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# Re-imagined Community: The Mapuche Nation in Neoliberal Chile

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## Introduction

Academic discussion has profoundly reviewed the effects of neoliberalism in Latin American countries, defined its origins and metropolitan directives, and even celebrated the programmatic responses that in some countries such as Venezuela and Bolivia have allowed a glimpse of interrupted neoliberalism—not without facing serious problems such as the severe crisis of post-Chavism and the conflicts of Evo Morales regime with some indigenous peoples and its recent setback in recent elections. Revising the case of the long and uninterrupted conflict between the Mapuche people and the Chilean state allows us to see in its extreme rawness the current struggle between global capitalism and the indigenous communities harmed by this system. Chile is not only an example of the strict implementation of the neoliberal model in the 1970s—the first major practical experiment of what would be called the Washington Consensus in the 1990s, which all Latin American countries (except for Cuba) signed to escape, under the guidelines of the IMF and the World Bank, from the decade of economic stagnation caused by the debt crisis in the 1980s. It is also an example in Latin America where a neoliberal state frontal attack on an indigenous people was perhaps forceful, focused, and effective: the so-called agrarian counter-reform of the Pinochet regime of 1974 and Law 2,568 of 1979,

which repealed the continuity of land title deeds (*Títulos de Merced*). Even when the fall of the dictatorship and the return to democracy in Chile could open a scenario of hope for the Mapuche community, the reality has proved them wrong. Despite the opening of intercultural policies and improvements in the institutionalization of indigenous rights (with the enactment of Law 19,253 and the consequent creation of the National Indigenous Development Corporation (CONADI) in 1993) when faced with the protests and demands of the Mapuche people—particularly in regards to the recovery of ancestral territories—the state response continues to be that of the neoliberal model of imprisonment and violent repression. It is difficult not to conclude that the Law 18,314, known as the Anti-terrorist Act, enacted during the dictatorship in 1984 and mostly created as a form of institutionalized repression for the political opposition to the regime, still effective even 28 years after the fall of Pinochet, remains as an infamous legal framework that allows the Chilean state to criminalize any type of social mobilization that could affect the hegemonic raw production and exporting model consigned to large private corporations (domestic and foreign). In addition to legal persecution, the framework offered by the Anti-terrorist Act allows a discourse articulation in the media that delegitimizes the Mapuche struggle on the recovery of territories taken from their communities, legally and illegally, since the time of the military occupation in 1883. As effective as this has proven to be, for much of Chilean public opinion (and even that of some scholars, such as the award-winning historian Sergio Villalobos) the Mapuche's demands and protests are part of destabilizing, anti-modernist, regressive forces, which are wild, premodern, violent, criminal, and defamatory. In this sense, Goodale and Postero (2013) comment that, in the current scenario of Latin America, the challenges to the globalized neoliberal order coexist with exacerbated patterns of violence and exploitation that seek to drown radical forms of social change (some alternative forms of governance have been consolidated to a greater or lesser extent, such as the Zapatista autonomous communities in Mexico or the San Basilio palenque in Colombia).

In this sense, the uninterrupted conflict between the Mapuche nation and the Chilean state is an integral part of the colonial and the 19th century legacy inherited by neoliberalism in Latin America; inheritance that maintains racial, cultural, and linguistic prejudices, fermented with the ideas of ethnic homogenization under the signs of miscegenation and the (forced) integration to the Chilean national culture but, nevertheless, maintaining a structural exclusion. These contradictions, the diminishment of the Mapuche culture upon the

Western-mestizo culture in favor of the supposed horizontality of the Chilean imagined community—typical concepts of 19th century liberalism (Anderson, 1993)—have pushed a community with strong ethnic-cultural identification to align their claims with other anti-neoliberal challenges in the region.

In this chapter, we want to review some of the most severe points on the conflict between the Chilean state and the Mapuche nation, their challenges and responses to state repression, and how they project a possible future for their people within the Chilean nation. First, we will revisit the origins of the eviction and consequent dispossession suffered by the Mapuche people after their military defeat of 1883. At that time, their lands decreased from 11 million hectares to only 5% of that original territory, which continued to shrink until the end of the 20th century (Seguel, 2007). Reviewing the deepening of this problem during the Pinochet dictatorship we will reach the present time to review the struggles for the recovery of their ancestral territories and the direct confrontation with the extractive projects promoted by the Chilean state and the neoliberal economic policies—the most notorious among those are the Ralco hydroelectric dam and the forestry companies Mininco and Bosques Arauco (Franch, 2013)—which, regardless of the governments' ideologies, have been uninterrupted since the coup of September 11, 1973. In the following section, we will analyze the development of the contemporary mobilizations of different Mapuche collectives at the end of the last century, their positioning in Chilean public opinion, and some of the positive results achieved, particularly in regards to the creation of the CONADI and some actions that in the context of the Indigenous Law have permitted the recovery of land for the Mapuche people. We also indicate the great limitations of these state policies, which, seizing the vindicating discourse of interculturalism, do not actually (or perhaps even intend to) build a solid foundation for a structural solution to the problem of land tenure for the native peoples of this country.

