

# ETHNOGENESIS OR NEOINDIGENOUS INTELLIGENTSIA

## Contemporary Mapuche-Huilliche Poetry

James Park

*Universidad de Los Lagos, Osorno, Chile*

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*Abstract: The ethnic-cultural (re)naissance in Chile is currently undergoing an expansion as well as a diversification along lines of minority cultures and gender differentiations. Since the explosion onto the Chilean literary landscape of the bilingual poet Leonel Lienlaf in 1989, Mapuche-Huilliche writers have come into the spotlight of academia, state, and popular culture critics. Younger generations of Huilliche poets are distinguishing themselves through a hybrid, reflexive, and literary expressiveness. In opposition to the poetry that is tied to indigenous cultural institutions, orality, and traditional rural forms of existence, these poets thrive and strive for a pluricultural and complex way of living and expressing themselves. This work explores a selection of poets and their individual circumstances in an attempt to delineate the differences within and between these poets and the more traditional ones, and suggest a greater cultural change that is coming about in south Chile.*

The unique perspective of the indigenous voice in Latin American literature and history has been examined in western academia since the first chronicles began to circulate and long before the concept of indigenous literature became accepted.<sup>1</sup> In the region's contemporary, globalized, and postcolonial societies in particular, however, the question of subalternity, and who is subaltern to whom, has become more complex and is an interesting cultural study in and of itself (Spivak 1988). Postcolonial theory assumes the existence of a dominant/subordinate relationship in which there are significant issues of power and control through actions, practices, and other forms of expression (Bhabha 1990). Contemporary Latin American indigenous social movements, however, have subtly

1. Miguel León Portilla published *Visión de los vencidos* (Mexico: Biblioteca del Estudiante Universitario) in 1959. Long before that, Father Bernardino de Sahagún had worked extensively on transcribing testimonies of indigenous peoples of Mexico and on pre-Columbian and Colonial codices in the XVI Century. Gordon Brotherston, in his *Book of the Fourth World* (1992), extensively documents literary traditions throughout the Americas that existed long before the arrival of the Spaniards.

and dexterously manipulated this dialectic to their advantage in many ways.<sup>2</sup> One can turn to various recent events that evoke the need for a much more complex approach to the study of these movements and, specifically, their lines of action and methods of discourse.<sup>3</sup> For if discourse shapes or has the ability to engender identity, it also has engrained within its syntax and symbolism a system of differentiation, if not an explicit attempt by the speaker to stand apart from an Other (Foucault 1972; Said 1979; van Dijk 1993). Not only does discourse differentiate, it also has encoded within a way of perceiving the world, the self and the Other—something particularly useful in bridging the gap of understanding between historically opposed cosmologies (Mignolo 2000; Bordieu 2000). Discourse also is a constantly changing phenomenon that, in a specific setting of time and place, can lead us to a greater understanding of difference and heterogeneity within our own society (Jameson 1991). The greater global/national versus regional/local discursive patterns that are becoming more relevant in developing economic and social policies can be studied, to a certain extent, in the artistic productions of a specific generation of poets, members of a doubly marginalized social group in south-central Chile (Chomsky 1985; White 1992).<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this exploration is to underscore the distinctiveness of a specific group of Mapuche-Huilliche poets, through their roles as artistic creators and cultural representatives, in establishing both a poetic and political variant expression in the contemporary Chilean indigenous cultural landscape and, to a greater extent, in modern Latin American literature.<sup>5</sup> These young poets are constructing a new identity via a subaltern societal and artistic project, generated from a multicultural poetic stance and discursive practices that are a product of their unique aesthetic and political experiences.<sup>6</sup> In order to simplify

2. For more, see, for example Joanne Rappaport's "Reinvented Traditions: The Heraldry of Ethnic Militancy in the Colombian Andes" (1992) and Xavier Albó's "From MNRistas to Kataristas to Katari" (1987).

