderson, 1993; Bauman, 2005; Hobsbawm, 2004, Foucault, 2002) and that have had an important role in the consolidation of the nation-states projects that were born as a result of colonization processes. A starting point to look at how these concepts came to place is the exercise that Lemke (2007) does trying to track how power is exerted by the state in a legitimate way. Lemke, calling Foucault, points out that the “government by state agencies must be conceived as a contingent political process and a singular historical event in need of
explanation rather than a given fact” (2007:5). He asks a set of questions that interrogate “how” the state became the legitimate way of governing. “How does the state come to act, if at all, as a coherent political force? How is the imaginary unity of the state produced in practical terms? How does a plurality of institutions and processes become the state? How do we account for the apparent autonomy of the state as a separate entity that somehow stands outside and above society?” (Ibid. 2007:5). A possible answer is what has been explained by Bauman (2005) who points out that the dynamic relation which exists between the state, as the normative and prescriptive dispositive to control people, and the nation that avails itself through the state by means of its capacity to create and provide identity to people legitimizing, at the same time, the power of the state.

Anderson (1993) puts forth the idea that nations are communities of imagination (Thobani, 2012). In this regard Isla (2012) points out that the conformation of nations are linked with previous, pre-existent- ethnic communities that share narratives about their ancestors, have common customs and are linked to a specific place –territory- what finally turns into a complex process of social and political construction. It is what Anderson has called “Imaginary community”. These imagined communities in colonized spaces talks about an instrumentalization of the pre-colonial memory. In the colonized world the national identity discursive constructions refer us to the reality of the colonial project which involves the materiality of the genocide experienced by colonized people. Thus, the identity discursive constructions are the result of the creation of a historic-cultural narrative that is legitimized through the repressive apparatus of the state in order to achieve the aim of the nation, “the fate of the nation” (Bauman, 2005:20), but also to ensure its continuation. Both Nation and State are in a dynamic relation that operates providing institutional support for the rise of national identity. Isla acknowledges that the notion of nation meant the confluence of “ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious particularities for the sake of a national community, thus, later the particularities of local identities became part of the folklore manifestations” (2012:19, own translation). Thus, the national identity is a project that has needed surveillance to achieve its aims, being the coincidence between territory and state sovereign crucial (Bauman, 2004).
What is normal v/s what is abnormal as well as several other oppositional categories such as legal/illegal, public/private, and national/extra national rational/irrational modern/retrograde, are the base of the discourses around national identity in the context of modern nation-states. Foucault identified “the social enemy” as a social category which represents the “irregularities, departures from the norm, anomaly and criminal deviations” (2002: 298). The enemy within would be a bio-political category. In terms of the construction of the nation and the feeling of belonging to this project, the category of the “social enemy”, “the dangerous individual” or the “internal enemy” provides a reference of inside/outside that plays inside the borders of the nation-state that classifies those individual who are part of the society and those who are their enemies, and against whom the state has to exercise its power of normalization. This conceptual category is anchored in a discourse that configures an “Other” from its ethnic, moral, political or socio-economic position within a particular society (Isla, 2012). From a national identity perspective, the enemy within is seen as a threat to the social order, this feeling of threat and fear works enhancing the notion of “we” but also deploys a set of bio-politics of surveillance and normalization of population that functions through the different agencies of the state.

Within the context of Europe the set of mechanisms and techniques to identify and keep under control the “enemy within” searched to provide of meaning an internal enemy which allowed the empowerment of the bourgeoisie in the context of the emergence of the modern state (Stoler, 1996). Foucault, in the History of Sexuality volume I, in its final chapter, points out that racism emerges out of the relation between the two poles of bio-power (disciplining of the individual and anatomo-politics of human body) resulting in a bio-politics that centers “regulatory controls” over the population as bio-politics (1998). The internal enemy -the dangerous individual- is a conceptualization that can be framed within a theory of social defense that centers racial discourses in the rise of the modern state in which “modern racism is the historical outcome of a normalizing society” (Stoler, 1996:26). For Stoler, in the History of sexuality Foucault “analyzes how a discourse of sexuality articulates and eventually incorporates a racist logic” (1996:22). Although, she recognizes that race and racism was not the central topic of his book, racial discourses are part of the theorization that Foucault builds
in relation to the technologies of sex, which goes beyond the control of the bodies and which aims the dominium of the population. In this regard, Foucault, centers his concern with state racism (however not overtly manifested) rather than its popular forms, and sets out a chronology of racism as a state affair that takes shape in the XIX century as a “a set of scientific discourses that bear witness to it” (Foucault 1985:147, in Stoler, 1996:28), a group of practices that lead a State to identify before its external “foes” its “enemies within”. But, as Stoler points out “[Foucault’s] focus is on the internal dynamics of European states and their disciplinary bio political strategies” (1996:29) European empires are part of the genealogies of racism that Foucault develops in his lectures, but imperial expansion is not in the focus. “The genealogy of racist discourse is sui generis to Europe: colonial genocide is subsumed dependent, accounted for, and explained in absentia” (Ibid., 1996:29), however this absentia takes shape and materializes in the colonial context.

**National Identity in the Colonial Context: “The Descriptive Statement” of Modernity**

The absentia of race in the colonial genocide has just a discursive character; race was the central argument that provided the theoretical support for the colonial enterprise; race is the main articulating axis of the colonial undertakes that extended in the post colonial period and provided the cement for the construction of nationalistic discourses of identity. Foucault (1998) identifies that racist discourses become part of the state affair during the XIX century as a set of scientific discourses that were applied to the normal/abnormal duality. However, this chronology of race is far from representing the events that occurred in the colonial space which stain the dynamics of power and sociopolitical, cultural and economic order until nowadays.

The very event of the colonial enterprise and colonialism was part of a process of reinvention of humanity that had at its zenith a racist logic which is the base of the world of modernity (Mignolo, 2000), and therefore, manifests in the discourses of identity that are raised in order to provide common ideals and goals for the nationals. This reinvention of the human being –that have been called as “the coloniality of being/power/truth/freedom” (or the Overrepresentation of Man) by Sylvia Wynter (2003); as the “racism-ethnicism complex” byQuijano (2000, in Wynter, 2003); and as “the foundational colonial difference” by Mignolo
points out that race is the central element that supports the logic, functioning and reproduction of the current hegemonic social, economic, political, and cultural order of the expansion of the West over the world (Wynter, 2003). This hegemonic order has its genesis in “the secularizing intellectual revolution of Renaissance humanism, followed by the decentralizing religious heresy of the Protestant Reformation and the rise of the Modern State” (Wynter, 2003:262), from where emerged a new historical subject outside the medieval theocentric descriptive statement of man who carried on the colonial enterprise and who constituted himself the measurement of normal in opposition to all the rest of individuals who were incorporated into the colonial order.

Sylvia Winter describes with mastery the rise of this new subject and the central place that race holds in what she has called as the “Overrepresentation of Man” which can be read in the following passage:

“In order for the world of the laity, including that of the then ascendant modern European state, to escape their subordination to the world of the Church, it had been enabled to do so only on the basis of what Michael Foucault identifies as the ‘invention of man’: that is, by the ‘Renaissance humanists’ epochal redescription of the human outside the terms of the then theocentric ‘sinful by nature’ conception/’descriptive statement’ of the human, on whose basis the hegemony of the Church/clergy over the lay world of Latin-Christian Europe had been supernaturally legitimated (Chorover 1979). While, if this redescription was affected by the lay world’s invention of Man as the political subject of the state, in the transumed and reoccupied place of its earlier matrix identity Christian, the performative enactment of this new ‘descriptive statement’ and its master code of symbolic life and death, as the first secular ‘degodded’ (if, at the time, still only partly so) mode of being human in the history of the species, was to be affected only on the basis of what Quijano identifies as the ‘coloniality of power’, Mignolo as the ‘colonial difference’ and Winant as a huge project demarcating human differences thinkable as a ‘racial longue durée’. One of the major empirical effects of which would be ‘the rise of Europe’ and its construction of the ‘world civilization’ on the one hand, and, on the other, African enslavement, Latin American Conquest, and Asian Subjugation” (Wynter, 2003:263)

The new descriptive statement of Man has been defined by Sylvia Wynter as “the Coloniability of Being/Power/truth/Freedom, with the logical inference that one cannot ‘unsettle’
the ‘coloniality of power’ without a re-description of the human outside the terms of our present descriptive statement of the human, Man, and its overrepresentation” (Wynter, 2003:268). To the question of whom and what we are -Wynter says, “natural organisms”. Because it does not mention women, it is possible to characterize this historic subject as a biocentric model of a natural organism that distinguishes from animal because of his rational capacity which puts him at the center of society where he constitutes the political subject of history and the modern world.

According to Wynter, the reinvention of the “descriptive statement” was a gradual process that involved two moments which testify also a paradigmatic change. The first transition extends from the Renaissance to the XVIII century, and the second phase of this reinvention from the XVIII century to nowadays. Wynter, deepens her argument pointing out that the paradigmatic change had a first moment when emerged the physical sciences, and the second phase when arose the biological sciences; both processes had been possible just in the context of the colonizer/colonized relation (Wynter, 2003).

The medieval theocentric descriptive statement had been defined in the opposition of Europe’s Untrue Christian Other/True Christian Self. This opposition emerged from the theological imaginary that positioned men as imperfect, sinful, unable to know reality, and whose fate was to follow a plan of salvation (Pandian, 1985; Wynter, 2003). When emerged the new West’s “descriptive statement” the “Other” also experienced a transformation as the result of the paradigmatic change. The new definition of the human being as a political, rational, perfectible subject, able to know reality needed an antagonist to prove his existence, in the wave of the colonizing undertaken the “Other” “was to be the peoples of the militarily expropriated New World territories (i.e., Indians), as well as the enslaved peoples of Black Africa (i.e., Negroes), that were made to reoccupy the matrix slot of Otherness-to be made into the physical referent of the idea of the irrational/sub rational Human Other, to this first degoded (if still hybridlyreligio-secular) ‘descriptive statement’ of the human in history, as the descriptive statement that would be foundational to modernity” (Wynter, 2003:266)
The paradigmatic change, allowed to the discursive construction of race to support the expansion of modern states as the only legitimate way of political, economic, social and cultural organization in the colonial space. Quijano argues that race has not physical correlation but its construction (the physical correlation) was possible due to colonization. Thus, the modern “descriptive statement”, the rational being at the center of the physical and biological science (Quijano, 2000), was the measurement of “normal humanness” to which were confronted the non-Europeans who were encountered (Pandian, 1985). Wynter in the following passage describes how this classification of “Otherness” operates:

“While the ‘Indians’ were portrayed as the very acme of the savage, irrational Other the ‘Negroes’ were assimilated to the former’s category, represented as its most extreme form and as the ostensible missing link between rational humans and irrational animals. However, in the wake of the West’s second wave of imperial expansion, pari passu with its reinvention of Man now in purely biologized terms, it was to be the peoples of Black African descent who would be constructed as the ultimate referent of the ‘racially inferior’ Human Other, with the range of other colonized dark-skinned peoples, all classified as ‘natives’, now being assimilated to its category – all of these as the ostensible embodiment of the non-evolved backward Others - if to varying degrees and, as such, the negation of the generic ‘normal humanness’, ostensibly expressed by and embodied in the peoples of the West”. (Wynter, 2003:266).

Wynter further contends that this renewed human being was able to place his figure at the center of the conquest by developing “their descriptive statement/prescriptive statement of: what is to be human and to re-ground its secularizing own on a newly projected human/subhuman distinction instead” (2003:264). As a result, there emerged the colonizer, as the superior subject that had the task of civilizing the world which had been discovered, inhabited by sub-human or non-human. To justify the occupation and colonization of the lands encountered, it was necessary to place their inhabitants as human projects which had to be helped to evolve from their natural/irrational stage. Thus, the awkward right to occupy, rule and exploit those territories by the Spanish crown was legitimized by the idea of superiority of the colonizer who was civilized and had the moral task to humanize the non-human others. In the categorization that the colonizer gave to “what he had encountered” there was created a scale of humanity that situated the colonizer in the rational side, while indigenous people were
considered as subjects in process of humanization and black population placed as the ostensibly lost link between the rational humans and the non rational animals (Wynter, 2003).

This logic which entails a racial classification has operated -and still does- in the post colonial institutionalism giving place to whitening discourses and practices that are important components in the construction of a memory –a selective tradition- that supports national identity in the –so called- post-colonial republics. In this regard there are bio-politics that look to watch over and to normalize population; these bio-politics circulates through the different agencies of the state. During the colonial context, circulated with the aim of controlling barbarian and uncivilized people, thus the aim of colonial bio-politics was to civilize and to bring the conquered territories toward progress and development (Isla, 2012).

The national identity is a category that encounters its antagonists inside and outside the physical borders of a nation; in fact, it is a category that delineates a symbolic but also a territorial space. In America Latina, national identities emerged mainly during the XIX and in the beginning of the XX century when the demarcated capitanias and virreinatos started process of independence from their “motherlands”. The rationale behind the construction of the “Other” in that context can be explained through the theorization on Bio-power that offers Foucault and through the genealogy of race and racial classification of individuals in conquered territories offered by Wynter.

The processes of independence in Latin America and North America mirrored modern ideas of nation and its expansion through Europe. “The foundational time –i.e., the time in which republics were born at the beginning of XIX century- was the scenario for the theoretical adoption and material adaptation of philosophical ideas emerged during the French Revolution and American Revolution (Isla, 2012:31, own translation). However, it did not commence as a search for total independence rather for colonial autonomy that latter promoted an independent republicanism (Anderson, 1993, Isla, 2012). In parallel were developed, as part of the independentist processes, discourses of national identity that stained all areas of life: in the political realm, educational and pedagogical field, the labor place, the private and the cultural and the legal narrative etc. (Foresti et al., 2009)
In the Americas, the idea of nation was one of the central axes of the independentist fights (Arnoux, 2008). In Latin America, the elites had a salient role in the construction of the nation, its memory, and in the process of naturalization of the national identity at a local level (Isla, 2012). The construction of national discourses of identity was articulated on the bases of a temporal brake where the past, represented by the colonial order and the monarchic absolutism was replaced by a vocation toward an independent and republican future (Ibid. 2012). Chesneaux(1990) points it out with a lot of clarity when he says that nation-states inscribed in modernity operated with the threat of the past as obsolete, while the colonial time had been the time of church and monarchy and the time of the nation the promising time.

Is within this logic that has been selected the knowledge which would become part of the selective tradition that crystallized in discourses of national identity and instituted a hegemonic social order. In Latin America –in similar with other colonial spaces- the discourses of identity have been constructed above this idea of barbaric past, continuously threatening our transit to modernity and development of humanity. Thus the main task in terms of the surveillance exerted by the state has been sweeping the perils of an insurgent barbarism, savagery, and chaos.

According to Stoler´s chronology for bio-politics based on race “Colonial technologies of rule bear witness to earlier, explicit racially-based policies once in widespread use” (1996:26). Some of them are, for instance, the definition of indigenous populations as barbaric peoples in need of guidance, (Wynter, 2003). As a response, for example, were configured the institutions known as “lasencomiendas”, administrative unites where groups of indigenous were put under the control and surveillance of “el encomendero” (a colonizer) who had the task of evangelizing and educating them, but also of administering their labor force and profits. In addition was exerted control over sexuality in colonies to avoid mestizaje (racial mixing); were deployed pedagogical measures to avoid mixed´s children natural inclination to prostitution and patricide; school hours were extended to keep mixed blood children away from their native kin; there were started some politics around mixed couples and the regulation of the acquisition of European status when the citizenship was inherited by someone from the colonies; the need to distinguish real white European from those who were natives of “fabricated European
status” (Stoler, 1996) are some of the examples that show the shape that acquired the “enemy within” the colonies.

According to the racial classification that operated under the modern “descriptive statement” of being human, the indigenous people, the black population and the “mixed by blood”, as Stoler says, were always in the colonial order considered the “enemy within”, the potential transgressors of the ‘interior frontiers’ of the nation state. Special attention required the mixed by blood “who were the same but not quite, potentially more brazen in making their claims to an equality of rights with ‘true’ Europeans, but always suspect patriots of colonial rule” (1996:52). In fact, during the independence movements, the leitmotif for the autonomy from the colonial empire was the legitimate right of local elites in the colonies (some of them coming from mixed blood families) to self determination. In this scenario, the scientific disciplines that operated under the agencies of the state probably contributed to the emergence of racist tendencies against those considered the potential disrupters of the social order “believes in blood, but so did nationalist discourse in which a folk theory of contamination based on cultural antagonist, not biological tainting, distinguished true members of the body politic from those who were not” (Ibid, 1996:53). Stoler establishes a connection between the operation of race theories within the empire and its mirrors in the colonies. In the empire the subversive subjects who were potentially the promoter of subversion were the hybrid populations. Under the same logic, in the colonial order natives were declared the enemies against whom the force of the empire was deployed, but those of the “mixed blood” –mestizos- embodied the seed of betrayal hidden in a false citizenship (1996) while black populations were erased as historical subjects.

Within the described context and following the argument of Stoler (1996), it is possible to elaborate a hypothesis around the construction of a national identity that has been developed within the “post-colonial” space in order to re-create the modern re-invention of human being that aims to minimize the hazards that involved the presence of indigenous peoples and mixed blood people. This discursive construction of national identity, searches to install a notion of human being that mirrors the “Man´s over representation”, who although a biologic organism, is a rational political subject placed at the center of history, and that has the role of turning
barbarism into modernity. Under this logic rises the notion of mestizaje as an ethno cultural racial category which acquires the role of the subject of the nation and which represents the transition from a barbaric-savage-irrational state to a new civilized-rational-humanized moment. This subject of the nation, let behind the irrationality of indigenous peoples and represents the possibility of advancing towards modernity, thus, the “selective tradition” that has been elaborated aims to provide of historicity a category which represents the transition towards the political, social, economic, cultural and racial project that entails the white world.

The presence of indigenous peoples and mixed blood mestizos represented barbarism and lack of civilization in the nascent autonomous republics in the colonial space represented a threat for the aims of progress-development-economic growth (Isla, 2012). Against those potentials social order´s enemies, was necessary to deploy a technology for control that would minimize the possibilities for insurgency, task that was done through the whole apparatus of the state that aimed the construction of a commonality which would act agglutinating people in the same national project despite their ethnic and racial differences. The legal and administrative system, the administration of medicine's measures to control the health of the population, the school and pedagogical actions, the religious and military institutions, and specially the construction of a narrative of a past rooted in a common ancestor made possible the building of an “imaginary community” (Anderson, 1993) which overcame all ethnic particularities and crystallized in a citizenship linked to development and modernity.