The reaction to the protests allows us to explore in the following section that ubiquitous face of the neoliberal states: repression and social discipline through the exclusive use of force and the implementation of the emergency rule in the face of any threat (or protest) to the status quo. As José Alwyn points out, the recently inaugurated Chilean democratic government—with the consequent expectations in relation to the political (and legal) treatment of social movements—in 1992 convicted under the charges of occupation and illicit association 144 Mapuche members of the All Lands Council (*Consejo de Todas las Tierras-Aukiñ Wall Mapu Ngullam*) for actions to recover land in conflict

(Aylwin and Yáñez, 2007). Since that time until today, despite the international protest and the domestic debate around the Law 18,314, the Mapuche people who have chosen radical actions to recover lost territories (many of them illegally) have been prosecuted under the Anti-terrorist law and therefore received much harsher sentences. Within this legal framework, the Mapuche can (and are) treated as bare life subjects (Agamben, 1998) and sometimes their bodies sacrificed without legal consequences.

In the last part of this work we analyze some of the resistance strategies articulated by diverse Mapuche collectives to resist the current state of affairs. Here we examine responses from trenches built on the margin of political mobilization—although immersed in a broader framework of vindication that definitely falls within the political struggle of the Mapuche nation against the Chilean state—like the organization of urban collectives of descendants of the great Mapuche migration to Santiago, which through community workshops reconstruct the ethno-cultural heritage of the Mapuche nation outside the ancestral territory of the south of the country (Abarca, 2005). Moreover, we analyze some literary expressions articulated by Mapuche poets, scholars, and journalists that are re-imagining the Mapuche nation and their historical struggle. It is important to note that these intellectuals are building a locus of enunciation that epistemologically resists the ignominious stereotypes Chilean state and society have used historically to exclude them from the national project. The re-emergence of the Mapuche ethnical positioning, as expressed by Pedro Cayuqueo, a journalist from Temuco, referring to the younger generation of Mapuche people, is not a search to return to "the *lost community* portrayed by anthropologists and social scientists or the *rural reservation* idealized by leaders and poets," but that of a "Mapuche voice charged with modernity and future" which "establishes the welcome of the Mapuche and the goodbye to the *mapuchito*"[1] (Cayuqueo, 2012; emphasis in the original). In this sense, we will pay special attention to the re-construction of an ethnic memory that opposes the disintegration of ethnic minorities' identities that neoliberalism intensifies, largely through forced migration to large urban centers where conditions are extremely adverse for these minorities. This phenomenon indicates the ineffectiveness of the supposedly inclusive intercultural policies of recent years. Despite the worsened scenario—which is on a continuum started by the victory of liberalism in the 19th century—the Mapuche nation continues to rearticulate itself with immense sacrifices.

## From the "Pacification" to the dictatorship

1883 marked the end of the conquest war of the Mapuche territory (the so-called "Pacification of the Araucania") by the Chilean state and the beginning of the loss of 95% of the lands that at that time comprehended the *Mapu*—the Mapuche nation territory—(Seguel, 2007). Beyond the usual implications of demand for primary products, the desire of the Chilean state to insert itself and have a competitive place in it, taking advantage of more territory for its exploitation; despite the discourses of integration of all the confines of the territory of the nation state[2]; what marked the Mapuche defeat was, as in any war of conquest between nations, military superiority. Sergio Caniuqueo comments on the last Mapuche offensive of 1881:

> Without a doubt, all the *Winka*[3] had to be destroyed, but the Mapuche people did not innovate in weapons, although there was the possibility of doing so via corsairs or the smugglers who entered the border. Not getting involved in an arms race or appropriation of military technology; without weapons of greater destructive power it was easy to calculate that the Mapuche resistance was a matter of time. (Caniuqueo, 2006)

In the next 45 years the Chilean state took possession of almost all the Mapuche lands. From 1884 to 1929 the government carried out the program of *reservations* where the Mapuche nation was relocated in 475,422 hectares (of 11 million original territory) and granted 3,078 land title deeds (*Títulos de Merced*). This meant a double strategy of the Chilean state to cancel any possible organization and counter-offensive of the Mapuche people. With the extreme reduction of territory, the socio-political unity of the Mapuche nation was broken, forcing them to move from a very efficient horizontal community organization scheme to become individual owners, which also led to the breakdown of long-range family ties.

After annexing this vast territory, the government began the sale of properties for a colonization project for national and foreign groups made up of Chileans, Germans, Swiss, French, and Italians. However, the colonists' pressure on the Mapuche lands continued and "between 1929 and 1948, 832 indigenous communities were apportioned into 12,737 hectares" (Toledo, 2003), enabling a greater loss of land. The relationship with the foreign colonists was diverse, and while the Germans avoided getting involved with the Mapuche, the Swiss

had a friendlier relationship, which did not prevent the process of accumulation of capital (and land) in favor of the foreigners to whom the Mapuche ended up serving as "agricultural worker and his wife as a domestic servant in the house of the colonists" (Caniuqueo, 2006).

This process of continuous dispossession had a significant moment of mitigation—although limited and later annulled—during the presidency of Salvador Allende. With the Law 17,729, which continued with greater effectiveness the Agrarian Reform of Frei Montalva presidency in 1962, the government of the Popular Unity "curbed the process of partition of the Mapuche communities and established the expropriation as a way to return lands to them" (Duquesnoy, 2012). According to the Report of the Mapuche Autonomous Work Commission (Comisión de Trabajo Autónoma Mapuche, 2003), in this period an important aspect of this law is that:

