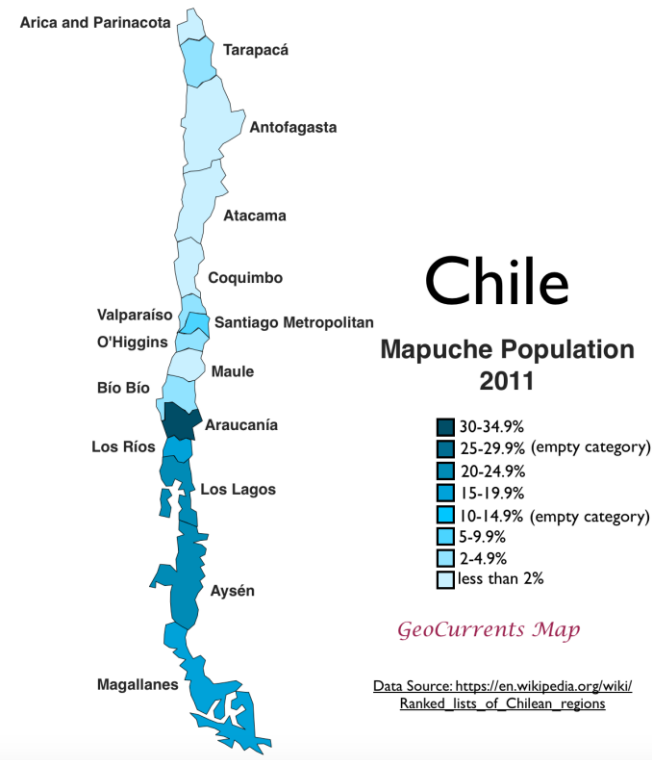


Teatro Milagro Huinca Study Guide 2020

Huinca Study Guide

The term “Huinca” (“Wingka”) derives from the Mapudungún language of the Mapuche people, and translates to “outsider.” The origin of the word can be linked back to the Spanish conquistadors who attempted to conquer the Mapuche people over four hundred years ago. In modern times this term may refer to the people working in the forestry corporations that have taken over Mapuche land. The Mapuche people are still fighting for their land and native cultural identity despite the many huincas who have infiltrated Chile.



Who are the Mapuche People?

The Mapuche People are an indigenous group in Chile, who make up about 10% of the Chilean population, making them the country's largest ethnic group. Approximately half of the Mapuche population lives in the south of Chile, while the other half is found around the capital, Santiago. There are also around 300,000 Mapuche people who live in Argentina. The Mapuche people are known for their work with textiles and silver.

Colonization and The Arauco Wars

The Arauco War refers to the long-running conflict between colonial Spaniards and the Mapuche people. In 1531, a conquistador, Don Diego de Amagro, arrived in Chile and the Spanish planned to overtake the Mapuche people. In 1581, they fought off Spanish conquistador, Pedro de Valdivia, when he

attacked the recently founded capital of Santiago. There were many battles and military confrontations during the Arauco War, even after the Chilean people declared their independence. In the late 1800s, Chile began to expand southward, sending in an army to clear the way for Chileans and European settlers, pushing the Mapuches off most of their land in a region known as the Araucanía.

The Machi

The Machi is the Mapuche shaman called to their position by dreams. They are usually female and perform ceremonies for warding off illness or evil, sometimes with a drum called the “kultrun.” Machis have a great knowledge of herbal medicines.



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The Pinochet Era

Augusto Pinochet was a Chilean general, politician and dictator between 1973 and 1990. Pinochet took an anti-Mapuche stance during his rule, declaring there were “no indigenous people in Chile, only Chileans”. During Pinochet’s era, the Mapuches had a large portion of their land sold to wealthy foreign landlords. The Mapuche people resisted this seizure of their land up until 1980, when there was an invasion by the Chilean army invaded, taking the land from the Mapuche and selling it to the timber and forestry companies.

Violence and Conflict Today

Today, roughly two-thirds of the 1.5 million Mapuche people live in squalor in urban areas, and the remainder in poor rural communities. The new generation has been inspired to reclaim their people's culture, language and rights. Some have formed organizations, such as the Coordinadora Arauco-Malleco (CAM), to demand the restoration of their ancestral land and regional autonomy. Deforestation and planting of



exogenous tree species has led to both peaceful and violent protests from various Mapuche groups. Aggressive military police called Carabineros, and Jungle Commandos have cracked down on the Mapuche people. These militias have killed four Mapuche activists since 2002, including Matias Catrileo. Catrileo was a young Mapuche activist who was participating in a land recovery action at Fundo Las Margaritas when he was killed by Military Police in January 2008. In 2013 a Mapuche mob stormed Fundo Granja Lumahue, an estate owned by Verner Luchsinger, and his wife Vivienne Mackay. After a brief standoff, Luchsinger fired shots into the crowd, and a fire broke out soon after killing the couple. Twelve people were brought up on charges, including an elderly Machi. In November 2018 the military police shot farmers and activist Camilo Catrillanca dead. He was shot through the back of the neck while driving in a tractor. The police initially



misrepresented the facts of the case but recovered camera footage revealed that there were no shots fired from the Mapuche. Camilo’s death became a rallying cry for the Mapuche activists, as he was considered a ‘weichafe,’ or a warrior for the Mapuche cause. Over the past two years the National Institute of Human Rights has filed more than 30 complaints over abusive police actions against the Mapuche.

Indigenous Activism Throughout the World



“Water is the lifeblood of Mother Earth. Our water should not be for sale. We all have a right to this water as we need it.”

-Autumn Peltier, 15-year-old activist, and a member of the Wikwemikong First Nation in northern Ontario.

The Mapuches are not alone in their struggle. From the Pullayup Tribe fighting against a fossil fuel facility in Tacoma, to the Munduruku Tribe in the Amazon trying to halt polluters and loggers, to the Wet’suwet’en nation’s attempts to halt a pipeline in British Columbia, and the Standing Rock water protectors in North Dakota, the fight of indigenous groups to protect the environment is a global phenomenon.

“The government of our countries keep concessioning our territories without our consent to the extractive industries that are creating climate change. This should be criminal.”

-Helena Gualinga, 16-year-old Kichwa activist from the Ecuadorian Amazon



Whether it is preserving clean air, clean water, land rights, or fighting against the threat of Climate Change, native groups are at the forefront of environmental activism. As is the case in Chile, this activism has received severe pushback from governments and corporations that has resulted in violence.



“We shouldn’t have to tell people in charge that we want to survive. It should be our number-one right.”

-Quannah Chasinghorse, 17-year-old activist of the Gwich’in and Lakota Sioux tribes in Alaska

The activism of young people has ignited an international movement. Social media has brought attention and given a platform to causes that are oftentimes ignored by corporate media, and has helped raise awareness with hashtags such as #NODAPL and #decolonize. In addition, groups like the Indigenous Environmental Network have helped build alliances throughout the world.

For Further Study:

Thunder Shaman, Making History with Mapuche Spirits in Chile and Patagonia, Ana Mariella Bacigalupo, University of Texas Press, Austin Texas 2016