In most of Latin America, are celebrated ephemerides that remind the encounter between the colonizer and the colonized, from that point the political historiography is constructed around independences and the conformation of the nation-states as the main and only history of population. Thus, the absorption of ethnic, linguistics, religious, and any other particularity present in the territory is sacrificed for the sake of a national homogenous community which is also homogenizing. The celebration until few years ago of October 12th as the “The day of the race” was a constant reminder of our Hispanic inheritance. In this regard the “selective tradition”, which is mainly elaborated by the national elites, has aimed to lead the population to civilization.
Historiography and pedagogy are disciplines invested of scientific truth that allows them to participate in the model social design. Among other disciplines (medicine, psychiatry, psychology, and so on) historiography and pedagogy offers narratives and technologies provided of a truth that appears as uncontestable and which is promoted by the state. They have collaborated to launch a disciplinary regimen that seek for a social order that have contributed to the success of the political and economic system since the bourgeois revolutions between the end of XVIII century and the beginning of XIX (Isla, 2012). At the same, historiography and pedagogy have contributed to the transition, in terms of Foucault, from violence to a microphysics of power (Peset, 2008) what has been possible just through the state.

In the present work, I am trying to address the notion of human being that is presented and disseminated through the schooling curriculum in the context of Chile. This notion of humanness is believed to be a local interpretation of the modern “descriptive statement” of Man which also constitutes the hegemonic notion of being human that is embedded in the discursive construction of the Chilean national identity. I have endeavored to look into the content of the official schooling curriculum that is available through the subject matter of HGSS in order to deconstruct the historiography that is presented as the official memory of the nation. I have also focused on the content of the curriculum as a carrier of the “selective tradition” that is installed with the force of the state to portray an official unique true memory. I have tried my level best to contest this “selective tradition” to unveil how it operates the dynamics of power that reproduce a very excluding social order since an early age at school. This exercise also allows me to see the techniques of exclusion that deploy the hegemonic power to contain the insurgence of a non official memory that in spite of all the efforts to erase it, has survived and constitutes a parallel narrative of what it means to be human and what it means to be part of a community that is compounded of multiple nations which refuse to assimilate the overrepresentation of man.

The following sections aims to analyze the official knowledge that is contained in the schooling curriculum and that tell us about a notion of human being that circulates as the official truth which correspond to a hegemonic selective tradition rooted in a racist discursive construction. However, it is important to highlight that while this work describe the formal
hegemonic discourse does not deny the existence of counter hegemonic narratives that emerge contesting the portrait of human being deploy by the state which is permanently challenged and contested.
Chapter III

Curriculum and its Role in School and Society

The definition and the rationale of humanity in any given society is contained and structured through the education that it bequeaths to its younger generations. Education as a social institution transmits the values, ethos, traditions and beliefs that each society holds dear. In modern societies, schools are considered an essential part of the Education system because they act as mechanisms to socialize the new generations with a particular culture and install in the individuals a sense of belonging and identity with a particular group, nation, state, country, etc (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Within the school structure, curriculum is the instrument that structures the school’s dynamics of knowledge production, dissemination of its outcomes, and legitimization of the power relations that define societal knowledge, however, is not exempted from contestation which acts as an act of regulation of its contents and pedagogical practices. This is attained by deliberate processes that are entrenched in the values of the hegemonic group over those of the groups in the margins (Apple, 1993).

“Education is a power-saturated discussion” (Dei & Simmons, 2010: XIV) and knowledge is never neutral (Dei, 2000, 2006, 2010; Foucault, 1975, 1976, 1980; Deng and Lucke 2008) as well as the curriculum is not a politically neutral document (Apple, 1993). “The curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, of someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge” (Apple, 1993: 1). Reflecting through this argument, a critical reading of the curriculum as a discourse that articulates relations of power, would give us a map of the groups that form a society and the position that those groups hold within it. Also it could lead us to unveil the relations and symbols around which they support, organize and legitimize those positions. The fact that there is a difference between what is considered as official knowledge while “[other] knowledge hardly sees the light of day” (Apple, 1993:3), cautions of a centeredness and a periphery that are occupied by specific types of bodies. Looking at the curriculum as a container of the official knowledge of the schooling system; it is possible to distinguish who are in society defined either as centered or
marginalized within the social structure, and how those in/out places are assigned to certain bodies.

Curriculum is the instrument for the reproduction of the “hegemony”, which could be defined as “a whole body of practices and expectations…which is truly total, which is not merely secondary or super-structural… but that which constitutes the limit of commonsense for most people under its sway that it corresponds to the reality of social experience…” (Williams, 1976:202. In Apple, 2004:33-4). Thus, through the curriculum it would be possible to see how the complexity of dynamics acts through ‘hegemony’ that “saturates our very consciousness, so that the educational, economic and social world we see and interact with and the common sense interpretations that we put on, it becomes the tout court, the only world” (Apple, 2004:34).

Curriculum is a source of primary information of a specific society, but it is also the means that society prescribes its notion of humanity; the meaning of being human that is embedded in the world view of that specific society (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). That notion of humanity is not only expressed in the information that is promoted by the curriculum, but also in the philosophical principles that underpin that curriculum and act as axiological units which look through the whole core curriculum (Eisner & Vallance 1974). In relation to those philosophical principles, the curriculum involves not only what ought to be known, but also how that knowledge should be acquired; curriculum constitutes a path to follow. Traditionally, the act of learning appears as a process through which the individual is conducted from a primary stage of less development to a next one where that subject is more advanced and developed; “to improve a man as a man…” (Hutchins and Ornstein, 2004:34). Learning is seen as a transformative process by means of which the apprentice leaves his original non human state to become a person. In this regard Dewey says that “…it is urged that the social definition of education, as getting adjusted to civilization, makes it a forced and external process, and results in subordinating the freedom of the individual to a preconceived social and political status” (2008:45). But, what kind of human genre is sought through the transformation that entailed the learning process promoted by society? What is the ontology of this historical subject? And if the transformative process of learning entails a transition from a non-human to
a less human state to a fully human state, what does this mean to be the fully human persons that is the ultimate outcome of education? What is dehumanized as a consequence of the searching for a specific kind of human that represents the ideal human being? These are some of the intriguing questions worth-exploring.

Curriculum is located at the core of schools. It is such an important constitutive element that has been largely discussed as a schooling instrument and also in terms of its further influence in society at large (Pinar, 2004; Apple, 2004; Illich, 1971; McLaren, 1983, 1989, 2002; Giroux, 1981, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2011). What is curriculum? What elements do constitute the curriculum? What is the scope of curriculum? What are the aims of curriculum and what are its sources of information? Are some of the questions that have been posed in this educational area in order to define its field and to establish some methodology for its construction (Bobbit 1918; Caswell and Campbell, 1935; Dewey, 2008; Tylor, 1949) without the arrival of a final definition? However, the foregoing questions constitute just one side of the discussion; there are some scholars who see curriculum as a key instrument that operates as a discourse of power in society.

As a reaction to the post-Sputnik era within the academy, ideas have been developed around schooling, curriculum and the practices associated to it as vehicles for the reproduction of the hegemony of a society which is full of inequities (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 1981, 1997, 2001; McLaren, 1983, 1989, 2010). In this regard the discussion around curriculum has added to the classical questions a new set of queries that transit from what is curriculum to questions such as: what are the implications of curriculum for society? Whose interests are served by curriculum? What is the role of curriculum in the school system? Who does select the information and pedagogical practices associated to curriculum? And what is curriculum knowledge for? A transformation that has gone from the typical question pointed out by Spencer in the 19th about “what knowledge is of more worth? … [To] Is knowledge the arbiter of worth?” (Smith, 2003:36) All questions that address relations of power and privilege that are associated to knowledge; questions that have as a backdrop a suspicion about the neutrality of the knowledge linked to curriculum.
Curriculum as a field of study and as an instrument for instruction is quite problematic, however, it is exciting and compelling. To precisely define curriculum is a major undertaking; it has been characterized as “elusive, fragmentary, and confusing” (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004:1). Try to establish a clear delimitation in terms of the scope of the field of curriculum or to find a general statement of its meaning, its extent, and its components are tasks not finalized yet. Orstein and Hunkins (2004) explain why theorization of curriculum is an elusive subject, arguing that it has an axiomatic load that involves the design and planning of curriculum besides the feelings, experiences, particular perspectives and hierarchies that surround the knowledge contained within curriculum. Thus, to better understand the meaning of curriculum and to think about its implications it is crucial to have a broad contextualization of its conceptual construction. According to Pinar, “Attention to the history of the field [of curriculum] is essential as it alerts scholars and school persons that curriculum issues occur in historical time and political context”. (Pinar et. al., 2008:11)

Although, the present study addresses the curriculum in Chile, it is worthwhile to look at the philosophical streams that the field of curriculum has developed in the context of North America. The main reason is that the momentum for the schooling curriculum in South America and especially in Chile was mirrored from the northern hemisphere, following at least the first stages of the development of curriculum in those industrialized countries.

**Foundation of Curriculum: Philosophies and Implications**

Philosophy is angular to curriculum it represents a certain way of thinking about reality. It entails certain epistemology, that is to say, a particular way of constructing the knowledge that will explain a particular reality. Thus, epistemology involves a worldview, namely a group of suppositions in which the idea of human being and humanity is always present as a central element in the construction of knowledge but also as an instrument for the transmission, ascertain, accumulation, and transference of that knowledge from persons to persons (Lincoln and Guba, 2005). Philosophy in the context of school and curriculum provides a framework for organizing schools, classrooms, subject matter, defines goals, aims, and content (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2008). For curriculum, philosophy constitutes a starting point of a series of
decisions that seeks to promote a rationale of humanity and the system in which this rationale functions and is transmitted. Goodlad (1979) situates philosophy as the ground from which curriculum goals, criteria, subject matter, and decisions in general are taken. Philosophy presents “The aims [that] are statements of value, based on philosophical beliefs; the means [that] represent processes and methods, which reflect philosophical choices; and the ends [that] connote the facts, concepts, and principles of the knowledge or behavior learned” (Ornstein and Hunkins 2004:35).

“Four major philosophies have influenced education: idealism, realism, pragmatism, and existentialism” (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004:33). Realism and idealism, both are considered as traditional philosophical streams of metaphysics. Realism centers reason as the central feature which leads to find the “true purpose” of humans or good through thinking. Aristotle, Descartes, Aquinas pointed out the existence of a universal order (Ibid, 2004). In relation to curriculum “Realism places its emphasis upon objectivity of subject matter with science and mathematics presenting models to teachers in the classroom setting”. (Ediger and Rao, 2003:14).

Idealism, with Plato, as probably its most characteristics philosophers, points out the idea of the existence of eternal and immutable truth. “To know is to rethink the latent ideas that are already present in the mind. The teacher´s task is to bring this latent knowledge to consciousness” (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004:33). Curriculum from an idealistic philosophical perspective presents knowledge in a hierarchical order of related disciplines which are part of the “heritage of humankind” (Ibid, 2004:34).Scientific knowledge is organized putting the abstract and more general subject matters on top and situating at the bottom those subject matters related to the physical realm (Ibid, 2004).

Pragmatism, also known as experientialism, is a philosophy that centers in experience. This philosophical school “construes knowledge as a process in which reality is constantly changing” (Orstein and Hunkins, 2004:34). This philosophy, mainly developed in North America, has a specific link with education through the work of John Dewey (Ibid. 2004) for whom “…education is committed to some kind of empirical and experimental philosophy”
(Dewey, 1997:25). In his work experience and education (ibid, 1997), he advocates for education as a philosophy of experience. Thus learning from a pragmatic perspective is rooted in experience, in reality. Education and specifically curriculum must be intimately connected to the experiences the child goes through in real life, and school should be the place where those experiences can be recreated, related with the very learning experiences of life.

Existentialism is a philosophical school which is centered in individual experience, freedom and choice-making (Greene, 1967). For existentialism the individual is the one entitled to make choices, and through the making-choices is that the world and the individual become meaningful. This philosophy can be observed during the reconceptualist curriculum movement (1970) in which W. Pinar and M. Grumet promoted social change through the reflection over the past, present with the aim of envision a possible different future (Schubert, 2010). From an existentialist position, “the curriculum would avoid systematic knowledge or structured disciplines, and the students would be free to select from many available learning situations” (Orstein and Hunkins, 2004:35). The theory of existentialism points out the potentiality of becoming; an existential ontology that is, it expresses the possibility of reaching humanity through the very act of making a decision (Sartre, 1956). Seen from an existentialist perspective education and curriculum should provide the opportunity for the expression of that freedom, to bring the possibility of becoming a being.

Each of these philosophical thoughts are expressed in how schooling has been organized and how they have helped to define goals and ends of education. Each of them entail a notion of humanity and human being that wants to be achieved; therefore, each approach and philosophy expresses and embraces certain political project of society that among other dispositive is channeled through schooling and curriculum.

From the described philosophical schools, have been developed educational philosophies that mirror the principles of those philosophical schools which are applied to the field of education. Theories of education or normative educational philosophies look at education in its relation with the construction of the being and what exists. In relation to some
principles and values, educational philosophies try to respond to inquiries about the purpose, means, goals, and ends of education (Frankena, et al., 2002).

Commonly, there are four educational philosophies described: perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, and reconstructionsim. From these philosophies, the academia has derived some particular branches to highlight some values, arguments, ideas and pursue some specific social objectives through education.

Perennialism is an educational philosophy rooted in classic philosophies. The notion of an ideal true world elaborated by Plato, and the idea that the material world is one plane or level insert in certain hierarchical order that goes in-crescendo until reach perfection characterized perennialism (Mosier, 1951). Following the same argument of the existence of different planes of existence, Augustine developed ideas in relation to a duality in constant contestation for the dominium of the world, and Aquinas about the existence of pure and same form of things (Ibid, 1951). Those argumentations impregnate perennialism with the idea of a hierarchy in all order of thing which manifests in society organization, education, school, and therefore also in curriculum which is organized also in relation to certain kind of hierarchy that applies to the subject matters. From a perennialist perspective “reality is everywhere and at every moment the same” (Ibid, 1951:83). There are some universal timeless principles that govern truth which are contained in knowledge, beauty, virtue, human nature, and constitute proof of the unchanging nature of the universe (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004). Those universal are manifested in curriculum.

Essentialism, probably best represented by William Bagley (1934), points out the existence of a common corpus of knowledge that is attained to culture which has to be transmitted to students in a structured and systematic form. For Bagley, the humankind is unique because of its ability to learn and transmit what has learned to the next generations. In this regard, education must bequeath to younger generations ideals, skills, knowledge (Cameron, 1935). From an essentialist educational perspective, curriculum must emphasize the three Rs (writing, reading, and arithmetic) in elementary school while traditional disciplines such as history, arts, philosophy, etc at the secondary level, however, differs from perennialism
because it considers the possibility of incorporating until certain extent technical subjects matters (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004). Essentialism in education today is linked with the politics of standardization of curriculum and evaluation systems what have promoted the raise of the movement *Back to Basic Curriculum* and *Excellence in Education* (Ibidem, 2004) a politic that characterizes the curriculum policies established in those countries that subscribe to international cooperative organizations such as OECD, NAFTA, and APEC.

In association with a set of standardized testing systems accompany the delivery of knowledge which leads to develop quantitative notions of quality and equity, both measurable through testing. Quality and equity interrelate in a curriculum because it is the same for everybody and allows identifying who has a better performance due to the technical conditions in which curriculum is delivered or as a result of individual effort. Meritocracy acts as a reward in a fierce competition that classifies people and prescribes their future.

Another educational normative theory is Progressivism which is rooted in pragmatism philosophical stream. In the field of curriculum it is expressed through the idea that learning is a child centered activity. Perhaps this is the easiest way to define educational progressivism due to the lack of consensus about the term. In this regard, Kridel contends, “When [progressivism is] used in the field of curriculum studies, progressive education adopts more of an ideological definition, representing a dynamic, transactional view of learning, and a focus on the interests of students. Such a working definition, however, provides little clarity when the term is so widely and casually used to describe a wide array of educational practices” (2010:689). John Dewey in his work *Democracy and Education* (1916) explained the child centeredness as the main characteristic of the educational experience which accounts as a sample in a micro scale of how democracy functions in real society.

Looking at the current characteristics of curriculum, it is interesting to see how the philosophical roots that ground progressivism become the rationale that underpins international trends in education and curricula. Knowledge is understood a permanent development, in whose center is the experimentation. As a result innovation and to be innovative seems as a skill that is essential to fit in the current global scenario and which connects schools with
economic and social development “We… need to promote innovation and not to be afraid to experiment…without innovation it will be impossible to transform schools and adapt them to the new requirements (Brunner, 2001:145). Therefore, it is not a casualty that international organization as the OECD and UNESCO promote broadly this progressivist philosophy of education.

From a progressivism that inquired the traditional normative educational theories emerged reconstructionism, an educational philosophy that promotes to address the political, economic, social, and moral attempts of schooling. Reconstructionism in curriculum arises pointing out education as a means for social transformation. The novelty of this approach is the critical questions that are posed in order to unveil the relations of power that operates through knowledge and specifically through curriculum; gender, race, class, ableisment are topics that appear and bring the critical perspective to curricular studies. Among representatives scholars of Reconstructionism are Harold Rugg, George Counts, and Theodore Brameld, “these three authors represent a wide range of reconstructionist thought from the more moderate position of Rugg to Brameld´s more radical one, Marxist-oriented version of reconstructionism” (Stanley, 1992:11). Also, it can be seen as reconstructionist and reconceptualist in education figures as Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren with the development of a theory of critical pedagogy, the work of George Dei in antiracism and anti-colonialism in education, Michael Apple with a neo-Marxist analyses over curriculum, Peter Trifonas with his poststructural work in education, William Pinar with his work in curriculum from gender, queer, and antiracist studies, are some of the contemporary figures that highlight for their contribution to the critical study of education and that can be defined as part of the new era of reconstructionism known as reconceptualism.

Crisis is at the center of socio and cultural conditions in capitalist societies (Stanley, 1992) what also applies to colonized and racialized societies. From this assumption, reconstructionism compels to be aware of sociocultural conditions in order to use education to trigger social change. This logic is the rationale that underpins a “radical or critical curriculum theory, or politically oriented curriculum theory” (Pinar et al., 2004. In Robertson, 2008:16) that asserts the political no-neutrality of curriculum and knowledge.
Reconceptualism—grounded in a reconstructionist rationale—addresses curriculum as a discourse of power that is value laden “historically, politically, racially, autobiographically, biographically, aesthetically, theologically, institutionally and internationally, as well as in terms of gender, phenomenology, postmodernism, and poststructuralism” (Pinar, 2008:6). From a reconceptualist perspective, school subjugates the individual to a technocracy and bureaucracy that diminish him/her to a powerless and manipulated subject. Schools arise as a side for oppression, control and coercion (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004) where curriculum is the instrument to install a “selective tradition” that inherits to the new generation a certain memory, rituals, mythos, knowledge usually those attached to the nation, while discarding other less valuable wider spectrum of knowledge. From a reconceptualist perspective it is possible to interrogate the curriculum and the schooling system in general in relation to issues of difference, equity, and social justice which are aspects that must be address whenever a study of curriculum from a critical perspective is done.

Reconceptualism in its reconstructionist vocation sees in school and particularly in curriculum a side of oppression but also a side for contestation. An opportunity to address the cultural crisis that affects society is to create in schools “pockets of resistance that provide pedagogical models for new forms of learning and social relations” (Stanley, 1992). However, to turn education as a site of resistance; it is fundamental to have a clear sense of the existing sociocultural conditions, a task advocated by reconstructionists in education.