> The project aims to significantly increase the Mapuche lands through the following mechanisms: return of the land usurped, which for documents that were delivered within the Commission would be around 50,000 hectares; expropriation of lands that were part of land title deeds and are in the possession of individuals, which would constitute an approximate area of 100,000 hectares; and effective integration of the indigenous peasant to the process of agrarian reform and, also, to industrial and commercial activities, after the necessary training...
> In summary, during the period of Salvador Allende, which lasted between November 4, 1970 and September 11, 1973, 574 farms were expropriated in the Provinces of Malleco and Cautín, with an area of 636,288.3 hectares. The properties expropriated in favor of Mapuche communities or with Mapuche participation were 138, with a total area of 132,115.78 physical hectares, equivalent to 7,407.77 hectares of basic irrigation

After the brutal Pinochet coup in 1973, the expropriated land was returned to the landowners and the community leaders suffered fierce repression. However, the Mapuche activities did not stop; on the contrary, they kept maturing more and more during the dictatorship and they articulated a discourse that integrated, in addition to territorial claims, the defense of their culture and ethnic identity. Even so, the offensive of the dictatorship against the Mapuche mobilization—and the Chilean people in general—had dramatic consequences. The

Law Decree 2,568 of March 22, 1979, authorized and promoted the partition of Mapuche grounds granted under land title deeds, disrupting communities by making them individual owners and inserting them unfavorably in the free market model of Chilean oligarchs. As Rodrigo Levil Chicalhual (2006) explains:

> This law addresses and deepens the same objectives of all division laws: to convert the Mapuche communities into individual owners and to end the restrictions on their lands in order to homogenize the Mapuche population along with the rest of the small farm owners. It is provided that once the division is made, the lands and their owners will cease to be considered indigenous, as indicated by the Law in its first Chapter.

Under this law "2,000 communities were apportioned in some 72 thousand individual land lots. What remained in the hands of the Mapuche from their "ancestral" territory was definitely divided into private plots" (Duquesnoy, 2012). This process of deterritorialization carried out through the Pinochetist agrarian counter-reform would worsen the phenomenon of Mapuche migration to urban centers, most of them to Santiago, a matter we will review later. As a result of the neoliberal policies implemented by the dictatorship and continued during the so-called Concertation governments in the following 20 years, four companies hold two-thirds of the forest plantation territories throughout Chile (Levil, 2006). Alongside this process of accumulation sponsored by the state, the Mapuche nation have suffered an enormous territorial loss, which has pushed them to a greater and more radical mobilization for the recovery of land usurped.

## Mapuche mobilization and state repression

The return to democratic life in 1990 meant the initiation of dialogue between the state and the Mapuche nation (as with other indigenous peoples of the country), which was unimaginable during the dictatorship. Nevertheless, this circumstance was not the beginning of their demands; on the contrary, it came at a time of acute crisis due to the almost disappearance of land owned by the Mapuche communities by that time. Within this agenda of state openness, the Law 19,253 (October 1993), known as the Indigenous Law, was promulgated and the National Indigenous Development Corporation (CONADI) and the Indigenous Lands and Waters Fund were created

during the government of Patricio Aylwin (Franch, 2013). It is worth highlighting some actions promoted by the CONADI in favor of the development of the Mapuche people in the first decade of the Concertation governments:

1 The destination, through different plans and programs, including the transfer of fiscal lands, the acquisition programs of properties in conflict and grants from the Land and Water Fund of Conadi, of around 75,000 hectares of land for Mapuche individuals and communities between 1994 and 1997.
2 The support, through the Conadi Development Fund, for the implementation of indigenous economic, social and cultural development initiatives.
3 The constitution of three areas of indigenous development (ADI), two of them in the Mapuche territory (Alto Bio Bio and Lago Budi) and the allocation of resources for their implementation. (Aylwin, 2000, p.284)

Yet these actions were far from making a noticeable difference in the situation of the Mapuche people. The balance of these years reveals the great limitations of the indigenous law. Aylwin (2000) points out that, for example, in 1996 of the 1,357 mining concessions to national and foreign companies in Chile, 144 were on lands of Mapuche communities and 75% of the rights of surface water available in this territorial space had been granted to non-indigenous individuals and only 2% corresponded to the Mapuche communities. During the period of President Eduardo Frei (1994–2000), the dialogue between the Mapuche and the Chilean state was fractured as a result of the contradiction between what the indigenous law states—for example, article 13 states that "Indigenous lands will not be alienated, seized, encumbered or acquired by prescription, except among communities or indigenous people of the same ethnic group" (in Franch, 2013). Conversely, in the end the government granted the ENDESA-Spain consortium the Ralco hydroelectric project in the Alto Bio-Bio where lands inhabited by Pehuenche[4] communities are located without any consultation or agreement.

This long-term conflict—between 1996 with the beginning of the "negotiations" and 2004 when Endesa finally flooded the reservoir—is one of the most paradigmatic in terms of the tense relationship between the Mapuche nation and the Chilean state. It signals the profound meaning of the reality that exists in Chile currently: the subordination

of the society and the state to the demands of productivity imposed by the neoliberal system in this country. The imperative production of electricity (founding part of modernity) promised by Endesa's dam scheme—a Chilean company privatized in the framework of neoliberal measures during the dictatorship—in the Alto Bio-Bio represented a project that the state was not willing to stop, although it had to go over the rights of Mapuche communities in the area (Morales, 1998); rights that were approved in Congress just three years before. During the negotiation stage between the company, the government, and the Mapuche people, the resolution of the Pehuenches was that they did not want the dam installed. In a June 1996 letter addressed to the Director of the Environment National Agency (CONAMA), a state entity that had to decide whether to approve the megaproject in relationship with the environmental impact (relying on a study carried out by Endesa itself), Mapuche representatives argued from different angles what the proposed relocation would be for those affected by the flood of lands:

- Moving some families would affect the integrity of the entire community because the division will cause the discontinuity of traditions in which all the members of the community should participate.
- The project would flood old cemeteries of the community.
- The project would fracture a life trajectory linked to the land where they lived.
- Endesa had breached promises in a previous project (Pangue).
- The lands that were offered to them in exchange did not have the conditions to sustain the Pehuenche mode of traditional productivity.
- The offer of jobs does not compensate for the loss of their culture.