3. Consider the unexpected (and still developing) outcomes of such phenomena as the Zapatista rebellion that began in 1994; the overthrow by a disarticulated indigenous movement of Jamil Mahuad's government in Ecuador in 2000; or the election of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia in 2006.

4. The authors discussed here have been marginalized both by their origins in peripheral Chile (not in Santiago), but more significantly by their ethnic identity—though later, this factor has become a benefit, for some though only to a certain extent.

5. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, indigenous movements across the region have given rise to multiple forms of expression: artistic, political, and others. These poets presented here are comparable to a certain degree with the experiences of the literary renaissance among the Yucatec Maya with writers such as Jorge Cocom Pech; Zapotec authors like Javier Castellanos, both Mesoamerican narrators; Iguaniginape Kungiler, along side a number of other Kuna orators; a broad range of Quechua poets with Lily Flores and Eduardo Ninamango among them, and many more.

6. For our purposes, this group of authors seems to be subaltern to the already subaltern indigenous writers who consolidated their position in Chilean literary circles in the 1990s

and to demonstrate this contrast, I distinguish two sets of contemporary self-identified Mapuche poets from southern Chile. These sets are differentiated by three factors—geography, generation, and education—though I also introduce an exception to underscore the frail nature of such generalizations and to draw attention to the diversity within an otherwise seemingly homogenous cultural-artistic group. It is important to note that these distinctions are fluid in nature, and by no means are they to be considered as a rule, as social phenomena in general are not static. This is, rather, the representation of a literary (and I believe, social) phenomenon that is evidencing itself in the Chilean cultural landscape—a phenomenon that highlights the diversity and contradictions in what is usually considered a homogenous indigenous form of expression. I refer here to contemporary indigenous writers of southern Chile who self-ascribe and are identified as Mapuche (or Huilliche as the case may be).<sup>7</sup>

The geographic distinction, historically significant and appearing just as important today, is a political border separating the ninth and tenth regions (Región de la Araucanía and Región de Los Lagos, respectively). Additionally, closely following this artificial demarcation, are the internal linguistic differences that distinguish the indigenous populations using the city of Valdivia as an approximate dividing point between those who speak Tsezungun (south), few though they may be, and those who speak the more prevalent Mapuzungun (north)—though there is also an east/west axis that demarcates other linguistic variables—Lafkenche (west) versus Pehuenche (east), respectively.<sup>8</sup> In any case, these differences have been exacerbated in recent years by either the state or by linguistic anthropologists and have systematically, though to a certain extent usefully, obviated the fluctuating nature of millennial borders

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(Elicura Chihuailaf Nahuelpan and Lorenzo Aillapán Cayuleo, among others). Moreover, they take positions, to a certain extent, against some of these “consecrated” writers who preceded them, choosing to write along Western canons, literary rather than oral in nature, but at the same time they refuse to renounce their own indigenous ancestries or deny their newly developing identities. Articles elaborating on these and similar topics can be found in *Crítica situada: El estado actual del arte y la poesía Mapuche* (García Barrera et al. 2005).

7. In the 2002 national census, 4.6 percent of Chile’s population, or 692,192 individuals out of a population of 15,116,435, declared themselves belonging to an ethnic group. Of this number, 87.3 percent (604,349 people) declared themselves as Mapuche. The census does not distinguish between Moluche, Pikunche, Lafkenche, Pehuenche or Huilliche. Academic distinctions are made on the basis of linguistic variations and geographic location within the greater Mapuche zone, comprised of, primarily, the eighth, ninth, and tenth regions. See *Estadísticas de los Pueblos Indígenas en Chile, Censo 2002* (INE 2005).