Particularly important to this study are the ideas developed by reconstructionist and reconceptualist in relation to curriculum as an instrument to be challenged. Looking at the history of school and curriculum in Chile as well as the characteristics of curriculum as a field of study, one may identify the influences that different approaches and educational normative theories have had in the Chilean curriculum development and in studies that address it. However, beside the contributions done by Abraham Magendzo in the area of curriculum from a critical pedagogy perspective and a number of other studies that evaluate and critique intercultural bilingual education, there are no studies that highlight the implications of curriculum as an instrument that shapes identities and subjective individuals in relation to some
political, social, economic and cultural project, what is even more dramatic, when it goes to issues of gender, race, racism and anti-colonialism.

Michal Apple in “Ideology and Curriculum” asks “What is the relationship between culture and economy? How does ideology function?” (2004:53). To answer this question, Apple calls to look at the role that education and schooling have in society, he directs to the curriculum the discussion about power, ideology but also about resistance “As people concerned with education, we need to answer in relation to one major institution, the school. Thus, we must rigorously scrutinize the form and content of curriculum, the social relations within classroom, and the ways we currently conceptualize these things, as cultural expressions of particular groups in particular institutions at particular times” (Ibid, 2004:53-4). Therefore, what is planned and delivered in the classroom is not something that may be taken for granted.

The present study follows the same criteria. It looks at the subject matter of history in the Chilean curriculum as a way to unveil the relationship between culture, economy, ideology, identity. In this work I asked what is the “selective tradition” embedded in the curriculum that is being imposed, what is the political and economic project attached to the selective memory that is presented as the official discourse of the nation; as a politic of identity; who is the ideal individual, the perfect human being that Chile seeks through education? But also what are the consequences of such a searching and what are the possibilities to contest that project?

Following the logic in which this work is structured, the next chapter briefly contextualizes the development of school and curriculum in Chile. At unison is being done an analysis of the information presented taking in consideration the categories described in this chapter.
Chapter IV

An Overview at the History of the Educational System in Chile

The current educational system in Chile is the result of two hundred years of educational proposals and essays which have been ideological, political, social and economic reflections of the different moments of the republican history of country. Rubilar (2003a), identifies 4 stages in the political and economic development of Chile which –he argues– mirror the 4 different stages in the educational field: 1) The bird of the republic which coincides with “arise of elementary school and the University of Chile” (1842); 2) Democratic Progression which coincides with the legal normative that impulses the elementary education for everybody (1920); 3) Democracy regression which coincides with the new law of education under the dictatorship and the new constitution (1980); and 4) ambiguous transition to democracy in which the neoliberal model was consolidated by the governments post dictatorship and that coincide with an educational reform that consolidated the right to profit through education (1996) (Rubilar, 2003a).

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of the trends that have characterized education and specifically the schooling system in Chile in order to contextualize the analysis that is done in the following sections in which are addressed the Chilean educational law and the current curriculum in terms of their final impacts on Chile’s society.

After a short review of the literature and the curriculum documents, it is possible to say that a main characteristic of education in Chile has been the often importation of foreign educational and pedagogical models since education was set as a public institution almost at the middle of 19th century, situation that mirrors most of the South colonized contexts and which compels to inquiry why foreign models have been adopted and how it would be possible to break away from this patterns.

In the context of Chile, educational and history researchers such as Labarca (1939), Salas (1967), Nuñez (1985), Briones (1986), Caiceo (1991), Rojas (1997), and Rubilar (1999) point out that the educational history is marked by the introduction of foreign models aiming to improve education; thus among these models can be named the Lancastrian method, the German educational reform, Dewey’s model of education, Taylorian management ideas
applied to education, educational constructivism, curriculum based in working competences, among others. These importations have been mediated by methodological adjustments in order to fit the necessities of economic development of the country.

The 19th century was a time when the ideological debate was focused in the role of the State in the educational activities ("MemoriaChilena", 2004). During this period a set of legal regulations were promulgated in order to ensure uniform pedagogical practices and to establish educational institutions (professional schools for pedagogic instruction, universities, national libraries) as means to build a feeling of national identity that would contribute to the consolidation of the emancipation from Spain (Mascareño, 2004; Bengoa, 2008). This period is strongly marked by the idea that education is the means of abandoning savagery and ensuring the national prosperity. As Mascareño states, the school assumed the positivistic dichotomy of barbaric/civilization defining as a main goal to contribute to the eradication of any vestige of barbarism while installing order and progress in students as cherished values of Chilean citizens. (Mascareño, 2004) This positivistic assumption of progression as a linear process that goes from the no civilized (represented in the colonial space by the pre-colonial) to the civilized (represented by the colonizer and his socio cultural system) is present through different moments of education system in Chile, but was overtly declared during the first years after the independence in Chile as the core ideal of the nation project. However, during 19th century the focus of education was not the whole population of the young nation, in this period the educational system was mainly concerned about forming the governing elite and to train mid-level employees.

In fact Serrano and Jaksic, contribute with information about the percentage of illiterate people in Chile which --between 1810 and 1840- reached 80%, being literacy just a commitment towards the formation of the ruling oligarchic central class (Serrano and Jaksic, 2000 in Isla, 2012). Even though, the principles behind the creation of a secular education system where the humanist ideals of modernity (Rubilar, 2003a), a very little extent of working class and peasant population were attended by schools which mainly belonged to charity societies and to religious organizations ("MemoriaChilena", 2004).
The creation of a secular education system was crystallized through an important event: the creation of the “law of primary instruction” which was promulgated in 1860. It established that education had to be free of charge and a responsibility of the State in its financial matters (Rojas, 1997; Rubilar, 2003a; “MemoriaChilena”, 2004). It was definitely an enormous step in the institutionalism of education, however, the levels of illiteracy were still high (more than 50%) and the number of schools clearly insufficient (González, 1999).

After the promulgation of the law of primary instruction, the State became the main supporter of education in Chile and the system was centralized being the state the only supervisory agent of any pedagogical activity. During the 19th century, the Government of the country sought to organize and promote school as an institution. The elementary education was mainly public but the law also permitted the private elementary education which was mainly adopted among the members of the ruling class (“MemoriaChilena”, 2004). Under these guidelines, school became a disciplined and organized place, separated from the family and community. The pedagogical practices were led by the Lancastrian method, placing children by age and levels, establishing a system of reward and punishment, and promoting the use of homogenized textbooks (Rubilar 2003a, “MemoriaChilena” 2004, “Peuma”, 2007). All these efforts aimed to consolidate Chile as an independent nation in her path to modernity, however, despite the humanist discourse of rights and equality in the country, there were two different worlds; one of them configured by the oligarchic landlord class –heirs of the colonizer class-the second one configured by the common people –peasants, mestizos, working class, indigenous peoples- who were not reached for the set of rights and humanism values that accompanied the process of independence and the conformation of the post colonial education system. This feeling of abandonment became a fertile ground to give birth to a social movement that led to the conformation of myriad grassroots social organizations and unions movements which claimed the right of common people to be incorporated to that Chilean society where people enjoyed rights (Rubilar, 2003a)

Finalizing the nineteen century, Chile faced the “German Educational Reform” which established the secondary education. The most noticeable change introduced by this reform was the institution of a uniformed curriculum for the whole country. The reform established the
notion of subjects matters in school, and following the German structure, was founded the “Pedagogical Institute” looking to professionalize and specialize teachers in specific subject areas (Cox and Gysling. 1990; “MemoriaChilena”, 2004). A main event that constituted a landmark in the history of Chilean educational institution was the creation of special teacher colleges in the main cities of Chile (Santiago, Chillán, La Serena) with the intention of professionalizing teachers to work at elementary levels, named “Escuelas Normalistas”; these were the centers of the pedagogical activity since 1854 until 1974 (Nuñez, 2010). The “Escuelas Normalistas” were a new step in the path to civilize the country’s population, besides the task of creating a homogeneous mass of professionals for elementary instruction, they had a moralizing character. Nuñez (2010) while citing documents of the Chilean National History Archive notes that there is a misconduct annotation in the book of one of the “Escuelas Normalistas” where the director of the school highlighted the importance of being morally civilized to be capable of driving the civilizing project of society. Thus the “Escuelas Normales” became residential schools which functioned under an ultra disciplinary logic and with a very strict selection process. The candidates had to be part of morally respectable families and had an irreproachable behavior to become teachers (Nuñez, 2010).

In the 20th century, an educational reform took place in Chile. During the administration of Salvador Sanfuentes; it was proclaimed the “Ley de Instrucciónprimariaobligatoria y laica” (law of compulsory and secular primary education). To reach this point in the History of Chile, a lot of effort had to carry out (Rubilar, 2003a; Egaña, 2004). This law, which was proposed by the liberal and radical parties, had to fight with the old conservatism that represented the values of the Spanish Colony, Catholicism, and the primary republic (Egaña, 2004). For conservatives, education was a parental responsibility in terms of its costs. For them, the state assuming the task of educating a nation meant to releasing parents of one of the main task of parenthood, the upbringing of children. In addition the idea of a secular school was considered as a path to social chaos. Among the reasons that were argued by prominent political and educational figures of the country to support the new law (Dario Salas, Amanda Labarca, Andrés Bello, ValentínLetelier, Bannen) were the incapacity of Chile as a nation for responding to the demands of education of the marginalized classes, the high levels of illiteracy
and the non schooling attendance by a section of the population because the lack of schools (Rubilar, 2003).

González points out that by 1875 there were eight hundred eighteen schools, with 65,875 students while the total population of the country had reached 2,254,000 inhabitants (Gonzalez, 1999). Dario Salas was an important educator who portrayed the educational problem of access to school through his book “El Problema Nacional” (The national problem, 1917). Salas, analyzed the set of problems that were central to education in Chile since the 19th century, and that were still critical in the first decade of the 20th century. Salas, provided a overview of the elementary education and its challenges which were related to financial responsibility, professionalization of school instructors, pedagogical styles, and curriculum (“Peuma”, 2007)

The political leaders of the beginning of 20th century saw in the law of compulsory elementary education, a matter of country’s development; the need of overcoming the national negative effects of having an ignorant mass of uneducated people, was the major force to impulse the state to promulgate this law (Gonzalez, 1999). Thus is again the logic of normalizing population, of homogenizing population in order to get them rid of barbarism and lack of civilization the core of the promulgation of this law.

In terms of pedagogical models, the discussion about society and education system during the 20th century was influenced by the traditional academic rationalist and by the pragmatic model of John Dewey. The academic rationalism aims to develop human capital for the economic needs of the nation and it is complemented by ideas from the French humanistic influence and by the pragmatical model of John Dewey that can be summarized in the idea that an apprentice learns from his/her experience in real life and that school must be the place where those experiences can be recreated to promote a significant learning process. An important situation to consider was the “National Evaluation System”. Assessments were applied since elementary to university students (Gonzalez, 1999). So examination was the center of the pedagogical and didactical practices which is not very different from what happens today.
During the first decades of the 20th century, critical and assertion movements got relevance which addressed problems of the education system. A novelty was given by the membership of these social movements that found their adherents mostly among teachers; some of these organizations were: the Union Action Teacher’s Association, 1901; Society of Elementary Teachers, 1903; National Educational Association, 1904; Centre of Pedagogical Studies, 1905; Student Union of the University of Chile, 1906; National Society of Teachers, 1909 (Rubilar, 2003a). As a result of these initiatives, came up new ideas about the ends of the educational system. Education was thought as a way to shape better citizens, developing physical, intellectual and critical skills. An effect was the recognition of differences between geographical regions. However, still the elite was at the center of the educational system (ibid. 2003a).

A main contribution from union’s participation in educational matters was the introduction of the amendment N° 7.500 a reform to the law of compulsory primary education. This amendment defined education as task of the state in order to develop the individual in a holistic way, according to his will and with the goal of maximizing his productive capacity and the solidarity with the social group to which he belonged (Rubilar, 2003a). Thus the incorporation of the popular classes to the educational system in Chile also implied the introduction of a clear class and economic discourse to the role of school. Even though the amendments done to improve the law of compulsory education were loaded of good intentions, the main goal of the reform and the expansion of schooling was the creation of a labor force, a human capital, to develop the national economy. Thus along with the civilizing project that entailed the schooling system, after the amendment of the law, it was overtly declared and attached to school an important role in the economic development of the nation. Since then education in Chile have had two important tasks that are interrelated; on the one hand the civilization of the nation while on the second hand the provision of human capital for the development of the economic system of the nation.

The amendment N° 7.500 was another great step in the path to a more democratic education; however, it was too radical for that time when still political and religious conservative sectors of the nation were huge political forces. As Rubilar (2003a) points out the
reform considered education and school as a state’s task but the school’s organization had to be communitarian and family could be a co-educative agent. The reform also revised the structure of the levels in school and defined a teaching career for teachers. Unfortunately, the reform did not see the light because the government of the period considered that the budget to implement it was too high. Although the reform did not work, it was the seed for future changes. Later, after the failed amendment, was adopted the CEPAL Development Model, which came into effect after the crisis of 1929 and was embraced by most of the countries in Latin America. This model had a direct impact in the principles and focus of the educational system in Chile (“Peuma”, 2007; Rubilar, 2003a).

Between the 1930’s and the 1950’s the discussion about education was relegated to a second place because of other political and economic issues that were perceived to have a greater bearing on society than education. So not until the end of the Second World War, education was seen as a critical aspect of the governmental agenda. The improvements of this new stage were related with the increase of population attending schools and with a significant decrease of illiteracy from 50% in 1900 to 9% in 1972 (Rubilar, 2003a:210). From that point onwards, the curriculum and the school developed and maintained a North American methodology which was enforced with the rise of international conferences which not only encouraged agreements among countries but also spread ideas about common issues in education (“Peuma”, 2007). Following the North American politics, education was focused in production. The massive extension of the schooling system looked to shaped citizens that would fit with the national values while creating a labor force that could lead the country to development and progress.

This relation between economy and national values resulted, for instance, in the creation of new institutions that would answer to modernization demands. An example was the inauguration of the Technical University of the State that adopted and maintained Taylor’s principles of scientific management in education (“MemoriaChilena”, 2004). Thus the vision of the subject matter as ends changed to see subject matter that worked as instrument to develop skills which could be used later as tool to contribute to the development of the Chilean society. In this regard, the structure of school changed and increased technical school in order
to create a more efficient human capital able to adapt better to new production processes and industrial scenarios (Jocelyn Holt, 2001).

Between 1970 through 1973 during the Social Government of Salvador Allende, education system experienced a deep transformation. The government of Allende –known as the Chilean via to Socialism- expressed the principles of equity and democracy through direct participation; it was also reflected in all areas of politics, and the education system was not the exemption. The educational policy so-called “EscuelaNacionalUnificada” (Unified National School) geared up a real revolution in education of what had been very conservative initiatives in terms of values while liberal in economics since its creation. This educational project which ended abruptly with the breakdown of democracy during September of 1973, can be summarized in the following principles that were declared by the President Allende in his presidential speech of 1972 which has been collected by the work of Nuñez: “(1) Equal educational opportunities for all children regarding their cultural and educative needs, (2) Promote the human development considering general aspects but also singularities aiming social integration by means of a new educational system, (3) Build a new unified educational system linked to cultural, economic, social development, (4) Decentralization of technical, administrative, financial responsibilities in order to distribute decision power in the community, provincial, and regional level, (5) Guarantee teachers and educational workers with the best social, professional, and labor conditions which are in relation to the economic and educative policy, and with the national development, and (6) Promote the democratic, direct, and responsible participation of the educational workers and members of community to transform the educational system and the meaning that education acquired” (Nuñez, 2003:15. own translation).

The “unified school” looked to develop an education centered in socialist principles. Workers had to be part of the productive world through their direct participation in the economic system. To achieve this goal, education and specifically school allied with productivity. However, this alliance also placed together communitarian and integrative values, “science and production had to search for human development” (Rubilar, 2003b). Singular and remarkable is the fact that the “unified school” looked to synchronize curriculum and
educational goals with local and provincial development (De la Parra, 1998). A noticeable fact was the influence of Paulo Freire who during this period lived and wrote his works from Chile. Some ideas of the educational project were a clear influence of his socio-critical paradigm.

After the coup d'état what had been considered as a mainly task of the state, education, was no longer accepted. The radical and fast adoption of Friedman’s free market paradigm had a tremendous impact on the notion of education. The role of the state changed from guarantor of education to a subsidiary State. As Michal Apple theorizes “an effect of the combination of marketization and the strong state in Chile, was the removal of education from public debate being it defined as a family issue space also controlled by the forces of the market” (1995: p. 354).

Principles and policies that supported the new notion of education were provided by Christian Humanism (Human Rights), Neoliberalism (a subsidiary State) and also the idea of education as a decentralized system. The restructuring of Chilean educational system under the dictatorship incorporated the philosophical principles of Christian Humanism. This philosophical perspective considers individuals as beings who potentially -through their personal effort- can get to know the natural law, thus, to be able to live in accordance to God’s precepts. Here, it is important to notice that a main religious institution that relates to Christian Humanism is the Catholic Church, with Pope Pio XII as one of its more salient representatives. In this regard, it is important to clarify that Catholicism was the official religion of the Chilean state; actually the mythological image of Virgin Mary is at the head of Chilean infantry.

Jacques Maritain is probably one of the main expositors of Christian Humanism. Maritain considers the individual within this philosophical perspective as a subject who is defined in relation to human rights, freedom, and self-realization. Therefore, it is a subject defined in relation to social development and human progress (Evans and Ward, 1965). However, this individual development must focus on social welfare rather than individual reward, thus every activity should aim to improve conditions of human life, freedom, social justice, fraternity, and civility (Ibid. 1965). These values were reflected in school in terms of its
organization and in the direction in which curriculum and pedagogical practices were addressed.

Following the re-foundational logic, which permeated the discourses of the epoch after the so called country’s Marxist destruction done by the "Chilean path to socialism", the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, created a new nation based on "democracy" and market freedom. Thus, the rationale of Christian Humanism which attached democracy as the political ideology of free man was the euphemism that operated while it was installing an ultra neoliberal policy which was introduced and by means the new constitution. The first consequence in education was the subsidiary role that the state acquired while the forces of free market took over all aspects of Chilean life. In the education, it created a kind of paradox between the internalization and globalization that would bring the openness of Chile to global economy and the loss of feelings of attachment to the national project. Thus the instrument to solve this contradiction resided in the schooling national curriculum which -mainly through the subject matter of history and geography- must enforced the feelings of belonging to the nation of Chile.

This was a dark period in the history of Chile in all its aspects. By law it was forbidden the promotion or even review of any ideological and doctrinaire stream. In fact any idea which -remotely- could be related to Marxism was suppressed from curriculum and text books, instead was promoted the picture of an apolitical state which was mainly concerned of the national security. Many administrative positions were cut off while some others were occupied by military state agents. Public employees including teachers were threatened and coerced to move from a public pension system to a private one. The teachers colleges and universities in general were closed, after a while a change of the entire educational system was installed (Rubilar, 2003b).

Elementary education was defined as a tool to train good citizens and workers. Secondary and post-secondary went from being a public responsibility to a private one where the family had to assumed the cost of education while the state had just a subsidiary role that in the case of post-secondary education was diminishing over time. Ideas about nationalism,
economics, privatization, regionalization and municipalization, private subsided education, are verbs to describe the situation at the end of the 70’s (Rubilar, 2003b).