Their list of reasons closed with the most valid argument possible: "For all the above, the Project Ralco proposed in the study presented by Endesa must be rejected, because we want to continue living in our lands according to our culture as we have always done." And maybe thinking that the conditions in the country had changed with the constitutional confirmation of being a multicultural state, they finished the letter this way: "We hope that this time our opinion will be taken into account and not ignored as usual is" (in Relmuán 1998). One year after receiving this letter, CONAMA approved the project, not only against the will of the Pehuenches, but also bypassing the recommendations of a group of scholars from the Universidad de la Frontera that served as advisor (among others) of the CONAMA. The dramatic outcome of this conflict was that in April 2004 Endesa

authorized the filling of the reservoir one month sooner than expected without notifying the Pehuenche communities flooding their cemetery (Franch, 2013). That is to say, "as usual" the Mapuche people decision was ignored in favor of a profitable project for the business sector, for the state, and for Chileans. Moreover, this net of socio-political actors through the law and the media would label as terrorists those Mapuche who were radicalizing their protests upon the unstoppable advance of neoliberal modernity and progress.

A particular event in 1997—connected to the big forestry companies, the other great threat to Mapuche territories—illustrates how the democratic Chile would deal with the Mapuche mobilizations, enabling the usual repressive strategy of the neoliberal state of our times: emergency rule against the threat of terrorism. On December 1, a group of Mapuche protesters scorched three trucks belonging to the forestry company Arauco. The detainees were judged under the anti-terrorist law and were sentenced to many years in prison (Duquesnoy, 2012). The special trial prosecution followed that

> the Regional Mayor of that time, Oscar Eltit, qualified the felony as serious, of terrorist connotation, for which he opened a requirement in the Court of Appeals of Temuco under the Law of Internal Security of the State to those who are responsible. (Franch, 2013)

Pedro Cayuqueo denounced in 2007 how the emergency rule applied to the Mapuche protesters was disproportionate and unjust, pointing out that "ten years after the arson attack in Lumaco, 300 Mapuches, among them women, the elderly and children, were still imprisoned after having passed through several prisons in the country" (in Duquesnoy, 2012). If prosecution, conviction, and imprisonment under the anti-terrorist law is the most visible and severe face of state repression, the punitive program that the government has taken against the mobilizations and protests extends the emergency rule toward the entire Mapuche community with indiscriminate exercise of police violence. A report of the Human Rights Observatory for Indigenous Peoples describes common abuses committed against the Mapuche people by *Carabineros*, the National Police Corps, "in the line of duty:"

> Extremely violent detention. / Violent eviction of Mapuche commoners. / Unlawful beating during arrest and detention. / Shots during raid injuring several Mapuche people. / Freedom of movement impediment to people

> within a community by actions of registration and control. / Mistreatment during detention. / Entering farms and extraction of livestock belonging to Mapuche people. / Shotting against houses of a community by an unknown group that is suspected to be personal of *Carabineros*. / A driver accompanied by a *Carabineros* official tried to run over a member of the Mapuche community. / Physical and verbal maltreats (racist and discriminatory epithets) during raids. / Systematic harassment during research (permanent identity checks, follow-up on the leaders). / Arrests with heavily armed personnel. / Eviction and detention of numerous people in the morning, including women, the elderly and children. / Shots with anti-riot shotguns during raid, injuring a 12 years-old child impacted with 7 shots. / Punches and racist insults during detention. / Detention and beatings of students during a peaceful protest. (Beaudry, 2009)

In this repressive context, the Mapuche people have also been radicalizing their protests, in particular those related to the recovery of ancestral community lands, with actions that include occupation of premises, in which they are particularly exposed to police repression and in some cases even to death. Franch refers to the case of two community members who were killed by *Carabineros*:

> 22 years-old Matías Catrileo on January 3, 2008 and 24 years-old Jaime Mendoza Collío on August 12, 2009... The investigation of the two murders confirm that the shots were received by the Mapuche commoners when they turned their backs to police officers. (Franch, 2013)

Furthermore, in 2010 there were 58 Mapuche people prosecuted and/or convicted under the charges of "terrorist arson, frustrated homicide with terrorist character, terrorist threat and terrorist illicit association," these cases denote the application of the anti-terrorist law exclusively to members of the Mapuche nation during the decade 2000–10 (Franch, 2013).