8. Though the Mapuche generally do not make distinctions among themselves beyond geographic origin, Rodolfo Lenz, in *Estudios Araucanos (1895–1897)*, made the four basic linguistic distinctions that are followed to this day: Pikunche (north), Moluche (central), Pehuenche (west) and Huilliche (south), though the Lafkenche (east, or coastal) has been incorporated as both a geographic and linguistic distinction.

and cultural-economic patterns of exchange.<sup>9</sup> We can also point to certain colonial historical factors which may have contributed to a sense of difference and unique identity in this particular case using, precisely, Valdivia as a geographic pivotal point.<sup>10</sup>

Spanish forces established the forts around Valdivia in 1552, Niebla, Corral, Mancera, as *avantguard* settlements for their troop movements in the southern provinces of the Capitanía General de Chile during their battles against the Mapuche (at the time called Araucano) settlements primarily located between the Bío-Bío and Tolten rivers, north of Valdivia.<sup>11</sup> Though destroyed along with most of the Spanish settlements in the south during the uprisings of 1598, Valdivia, once refounded, persisted as a strategic access point to what is presently known as the Región de la Araucanía and points south. While colonial forces attempted to consolidate this territory, trying to unite the central valley between the rivers with the austral regions, the military focused its energies in today's provinces of Bío-Bío, Malleco and Cautín (eighth and ninth regions), where it encountered the fiercest resistance. The Treaty of Quilín, which was passed in 1641, subdued the bloodshed and violent incursions to some degree, and the Mapuche gained recognition as a sovereign state from the Spanish Crown. The limits were placed at the Bío-Bío River (eighth region) and the Calle-Calle River of Valdivia, however, establishments further south remained and were used to encroach on, influence, and promote territorial dismemberment. New pacts and treaties were necessary for more than 100 years after, culminating, for our purposes, in the 1793 Parliament of Osorno (known as *El tratado de las canoas*), allowing Spanish occupation and appropriations of lands and settlements beyond the previously established borders.<sup>12</sup> This was not the case further north.

The 1793 Parliament of Negrete maintained the status quo, but it permitted Catholic missionaries into the territory. It was not until after Chile finally gained independence (1818), and consolidated nitrate-rich

9. Most Mapuche historically did not distinguish between north, south, east, and west, but only since independence, and the prevalence of the greater issues of territorial dismemberment, forced acculturation, political and ethnic persecution, has there been a tendency to differentiate, due to the necessary legal classifications of language practices and ethnic origin.

10. Though the geographical distinction looms large as a differentiating factor, this paper is not intended to explain the relationship between geography and discourse among the two groups of poets. That is a project destined to be carried out by others.

11. Most historical material is from Bengoa (1991) and Wilhelm de Moesbach (1984); see also, Loveman (1988) and Molina (1998).

12. Rolf Foerster and Jorge Vergara discuss the territorial disputes that were resolved with this treaty. Lands in today's tenth and eleventh regions were ceded to Spaniards at this time, but it was not until the second decade of the twentieth century that the largest tracts here were usurped and granted to primarily German immigrants by the government of the time (Vicente Pérez Rosales was charged with handling the immigration program in the south, under Manuel Montt's presidency).

territories in the north as a result of the 1879 War of the Pacific, that the republican army was able to mount a large enough force to enter, and eventually subjugate the Mapuche caciques during the misnomered *Pacificación de la Araucanía* (1881).<sup>13</sup> These differences have made for some bitter exchanges among contemporary Mapuche regarding history, territory, and language.<sup>14</sup> Language, territory, and degree of acculturation of western traditions have consistently been factors scholars have studied when attempting to identify and differentiate cultural associations and relative levels of westernization, but for our purposes, this is less of interest than the possible development of a new identity, an ethnogenesis, or maybe, equally interesting and important, the birth of a neo-intelligentsia of Huilliche origins in southern Chile. For the purposes of this paper, I will only focus on the work of three poets from the north and four from the south, with one being the exception, both linguistically and thematically, to the other three from the south (understanding that there are approximately three dozen other writers who exemplify the norm as well as the exception).<sup>15</sup>

Aside from the stylistic and other differences, similarities abound in the formation of each of these individuals. One will note that all of them, to some degree, have been educated in the Chilean school system, although some have not completed their university educations. It is important to note that, with the exception of María Isabel Lara Millapán

13. For more, see José Bengoa's *Historia del pueblo mapuche* and Father Wilhelm de Moesbach's transcription of the longko Pascual Coña's testimony *Testimonio de un cacique mapuche*.