The main instrument to legitimatize the new model was the constitution of 1980 which is wryly still on use. In it was explicitly declared the education’s ideological basis and criteria and determined the creation of a special law to regulate education which was promulgated ten years later (1990) just a few days before the dictatorship’s last business day. This law which had an organic character was called "Ley OrgánicaConstitucional de Educación" (LOCE or Organic Constitutional Law of Education). The LOCE was functioning until 2009 when under the Government of Michelle Bachelet, a new version of the same controlling, undemocratic, and neoliberal law was promulgated which is still functioning and is known as "Ley General de Educación" (LEGE or General Law of Education).

The main aspects of the LOCE were the decentralization of education with the atomization of the problematic, the weakening of the unions (mainly teachers’ unions) with intent to finally and completely exterminate them, the opening up of private post-secondary education and the division and decentralization of public universities which were to gradually stop receiving financial support from the state in order to become self-financing through tuition fees. This measure meant the end of free university education, and the control of any intellectual activity under the supervision of army designed rectors who were in charge of cutting off any possible political discussion or initiative. In this regard, some historic and socio political analyses of the Chilean education have portrayed very well the scenario during the years of dictatorship and post-dictatorship among which can be named the works developed by Cox, 1999; Jocelyn-Holt 2001; Rubilar, 2003b; Waissbluth, 2010.

The LOCE as law, was one of the privileged daughters of the constitution, this defined issues about national security in the educational system by banning the practice and discussion of any ideological ideas, established a national curriculum with certain level of regional autonomy but defining its contents and articulation, encouraged the participation of private capital in education, created the Counsel of Education which had a national scope and was in charge of supervising and making final decisions in all areas of education. The law also
allowed military academies to confer degrees to members of the armed forces thus usurping a role that was ordinarily the preserve of universities ("Peuma", 2004)

Nowadays, the institutional order that frames education and specifically schooling in Chile is still a token of the legacy of the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. After more than twenty years of the end of the military dictatorship and after several reforms in methodological and supposedly doctrinaire aspects; the governments after Pinochet recycled this law and gave it another “new” but not very much different emphasis. The government of the party coalition "Concertación" has continuously identified a big crisis in the educational system in terms of quality and equity, in this regard; a discursive construction has taken place around educational reforms and improvement. However, it is clear that problems still persist. These problems which are now interpreted as access to education with quality, being quality defined in terms of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and education for human capital, are central in electoral campaigns for presidential and congress politic positions, although with no an effective answer. A good example is for instance the absence in the discussion around quality of questions that inquiry about the place of indigenous knowledge in the schooling system and curriculum structure or even beyond to inquiry how the nation would account for the coexistence of multiple education systems in a country which is multicultural. Until now the solutions to these questions have been the creation of a curricular innovation that places a subject matter of indigenous languages as the panacea that materializes the aims of inclusion by means intercultural education, which is just a delusion.

Rubilar states that Pinochet´s discourse of education´s modernization has been changed by the Concertación for one which speaks about improving education´s quality in order to achieve the challenge of productivity; a discourse in which productivity adopts just a material dimension and is defined strictly in economic terms. On front of the description already done, it is worth to ask until what extent the party coalition´s reading of quality in education is different from the one pointed by the dictatorship of Pinochet. Given the conditions, the national curriculum has turned into an instrument oriented to the economy which also deepens the unequal social and economic positions and distributions. This situation creates deep class divisions and marginalization that reproduce with little variation. Under this panorama, the
discourse of meritocracy that is exerted by the government appears just as a delusion. Two educational policies portray the phenomena of exclusion and segregation that, probably is not intended, however, occurs through education in Chile: 1) the emphasis that technical education has received among the so-known socially excluded classes, and 2) the adoption of a pedagogical model based on working competences that tries to develop since an early stage a mass of technical workers functional for the areas of the economy that are in expansion.

The last noticeable landmark in the Chilean education history was the promulgation of a new law of education which was launched during the government of Michelle Bachelet in year 2009. After student´s mobilizations and a couple of months of strikes the government sent to the parliament the Ley General de Educación (LEGE General Law of Education) which was looking to achieve and to ensure quality and equity in the Chilean Education. However, the reform appears to have achieved little in terms of real change but rather only introduced a new version of the LOCE promoting subsidiary education and expanding the possibilities to profit from educational corporations.

The crisis in the area of education led to the events of year 2011 known as the Chilean Winter; hundred thousands of students were part of a social movement to denounce the consequences of education as a market commodity showing how deep the educational crisis in Chile is going through. There is an acute dissatisfaction and resentment against the policies of the current economic goal of the educational system that is supported by a neoliberal ideology which is also reflected in the curriculum. During 2011, despite the new law of education, social movements were again led by students. This situation revealed a general perception of a process of reform that has yet to be born. The main challenge to achieve a real educational reform in Chile is to modify the constitution to annul the commoditization of education. This will pave the way for the amendment of the education law that not only permits profiteering from education but also promotes it.

Seeing it from another side, the reform of 2006 and the later educational law did not address in depth an examination of curriculum in terms of content and pedagogical practices. In fact the stress was situated again on education as a path to economic growth. In one of the
discourses of ex president Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle (1999) the role of education is highlighted in terms of economic development, he said “Education is the most powerful instrument for social promotion; if we want to be competitive, if we want to make our production more valuable, if we want to develop a service sector that allows us to be the neuralgic centre of trade between Latin America and the global market, we need to improve quality of education” (In rubilar, 2003b:364, own translation). This reflection shows the meaning of education in Chile which goes along with the policies of the World Bank where a minimal role of the state is promoted. In fact Chile received financial aid from the World Bank to implement the reform of 1996 in conjunction with other changes in education in order to make it more competitive. Thus there is a pending task which is to look at education in terms of a social responsibility. In this context, social responsibility is referred to query knowledge production and to unveil which interest it serves. It is fundamental to open discussion about how we envision education in a multicultural society as Chile is. In this sense, there is a huge debt in democratizing curriculum. In theory after 1990, Chile returned to democracy, however, the contents in the curriculum still serve to the hegemonic history, language, religion, natural sciences, etc. Knowledge is not neutral (Dei and Simmons, 2010), neither school nor curriculum; in this regard the work here presented seeks to contribute to this task.

In the following section there is a presentation of the main aspects of the General Law of Education which is related to the set of axioms that are presented in the curriculum. The axiological system is transversal to the whole curriculum and constitutes the spine of curriculum; therefore, it is crucial to look inside of them in order to accomplish the objective of this study.
Chapter V

The Legal Frame Work and the System of Values in the Chilean Curriculum

Education in Chile and specifically the schooling system is supported by two pillars which act as the spine of the system: the constitution and the “Ley General de Educación” (LGE “General Law of Education”, own translation). In addition, the different conventions and agreements that Chile is signatory to, contribute to shape the system. These three sources provide the structure for the curriculum to be produced, and offers the terrain in which it is articulated.

This section looks at the main constitutional articles that relate to education and look at the LGE in order to understand how curriculum inserts and operates within this institutionalism and, mainly, what is intended to be reproduced as legitimate values of humanity, the same that are attached to the notions of national identity and citizenship. In this regard, there is a description and an analysis of the axiomatic structure of curriculum which is presented as a transversal axis to the learning process that is promoted in school.

The Legal Framework of Curriculum

The constitution is the navigation chart of the nation; it consigns the political philosophy that permeates all the legal regulations which function in Chile to provide a frame for the relation between the individual and the political society. Therefore, the shape that education acquires within the Chilean nation is also consecrated in the constitution as follows:

“La educación tiene por objeto el pleno desarrollo de la persona en las distintas etapas de su vida. Los padres tienen el derecho preferente y el deber de educar a sus hijos. Corresponderá al Estado otorgar especial protección al ejercicio de este derecho” (Constitución Política de la República de Chile, capítulo III, artículo 10, 1980 (2009))

“Education is to develop the individual at different stages of his life. Parents have the primary right and duty to educate their children. The state shall provide special protection for the exercise of this right” (Political Constitution of the Republic of Chile, chapter III, article 10, 1980 (2009) own translation)

Education in Chile is consigned as a right in accordance with the declaration of Universal Human Rights which is a pillar of the constitution. But this universal right that
reflects in the Chilean legal order is subjected to interpretations that grant the particularities that education acquires in Chile. These interpretations have direct impact on the politics of education from economic, philosophical and methodological perspectives.

From an economic perspective, Chile has embraced decisively the neoliberal model which is clearly manifested in the structure, values, and contents of the educational system. Actually, it is explicit in the constitution as follows:

“La libertad de enseñanza incluye el derecho de abrir, organizar y mantener establecimientos educacionales”.
(Constitución Política de la República de Chile, capítulo III, artículo 11, 1980 (2009))

“The freedom of education includes the right to open, organize and keep educational places”

The normative in practice is expressed in the subsidiary role that the state acquires in the field of education. In fact, the laws operate in consonance with the laws of Neoliberalism which means the reduction of the state’s role to the supervision of the system’s functioning while the promotion of private enterprise in the field of education.

In philosophical terms the constitution does not speak particularly to certain specific philosophy, however, it overtly advocates for “democracy” and tacitly promotes “liberal ideas” of human beings; this definitively agrees with the policy of free market in education that has been embraced since the dictatorship. These ideas which permeate the education system also have echoed in the pedagogy that the curriculum promotes. The schooling system in Chile, embraces the methodological guidelines promoted by the World Bank and the OECD. The constitution consigns freedom in education in relation to the market what is explicitly said in the following article:

La libertad de enseñanza no tiene otras limitaciones que las impuestas por la moral, las buenas costumbres, el orden público y la seguridad nacional”
(Constitución Política de la República de Chile, capítulo III, artículo 11, 1980 (2009))

“The freedom of education has not any other limitation than those imposed by morals, good customs, public order and national security. The education officially recognized cannot be oriented to spread any political trend or political party” (Political Constitution of the Republic of Chile, chapter III, article 11, 1980 (2009) own translation)
As an organic law of the constitution, it is considered the law N°20.310 or the General Law of Education (LGE). The LGE is the specific normative that regulates the functioning of education as an institution in Chile. This law, as already mentioned, was approved and promulgated during the year of 2009 under the Government of Michelle Bachelet. This legal instrument is the result of 19 years of discussion about goals, ends, appropriate mechanism, financial matters and methodologies.

According to the law, Chile has undertaken to provide education that is the primary means of engendering social values, developing human capacities and promoting human dignity. The law establishes forms of participation, mechanism for recognition and certification of knowledge acquisition outside of formal education, enables schools to operate, outlines the school certification processes and defines universal standards of quality and evaluation. In short, the law determines what constitutes formal, scientific knowledge.

The article N°2 in its second paragraph, categorizes education as a continuous process whose final goal is to achieve the development of every human being in his spiritual, ethical, emotional, intellectual, physical and artistic aspects. The definition is framed by the respect to the Universal Human Rights, the Fundamental Freedoms, the multiculturalism, and the national identity. The educational system has to shape individuals in order to become people able to coexist within society and to actively participate in the community, thus contributes to develop the country.

“La educación es el proceso de aprendizaje permanente que abarca las distintas etapas de la vida de las personas y que tiene como finalidad alcanzar su desarrollo spiritual, ético, moral, afectivo, intelectual, artístico y físico, mediante la transmisión y el cultivo de valores conocimientos y destrezas. Se enmarca en el respeto y valoración de los derechos humanos y de las libertades fundamentales, de la diversidad multicultural y de la paz, y de nuestra identidad nacional, capacitando a las personas para conducir su vida en forma plena, para convivir y participar en forma responsable, tolerante, solidaria, democrática y activa en la comunidad, y para trabajar y contribuir al desarrollo del país” (Ley General de Educación de Chile, paragraph 1°, article N°2, 2009)

“Education is the lifelong learning process that covers the various stages of life of people and aims to achieve spiritual, ethical, moral, emotional, intellectual, artistic and physical development, through the transmission and cultivation of values, knowledge, and skills. It is based on respect and appreciation of human rights and individual freedoms, multicultural diversity, peace, and our national identity, enabling people to fully lead their lives, to live and participate in a responsible, tolerant, democratic and actively way in the community, to work and contribute for the country's development "(General Law of Education of Chile, paragraph 1°, article N°2, 2009, own translation)
Education is seen as a lifelong learning process which main aim is to develop the human being in all its scope. But what human being is it talking about? Who is this subject that the Chilean law is searching for? At this point, it is crucial to think over the idea that “Education is about the power to define oneself, to construct, validate, and legitimize knowledge and learn what is acceptable and not” (Dei & Simmons, 2010: XIV). As the quote says, education is about the power of being, of reproducing the self what undeniable occurs in relation with the Other. In this encounter, emerges what we are, but by differentiation; rises our identity. But there is not memory without narratives (Isla, 2012). Thereby, how could be possible “to define oneself” if there is no place to exercise distinct narratives, to recall our memory, “to define oneself? The omnipresence of a specific but universal subject, one that advocates for the development of Chile as a nation, opaque the dynamic of the encounter between the Other and the self and rather generates the subjection of the Other; there is no chance to produce and less legitimize alter knowledge, thus, diversity and multiculturalism is just a delusion.

The paradox comes from the fact that Chile is a nation state in which different cultures coexist with different histories or even with different interpretations to one particular historic phenomenon. In fact Chile, declaredly through the law, embraces values of diversity and multiculturalism which must be present in education, however, points out a common aim for everybody –the country´s development- and set the characteristics of this ideal of humanity that is searched through the education system and in which fall the values that conform national identity and materialize through citizenship.

One main guideline of the LGE is the Universal Human Rights Declaration which provides axiological foundation for the Chilean constitution and in consequence for the rest of norms emanating from it. In addition, the recent accessions to the Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and becoming an OECD member, have acted over the Chilean education system in order that values and principles persecuted through education in Chile, resonate with educational goals tendencies that are presented in a global scale.
“El sistema educativo chileno se construye sobre la base de los derechos garantizados en la Constitución, así como en los tratados internacionales ratificados por Chile y que se encuentren vigentes y, en especial, del derecho a la educación y a la libertad de enseñanza...” (Artículo N°3, Ley General de Educación, 2009)

“The Chilean educational system is built on the basis of the rights guaranteed in the Constitution and international treaties ratified by Chile that are in force and, in particular, the right to education and academic freedom...” (article No. 3, General Law of act, 200, own translation.)

The article N°3, besides the information already provided, declares a set of values that are the spine of the educational system in Chile, among which we find: (a) universalism and lifelong learning, (b) quality in education, (c) equity in education, (d) autonomy, (e) diversity, (f) responsibility, (g) participation, (h) flexibility, (i) transparency, (j) integration and (k) sustainability. This gives a veneer of the system being democratic, inclusive, and equitable; all principles that recall the neoliberal subject, the cosmopolitan individual as long as is being shaped a subject that must be flexible enough to successfully handle the continuous new challenges that present the new contexts that the individual in confront in a daily basis.

In this scenario, it is important to pay attention to what Apple says about curriculum’s content: “The curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, of someone’s selection, some group’s vision of legitimate knowledge” (Apple, 1993:1). In fact, as Apple warns, underlying the curriculum there are dynamics of power that determine the content that is learnt. Thus at this point it is interesting to look at how the curriculum is produced and who are in charge of that task; whose selective tradition is contained in the information promoted by the curriculum; and in relation to the aim of this work, what is the vision of human being and the values that informs the curriculum?

Looking at the values that support the educational system and connecting them with global tendencies, it is possible to observe the characteristics that are desirable in an individual which are flexibility, respect for the general consensus, ductility and cosmopolitanism, all of them characteristics that are demanded in the individual by the global economy. An individual that understands diversity from the perspective of the market, as a skill to manage and succeed in very dynamic and unstable economic and social scenario Here perfectly fits the social
Darwinist rationale that was applied by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) which points out that the responsibility of success falls in the individual, thus lessens the participation of the state and the structure of the system in any individual or communitarian failure.

In relation to the ideas deployed in the foregoing paragraph, Mitchell points that educational changes have taken place, in his words “[there have been] changes in the philosophy and practices in national education system[s] [that] have turned toward the development of the creation of a more individuated, mobile and highly tracked, skills-based education, or the creation of the ‘strategic cosmopolitan’” (Mitchell, 2003:387). Actually, taking a look at “Education at Glance 2012” (OECD report, 2012), it is possible to distinguish the structure that supports the principles and values that inform the education system and the curriculum in Chile and promotes an individual within the narrow conceptualization of a human being envisaged in the Chilean curriculum. The report centers its conclusions in the positive economic rewards that bring to have access to higher education, situation that reflects—for instance- in a lesser level or unemployment of people with higher educational degrees in relation to those without them during economic crisis (OECD, 2012). Following the same logic, the educational system in Chile has developed a set of programs which aim to bridge the productive needs of the country with the educative programs, thus, the curriculum has experienced transformation that is limited to the economic goals at the expense of other aspirations of holistic education. A change experienced lately in the curriculum is the adoption of labor competence oriented methodologies that seek to install since very early in school, skills that will train the individual to better serve the economic model.

Similarly values of quality and equity are defined in relation to competitiveness and efficiency which fit in the neoliberal economist model that prevails in Chile. At the level of the schooling system quality is quantitatively measured through national and international systems of assessment (e.g. PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS, and ICCS). In this regard, the meaning of success and excellence is determined by the OECD and the Western values that support ongoing processes of colonization. In fact, just a look at the recent studies conducted about Chile during its process of admission to the OECD, show as a main organism’s concern, for the performance of Chilean students in international systems of assessment (OECD, 2004, 2006, 2009, and
2010). This information is crucial for the OECD as long as the performance of students provides a picture of Chile in terms of potential economic growth and social development.

Concerning equity, the equation is not much different. Equity is thought in terms of access to quality i.e. equity in education is defined by the possibility to have access to schools which have an equal high technical capacity, thus, students are well trained for the national and international assessments regardless of their socio-cultural and economic background. It looks like there is a forgetfulness of the learning process in its qualitative dimension, which as a process of conformation of the human being implies an integral process which is not quantifiable (Rubilar, 2003b).

Similarly, autonomy, another principle that is declared in the LGE, is interpreted and reduced to the freedom to open schools in a market which is more and more competitive where the results of the national and international assessment play a role in the categorization of school in a national ranking which promotes segregation and marginalization. Nevertheless, the acknowledgment of diversity is just a tokenism that acts as a ticket for checking the list that is a requirement of the international agreements that Chile has subscribed and ratified. Thus, in the context of Chilean education what actually is happening as a practice is exactly what Mitchell warns when he says that “In the field of education, multiculturalism draws directly from this Dewey nationalist legacy. Multicultural education in liberal, Western societies is concerned with the creation of certain kind of individual, one who is tolerant of difference, but a difference framed within certain national parameters and controlled by the institutions of the state” (Mithell, 2003:392). Thus, there is a manifest contradiction between the humanist inspiration that is declared in the educational system through embracing the Universal Rights declaration and the market orientation of the policies that structure it.

One question that is crucial to this research is whose “selective tradition” is represented in the curriculum. In this regard it, is fundamental to look at how, according to the law, are established the participants of the organizational structure that operates the values and aims declared in the LGE.
Who Writes the Curriculum?