The severe and unjust prison sentences caused by this legal framework have given rise to Mapuche protest within prison confinement that runs parallel to the mobilizations (peaceful or violent) in the streets—hunger strikes have been initiated by several Mapuche prisoners under preventive detention or convicted under the anti-terrorist law. This

political action has had a double functionality in the spectrum of the Mapuche mobilization: on the one hand, it has affected public opinion, dismantling to some extent the negative and condemning vision of the Mapuche movement built from the media and state discourses. The peaceful and particularly dramatic nature of this type of protest, in addition to its long-time extent, has had positive repercussions since it has made the Mapuche struggle visible and favored the involvement of other social and political actors such as NGOs and the Catholic Church. On the other hand, the hunger strike as a political strategy has been constantly articulated by the Mapuches from an angle that emphasizes the community character of their struggle. Thus, in 2010, 34 Mapuche commoners held a collective hunger strike for more than 80 days demanding that their legal cases were not double prosecuted by ordinary and military courts. Among the achievements obtained was an international protest in favor of the Mapuche struggle in several Chilean embassies abroad, in addition to the government examination of aspects for the applicability of law 18,314 (Franch, 2013), achievements that, in the political-judicial framework that we have described, represent significant advances. Moreover, the domestic visibility of the protests, mobilizations, extreme persecution, and condemnation, along with the hunger strikes, has had an effect not only on Chilean and international public opinion, but also on the identity awareness of many urban Mapuche people, and has promoted an expansive claim for the Mapuche nation in recent years. This has been creating an urban movement parallel to the mobilizations in the ancestral territories of the south—not without conflicts, as we shall see later—which highlights the other side of the extreme deterritorialization the Mapuche people has suffered for decades: migration, discrimination and acculturation related to the urban exile phenomenon.

## Migration: From deep fracture to identity reconstruction

From the 1930s, due to the increasingly adverse conditions suffered by the reservation communities in southern Chile, Mapuche people began to migrate to urban centers especially to the city of Santiago. This phenomenon worsened in the following decades, especially with Pinochet's agrarian counter-reform. In this situation of gradual and continuous territorial and economic disadvantage, the Mapuche people also have had to face a nation state and a society that historically have ignored the legitimacy of the ethnic and cultural claim of the Mapuche. With modernity's arguments—which decidedly declares

that "there is no doubt that they resigned to ancestral rights, that they accepted domination and that, adapting to it, they have looked to the future" (Villalobos, 2000, p.A2)—the Chilean homogenizing discourse assumes that the displacement (exile) of the Mapuche from their communities to the city would provoke the slow but inevitable Westernization (acculturation) of the indigenous people and their consequent insertion in the national project. However, historical reality has shown that despite the contact, exchange and cultural adaptation of the Mapuche people—that is, their historical and forced negotiations with Western modernity—in the city (nation), their place in the imagined community that is Chile still is relegated to peripheral spaces.

In general, the conditions that historically have pushed the Mapuche people out of their communities are poverty and insufficient land for its inhabitants. A migrant says in this regard: "Ten years ago, in the year 1990 I came because of lack of work, the land is not the same as in the past, not anymore, the land is diminished and in addition there is little and unproductive" (Abarca, 2005). As in almost any other migratory context, the conditions Mapuche people face arriving in the city are usually very adverse:

> Here [in Santiago] they must share their misadventures with other isolated groups, which usually are unqualified workers, with humble and intermittent jobs, who live in overcrowding houses, giving space to promiscuity and a series of indicators that describe extreme poverty. In the capital of Chile, in places like those described, lives the greatest concentration of the Mapuche population of the country, which had to leave their impoverished homeland to look for some job that would allow them to survive. (Paillalef, 2012)

Faced with this unfavorable situation many Mapuche migrants in Santiago have opted for civil organization in the city. Still being aware that some will not return to the south they refuse to surrender their roots, as explained by a migrant who has been in the capital city for 50 years:

> I always worked for the unity of the people … To work for the development of the urban Mapuche. Because for us it is difficult to return to the south, some may perhaps, those who have land but I no longer have any. The little land that my father had was something of 25 hectares and

> we were several brothers. We inherited 5 hectares each, so we agreed and we left everything to the two brothers who were there, who worked the land. (Aravena, 2008)

Even without land, for this migrant, uprooting does not mean the loss of identity because he maintains contact with the ancestral territory as a form of belonging to the *Wallmapu,* which means the whole space of the Mapuche nation:

> I did not ask for land in the distribution and I do not have land, but that does not mean I'm not Mapuche. No, because we are always cooperating with people who have problems. I've made eight trips to the Alto Bio Bio bringing help to the people, clothes, food. (Aravena, 2008)

At the same time as that relationship with the southern community has been maintained, over the years there has been a parallel promotion of a solidarity consciousness toward the Mapuche people of the city, although without neglecting the aspect of cultural conservation:

> So here we are more dedicated to the urban Mapuche because we have many people who live in very poor peripheral communities, so we want them to have decent housing, education and health, all those things … I wish I could prosper, that is our hope. Another one is not to lose our culture, to spread our language. For example, I still speak *Mapudungun* (Mapuche language) but young people do not. (Aravena, 2008)

The return trip—even if it is temporary to visit relatives, or so that the children of Santiago have contact with the community, the landscape, and traditions—is persistently repeated in the testimonies because it is part of an imaginary that strengthens the identity of the urban Mapuche: "We go back to see our people and to visit those places where one came from, where I used to run when it rained and I went out to look for birds, I went fishing and when I go there I like to do that" (Abarca, 2005). As Geraldine Abarca explains, after carrying out several workshops with Mapuche migrants from La Pintana collective, in Santiago, the memory and the idea of the place of origin, of the ancestral *mapu* (territory) is vital for the migrants in Santiago because:

> The people of the land have left in the south a sort of "cultural niche" where they find their ancestors, their relatives, the *Mapudungun* language, the memories associated with the rites and the practices they were part of in that way of life linked to agricultural work. (Abarca, 2005)