14. The author witnessed an exchange, in the context of the Seminario Internacional de Derechos Humanos y Pueblos Indígenas (Temuco, 2003), between two *longko*, in which the one from a community in the north (ninth region) chided in mapuzugun the other from the south (tenth) for not speaking the language. Afterwards, the *longko* from the south made a backhanded remark in Spanish about how much land the other one controlled, mentioning the great extent of his own. Deeply entrenched animosities such as these are rarely discussed or interpreted as culturally differentiating markers, but here they reveal great differences perceived and clearly identified within a not-so-homogenous cultural group.

15. Contemporary indigenous poets of southern Chile know and cite the works of both Sebastián Queulpul and José Santos Lincomán (from the ninth and tenth regions respectively), both from the first half of the twentieth century. There is also a plethora of writers who, while primarily writing in Spanish, maintain the cultural identification with the Mapuche and their traditions. Among monolingual poets from the tenth region, is Graciela Huinao who, while belonging to an older generation (born in 1956, Osorno), proposes a cultural poetry rooted in rural traditions and concepts. César Millahueique (1961, raised in Osorno), also draws on ancestral tradition for inspiration in his work, but tends to emphasize a much more urban-based creative line. Febe Manquepillán (1960, Lanco), on the other hand, publishes bilingual poetry, and is much more akin to the work of her ninth region colleagues. Maribel Mora Curriao (1970, Panguipulli) has worked along both lines of inquiry as to cultural identification, but her work is monolingual and primarily responding to indigenous references. For more, see Huenún's anthology of twenty Mapuche poets (LOM, 2003).

(of the northern group), the writers did not originally study in the field of literature. In addition, both elder poets were raised and formed before the military dictatorship, which means their perspective and manner of expression have been shaped by the time in which they lived. Also, all of these writers have experienced what it means to be part of the periphery in both linguistic and ethnic terms; experiencing bigotry and racism is not unfamiliar to them, though the younger generation has a very different perspective on these issues than the older one. Again, I believe three factors explain these distinctions: geography, generation, education—all of which help explain differences and similarities among these writers who have obtained significant positions in the otherwise elitist and xenophobic Chilean literary circles.

Starting in the north, and with an older generation, we have the case of Lorenzo Aillapán Cayuleo, born in 1940 in the community of Rukatraro, near Puerto Saavedra (the coastal area of the ninth region).<sup>16</sup> He is widely known as an imitator of bird songs, and he has acted in films, recorded a CD, and has been invited abroad to various poetry and cultural events.<sup>17</sup> He studied journalism, theatre, and music but does not hold a formal degree. He has published two collections of poetry, *Hombre pájaro* (1995) and *Üñümche: Hombre pájaro* (2003). The first of these earned him the Premio Casa de Las Américas: Literaturas Indígenas in 1994.<sup>18</sup> A fragment of an extensive poem in the first publication (not reappearing in the second) is indicative of the content and style of his work (figure 1).<sup>19</sup>

As noted in an earlier study on Aillapán Cayuleo (Park 2001), the entire text, not only this poem, geographically explores the area of his ancestry, marking distinctions in toponyms, Mapuche and Spanish nomenclature, and strategic settlements along the primary rivers of the region. “Traytrayko” or “Cascada natural milenaria,” as this poem is titled, mirrors the sinuous route of the Chol-Chol river, stopping as it

16. “North” must be understood here as the region generally comprising the IX Región de la Araucanía, reserving the use of “south” for the geographic zone primarily designated as the X Región de Los Lagos. Again, though it is somewhat arbitrary, I believe the geographic distinction has been validated through the historical differences discussed above.