According to the law of education, the main instrument that delineates aims, axioms and the information contained in the curriculum is called bases curriculares (curricular basis). The formulation of this instrument is prerogative of the President of the Republic who delegates that task to the Ministry of Education.

“Corresponderá al Presidente de la República, mediante decreto supremo dictado a través del Ministerio de Educación, previa aprobación del Consejo Nacional de Educación, establecer las bases curriculares para la educación parvularia, básica y media. Éstas definirán, por ciclos o años, respectivamente, los objetivos de aprendizaje que permitan el logro de los objetivos generales para cada uno de los niveles establecidos en esta ley. Las bases curriculares aprobadas deberán publicarse íntegramente en el Diario Oficial” (TITULO II Artículo 31, Ley General de Educación, 2009)

“The President of the Republic has to establish the curriculum foundations for preschool, primary and secondary education, by means of a Supreme Decree issued through the Ministry of Education, with the approval of the National Education Council. The curriculum foundations will define the learning goals in relation to educational levels or years respectively, therefore, to enable the achievement of the general objectives for each of the levels established in this law. The curriculum foundations when approved must be in full published in the Official Journal of the Nation” (Title II Article 31, General Education Act, 2009, own translation)

According to the law, is the President of the Republic who ultimately is in charge of defining the kind of information that the students are exposed by means the curriculum. Although his proposal has to be approved by other governmental department (National Council of Education); that department is integrated by members who are designated by the President, therefore there is not absolute independence to refuse a President’s curriculum proposal.

This law was promulgated in September 2009, thus President Sebastián PiñeraEcheñique, was the first president of Chile who put it in practice. A little bit of his biography tells us that he is the first Rightist President elected after the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. President Sebastian Piñera, a successful entrepreneur, has overtly embraced and promoted the political and economic neoliberal system. The following paragraph shows an extract of the discourse that President Piñera performed to the United Nations Plenary, during
September 2011 in which manifests his conception of the main goal of education for the nation:

“..The emerging countries have to commit to building new pillars of development, and they are investing in science and technology, promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, the construction of more flexible society, with the capacity to adapt to a world where change is the only constant. But, above all, we have to make a huge effort to improve our human capital, the education of our youth, training of our workers, because that is certainly the main wealth and the main instrument to leave behind underdevelopment.

No doubt, the race for development and the fight for the future we must win in the classroom, giving quality education to each and every one of our children…”(President of the Republic of Chile, Sebastián Piñera. Gobierno de Chile, discursos, 2011. Own translation).

Examining the words of President Piñera, there is an overt and clear inclination toward ideas of national progress and economic development which must be achieved through education. Those ideas also reflect the main aims that are sought by the LGE. All ideas that are informed by a positivistic rationale that acts as model for the so-called “developed countries”. Those countries are referents for Chile in economic terms, but also in cultural, social and, therefore, human terms.

The words of President Piñera reflect the values that are embraced by the neoliberal and cosmopolitan subject. In this regard, it is important to notice that the LGE was designed and enacted during the socialist government of Michelle Bachelet (2006-2009); a government that represented the Leftist political side in Chile; a political Left, which was built with the aim of overthrowing the Pinochet’s dictatorship. Therefore, the question that logically follows is how it is possible that the law that rules education in Chile, which was designed and enacted during a socialist government, can be the main vehicle to install the neoliberal ideology in the Chilean society?

The answer is rather charged of historicity. As Isla (2012) warns, the construction of the nation since colonial times to nowadays has been in charge of the oligarchy. A selected group of people who inherited the power from the colony and which have reproduced it through the republican institutions that have since then been advocating for the modernization
of Chile. Thus, no matter who handles the political and economic power, it is always the logic of the modern state underlying the institutionalism in Chile.

Going back to the LGE, the government’s searching for quality and equity in education, consigned two new agencies that play an important role in this task: the “ConsejoNacional de Educación” (National Council of Education) and the “Agencia de Calidad de la Educación” (Agency for Quality in Education). The first is in charge of supervising compliance with the law, among its responsibilities are for instance, to approve or modify the curricular basis for all the schooling levels, to approve or modify recommendations for the curricular basis designed for specific population such as first nations, to serve as the only tribunal when there are disagreement between the Ministry of Education and particular study programs, to provide an opinion in relation to the national plan of assessment of the schooling system, the national educational quality standards, to advise the Minister of Education.

The National Council of education, as specifies the LGE, counts with ten members all of them related through their academic work to the field of education; recognized professionals and leaders in their work in education. The director of the National Council is designated by the president of the republic, however, some others positions which are also nominated by the president of the republic, are subjected to the approval of the national congress or educational authorities. What it is important to notice here is that none of the Nacional Council’s members are elected by the national community who definitively would have something to say; this is the case of parents, teachers, students, etc.

One important task of the National Council of Education is to approve the curricular basis for the schooling system which involves reviewing, approving or modifying educational goals, contents, and pedagogical methodologies. Thus, the council not just looks after the fulfillment of the LGE; it also, ultimately, decides what is learned in the Chilean classrooms. Looking at the composition of the council, there is a clear demonstration of the power and influence that the Chilean elite has in education, while the interest of marginalized and less economically endowed groups are fragrantly trampled upon with potential perverse
consequences. There is an absentia of democracy; teachers, parents, students, and the community in general are silenced by the state.

Along with the council of education, we find another agency which is crucial in Chilean educational structure; it is the “Agency of Quality”. According to the law, it is a state´s task to ensure the quality of education in all the educational level (“Ley Chile”, 2012). As a mechanism to achieve that goal, it was enacted during 2011; a specific law that created the system that ensures the quality of education at the preschool, elementary and the secondary level of schooling. In this context was born the “Agency of Quality” which is in charge of the design and implementation of the national system of assessment in education that evaluates the curriculum´s learning goal achievement (“Ley Chile”, 2012).

Both the agencies play an important role in terms of quality and equity in regard to the definition that the state of Chile assigns to these concepts. Quality has a quite wide meaning in this context, there is no one formal, unique and absolute meaning that can be attributed to quality. In fact, the National Education Council in intent to cover the doubts that the meaning of quality has in the educational field, has attributed to it a multifaceted character, acknowledging that it is a ductile conceptual construction which is contextual to any particular society and conception of human being (Valdebenito, 2011). What is clear is that Chile –true to its neoliberal modernizing project- follows the guidelines provided by the OECD, however, not even the OECD provides a complete definition for quality in education, but rather a complex of conditions that all together would aim to accomplish the purpose of education which is to shape the individual to contribute to social development and economic growth (OECD, 2012).

The OECD predicament considers quality of education when the following criteria are found: a) low percentage of schooling drop out, b) no grade repetition, c) student selection is delayed until secondary school, d) policies regulate schooling selection to avoid segregation, e) resources are distributed in relation to real needs, f) schooling direction is improved, g) teachers accomplish high standards in testing systems, h) there is a continuous feedback among school, parents and community, i) the curriculum considers pedagogical strategies centered in students (OECD, 2012). The conditions presented match with the paradigm of human capital which is linked to economic development where education is conceived as a service that serves
to achieve the human condition. This conception of quality is functional to the economy and the market, but what is more crucial here is that according to the documents prepared by the OECD, achieving all these conditions that ensure quality also ensures equity.

Equity and quality in education are related; having the same possibilities of accessing to quality of education no matter student’s socio, cultural or economic background is the meaning that equity acquires under the paradigm of education as a mean to shape human capital. This is a concept that has been well defined by the OECD which also guides the axiological definitions done by the Chilean educational system. For the OECD “Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, are not obstacles to achieving educational potential (fairness) and that all individuals reach at least a basic minimum level of skills (inclusion). In these education systems, the vast majority of students have the opportunity to attain high level skills, regardless of their own personal and socio-economic circumstances” (OECD, 2012). Under these conditions, it is produce the curriculum, following two principles: on the one hand aiming to answer the demands that international free market requires from human capital, and on the other hand searching the consolidation of a strong national identity that ensures loyalties to the modernizing project of Chile. As a result the logical question that rises after this analysis brings us to inquiry the extent of local input in the construction of the curriculum? Where are placed the local voices; the voices of the community in the making of the curriculum? An antecedent that can help us answer these questions is the national character of the curriculum. In Chile, as will be seen later in this chapter, the curriculum is a single instrument for the whole territory. This official instrument is designed in the central level of the government from where it is published and distributed to public and subsided schools. Thus are the experts, the national intelligentsia, who are given discursive power and authority to enact the official curriculum which deploys the memory and interests of the historical economical and political elite of Chile as a nation state. The voices of local authorities and the alternative interpretation of phenomena usually seen and presented from the hegemonic group’s perspective are silenced; the local historical constructions are absent within the official discourses.
In the following section, the curricular structure is described in terms of it organization, axiology, philosophy. Also are presented reflections around the conception of human being that is embraced by the Chilean education system which is also the conducting thread of the curriculum.
Chapter VI

Description and Analysis

A Standardized National Curriculum: The curricular bases

In Chile, the official schooling system, that -according to the law- has a compulsory status until secondary education, starts at the age of five yearsold and finishes almost at the end of adolescence, around the eighteen years old. This document has a national homogeneous character which continually recalls whiteness. In the curriculum that is articulated through the law Whiteness has an ex-nomination character. In fact, it is important to have this in mind and to read the following description and analysis understanding that the Chilean curriculum is inserted and is the product of a white rationality which is presented as the unquestionable and uncontestable norm, at least, for the official hegemonic groups. The fact that the curriculum is invested of a legal character relates us to a rationality that has operated within the white world and which has been a mechanism to install the white colonial project in colonized spaces. The curriculum has the force of the law which involves a certain naturalization of its existence, therefore the contents that are presented are assumed as real, trustable, as a token of truth.

Under the foregoing described logic the LGE act as another modernizing instrument that operates as a mechanism to perpetuate a white logic and sense of human being that categorize individuals and assign them positions within the social structure. This legal instrument structures the education system fixing the elementary education from first grade through six, where secondary education starts. Before the LGE, elementary school lasted until eighth grade, now these two grades which were transferred to the secondary school, are considered years of transition to the secondary level of school. The secondary education is presented in two modalities: a) Scientific humanistic education, and b) Technical education.

The scientific humanistic mode addresses education from an academic perspective, deepening disciplinary knowledge. This type of education is thought for those students who want to pursue higher education levels attending the university. The technical mode is mostly offered in school located in lower class neighborhoods where it is assumed that arriving to the
end of the schooling cycle; the students will incorporate to the labor force or will continue to study some short technical specializations. For both modalities there is a common curricular base that covers the challenges presented by the general learning aims, but a curriculum differentiation when it goes to the kind of modality that students will pursue.

In the schooling system in Chile, the curriculum is a national instrument which is valid for the whole country no matter the differences in terms of culture, geography, traditions, local history, economy, etc. The curriculum which is presented as the main tool to guide educational practices is the reflex of the hegemonic group in the Chilean society, and constitute a set of traditions, history and experiences which work as pillars to legitimize an official knowledge that represents just one side of the society and works towards developing a kind of individual who fits in the hegemonic system; a hegemonic systems that continually establishes link to the modern – white – neoliberal - world.

The legal framework, establishes that the national curriculum is an instrument that responds to the guidelines provided for the curricular bases which are, according to the educational reform and the new law of the education, the navigation chart of the schooling system in Chile. The LGE (2009) established the curricular bases as the main instruments that inform the schooling system in curricular and methodological aspects, they have the missions of offering common cultural basis for the whole country (Ministry of Education of Chile, 2012). This task, is presented as a tandem of administrative rules and learning objectives that follow the Piaget’s and Bloom’s rationales of learning in relation to the age of the students, provide them with a common schooling experience; a common cultural background is assumed, and an idea of social cohesion and integration is promoted.

The curricular bases put into practice a tandem of general learning aims which are classified in two differentiated but interconnected areas: cognitive and axiological. These two main curricular elements are defined by the LGE as: a) Learning Objectives (LO) which corresponds to the information that the curriculum provides along with the learning goals and methodological practices, and the b) Transversal Learning Objectives (TLO) which corresponds to the values that will shape the Chilean subject. In the following paragraphs there
will be addressed the TLO and the LO as a preamble that will help us to understand how, through the curriculum, are settled the bases and promoted a certain type of individual who is functional for the national project of modernization.

**Transversal Learning Objectives for Elementary School: The axiology that Supports the Curriculum**

According to the definition provided by the Ministry of Education, the TLO are those objectives that originated in the LGE, search to contribute to student’s personal development and to achieve a moral and social behavior in accordance to the national values (Chilean Ministry of education, 2012). The TLO have their origin in the former Fundamental Transversal goals which can be defined as “objectives which have a comprehensive and general character, their achievement is based on the formative work that has the whole curriculum, or a group of subject matters or even through one particular curriculum sector or a specific subject matter” (Magendzo, 1998:197, own translation). The former transversal goals, as is declared by the Ministry of Education of Chile, where maintained and correspond in their totality to the new TLO.

The TLO and their former -fundamental transversal goals- have their origin in the international educational trends, specifically, in the reforms done in England and Wales at the end of the 80’s and in Spain, in the first half of the 90’s. The English educational reform directly influenced the education system in Chile. The English reform defined the so-called “cross curriculum elements” a set of values, attitudes and abilities to be developed by the students that inform the curricular English orientations. These “cross curriculum elements” were adopted for the Ministry of Education of Chile and now are part of the curricular orientations in Chile. Among the “cross curriculum elements” were considered a) the transversal dimensions which involve all the actions that propitiate equal opportunities, b) transversal abilities which involve the communicative skills, quantification skills, social and personal problem-solving skills, and technological skills, and finally c) cross-cutting themes which search for an economic and industrial understanding, to acquire a sense of the meaning of working skills, vocational orientation, health and sexual education and citizenship.
(Magendzo, 1998). Nowadays, in Chile, these elements represent the rationale that informs the formulation of learning goals within the schooling system and also the post secondary technical education. This situation lead us to look at the new reforms done in the educational system in Chile as another new settler project appendix.

Magendzo, a theorist of education in Human Rights, talking about the character of transversality in education, recognizes in this approach a search for improving quality in education, he sees in values that are transversal to the whole schooling system a new way to interpret reality and experience social relations from a more holistic perspective, thus, transversality in education looks to overcome the current disciplinary fragmentation, to contribute to develop certain axioms, attitudes, feelings, certain ways of knowing the world and to conceive social relations in a specific context (Magendzo, 2003). Seen from a transversal approach, what it is searched is to influence individuals in their cognition, attitude and performing in order to confront the historical, social and cultural challenges that their society presents (Ibid. 2003). Taking these points in consideration, the TLO are learning objectives that search to develop a sense of reality in students, a moral and ethic consciousness that leads their behavior and provides them with a frame from where to relate with the world in which they are inserted.

In the case of Chile, the transversal approach and the learning goals that were defined for the curriculum are part of a process of social convergence which installed these goals not just in the school but also in the different policies promoted by the state. Transversality is a concept that is used in several areas of institutionalism wherein certain attitudes, abilities and awareness are present in the public policies; however, this notion has acquired saliency in the field of education. In Chile, the transversal goals came out of the educational reform that took place during 1996. For Magendzo (2003), who directly participated in the formulation of the educational reform, the fundamental transversal goals are the result of a participative process that implied a consensus of knowledge, interests, and intentions among different social participants. According to his narrative, the process was not exempt from tensions, contradictory interests and positions. Not downplaying Magendzo’s words, the term “participation” is quite arguable as long as the process was carried out inside the educational...
field by professionals, faculties and representatives of government authorities, but in which was not direct participation of the national community and teachers’, students’ or parents’ organizations. Therefore, as always, was the elite, the Chilean intelligentsia, who were in charge of taking major decisions in the field of education. That was the context in which were born the former Fundamental Transversal Goals which are the current the TLO.

The TLO have a wide and general character, they are thought for each level of schooling in Chile. The definition and distribution of TLO to each level responds to the logic that relates age with ability to develop more complex mental operations. The TLO are educational goals that do not relate with specific subject matters, those should be present in the student’s whole experience with school, within and outside the classrooms, the idea is that students become part of the socially interwoven community which hypothetically is mirrored by schools as social organizations. In the following paragraphs there will be examined the TLO that correspond to the elementary school and which constitute a main part of the focus of this study.

**Transversal Learning Objectives in Elementary School**

According to the Ministry of Education of Chile (2012), elementary school is oriented to develop in younger students positive attitudes towards their bodies, emotions, knowledge, ethics and morals. The elementary school through the curriculum and the “Learning Objectives” (LO), tries to develop these attitudes in accordance with the law and with the recommendations provided by the “Council for Educational Modernization” of Chile. There are two areas that the TLO are related with, which are: a) the individual and the society, and b) the relation between the individual and knowledge and culture.

“La educación básica es el nivel educacional que se orienta hacia la formación integral de los alumnos, en sus dimensiones física, afectiva, cognitiva, social, cultural, moral y espiritual, desarrollando sus capacidades de acuerdo a los conocimientos, habilidades y actitudes definidos en las baxes”

“Elementary education is the educational level that is geared towards the integral formation of the students in their physical, emotional, cognitive, social, cultural, moral and spiritual dimensions. It searches to develop capabilities according to knowledge, skills and attitudes defined in the curricular basis which are determined in accordance with
The Ministry of Education (2012) has determined the TLO for the years of elementary school as follows: a) growth and personal affirmation, b) thinking development, c) development of ethics, d) the individual and the environment, e) Information and communication technologies. These are the areas which define abilities in axiological and cognitive terms that must be achieved during the primary years of students’ experience in school.

The so-called area of “growth and personal affirmation” involve the development of personal care, knowledge of oneself and human finitude, knowledge and reflection on religion, self esteem, and the interest for knowing reality. The area of “thinking development” searches to develop and install cognitive abilities that are useful for different areas of life such as social life and civic participation, research abilities, problem solution, communication, analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and working capacities.

The next two areas are the “development of ethics” focuses on developing skills to self control, autonomy and ethical consciousness that searches for justice, freedom, autonomy, individuality and uniqueness, truth, beauty, common welfare, and respect for the Other. The fourth TLO is called “The Individual and the Environment” which tries to install abilities that promote the life in harmony with people who surround the student and with which the student experiences daily life, i.e. appreciate to live being part of a society which is democratic by definition, therefore, to build abilities to exert rights and obligations, as well as to appreciate work as an important component of one’s life and also for society, mutual respect, community participation and civic life. It is of special importance to appreciate family and marriage as a social institution for the development of the Chilean society and also to understand the rigor of work as a means to achieve personal satisfaction and purpose in life while being flexible to adapt to new life situations and to accept criticism. Important is to be innovative and entrepreneur, a person who takes risks, to develop personal initiatives. As well this area of the
TLO searches to create feelings of belonging with the Chilean nation through the appreciation of national history, symbols, territory, culture, language all of this within a context of increasing globalization. Also are mentioned the importance of establishing a harmonic relation with nature and in the same logic between genders.

The last area of TLO for elementary education searches to develop skills that are related with Information and Communication Technologies. In this specific scope, the main idea is to be able to manage the technology to communicate and to be continuously updated with national and global events in all areas of science and society as well as being able to use technology in order to organize and communicate ideas.