Despite the conscious efforts to maintain their heritage, discrimination in Santiago suffered by migrants or their children born in the city has often led to the denial of culture and origin. One aspect of this phenomenon of acculturation is the weakening of the intergenerational transmission of *Mapudungun*. Some parents decided not to teach their language to children to avoid ethnic or employment discrimination. Sakin, a Mapuche girl from Santiago, explains: "I think they did not teach us *Mapudungun* because of a very racial question, they realized that the Mapuche were very badly looked at." In another example of this issue, a migrant father explains the case of his children: "None of them can speak our language, they do not want to, I have not taught them either, however when going to school they treat them as Indians, but we are not Indians, we are just Mapuche" (in Abarca, 2005). At this point we must emphasize the role of cultural claims and promotion that civil organizations have had within the collectives of Santiago. Partly thanks to the financial support of the Chilean government, partly due to a revitalization of the Mapuche identity as a result of the mobilizations of southern Mapuche communities in the capital city demanding the repossession of ancestral territories and the consequent visibility in the media and urban society, from the 1990s began the creation of projects of cultural recovery among the Santiago collectives, in which the use and teaching of *Mapudungun* has a special place next to the celebration of Mapuche religious rites.

The case of Mrs E.H., born in Santiago, is paradigmatic and at the same time an echo of many others. She comments: "From the year 1995 I began to internalize about the Mapuche people for what came out on television about them. There I also learned about CONADI." (Aravena, 2008) The "internalization" she mentioned is actually a process of rearticulation of her cultural and ethnic identity, which had suffered a significant deterioration throughout the years, particularly since the early death of his mother when she was eight years old. Despite living for a time in a community in the south, and maintaining contact with her family, whom she used to visit, the isolation she suffered in Santiago and the alienation in an adverse society "froze" in her, so to speak, the use of their mother tongue:

> Of course, I remembered my language and used to speak it by myself. But it was a suffering, because it hurt my soul not to be able to talk with some else … Sometimes, I also went to the south by train, to see my father. When I was in the rural buses, I was catching up everything the Mapuche who were sitting in the buses talked about, but I never practiced it. (Aravena, 2008)

Although E.H. expresses in a dramatic way her estrangement from *Mapudungun*, her testimony highlights a feeling of personal pain that shows just part of the more complex side of this phenomenon—the intergenerational and regional conflict between the southern Mapuches and those from Santiago. In general, for those who were born in the southern communities, who learned and spoke *Mapudungun* daily, and who continued to use it after their migratory experience to the capital, the fact that a Mapuche from Santiago does not speak the language is cause for reprobation when not of discrimination. Geraldine Abarca comments on how this problem was presented in the workshops of La Pintana collective when she requested a translator during an exercise:

> In this single fact, I observed that the speakers of *Mapudungun* rebuked those who were born in Santiago for not having learned to speak their parents' language and the non-speakers answered that their parents had not taught them. Somehow, they represented their parents at the table of migrants. In the end, they recriminated each other talking all at the same time and shouting from table to table. Allegorically, I observed the break between migrant parents and children born in Santiago. (Abarca, 2005)

Returning to the case of E.H., she finally founded an organization in the commune of Lo Prado and comments on her personal experience in relation to *Mapudungun* language:

> I am the founder of my organization that today is called *Nehuen* (which means strength) and then I start to well recover the language because at first it seemed as a poorly spoken Spanish because of so much time passed in which I did not practice our way of speaking, then I recovered it, but still not 100% (in Aravena, 2008).

Beyond her individual story is a remarkable case where from this personal "internalization" would emerge a collective cultural recovery project that touches other urban Mapuche migrants and their children. Doing so they are proclaiming "we too have our own language, our way of speaking, we want society to see that we are alive and present." (Aravena, 2008) Another significant aspect of this identity amending is that it is articulated from multiple angles and positions from the Mapuche community in urban exile (and also from rural areas). Although the process of transmission-reconstruction of Mapuche memory and identity we reviewed here has arisen in the domestic environment, it runs parallel to the intensive work of artists and intellectuals that together helped in the positive self-evaluation of the difference to the Western-mestizo culture and, consequently, has allowed the Mapuche nation to position themselves before the Chilean society.

## Artists and intellectuals re-imagining the Mapuche nation

In contrast to the reiteration in the present of the fossilized history and stereotypes carried out by the state and the Chilean media renewing them before public opinion to delegitimize, make invisible, or discredit any ethnic, cultural, or territorial claim by the Mapuche people, for several years a new generation of Mapuche journalists, writers, and scholars have carried the task of refuting the negative view of the Mapuche history written by Chileans. Therefore, they have undertaken the project of rewriting their history but, perhaps more importantly, they have devoted themselves to the task of presenting it to Chilean society in general, and to their own people in particular. In 2012 an editorial note from a Mapuche journal *(Revista Rufián)* in a special issue dedicated to the urban Mapuche migrants—which are called *Warriache* by the "real" Mapuche from the south as a way to distance them—they state who they really are and how their struggle is the same as the one of the whole Mapuche nation:

> We, the Mapuche of the 21st century, are the grandchildren of those grandparents who migrated to Santiago in the 60s, to leave the impoverishment that left years of usurpation to the Mapuche territories … Most of us are the first to have university studies and we dare here in the city where we have established ourselves within local communities … to every day form our identity as Mapuche people, dealing

> with Westernization, with capitalism and other evils of consumer societies. *Warriache* they call us, and we proudly dare to write of ourselves and our people, of our struggles, of the poverty that exists in the south, and of our beloved people, who refuse to disappear. (*Revista Rufián*, 2012)

In this sense, as a social minority par excellence, the Mapuche urban community—certainly also the rural one, although with a different kind of activism, for example in relation to the social and political struggle for the recovery (peaceful and violent) of ancestral territories in the Chilean south—has been building a movement of cultural and ethnic claiming. In the first place, distancing itself from the folklorist vision, which is alienating and reductionist, placing them in an anachronistic past and present of a premodern character; and on the other hand, resisting the discourse that tries to condemn them to the margins of a society that continues to perceive the acculturation and acceptance of the model of Westernized Chile—economic, cultural, political, legal, religious, social, ecological, linguistic ways—as the only form of integration.