17. As a guest on variety and talk shows (*Sábados Gigantes*, etc.), he displayed his onomatopoeic abilities. Feature films he has acted in: *La Frontera* (1992) and *Cautiverio Feliz* (1998), and a short independent film: *Wichan—Juicio Mapuche* (1999). The CD is titled, *20 poemas alados*, and was edited in 2001.

18. This second book contains some poems from the first, but is designed, conceptually, exclusively as a collection of bird songs.

19. The poetry was originally published in a bilingual format. This paper, however, does not attempt to explore the linguistic aspects of the Mapuzugun versions. Others have made significant incursions in that field. See, for example, Golluscio (1984), Catrileo and others. The Mapuzugun translations are included here for their documentary value.

TRAYTRAYKO FEYTA MONGEN,  
 ayiwvn ka poyewvn  
 epu fvtra amun witrnko tuwvkvley  
 epu chang zdomo reke femngey  
 pañuzdkvley  
 Chol-Chol leufu ka Kawtin leufv:  
 feula kiñewvn vlkantun mew  
 mangiñko leufv  
 zdiñum apopuy konum leufv lafken  
 waria mew  
 Wallotu rumeley Karawe waria pvle,  
 kuyfi mvlewen cheyem  
 kiñewvn trawvupuy leufv engv ko  
 fvtra newen  
 Tvfapvle fvzdo leufv mew tuwi,  
 llegv reke fey chi koyagtun  
 fey: poyewvn, mongen ka ayiwvn rvf  
 fey pingey  
 tachi fey: ñiwvlfalay: mongen,  
 ayiuwvn  
 Yeneyey kuyfi ñi laku vyem  
 TRAYTRAYKO  
 Kizdu ñi traytray vl ka allangechi  
 zdakeluwvn ko  
 fvtra ponwi, witrn llufv, pvzdkan  
 kochi mvrkeley  
 Chol-Cholzdomo reke tralkamatra,  
 fillpvle rumeley  
 Epe mary epu kuykuy tuwe rumey,  
 welu kizdu fey mvtem

TRAYTRAYKO ES VIDA, alegría y  
 amor  
 dos cauces torrentosos de aguas  
 semejantes a dos piernas suaves  
 femeninas  
 que une en realidad aguas sin me-  
 didas  
 río CHOL-CHOL y río CAUTIN:  
 Hoy conforman el ruidoso río  
 IMPERIAL  
 fluye hacia la barra de Puerto  
 Saavedra  
 pasando por CARAHUE, la antigua  
 Imperial  
 a sumarse con las aguas del mar  
 poderoso  
 universal recorrido a través del  
 Océano Pacífico.  
 Por ese cordón fluvial nace, proviene  
 ese don  
 de amor, vida y alegría, pues así se  
 llama.  
 Ella es inconfundible: vida, alegría  
 y amor  
 lleva por apellido totémico Tray-  
 trayko  
 sonido natural y romántico del agua  
 profundo, caudaloso, turbia,  
 achocolatada  
 Chol-cholina llena de curvas, atra-  
 viesa  
 decenas de puentes, pero es ella  
 misma.

(Aillapán Cayuleo 1995, 8–9)

Figure 1

flows downstream where the Quilin Treaty was signed. Onomatopoei-  
 cally, the poem describes the running waters that irrigate the banks of  
 settlements steeped in the embattled history of the region, Carahue,  
 Imperial, and Puerto Saavedra—founded in 1885 and named for the  
 general and commander-in-chief of the army, Cornelio Saavedra, who  
 initially proposed the plan that led to the misnomer Pacificación de la  
 Araucanía (1861–1883) and was later assigned duties in the Guerra del  
 Pacífico against Peru and Bolivia (1879–1884).<sup>20</sup>

20. See <http://www.ejercito.cl>

Territorial recuperation has been one of the greatest points of conflict in the recurring struggle between neoliberal states and indigenous peoples when national infrastructure is at odds with conservation and preservation of lands, environment, and native traditions. While Aillapán Cayuleo echoes these concerns by evoking the historical period that still causes strain in state negotiations with indigenous peoples' rights, he places linguistic evidence of a historical nexus between the Mapuche and the land that was usurped towards the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup> By recalling past territorial conflicts, Aillapán Cayuleo places current land rights concerns in the forefront. The political undercurrent of his work is difficult to overlook, especially when one considers that land recuperation protests were rising in and around Temuco, of which the most cited case is one in response to the expulsion of indigenous families from ancestral lands and the construction of the hydroelectric plant in the community of Ralco, in the upper Bío-Bío River basin.