The main goals of the TLO are to install -in children- those values that describe a good person in the Chilean and global society. It will consider the development of feelings of respect towards moral precepts, spiritual (or religious) beliefs and the individual, and to have a positive self image, to respect each other, to be responsible, healthy, and so on.

Education is never a neutral undertake, it is a power saturated hegemonic process. This statement is overtly manifested through the information that has been provided in the foregoing paragraphs. Through a set of values, presented as educative goals, is described the white world in its white ethics, morals, spiritual and aesthetic values. The educational system in Chile aims to install whiteness and its privilege as the only way to experience life and in this task the schooling system is a key dispositive for the nation-state to enhance the naturalization of the neo-global-white-world.

By means the TLO is promoted awestern-scientific-White-rationalism that puts reason and intelligence at the center of the relations of knowledge production. It is the white norm of rationality by means the world is known and tamed which is disseminated; the scientific method appears as the only way to know the true world. This conception that has emerged as part of the modernist paradigm of humanity marries with sciences to find the logic that justifies its global character. In this regard, Kincheloe says that “rationalistic modernist Whiteness is shaped and confirmed by its close association with science. As a scientific construct, Whiteness privileges mind over body; intellectual over experiential ways of knowing; and
mental abstraction over passion, bodily sensations, and tactile understanding” (1998:5). As seen the TLO, specially the two first of them, focus in the development of attitudes towards knowledge, but is not any sort of knowledge, it is the rationalistic knowledge that contemplates analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and so on, which corresponds to the positivistic/modern/Cartesian scientific method. This rationality that was born in the XVI century, which also accompanied the colonizing enterprise “emerged as the conceptual base around which civilization and savagery could be delineated (Alcoff, 1995; Giroux, 1992; Keating, 1995; in Kincheloe et.al. 1998:5) and that constitutes part of the foundational “overrepresentation of Whiteman” as the only way of being human.

There is not any allusion to knowledge construction outside of the rationalistic paradigm, there is not mention to others kind of knowledge that are part, for instance, of the daily life of people who lives in Chile, specifically, indigenous knowledge is silenced and eroded as illegitimate knowledge which re-calls superstition, folklore and savagery while is highlighted the rational paradigm that manifests –using Foucault´s terminology- “the disciplinary power” that is embedded in the curriculum. It is sought to create a common sense that attributes to white rationality -from an early age- a sensation of natural presence while devalues everything else that does not fit within the White paradigm.

Thompson in relation to white supremacy says that “symbolic White privilege includes conceptions of beauty or intelligence that not only tied to whiteness but that implicitly exclude blackness or brownness” (Thompson, 2001:para.1). Following the foregoing lines and looking at the TLO, is found a relation between ethics and aesthetics that is portrayed in the curricular axiological aims which relates, again, to the white world and excluded and devalued what does not belong to it. In fact the areas of “Development of Ethics” “growth and personal affirmation” “The Individual and the Environment” intertwine providing a notion of being and of the ought, i.e. those axioms provide the characteristics of the ideal human being that the educational systems searches to shape for the Chilean society which involves a way of performing, behaving and feeling. These TLO looks to install and promote behaviors of autonomy, cleaning and hygiene, self-control, self-care, enhance family life in its heteronormative version, all own values of the White world, but which devalue other type of
behaviors that move away from the norm. In this regards Kincheloe describe Whiteness as “representing orderliness, rationality, and self control, non whiteness [indicates] chaos, irrationality, violence, and breakdown of self regulation” (1998:5) therefore these are the values that, according to the educational system, urge to achieve in order to contribute to build in Chile a civilized society.

Special interest has the value of self-control, a kind of self-governing a concept developed by Gramsci (1971)

The foregoing discussion indicates that self-adscription done by individuals to the hegemonic project decreases the instances of domination via coercion. In this case self-governing involves to participate by the own will of the hegemonic project of Chilean modernization, consciously or unconsciously as a result of the exertion of dominating forces through the institutionalism.

Whiteness has an ex-nomination character in the Chilean curriculum, i.e. it is the reality in which curriculum is inserted and which is promoted and perpetuated through it. Whiteness is not seen or named; it constitutes the indisputable norm; the true way of being what provides a sense of natural order that is not seen but through which reality is perceived and experienced. For Dyer “There is no more powerful position than that of being ‘just’ human. The claim to power is the claim to speak for the commonality of humanity” (1997:2 in Stalling, 2005:210). The curricular TLO claim to be inspired in the declaration of Universal Human Rights and individual freedoms, both principles traditionally considered as fundamental to live in a democratic society and which have an “unarguable” universal character. It is again the White world and its hegemonic interpretation of reality and morals fashioning the ideal notion of human being of the Chilean society. We must remember that the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights is a constituting part of the Chilean constitution from where emerge the LGE, therefore, it is the power of the law, the main instrument that, historically, has been used to subjugate and dominate the non-white world what provides that sense of naturalization of which Whiteness is invested, that is not questionable and has that universal character.
Part of the TLO promoted through “The Individual and the Environment” area, are abilities and ethics towards living in society, work, and the individual as an important agent for the development of the nation. In this regard, students are encouraged to become hard working or -as it is indicated in the curricular bases- towards rigor as means to achieve personal satisfaction and life obsessions, they are motivated to contribute to attain a quality of life through a productive process in which one can be involved. It is promoted to be innovative, to be proactive, to take risks, to become an entrepreneur.

There is tacitly a Christian protestant ethics towards work present in the abilities and attitudes that are being instilled in students. These are values which are central to whiteness which also are considered as some of its highest cultural values (Thompson, 2001). Weber (2001) in his famous “The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism” established a relation between the ethics of Protestantism and the form that capitalism acquires in modern society in terms of production where the individual finds his self-realization through work as a means of glorifying God. In this regard, looking at the TLO based is the logic of the private property and accumulation in individual terms which is promoted through the TLO. Giddens, re-calling Weber’s work, ponders that “Capitalism, thus defined in the shape of mercantile operations, for instance, has existed in various forms of society: in Babylon ancient Egypt, China, India, and medieval Europe. But only in the West, and in relatively recent times, has capitalistic activity become associated with the rational organization of formally free work, by ‘rational organization’ of labour here Weber means its routinized, calculated administration within continuously functioning enterprise” (Giddens, 2001:x, xi). For that organization, calculated administration and functioning enterprise to happen it is fundamental to have labor force willing to be the punished component of the accumulative rationale that grounds capitalism.

Chile is probably the most neoliberal country all over the world where people’s rights are coerced by the free market operation. How it is possible to happen that people have handled the system miseries for more than forty years since it was installed by the Pinochet’s dictatorship? The answer looks to relate to the whiteness privilege that is promised and promoted through the state, the media, and has a special position in the schooling system and its official curriculum. People are led to think that embracing values of the White “first” world
will pave the path to have access to whiteness as a position of privilege. Here we encounter one of the reasons that the value of quality and specifically quality in education is so important for the Chilean government. In order to be globally competitive, to be closer in the waiting list for white privilege is fundamental to provide the global market with “human capital” that is at the height of the white-global-modern-world.

Kincheloe says “Once all the nations on earth are drawn into the market economy, then all land can be subdivided into real estate, all human beings’ worth can be calculated monetarily, values of abstract individualism and financial success can be embraced by every community in every country, and education can be formulated around the cultivation of human capital” (1998:7) it exactly portrays the direction that education has acquired in Chile during the last three decades, being the production of human capital that responds to the market the main aim of schooling and education in general.

Jones (2007) analyzes the culture of excellence showing how this invention was part of the response that was formulated by the hegemonic group to confront the economic crisis lived during the sixties. Thus, the result was the decrease of welfare while increasing individual responsibility diminishing the state obligation and promoting free market. Jones points out how the culture of excellence and enterprising and its characteristics such us “individual improvement, willingness to take risk, to ‘stand on your own feet, to innovate, to take the initiative, to compete and to challenge convention. These individualistic and profit driven qualities are then promoted as generally achievable human virtues” (Jones, 2007:60). What it is interesting to see is how these values that are central to the global-white-economic-cultural project, are crucial and cross over the whole educational system, therefore, manifest with grandiloquence in the curriculum.

The project of globalization that is addressed by means the curriculum is twofold: first, involves values of the white society and, second, enhances feelings of national identity. The first, besides what has already been exposed and analyzed, involves the access and use of CIT as one of the main instruments that permits people to connect with the local, national and international community, to be member of the “global village”. On the other side, the second
aspect relates with those dispositive that acts promoting the adscription to the hegemonic project of the nation. Those TLO, aims to connect the student with the history, traditions, symbols, and territory of Chile. What is important to query here and what is the topic for the next section is what tradition is portrayed as the Chilean history, symbols, margins, etc. Finally, very quickly and briefly are alluded the relations of the person with the natural environment and gender relations.

**Learning Objectives: The Cognitive Component of the Curriculum**

Methodologically, the curricular bases collect past experiences and incorporate disciplinary innovations as well as new pedagogical and curriculum tendencies (Ministry of Education of Chile, 2012) within this framework are defined the Learning Objectives (LO) which consider the cognitive abilities and attitudes that students must develop in school and that are measurable through specific attitudes and competencies. The cognitive domain searches for students to have access to knowledge at different levels and areas; in fact, the curriculum is structured in relation with the main areas of sciences such as: Physics, Natural sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities. Those disciplinary areas, which respond to a Western knowledge organization logic, are actualized through the subject matters of mathematics, natural sciences, English as second language, arts and technology, physical education and health, history, geography and social sciences, and orientation.

The LO, relate abilities, knowledge and attitudes in a way that can be clearly measured. There is an operationalization of the LO in order to thoroughly define what are the attitudes that should be achieved by the students. This operationalization, according to the Ministry of Education, helps to define the pedagogical actions that must be done in order to pursue the desired abilities. Looking at the structure of the curriculum, in Chile, it is a faithful copy of Eurocentric traditional curricula which are spread in most of the Western countries. There is certain hierarchy in terms of subjects being on top -those that are more likely to develop the intellect- and in a lower position, those that develop more manual abilities. An important aim of the curriculum is to reach the fundamental three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic) due to the link that is established between the development of literacy, communicative and calculation
competences and the acquisition of basic labor competencies that are of total need to be part of the work force. All these elements are crucial for the formulation of the LO.

**General Reflections**

The curriculum in Chile is a hybrid discursive construction, to define, for instance, what is the character, the foundational philosophy and the educational philosophy as well as the approach that support the curriculum turns complicated and confusing, even sometimes contradictory. Looking at the description already presented, can be said that this formal document has a prescriptive character as long as it provides a normative sequence of goals, content and activities which go deepening while the students progress in years of age and experience within the schooling system, all of them promoted and organized through curricular programs which, even though, have a degree of freedom, must mirror the LO and TLO declared in the curricular bases.

There is not a unique approach that defines curriculum in Chile, thus, it has a **behavioral** approach due to its prescriptive character and the relations that this approach has with the standard base movement. In addition, the curriculum also has characteristic that fit within the academic or also known as academic rationalism approach which center reason and intellectual development as the main purpose of curriculum. However, these are not the only two approaches that can be related to the Chilean curriculum; it also has, in methodological terms, certain closeness with the humanistic approach as a result of its “child centered activities”, a tendency that has been promoted by the OECD globally. Also in this line, the Chilean schooling curriculum, can be classified as one that pursues social efficiency, as long as seeks to equip students with skills that will allow them to respond to the economy’s needs.

The overlapping of approaches that have been described, is a situation that is the result of seeing school and education in general as a process that shapes individual to fit in the economic model. According to recent literature, for example, “Academic rationalism, social efficiency, humanism, and social reconstructionism are the orientations which overlap and are part of the curriculum policy debates over the purposes of schooling and curriculum content”
(Deng and Lucke, 2008:70). In philosophical terms, the Chilean curriculum is also the conjunction of different philosophical streams.

From idealism and realism, the curriculum in Chile, collects the centrality of reason and the hierarchical disciplinary order presented in the curriculum. When philosophy goes to the educational realm, coincidently, the curriculum in Chile looks like predominantly responding to a perennialist educational philosophy where there is a hierarchical order of subject matters that privileges the abstracts disciplines, which stress meritocracy, emphasizes testing students and enforces academic standards (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004). The perennialist features are presented by those cherished values in the curriculum which mostly embrace the idea of a constant human nature based in the ability to think and to understand the universal and permanent truths that make society’s reproduction (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2004).

From an essentialist educational philosophy, curriculum adopts the idea of certain common corpus of knowledge that must be transmitted to the new generations, this is the case, for instance, of the subject matter of History, Geography and Humanities in which is contained the memory of the nation. Besides, from the essentialist approach the Chilean curriculum takes the emphasis on the three Rs and the incorporation of some technical subject matters, as well as the devotion for the so called “excellence” in education. The only idea of having a national curriculum which is related with a national system of assessment and standards, bring the Chilean curriculum closer to essentialism. At the same time, the idea of equity through a common curriculum regardless of culture, abilities and different interests is an essential perspective.

Nonetheless, the curriculum in Chile is the expression of the international trends which have marked the educational field during the last century. Nowadays, the doctrine of free market which imposes the direction in which education goes has a vital role. As Kincheloe says “Traditional colonialism was grounded on the deviation of those colonized from the norm of rationality; thus colonization became a rational response to inequality. In the twenty century, this white norm of rationality was extended to the economic sphere, with the philosophy of the free market and exchange values being considered signifiers of civilization”(1998:7). Thus, the
mission of school is to civilize, to prepare human capital to be part of the civilized world, this is the backdrop of the reforms which have been done lately in Chile. However, to accomplish the modernization that demands the global-white-world without the over use of coercion, the will of common people must be conquered, then the narrative promoted in the curriculum must resemble the white world.

In the following paragraphs, will be described and analyzed the content of the subject of History, Geography and Social Science that is designed for the elementary level of school. The importance of this subject matter relies on the role that this subject matter has in the task of building the national memory and identity.

**History, Geography and Social Sciences in the Chilean Curriculum: Description and Analysis**

This section presents a description of the subject matter of HGSS at the elementary level of school and an analysis of the curricular content. The information contained in the curricular documents –presented as a set of cognitive learning goals- is exposed and analyzed considering the categories described in the framework such as *hegemony, national identity, selective tradition and man’s overrepresentation*.

According to the curricular bases, the subject matter of HGSS has an important position within the curriculum. For definition this subject matter “aims to lead students to understand the society in which they live and ascertain their role within it” (Ministry of Education, 2012, para.1, own translation) The disciplines that converge in the subject matter (history, geography, demography, sociology, anthropology and social sciences in general) are incorporated with the goal of introducing students in the “study of the human beings as individuals but also as members of society” (Ibid, 2012, para. 1, own translation).

Within the elementary education, the subject matter of HGSS, declares the Ministry of Education, mainly seeks that students develop an identification and sense of belonging towards the nation. First, students with the help of other subject matters will be able to recognize themselves as individuals but also as part of a community that is at the same time a component of a bigger social construction, the Chilean Nation. In order to achieve this goal, in the
curricular basis, there are three declared cognitive emphasis that must be considered in the construction of curricular programs:

a) Environmental emphasis: the curriculum must connect students with all the social structures that surround them, in which they also participate as members, i.e. family, friends, school, neighborhood community, city, etc. Also, this emphasis considers the institutions, traditions, norms and values that characterize and contribute to the cohesion of society.

b) Development of historical thinking: this component seeks that students are able to provide a temporal dimension to society and experiences with which they are related. It is desired that students understand the dynamic relation between past-present-future and visualize the concept of humanity as something that they belong to but that goes beyond them. Also, it is intended that students understand that the meaning of humanity and human being has gone through transformations in different moments of history. In this sense, students are also exposed to other cultural and social systems which temporarily coexist with the main stream society, or were present during some past times of Chilean and Western history.

c) Appreciation and application of social sciences methods: in order to develop critical thinking, intellectual diligence, relational and argumentative capacity, creativity and imagination, students are exposed to social sciences´ research methodologies.

d) Overview of Chilean history: by means the curriculum, it is intended to build, among students, a feeling of belonging to the Chilean society. This emphasis is fundamental as long as seeks to familiarize, from an early age, the students with the social structure in which they will participate. It is promoted to know the past and the elements which conform to the national identity which is defined as mutable, and that acquires different nuances depending on regional particularities. The curriculum proposes that students know the past of their nation and relate it with the current Chilean society. Therefore, it is compulsory to be aware of the main events, processes, institutions, and people who
constitute the “collective memory of the nation”. It is also required, to distinguish the historical and institutional elements that continue or that have changed in order to identify which of them are parts of the current institutionalism.

e) Conformation of geographical thinking: in order to provide an idea of spatial closeness and remoteness, it is a key activity to expose students to geographical thinking that will allow them to a) identify and comprehend the physical space in personal and cartographic terms, b) recognize the relations that human beings establish with the territory and the role that territory has in the socio-cultural organization, and c) to know and analyze the Chilean territory and the provincial landscape variations. The conceptualizations and general geographical knowledge gradually acquire more complexity until it attains the ability to characterize the territory incorporating the physical and the human element that acts to modify it. Also it is sought that students understand economic and environmental conceptualizations.

f) Development of citizenship skills: this emphasis, searches to install and develop in students the notions of citizenship, state, rights, democracy, participation and civil responsibilities. This contributes in formatting students as citizens with rights and responsibilities, the citizens who are honest in solidarity and empathic in nature.

g) Respect and appreciation of human diversity: this emphasis seeks to contribute to create consciousness and acknowledgment of human and cultural diversity present in the current world. This also aims to achieve a “more inclusive” society, less discriminative and where socioeconomic differences do not constitute a reason to discriminate or to have parity of opportunities for success.

According to the curricular bases, the subject matter of HGSS considers four different groups of abilities which are: a) Temporal and spatial thinking which looks for students to be able to use maps and other geographical resources, and understand that any phenomena happen in a determined space; b) Analysis and work with different sources of information with the aim
of introducing students to the study of human beings and their activities; c) Critical thinking which searches that students be aware that knowledge in social sciences has a interpretative character; and d) Communicative abilities which are central to the learning process; it means students are able to express and communicate ideas in a clear way through different channels of communication.

In curricular terms, the Ministry of Education designates three axes that ground the subject matter of HGSS. These three axes organize the learning objectives of HGSS and History, Geography and citizenship. Around these three axes are organized and presented the learning aims to the students.

History, seeks to raise interest and enthusiasm for the study of history as a way of deepening the knowledge and reflection about the human beings; it also encourages students to develop historical thinking that allows them to cope critically and responsibly in society. The contents are presented gradually. During the early years of elementary school are addressed the concepts and basic skills of chronological thought; it is also sought that students develop an individual self-consciousness, personal identity, sense of belonging to the family, local communities and the nation. The importance of knowing and appreciating their own culture is highlighted in its various manifestations. The symbolic representations and the contribution that different people have made to society throughout the history of Chile is given due attention.

In second grade, students are familiarized with the cultural diversity of Chilean society; information is provided about the indigenous peoples who inhabited the so-called “Chilean territory” during the pre-Columbian period. It emphasizes the recognition of their legacy in terms of cultural heritage and their presence today in Chile. Finally, are observed the contributions made by immigrants over time and the impact they have had over the Chilean society. During third grade, students turn toward the origin of Western culture, the study of societies such as Ancient Greek and Roman. While teaching regarding these civilizations, major focus remains on everyday life, the goal is that students acknowledge the socio/cultural legacy of the classical world in the Chilean current life. In the fourth grade, begins a
chronological study of history. It is intended that students gradually become aware of the multiple historical processes and their temporary nature. At this level, are also addressed the great American civilizations, their characteristics, their legacy and presence today.