In another example of the Mapuche claim in the city, some contemporary poets situate themselves more directly in the process of appropriation of the new space in which they live or were born. With the poem entitled "Mapurbe," David Aniñir (2009), a Mapuche poet born in Santiago, positions *Warriache* people in the city at the same time as he claims to belong to the Mapuche nation:

> We are concrete Mapuche
> Under the asphalt our mother sleeps
> Exploited by a bastard.

But the identity is not only linked to the exploited land of its people, under the asphalt, but the poem resorts to other element extremely important for the Mapuche cultural identity, the lineage:

> Mother, old Mapuche, exiled from history
> Daughter of my benevolent village
> From the south you came to birth us
> …
> We are the children of the children of the children
> We are the grandchildren of *Lautaro* taking the bus
> To serve the rich
> We are relatives with the sun and thunder
> Raining over the stabbed earth. (Aniñir, 2009)

Aniñir enunciates a violent criticism about the conditions faced by the Mapuche people in urban exile, not only with a disadvantaged position at work—the common jobs accessed by the Mapuche migrants are as baker, construction worker, gardener, laundress or maid, "serving the rich"— but in general about their experience in the city which is marked by ethnic and cultural discrimination that often leads to self-denigration and sometimes to the denial of their origin. This situation, for example, caused close to a thousand Mapuche people, between 1970 and 1990, to legally change their names and/or surnames for fear of discrimination in the city:

> In this name-changing, Mapuche self-definition is expressed as an extreme process of denial of the Mapuche cultural identity... In this sense, the cases that we identify as rejection of identity show us how discrimination, dispossession and distortion of the Mapuche history and cultural codes make the subjects deal with their identity in a painful way. (Millaray, 1995)

Besides, maybe still dealing with their historical memory in a painful way, the contemporary Mapuche writers and intellectuals are looking to repair the damage that master narratives, as that of the Chilean National History, have inflicted in their people. One paradigmatic example of this work is that of Pedro Cayuqueo, a Mapuche journalist mentioned previously, who has been constructing a counter-narrative in his chronicles to confront the official history and its nationalist founding discourse. He replies to a famous historian, "General Cornelio Saavedra, the great architect of the occupation of the Mapuche territory in the second half of the 19th century," who coined the official phrase "The Pacification of the Araucania" and its connotations: "Three centuries of war with Spain, the Araucanians [Mapuche] finally accepted the call of civilization and progress" (Cayuqueo, 2012). His answer does not hide a hint of anger and resentment:

> At what point did Chilean official history begin to bother me for real? I suspect that when I took my university admission test and found, in the specific area of History and Social Sciences, the phrase of Saavedra again … How could historians call "pacification" a brutal genocide, an ethnic cleansing authorized by the Congress and financed with funds from the public treasury? (Cayuqueo, 2012)

If, on the one hand, Cayuqueo explicitly exposes the distorted view of the official history, on the other hand, his chronicle proposes arguments different from the official ones so that the readers of his column (written in Spanish), or the readers of the collections of his chronicles—*Sólo por ser indios* of 2012 and *Esa ruca* (house) *llamada Chile* of 2014—can understand the reason for some issues that are generally condemned by Chileans. For example, to the constant question of why the Mapuche people insist on differentiating between Chilean and Mapuche, if they are not also Chilean, another well-known Mapuche writer, Elicura Chihuailaf, responds in the following way:

> I was born and raised in a Mapuche community in which our view of the everyday life and transcendence is assumed from our own way of understanding the world: in *Mapudungun* and in the imposed Spanish; in the skin-browness in which we recognize ourselves; and in the memory of the irruption of the Chilean State that "gave us" its citizenship. Invasion verifiable in the proliferation of latifundia surrounding the reservations where we were displaced. (Chihuailaf, 2012)

But the condemnations made by the Mapuche writers not only refer to the imposition of the Spanish language but perhaps even more to the Chileans lack of will to recognize Mapuche culture and language as part of their nation. As Cayuqueo (2012) explains in another of his chronicles:

> Two peoples, two societies that speak different languages, can get to dialogue as equals? For now, the Mapuche people take the job of learning yours. In it, without going any further, I write this column. Will you speak or write ours one day?

Obviously, the question is rhetorical, the author of the chronicle knows the answer beforehand, not because it is directly answered by the society or the Chilean State–which since the Pinochet dictatorship, has actually taken steps (at least legal-administrative) toward an improvement of the situation of the indigenous people but which has not yet changed the structural adverse situation of the Mapuche in Chile.