Language and territory heavily mark this author's poetry and are topics for which he is known. He refers to them more insistently in his recent work, in regards to the fauna pertinent to the geographic zone where environmental issues take a more prominent position. Pertinence being a key factor in identifying cultural origin, the poets from this region insist on geography and on local, communal practices, and culturally significant institutions such as the *machi* (healer, visionary), the *longko* (literally the head, or tribal chief), the *weupife* (grand orator, sage), or the *werken* (communal messenger).

It is these last two cultural figures that have been associated with—and the writer himself has assumed these roles—perhaps the most widely known and respected poet, Elicura Chihuailaf Nahuelpán.<sup>22</sup> Born in Quechurewe in 1952, a community just south of the regional capital, Temuco, Chihuailaf Nahuelpán studied obstetric medicine at the Universidad de Concepción, until a punctured lung, the result of an altercation with the police, and the reiterative harassment of his family due to his father's political affiliation prevented him from continuing his studies.<sup>23</sup> Being the most prolific published writer of his generation, his work has been translated into multiple languages, he has appeared in various

21. This is significantly different that the experience of the Huilliche, who accepted interaction with the Spanish (and later the Chilean state) long before (1793) those from the central valley to the north, who were forced to accept incursion by the state beginning in 1881.

22. In my study, "Recuperation through Renovation: Mapuche Poets as *Machis*," I concluded an association with the healer figure in Mapuche society. However, the other subject of the study, Leonel Lienlaf, seems to have, over time, more effectively achieved this distinction, and Chihuailaf has left that moniker to Lienlaf, taking it upon himself that of messenger of his people to the nonindigenous people in Chile and abroad.

23. Personal unpublished interview, 1997.

anthologies (national and international), and he has organized cultural and literary events among indigenous writers and nonindigenous writers alike from Chile and beyond.<sup>24</sup> Spanning more than four decades, his poetry is indicative of a constant theme relating to divinatory dreams and messages for the non-Mapuche population, but also an emphasis on oral traditions and the importance of the spoken word over the written,<sup>25</sup> though his publications may be interpreted as countering this notion.<sup>26</sup> These publications also demonstrate an evolution in skill and a gaining of acceptance among a wider audience, starting with editions that were made in small, sometimes underground, printing presses: *El invierno y su imagen* (1977), *En el país de la memoria (maputukulpakey)* (1988), and *El invierno su imagen y otros sueños azules* (1990). His more recent works were published prestigious editorial houses, such as the now defunct Editorial Universitaria (*De sueños azules y contrasueños*, 1995), Editorial Pehuen (*Ti kim vl: Todos los cantos*, 1996), and LOM (*Recado confidencial a los chilenos*, 1999), and reflect a systematic attempt at reaching out to the nonindigenous.<sup>27</sup> *Ti kom vl: Todos los cantos*, was commissioned by Pehuen and is his selection and translation (into Mapuzugun) of poetry by Pablo Neruda.<sup>28</sup> *Recado confidencial a los chilenos* is an open letter to the Chilean people, in which he describes various aspects ranging from Mapuche cosmology to governmental policy toward the indigenous populations of Chile. Aside from the different format used here, the letter, the explicit attempt to “educate” the Chilean populous is evident. His poetry and political stance have consistently stayed within the lines of defending cultural autonomy and always recalling, and relying on, concepts and symbols of mystical proportions.