During fifth grade, students are exposed to the process of “discovery and conquest” of America, Chile, and the colonial periods, as historical moments. In sixth grade, the elementary school culminates in the study of the republican history of Chile. All the knowledge addressed during these years is applied following methodological criteria that considers as a parameter the age and maturity of the students, therefore, it is not intended to be an exhaustive and detailed study of all what has been described, however, it is sought to build some basic concepts from the development of certain thematic focus of interest.

Geography, seeks that students: a) explore the diversity and multiplicity of cultures and landscapes; b) that recognize the relationship between humans and their environment as a process of adaptation and transformation; and c) that students understand that social life occurs in a territory, i.e. in a physical space. During first grade, students should begin to recognize and use geographical and cartographic tools. In second grade, students begin to work with the concept of landscape applied to the Chilean territory; also the concepts of location and territory are applied to the pre-Columbian peoples who inhabit in Chile and the relationship of these people with their geographic settlement.

During third grade, students address the relationship between landscape and the way a culture adapts and transforms. There are used examples from the Earth’s climatic zones that show the influence of geographical factors in the development of important Western civilizations. In fourth grade, Geography focuses on various aspects of the American continent such as landscapes, resources, physical characteristics and population. In fifth and sixth grade, the focus is on the geography of Chile. At these levels, Geography again interacts with basic concepts and principles of Economics, for example, how the work adds value to natural resources.

The third axis is education for citizenship, in this regard it is intended to help students to acquire knowledge and develop fundamental skills and attitudes to participate actively and
responsibly in a democratic society. Regarding the thematic sequence, from levels one through six the focus is to articulate the complexity of values and knowledge that participate in the condition of citizenship. It promotes advances in knowledge and appreciation of public and private institutions, from those that participate in students’ everyday life through those that constitute processes involved in political life in democracy, for instance agencies of government, the constitution and main organic laws and mechanisms of participations, etc.

**Contents and Abilities**

In the following paragraphs are described the units of knowledge of elementary curriculum in the area of HGSS. These unites of knowledge, are grouped in relation to the axis history, geography, and citizenship.

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<td>- Family’s characteristics and history.</td>
<td>- National symbols, national, commemorations. Local and national cultural expressions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Family and community member’s type of work</td>
<td>- Examples of men and women who have contributed to Chilean society.</td>
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<td>- Importance of paid and unpaid labor.</td>
<td>- Examples of how other children live in different countries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Role of institutions present in students’ community.</td>
<td>- Relationship between geographical features of areas inhabited by indigenous peoples in Chile and their lifestyles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Importance of respect for rules within the family, at school and in the community.</td>
<td>- Elements of continuity and change between the lifestyles and cultural expressions of indigenous peoples in Chile comparing current times with pre- Columbian native peoples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Maps, planes and symbols used to represent objects.</td>
<td>- Attitudes and actions that reflect respect for others, tolerance and empathy.</td>
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<td>- Contributions and influence of native peoples and...</td>
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mountain range, coast, desert, valley, coast, volcano, archipelago, island, lake, town and village).
- Actions that care and respect public spaces.
- Mutual care, self-care, conduct a good living and care for the environment.
- Transportation, mass media, and the market.
- Styles of life of indigenous peoples of Chile.
- Geographic location of the indigenous peoples of Chile.

Spanish people to Chilean society.
- Influence and contributions of immigrants from various nations to Chilean society.
- Attitudes and actions that reflect respect, tolerance and empathy.
- Cultural heritage of Chile and provinces.
- Natural heritage of Chile and provinces.
- Actions that promote the care and respect of the public spaces inside and outside the school.
- Services and people who work for the benefit of the community.
- Care and protection of cultural heritage.

Third Grade
- Spatial location, use of reference lines and Cardinal points.
- Use of maps and Earth globe.
- Climate zones of the earth and landscapes diversity.
- Human environmental capacity of adaptability.
- Duties and responsibilities for coexistence in the classroom and team work.
- The landscape and environment during the Greek civilization.
- Geographic factors that influenced the development of ancient Greek civilization.
- Daily life of the ancient Greek civilization.
- The legacy of Greek civilization for current societies and cultures.

- The landscapes and geographical environment during the Roman civilization.
- Geographic factors that influenced the development of Roman civilization.
- Daily life of the ancient Roman civilization.
- Legacy of Roman civilization in current societies and cultures.
- Students’ duties and everyday life responsibilities.
- Rights of children: healthy growth, development and education, ways that society guarantees fundamental rights.
- Values and civic virtues such as tolerance, respect for others and empathy.
- Public and private services and institutions.
- Responsible and active participation at home and at school.

Fourth Grade
- Natural resources: distinction between renewable and non-renewable, limited character, necessary care and preservation, utilization of resources in everyday objects.
- Landscapes of America: climate, rivers, population, languages, countries, cities, ways of adaptation and transformation of the environment.
- Natural resources of America: location and distribution, sustainable development.
- The Maya civilization: geography, political organization and social, economic, cultural forms, daily life, customs, astronomy, the writing systems, wars and human sacrifices, rituals and religion.

- Manifestations of the cultural legacy of the Mayan and Aztec civilizations today: Mexican and Central American societies, cuisine, language.
- Fundamental aspects of the Inca civilization: geography, political organization, roads and postal system, religion and rituals, technological advances, organization society, roles and occupations of men and women, culture and food forms, constructions, customs and daily life.
- Inca cultural legacy in current social and cultural life.
- Comparison of the main characteristics of the Mayan, Aztec and Inca civilizations.
- Democratic political organization of Chile.
- Children’s rights and forms of exercise and respect.
- Forms of participation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fifth Grade</th>
<th>Sixth Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The Aztec civilization: geography, political organization and social, economic, Tenochtitlan, shapes culture, daily life, customs, wars, religious, technological advances.</td>
<td>- The Constitution, the fundamental law of the state that sets the political organization, government functions, rights and duties of individuals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Strategies that allow everyday conflict resolution.</td>
<td>- Cultural aspects of the nineteenth century: progress in education and founding institutions; contribution of intellectual and domestic and foreign scientists, first women to earn degrees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Physical and human features that characterize Chile's natural areas and landscapes: location, climate (temperature and rainfall), topography, hydrography, population and resources natural.</td>
<td>- The exploitation of Nitrate: economic expansion, nitrate economy, investments in infrastructure, towns and migration growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Main natural resources renewable and nonrenewable Chile and its distribution in the country.</td>
<td>- Social inequalities during the nitrate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- plotted on maps, the difference between renewable and non-renewable resources, and the importance.</td>
<td>- Civic attitudes in everyday life actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Sustainable development.</td>
<td>- Participation in a democratic society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Work and ideas as value added to natural resources.</td>
<td>- Design and participation in a project to address community issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Natural risks that affects Chilean provinces; actions to protect the local community from natural disasters.</td>
<td>- How to organize to pursue a common theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The voyage of discovery of Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan; objectives, routes traveled, technological advances, difficulties and challenges, and the general European context.</td>
<td>- The conquest of America and Chile; expeditions and war, the foundation of cities and the emergence of a new society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The conquest of America and Chile; expeditions and war, the foundation of cities and the emergence of a new society.</td>
<td>- Relationships between Spanish and Mapuche peoples: encomienda, slavery, war of Arauco, life in the border, Mapuche peoples' resistance, evangelization, indigenous parliaments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Political organization of the Colony in America and Chile: political dependence on the metropolis and operation of the main political institutions.</td>
<td>- The colonial economy: trade monopoly, indigenous exploitation, economic activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The colonial society and culture: mestizaje, ethnicity and social hierarchy, influence of the Catholic Church, slavery, family and everyday life.</td>
<td>- The colonial heritage elements currently in place: art, customs, traditions, buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relationships between Spanish and Mapuche peoples: encomienda, slavery, war of Arauco, life in the border, Mapuche peoples' resistance, evangelization, indigenous parliaments.</td>
<td>- Recognition people’s rights and responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Civic attitudes in everyday life actions.</td>
<td>- Participation in a democratic society.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Participation in a democratic society.</td>
<td>- Design and participation in a project to address community issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How to organize to pursue a common theme.</td>
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Reflections on Curricular Content

“Knowledge is never neutral” and curriculum always entails a political project; a notion of human beings that is embedded as a discursive construction; it seeks to shape individuals in a certain way, to serve certain interests, and to reproduce certain order. Looking at the information presented in the foregoing sections and paragraphs, it is possible to respond to questions which conduct this study such as: what is the notion of ideal human being that is portrayed through the curriculum in Chile? What is the political project that is entailed through the curriculum in Chile? Whose interest it serves? Who benefits from the curriculum rationale? Who has been left out in this ideal discursive construction of humanity? and What are the consequences?
The Chilean curriculum—and specifically the subject matter of HGSS—carries out a “selective tradition” that tells the story of the birth and the conformation of the nation, the events which the country has gone through to arrive to current levels of “economic and social development”. It is the story of the path that the Chilean nation has come to be, today, closer to the developed world, to an ideal of society that resembles the White world.

This “selective tradition” that talks about the conformation of the nation, permeates every word transmitted through the curriculum in order to contribute to the construction of ideal Chilean individuals that ensure the reproduction of the nation. This “selective tradition” - that corresponds to the hegemonic view of the national memory - is present in the topics, emphasis, disciplines, values that are promoted in the subject matter of HGSS. The information is charged with a quota of verisimilitude that comes from the legitimacy that provides the Chilean state institutionalism -in this case acquiring the form of the schooling system. Thus, the history of Chile that is presented in the classroom is loaded with a sense of truth that people -specially students- relay on. This knowledge, is incorporated as real knowledge and are the very students who -in Gramscian terms- consent to reproduce a social order which not necessary benefits them.

The legitimacy not only comes by means the verisimilitude that the state provides, it is also the presence of a scientific discourse that acts naturalizing a knowledge that claims to be originated by a scientific procedure. Thus, is the human reason, not superstitions which school preaches to disseminate and which students incorporate as true, in this case, the truth about the conformation of the Chilean nation. It is the scientific notion that is presented in disciplinary terms that explains the meaning of society, history, territory, nature, citizenship, and therefore, dictates how the human being must interpret, relate with others and with all that surround him, i.e. other alive being and the environment. But, what does this knowledge says?

The opening paragraph of the HGSS subject matter starts saying that a main aim is that students are able to understand the society in which they are inserted, but also that students be able to comprehend and visualize their own role within this society as agents of reproduction of a socio-cultural ideal order. Through the environmental emphasis, the curriculum seeks that
students recognize themselves individually but also in relation to the society which surrounds them. The curriculum provides a notion of time, responsibilities, rights, symbols, rules, rituals, past, memory and territory that -in interlocking- provides a sense of socio-cultural structure where students must position their bodies and project themselves. But how is this social order structured?

In the last sections, the effort is to show the characteristics of the hegemonic socio-cultural-economic order that is formed by an anthropocentric, Cartesian, modern, “democratic”, and neoliberal rationale that situates human being at the center of the universe and his development as a continuum transition to a better state; a state of perfection. It is a sort of human being who is at the center of creation, as Wynter (2003) argues, it is the white man’s overrepresentation that emerges during modernity and –except some variations- has taken place through the last 500 hundred years, the same that, nowadays, plays a huge role in the process of globalization and globally transits as the “cosmopolitan subject”. Thus, the curriculum, the social order, the meaning of human being that is portrayed between the lines of subject matters corresponds to this overrepresentation which is intended to be installed among students as the reference to which assimilate. Therefore, all the content, the values, abilities, information that is addressed through the curriculum points to create that sense of belonging to the white man’s privilege by means of spurious constructed similarities.

Through the subject matter of HGSS, it is sought to develop a historical thinking. If we look at the content that is presented as learning objectives and abilities to achieve, there is a permanent insistence from grade one through grade six of incorporating the temporal dimension to individual, communitarian, social and historical processes. Past-present-future are categories that student must apply to their lives, to the events that occur at the local and national level, but also to the historical events and phenomena that are presented in the curricular content. This temporal dimension goes along with a notion of progression, a positivistic logic that situates past as a time which has been overtaken and which has conducted us to current more developed moments where we, as human beings, are in a better position. This notion of progression is projected to the future providing a certain feeling of continuous transition to a better next moment in history in a line which extends from ancient times to an
uncertain far future. What is present is an idealistic philosophical perspective that being re-signified by the modern Cartesian rationale provides to the overrepresentation of man with the possibility of achieving perfection—through reason—in a posterior moment; then time is seen in a lineal form.

This temporal notion that entails a positivistic rationale intersects with a notion of material progression in which are classified technology, culture, knowledge, peoples in a scale that goes from barbaric, savage or a less human stage to more developed, refined and fully human or more humanized subjects. Thus, those events, peoples, technology, and cultural ritualism located in past times are considered less developed and less rational, of poorer knowledge, even barbaric or savage, while those that are located closer to current times are seen as more evolved, more civilized.

However this rational notion of human being, the white hegemonic referent, must have some legitimacy beyond the classroom’s walls and echoing in real life, recall peoples’ memory and narratives; must conquer peoples’ adherence, consent and so avoid being imposed through coercion, i.e. be legitimized and reproduced as another cultural component. Therefore, the social order that is promoted in the classroom through the curriculum is connected with the different agencies of the state with which people relate to on a daily basis, but at the same time it is told the history of these agencies. In the curriculum are identified what agencies are part of the institutional order, their goals and their history. Through the narratives presented in the curriculum is seen the conformation of the current institutionalism in a set of stories that described the conformation of the nation. This history of institutionalism is presented in such a way that tracks and connects current socio-politic-economic order with their former colonial institutions. Thus, it is established an idea that the social order has its origin in the arrival of the colonizer. Then the history of the nation is shown from the very beginning as walking in a lineal direction towards a future that promises civilization, development, happiness and is full of humanity.

The ability to think critically is very much appreciated, therefore, it is a transversal goal that students understand and are able to apply the scientific method and different techniques to
collect data about frequent events and phenomena. Thus, the abilities such as identifying primary, secondary, oral, and graphics sources of information are significant for the production of reality. The insistence for developing the critical thinking ability, legitimizes the so-called scientific knowledge while delegitimizes other kinds of knowledge that does not fit within the rational paradigm and is considered as informal, no structured, unascertainable, imprecise; therefore, unreliable or “unreal” knowledge. The direct consequence is the disqualification that experiences a vast range of knowledge that participate in our daily life which is considered just as superstitions, popular traditions, common knowledge and folklore but that lack the scientific probe. This is the case, for instance, of knowledge that belongs to indigenous peoples. In a daily basis we perform actions that relate with indigenous knowledge; that indigenous knowledge has been inherited from past generations and represents part of traditional medical knowledge systems, conceptions around nature and the way that we should related with the surrounding environment and other human beings. That knowledge entails a spiritual dimension, and constitutes an important component for diverse cultural identities that are present in the so-called Chilean territory; that knowledge is left out of the official discourse of reality and more over is devaluated and classified just as trickery and deceit.

What “selective tradition” is promoted through the curriculum?, the answer is not to vague, it is the Western white scientific tradition that permeates the whole curriculum while at the same time, goes devaluating any tradition that does not fit within the hegemonic paradigm. Within the subject matter of HGSS are shown a group of heroic events that would constitute the collective national memory; these events are endowed of historicity and anchor a discourse of national identity. These events, according to the hegemonic discourse, gave shape to the current citizen, the subject of the Chilean history. In this regard, identity which is a relational category emerges by contrast to those values that are antagonist to the values of the citizenship. In the case of the curriculum there is not an overt devaluation of an Other who is different and presented as the enemy or the traitor; in the curriculum, those who are consider as the Other, are not mentioned, there is a kind of invisibilization of those counter hegemonic historical subjects that do not fit within the project of modernization of the nation. This is the case for instance of indigenous peoples, who are always mentioned as the conquered, the
assimilated or the exterminated; also it is the case of black people who are not mentioned at all, thus, eliminated as historical subjects of the nation.

Identity has a collective dimension and involves a collective experience (Guibernau, 2009). Identity, raises from the question who I am, in an individual level; or who we are, in terms of a group that can be an ethnic group, a national group, or even continental. Thus, the question that consequently follows is who Chileans are? And in contrast to who or what groups the Chilean identity emerges as a national phenomenon? What does differentiate Chilean from an Other that coexist extra border but also within the borders of the national territory?

National identity is often built from an essentialism that rest on the selection of certain features considered fundamental and important while some others are excluded (Larraín, 2001). In the case of Chile, since colonial times until nowadays, is the Chilean elite along with the *intelligentsia* who has been in charge of selecting what are the elements chosen to be part of the “selective tradition” and which constitute the historical memory which supports a discourse of identity that tries to permeates all areas of social and cultural life. Thus, through the state and all its agencies the hegemonic identity discourse has been disseminated in a process where school and curriculum have been central.

By means the curriculum, it is shown the conformation process of the nation. Since early years students are exposed to nationalistic curricular content that seeks to enhance a feeling of belonging to a national project that “for declaration” embrace all Chileans and which all Chileans must embraced. Thus there is a complex of information, symbols, heroes, cultural inheritances, territories and sense of property description, indigenous peoples, and institutions that are loaded with an essentialism that provides to the discursive construction of the Chilean nation some metaphysical origin. Then this information is presented to the students through one of the most powerful tool that the state has to conquer legitimacy “the school”. This body of knowledge constitute an ethical and moral nucleus that contains the “essence of the nation”, – the “selective tradition” of Chile. Armstrong (2005) says that the conformation of a national identity involves the interaction of specific symbols. These symbols allow the reproduction and transmission of certain images of the world, from a
specific *locus*. “There is no nation without the creation of certain identity roots” (Isla, 2012:13[own translation]). Then, the creation of these roots is also the creation of certain national mythology. The national mythology acts interpreting the world says Armstrong (2005). Through the national myth the distinction between “they” and “us” is objectified, it acts keeping and reinforcing feelings of cohesion among members of nation but at unison produce the distinction with no members (Ibid. 2005).

This national mythology that is presented through curriculum starts socializing students with the main symbols of the nation which involves to recognize the flag and the values associated to this, the national anthem, the heroes that were part of the national conformation, and to indigenous peoples that inhabited in Chile and have contributed to the construction of the nation. This national mythology also link the Chilean origin with the ancient cultures as Greek and Rome, but also with the Spanish colonizer highlighting the inheritance that the current social order owes to these two civilizations and to the Spanish institutionalism.

The curriculum gives a central position to the process of “discovering and conquest” of America and Chile describing in detail the context in which the new world and its population were “encountered” and later domesticated. There is always a sense of lineal progressive order that fixed the genesis of the nation in the ‘encounter’ between conquers and indigenous peoples at the end of the S XV. Within this period are temporarily placed ‘the big pre-Columbus civilizations as well as ‘pre-Hispanic’ peoples that used to occupy the Latin American territories, later the curriculum addresses with special attention to those indigenous peoples who were present in the Chilean territory at the time of the conquest and colony explaining the process of domestication, extermination, and assimilation that led them almost to disappear (Ministry of Education, 2004, 2009, 2012). There is a distinction between those indigenous peoples who are considered big pre-Hispanic civilization and those indigenous peoples who in accordance with their cultural development (architecture, art, language, political institution, etc.), did not achieve that status.