Such a situation—linguistic subalternity aggravated by physical repression and territorial dispossession, undoubtedly all linked to an ethnic-cultural context—reveals what Walter Mignolo (2000)

calls the "colonial difference," a notion that unmasks many of the myths of the intercultural relations of contemporary neoliberal states with their indigenous peoples. In this sense, the Mapuche nation, whatever degree of sociocultural negotiation they have achieved with Chilean modernity, are situated (not only geographically but also) epistemologically in the subalternity of the Mapuche communities from the south. But Cayuqueo does not lose the opportunity to remind the Chileans, and the Mapuche people, that historical facts prove that this situation is not, as it never was, "normal," but positioned in the national consciousness since the hegemonic discourse of the Chilean state, and curiously not since colonial times:

> There was a time when being an authority and not speaking the language of my grandparents was not only politically incorrect in Chile. It also made you useless when dealing with "Kingdom's affairs". On the contrary, a good command of our language could well open the gates of Heaven. Or Lima, the capital of the Viceroyalty. Don Ambrosio O'Higgins knew it, the governor of the General Captaincy, Bernardo's father, another of our acquaintances, who also learned fluently *Mapudungun* during his childhood in Chillan … To speak the language of your main border adversary and business partner was an inevitable requirement if you wanted to come to power. (Cayuqueo, 2012)

The Mapuche chronicler, as other Mapuche writers and intellectuals do, constantly builds bridges in his texts between the silenced historical events of the Mapuche past, individual and community stories, myths and traditions, and the present of his people in today's Chile, full of injustice and of contradictions, as well as a determined and renewed Mapuche insurgence.

## Conclusions: a better future?

The identity reconstruction of the urban Mapuche represents one of the resistances of the Mapuche nation to the neoliberal state. It is a reaction that tackles one of the most persistent aspects of a problem that has worsened in the later decades: The acculturation process when migrating from the ancestral territories to the city. Paradigmatic in this sense, this cultural strategy is not disconnected from more violent aspects of the struggles the Mapuche nation is currently carrying out and which frames more radical actions such as taking land by force

and the consequent state repression. Besides conflicts and internal fractures within the movement due to geographical or generational disagreements, the Mapuche people have the great challenge of being able to articulate a political project of autonomy within the Chilean state. Remarkable in this context is the work of the Mapuche intelligentsia with sociologists, historians, professors, artists, among others, who undertake a triple task: first, they have initiated a dialogue with scholars—domestic and international—to encourage a debate around the Mapuche conflict; second, they are carrying out a formal reconstruction of the Mapuche history, but this time from within, leaving behind the classic ethno-cultural approach from Western anthropological vision (from outside); and finally, this production of knowledge can have repercussions in Chilean public opinion, as in the Mapuche community, which can benefit now from accessing not just the family or community level oral tradition but also materials that can reinforce their identity reconstruction from positions of social prestige such as publishing circuits of national scope.

For example, to mention just one of these intellectual projects, in the book suggestively titled *Listen, Winka…! Four essays on Mapuche National History and an epilogue about the future* (2006), three historians and a sociologist programmatically address the historical reconstruction of the Mapuche people against the grain of Chilean national history. With a vision from within, and not for that reason lacking objective rigor, the authors promote knowledge and debate around the causes of the conflict between the Mapuche nation and the Chilean state. But above all, the text seeks that this knowledge does not get isolated from the current actuality. Particularly in the last section, that paradigmatic "epilogue about the future," there is a lucid balance of what Chile´s return to democracy has meant for the Mapuche struggle:

> Today we cannot say that a certain political bloc is our potential ally. For some time, it was thought that the Concertation government could be, because the opposite right wing (Alliance for Chile) has shown its intolerance on the subject, a lack of knowledge of history and a denial of the rights that we have as people. But the Concertation learned well from the dictatorship to repress social movements, to undermine their bases and delegitimize demands; They have learned to handle populism and keep his population in ignorance. (Marimán et al, 2006)

But beyond the profound criticism of the state, the authors constantly allude to the possibility of an exit to the problem built on dialogue, overpassing the state's irresponsiveness to structural changes demanded by subaltern minorities as indigenous peoples are. They propose dialogue and debate with Chilean society as a whole:

> However, it is more strategic to call the ordinary citizens and invite them to reform things from their own space, to generate demands from everyday life. This may lead to a political movement with more organized groups that can make projects and demand changes. Let's talk, discuss, agree, recognize our prejudices and our ignorance of the other, because, apparently, a shared project to shake off those who oppress us can bring us closer to the well-being we all seek. (Marimán et al, 2006)

In this sense, the final proposal of the authors allows us to understand that the confrontation between the Mapuche nation and the Chilean neoliberal state now represents the summary of a problem and a phenomenon that the national states in Latin America have historically postponed: a relationship of respect and equality with the indigenous peoples of the continent. The Mapuche resistance—like so many other struggles of indigenous communities today, and of many other collectives extremely affected by neoliberalism in various countries—is proof that, despite the bicentennial efforts of nationalist homogenization, ours continues to be a region where multiple cultures and ethnic groups coexist. We just need to act accordingly to make it more just.

## Notes

[1] As in many other countries in Latin America, the childish term for indigenous people as '*indito*' (little Indian), in this case the '*mapuchito*' Cayuqueo points out, refers to a verbal strategy used by Europeans to diminish natives' subjectivity to a child-like state that persists until our times.
All the in-text citations in this chapter come from Spanish-written sources and will be our English translation.

[2] Which was a false argument as, thanks to the parliaments of Quillin (1964) and Negrete (1726), the Mapuche nation and the Spanish Crown agreed that the territories to the south of the Bio-Bio river were sovereign and therefore were not part of the territory of the new independent Chile (Bengoa, 2007).

[3] *Winka* in Mapudungun, the Mapuche language, means foreigner. It was used originally to name the Europeans but today in Chile is used mostly to reference Chileans, both white or mestizo.

[4] *Pehuenches*, Mapuche people that inhabited the South-Central region on both sides of the Andean Mountain range.

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