The content describes languages, geographical and temporal location, religion, political and economic organizations, among other features; it attempts to characterize a group of
civiliizations and peoples who received a treatment in the curricular documents as they were part of a remote time. Thus, there is a temporal localization of what are called pre-Hispanic civilizations (Maya, Azteca, and Inca) in ancient periods by means of use of grammatical past tense that alludes of an indigenous life that is extra-temporal. The encounter between Columbus and Indigenous peoples represents a milestone in the hegemonic history that divides and categorizes what is before the encounter as pre-historic and what is after, as historic. This categorization is explicitly linked to the writing ability or lack of it. Therefore, populations that were “found” by the colonizer and lacked a writing system are placed in a pre-historic time while the colonizers who owned this ability, acquires the role of the carrier of history and civilization for them. This fact is what constitutes the division mark that differentiates the “pre-historic” from the “historic”, the “irrational” from the “rational”, the ability to register in a written way the main events of a culture from the memory, the systematic of writing from the fragility of memory as the only container of the history of a population, therefore lacking of verisimilitude.

According to this narrative, the history of the nation state of Chile had its genesis right after the encounter, in “post-Hispanic” times, whatever it is located before the encounter is part of a romanticized past that had vanished and ghostly status. So, the study of these ancient peoples relies on the use of archeological tools and is subjected to anthropological interpretations. So it is again the Western science defining, classifying and categorizing reality. Moreover, the so-called “pre-Hispanic” cultures are subjected to comparison among them to evaluate their developmental stage. Technical advances inform a categorization and classification that put in place a very Western logic of hierarchization between nations. The same logic that operates categorizing civilizations and human beings and articulate power discursive practices that justify colonization and racist dominant relations.

There is a continual requirement of linking the territorial locus of indigenous peoples to the modern national territories in order to identify which of those populations were located within which national borders. Thus, it is installed in the students the perception that indigenous peoples belong to the nation whatever consequences it may cause. First, indigenous people are subtracted of their right to self-determination and self-governance. As
long as they are linked to the nation-state’s territory they are labeled as Chileans before indigenous. As Chileans, they must adhere to the legal-administration of the nation-state. The indigenous “Chilean” population is expected to function through the Chilean state’s institutions rather than their own and must respect the legal order of the nation, this implies to give up indigenous institutions. When these populations are linked to the national territory they are expected not to be indigenous anymore. For this undertaking, to be achieved, schools are the best places.

The very act of relating indigenous to the national territory implies the subtraction of their narrative agency. Indigenous history appears as another appendix of national hegemonic history. The indigenous are spoken by the state. On the one hand, the physical dislocation acts to disarticulate the social dynamics that are performed through their institutions which are also related to the territory, while on the other hand, the idea that indigenous peoples belong to some –gone- time is legitimized.

Continuing with the temporal order, the curriculum presents narratives that describe earlier phases of colonial occupation of the Latin American territories and later the occupation of Chile. Hispanic colonial institutions are highlighted and linked to present forms of political administration in Chile what provides them with a foundational character of the modern national institutionalism.

While the content progresses, the historical narratives narrow the description to the Chilean territory. The war between Mapuche peoples and the Chilean state has saliency as an important event in the consolidation and expansion of the national frontiers. It is described the “War of the Araucanía” and the later process of “Pacification of the Araucanía”; both different periods that entail a process of conquest and colonization of a land that belonged to the Mapuche first nation. Within the curriculum there is a section that alludes to the violence that was part of the process of conquest of the southern part of the country where the Mapuche peoples are located, however, in any case there is a description of the brutality that is still going on in the country against this indigenous population that has been continuously claiming back their communitarian lands. An example of euphemism and hiding of this situation is the
description done in the curriculum about the new colonization of Chile promoted by the state among European population during the fifties. It is described as a journey full of hope that brought economic and human development to the southern part of the country while ignores that the occupation of that territory was done at the expense of the Mapuche peoples who again faced an expropriation and stealing of their lands which were divided and distributed among the new settlers mainly coming from Germany.

In the next section, the curriculum invites students to determine the origin of the current Chilean institutionalism. The current Chilean society is presented as the result of an inheritance obtained from the Greek and Roman civilization, and Spain which is considered as the “motherland”. In contrast, the inheritance received from indigenous “pre-historic” population is reduced to a certain mythology that is circumscribed to folkloric expressions such as typical dances, foods, isolated words that come from indigenous languages and are incorporated and acknowledged as part of the popular informal idioms, however, the “great” administrative, political and institutional order comes from the ancient great civilization where was born, for instance, the current democratic political order.

In latter sections, the curriculum presents “The colonial life in Chile” aiming to describe the life style in Chile during the time of the Hispanic administration as well as the institutionalism that prevailed. There is an emphasis to narrate the way of living of the elite v/s the way of living of the working class, peasant and indigenous peoples which are described as precarious and even in some cases immersed in vices. Coincidently, the following sections of the curriculum present the historical evolution of the Chile from the independence through the current republican time; it is installed the idea of a nation that has experienced a continuum transit towards modernity.

Students are exposed to information that permanently establishes connections between the life in the colony and current Chilean life styles. A good example to consider is the way in which Spain is called when it is related to the national history; Spain is the “The motherland” of Latin America, therefore, the mother of Chilean population too. The reflection is oriented to think about Spanish as the official language in Chile as well it is in Spain, besides are added
some other elements that talk about a similarity with Spain that is noticeable through the conception of family, politics and philosophy, ethical and esthetical values. (Ministry of Education, 2004, 2009, 2012)

In contrast to the continuity and influence that the curriculum gives to the ancient cultures and the Spanish institutionalism on Chilean current political and administrative organization, the same curriculum leads students to think about the impact of the conquest and colonial times over the first nations in terms of assimilation and extermination of Indigenous Peoples. Examples are provided of total extermination and assimilation of indigenous population located in the central valley of Chile and southern part of the country. Thus, the negative values that surround the concept of assimilation are mediated by the notion of national identity that claims have been built over the strength and spirituality of disappeared indigenous populations.

A first sight of the curriculum provides the idea of a progressive notion of history that goes from a pre-Hispanic, a pre-historic moment to a post-Hispanic, historical time; the lineal temporal organization places the local “American civilizations” and the indigenous populations in a pre-Hispanic moment. Right after it, is described the moment of the colonial encounter when the colonizer through the mythical image of Columbus facing the native people, holding the bible, launched the history of America. In this time begins the conquest of the savage new territories and after its pacification, the period of the colonization; a period of humanization that lasts until nowadays.

A theme that is addressed in the curriculum is the meaning of mestizaje. Students are exposed to the idea that “mestizaje” is a key concept within the historical-cultural national identity of Chile. It is highlighted as a specific pedagogical instruction that the notion of mestizaje must be addressed from a cultural perspective rather than racial one. This situation is what perfectly Dei (2010) describes as Colonial education. Addressing mestizaje from a racial perspective causes conflict in the classroom. It is considered as something rude to talk about race. Race is uncomfortable, and then it is better to talk about ethnicity and nationality.
Within the curriculum the notion of mestizaje appears as the epitome of the encounter between Spaniards and indigenous peoples, an individual that summarizes both traditions and becomes the subject of the nation. The mestizo category is born out of the dichotomy that presents the encounter of two different worlds; dichotomy in which one of these words is associated with reality and means life while the other relates to the past, relates to death (Alcoff, 1999; Rodriguez, 1992). “The dilemma, turn white or disappear” (Fanon, 2008:184) comes alive through the meaning that mestizaje has acquired within a socio-cultural structure that gravitates towards Whiteness. In the case of the Chilean curriculum, through the subject matter of HGSS, to turn white means the adoption of a national identity that claims to be constructed over mestizaje, however, it represents the hegemonic history of the conformation of Chile as a modern state where there is not enough place for indigenous participation.

According to the foregoing discussion, the arrival of the Spaniards and the colonial project brought the written word, therefore, the ability to register the history of societies, to perform complicated thinking operations. Thus, the past times, before the Spaniards arrival, were times of non-rationality, of barbarism and savagery. Spain is the mother and the colonizer is the father who brought the real culture –the civilization- the life. Both gave birth to “Las Americas”, what is the place for indigenous peoples in the construction of the mestizo? As Fanon says “through dynamics of colonialism/racism the colonized subject loses his humanity, remaining alienated” (2008:33) The alienation is performed in the curriculum against those first peoples that live in the past, they do not exist in current times and what we know about them is through the work of archeologist and anthropologistas who have the tools to make disappeared people to speak, people with no history, gosth people (Bergland, 2000).

The notion of mestizaje is built between a hyper admiration of the colonizer who brought the culture, and the devaluation of the indigenous, the non historic people. The indigenous pre-Hispanic groups, are visualized through the lens of the national borders, they magically belong to Chile; assimilation is almost a natural consequence of becoming civilized, becoming humans. Who wants to be an indigenous, who wants to belong to the past? Why would somebody with the opportunity to escape from that past stick in it? Instead, what is
desirable is to be part of the white world. Isla, informs us that Chile and its national identity has been based on the permanent identification of an internal enemy, what has served to “the consolidation and legitimation [of]… citizenship linked to development and modernity” (2012:33, own translation). The curriculum constructs the internal enemy through the barbarism and lack of civilization that characterizes the pre-Hispanic population, nothing further than development and modernity which are the values of citizenship; values inherited from the colonizer. If the colonizer brought the culture, the written word, the institutionalism, in this scenario is much better to define one’s self as mestizo rather than indigenous, because “cultural” mestizaje becomes a commodity that brings us closer to the white world. According to Fanon, alienation from body, mind a soul emerges when a colonized person aspires to a white world that rejects him or her, when a black, oppressed or colonized body “conceives of European culture as a means of stripping himself of his race, he becomes alienated” (Fanon, 2008:224). Laziness, unproductively, foolishness, savagism, and dangerousness are the characteristics that define the colonized. Thus, to rule them, it is not a quirk, it is necessary and colonization and its violence was part of the “White man’s burden” that had to bring civilization and God to the barbarized territories that he encountered, therefore, conquest and coercive forms of control were necessary.

Fanon says that there is a hierarchy of whiteness, “To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture” (2008:25). A person becomes whiter with his increasing expertise of the unfamiliar language (spoken languages, morals, values, etc). When students are called to think about their society in relation to colonial institutions, they are invited to think whiteness. However, there is never a call to link current institutionalism in relation to indigenousness. Internalized racism is one of the consequences. Who wants to be recognized as indigenous in school if in the same place, it is taught their non-existence? In this sense, to be a mestizo is the closest and best option to get into a hierarchy of whiteness. If one has a light skin it is more likely to be acknowledge as white -pass as white- but, for those who don’t is the embracement and embodiment of the Chilean values of modernity and Western notion of development, to act like white, to pretend to be white, the only option. Thereupon, discrimination and exploitation
are performed from people of color against their similar as the result of the acceptance of the Eurocentric values as the right ones.

The rest of curricular emphasizes geographical thinking, development of citizen skills, and respect for human diversity, all of them, respond to the same intent of disseminating and installing a Western White worldview. The emphasis of geographical thinking leads students to conceive the world and specially the geo-political organization and distribution of lands in the way that is the result of worldwide processes of colonization, besides, the notion of nature always is presented in subordination to the humankind who always appears dominating the wildness in favor of progress and economic development. The development of citizen skills goes along with the project of civilization that has as referent the white world, thus, democracy and economic development are tokens of the closeness that Chile has with the “developed” “civilized” world. In this sense, the idea of respect for human diversity has a nominal character as long as the multicultural dialogue is done always in relation to the dominant hegemonic culture and it is mediated by the word “tolerance” what ultimately means an effort of acceptance of something which is undesirable.

The analysis done to the subject matter of HGSS of the Chilean schooling curriculum suggests that race is the main element that articulates socio-cultural, political and economic relations that organize, administer, and mediates power relations in Chile. It is race the element that grounds a nationalistic discourse of identity which materializes in a complex of rights and duties that constitute the legal status of citizenship. This nationalistic discourse operates creating a collective imaginary memory that influences the Chilean population aiming that people embrace the historical hegemonic project of national modernization.

In the task of socializing the hegemonic national order and identity, school has a salient role. As seen, the curriculum plays a key role legitimizing the discourse of identity by means of connecting it with the discourse of science and its method for proving it true. The history that is presented in the school and curriculum corresponds to “the selective tradition” of the nation. This “selective tradition” is represented as complex of statements attached to symbols and rituals that carries out and universalizes ideas about the meaning of being a Chilean citizen.
This statements and symbols originate in the traditional economic and political national elite and in the local *intelligentsia*. These ideas that are spread through the curriculum transmit a certain national mythology that situates the genesis of the nation beyond the time of national independence in the initial contact between Spanish colonizer and native “American” people. The “discovery” of the new world launched a process of civilization, of humanization of the population which was “encountered” living in the middle of ignorance and idolatry, which lacked of history and, however, resembled a human biotype that was not quite human. From that point forward, the curriculum goes detailing the stages of a process that has not concluded a process which – according to the hegemonic memory - has brought the Chilean society through a path that intends to carry society to modernity, development, and progress.

Where is located that so called modernity, development, and progress? Answering this question is easy if we follow the argument provided by Wynter (2003), Quijano (2000) and Mignolo (1999) which gives to race a centrality and a logic that supports the functioning and reproduction of the current hegemonic social, economic, political, and cultural order. In the case of Chile, the desire of modernity and progress is contradictory to the existence of a population which can trace its origin in the less or non human “Other”. To get rid of that barbarism, savagery and irrationality, has been the main task of the nation state. According to Wynter, the colonizing undertaken was justified by the creation of an “Other” which constituted the physical correlate of the existence of different grades of humanity. That correlate was created in opposition to the model of human being as a biological rational organism. Through the curriculum students are exposed to a narrative that tells the history of a humanization that started at the time of the encounter and which extends through the different moments in the Chilean history. This narrative shows how steadily the state of savagery has been left behind while acquiring human features. First was the language of the colonizer, then his culture later his institutionalism and his economy. It is the history of becoming part of the Western-White-Modern World. Within this history appears the mestizo subject, as the main subject of the nation, the citizen, the Chilean, an individual that is the result of the first colonial encounter and which is proof that it is possible to get rid of barbarism, vices and irrationality.
Chapter VII

Conclusions and Future Directions

The main idea developed through the different chapters tells us that “The Chilean schooling curriculum in its subject matter of HGSS portrays, disseminates, and installs an ideal notion of human being which gravitates towards Whiteness and operates by means the discursive construction of national identity and the notion of citizenship, both connected with the modernizing economic and social project of the nation”. This idea is clearly manifested in the passages of the curriculum that has been critically looked at. First the TLO explicitly promote the Western world values that involve a way to relate each other, a way to relate with nature, a certain political organization that is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and individual freedoms, and an economic model which nowadays is represented by the neoliberal economic system. Second, in the curriculum the Spanish crown, the colonizer, appears as having the moral task of humanizing the less or non human Other. It was a task that right after the independence was assumed by the elite of the nation, most of whom were Spaniards descendents and mixed blood subjects. It is the history that runs through the lines of the subject matter of HGSS. Also the content categorizes the figure of the mestizo as the subject of the nation which is the resulted in two traditions, the indigenous and the colonizer; however, this subject gravitates toward whiteness in consonance with the project of modernization that is aligned with the global tendencies. The curriculum tries to shape an individual that fits in the global scenario the cosmopolitan subject, somebody who speaks English, who is competitive, ductile, versatile, that has devotion to work and excellence. Through the curriculum, is executed a whitening nationalistic discourse of identity which created the figure of the “mestizo”; a category of individuals that crystallizes the possibilities that Whiteness offers, to become human, to become white, however, this is just a delusion and the history of the hegemonic group of society, because the real world shows that along with this narrative coexists multiple interpretations of reality and of the human experience.

The curriculum shows the “selective tradition” of the hegemonic groups that have held the power at the expense of numeric majorities which have experienced exploitation, humiliation, devaluation, marginalization on a daily basis, and finally negation. That is the
case, for instance, of black population who is not part of the narratives but has been present in the territory and is a significant numeric population. They do not exist according to the curriculum; they do not appear in the HGSS subject matter, however, they do exist in their descendants and hold a cultural legacy. Same is the case of indigenous peoples, they according to the curriculum belong to the past, and however, day after day those peoples fight for their rights, claim back their taken land, uphold their traditions and give birth to a human being that is not white. In the case of mestizos, we are taught to believe in Whiteness, to desire to be white, however, we are not white, and we daily experience our non-Whiteness. If the curriculum appeals to Human Rights as the ground of a socio-political and economic system that aims that all people stand on equal foot, therefore, we mestizos, we have the right to claim our indigeneity back.

This work is part of the above, said, claim. “It is the racist who creates his inferior” (Fanon 2008:93). Racial categories are not universal and absolute, but are instead a historically conditioned social product (Alcoff, 1996). Race is constructed as a means of institutionalizing, in material and symbolic ways, the domination of one group over another. “How do we extricate ourselves?” (Fanon, 1967:10), we mestizos, indigenous, black people, people of color, we have to claim our indigeneity and denounce the alienation and mimicry that brings us to gravitate towards a false white condition.

As an educator, my work here is a political act; it claims for social transformation, in an act of resistance, to re-think and feel the self beyond the institutional lines that the curriculum dictates. It is an invitation to other educator to be critical and to bring that criticism into the classrooms. I as an anticolonial educator, strongly believe that the pain of incoherence, dislocation, the feelings of injury are deep sensations that we, anti-colonials educator and people of color, should seek to transform into joy, desire, wholeness. Highlighting the color of our identities, is an act of healing that injury caused by the colonizer in his intents to conquer our consciousness, to recover that amputee side that everybody has experienced in a colonized space.
Methodologically, while my work, for the analysis’ purpose, has centered in race as the main site of oppression, there is in any case an intention to disregard the saliency of other oppressive sites such as class, ability, sexuality and gender. I acknowledge that the goal of anti-colonial thought is to challenge to oppression in all its dimensions; in this sense, this research invites to future studies that first look beyond the formal official materials of curriculum and contrast the theory with the practical dimensions of the execution of the curriculum to see how this formal official knowledge is challenged, contested and resisted. I take this opportunity to invite fellow researchers to observe how this national identity discursive practice takes different shapes and conjugates with other identities. I look forward to seeing someone conducting a larger future study that considers in the dynamic theory v/s practices the interlocking of all sites of oppression. Some questions that would be worth exploring and try to answer are for instance how the performative character of the curriculum opens possibilities to contest its formality whenever it is exerted? How the formal curriculum has been historically contested given place to the raise of social movements that search to vindicate marginal social positions in Chile? What are the possibilities to challenge and contest and disrupt the overrepresentation of man that is legitimated through a legal curriculum? How do we build strategies to open political spaces for the rise of multiple senses of humanities? How do we become human outside the white paradigm? And re-calling Fanon How do we extricate ourselves?


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