24. Chihuailaf’s work (and he has participated, too) has also been adapted in the music of bands such as Illapu (*Morena esperanza*, 1998) and Sur Profundo (*La selva fría*, 1997).

25. In a personal communication with the author, he spoke of his background and perception of traditional “literary” formats: “lo fundamental para nosotros es la palabra, por eso que el nuxam es una conversación, y la conversación es una manera de . . . es decir es un género—podríamos decir—referente al arte, si lo trasladamos a una mente occidental, porque siempre hay un cuidado en el uso, el buen uso, del lenguaje.” (Personal communication, 1997)

26. Leonel Lienlaf has developed work more along the lines of orality through publications in CD format—*Leonel Lienlaf, Canto y poesía mapuche* (1998)—and in video, where he has been involved in the script development—*Punalka: el Alto Bío-Bío* (1995) and *Wirarün: el grito* (1998).

27. Verónica Contreras underscores Chihuailaf’s efforts in the diffusion of Mapuche culture over the years in “La escritura poética de Elicura Chihuailaf: la nueva salida del sol,” appearing in *Crítica situada. El estado actual del arte y la poesía Mapuche* (Universidad de la Frontera, 2005).

28. Though Chihuailaf maintains close relationships with contemporary Chilean (non-Mapuche) poets, in the introduction to this text, he explicitly underscores his limited exposure to Neruda, beyond the standards to which any Chilean is familiar in school and popular culture.

Tami zugun ta kultrun zugun  
 kechiley  
 fey feypiyeenew ñi pu kuyfikeche  
 welu gynewkvley ñi kizu kimneel chi  
 kimvnmu egvn  
 Feymew tami azkan kimvn mew  
 nvtramkaymu tami pu wenviemu  
 ka fey weupimeamy pu wigkaemu  
 Wente relmu mew pvralen ta wifentu  
 yawvlfñi mapu  
 meli gen kvrvf ta afkazineenew  
 Kam tromvmu chi kewan  
 taiñ kayñe iñchiñ chi—pilerpuy ñi  
 rakizwam  
 kam kvñe antv mollfvñ ta kolotualu  
 trokiwvn  
 tañi pu che ñi rvpv.

Tus palabras son como el sonido del  
 kultrún  
 me están diciendo mis antepasados  
 pues se sujetan en el misterio de la  
 sabiduría  
 Por eso con tu lenguaje florido  
 conversarás con los amigos  
 e irás a parlamentar con los winka  
 Montado sobre un arcoiris viajo por  
 el mundo  
 los cuatro dueños del viento me  
 acompañan  
 Tal vez en las nubes deba combatir  
 contra nuestros enemigos—voy  
 pensando  
 tal vez un día con sangre pintaré  
 los caminos de mi pueblo  
 (90–91)

Figure 2

“Femgechi amuley ñi pewma ni wenche pelon kintun—Así trans-curren mis sueños mis visiones” (from *De sueños azules y contrasueños*) illustrates this attentiveness to the latent orality through the divinatory dream (figure 2).

Patently, his emphasis on the words of his ancestors, the image of the *kultrún* (the *machi*'s ritual drum) surround the message of a personal mission to communicate with the dominant culture under which his own has long suffered and is continuously being mistreated, misrepresented, and misinterpreted. Chihuailaf Nahuelpán, having the highest level of acceptance among Chilean writers, the academy, certain authorities, and a growing international following, has also become somewhat of a touchstone for younger generations of poets and artists. They are benefiting from the long and difficult road he traversed in previous years—an endeavor that has made the younger generation's journeys easier, but not necessarily free from the challenges cultural elitism, literary snobbism, and sexist politics.

María Isabel Lara Millapán is one poet who also has had to overcome a sometimes blatantly sexist literary tradition. Much younger than her male counterparts, and differentiating herself significantly from them, Lara Millapán was born in Chihuiimpilli (in the Comuna of Freire, some thirty kilometers south of Temuco) in 1979. She studied and received her degree in *pedagogía básica* (elementary education) from the Universidad Católica in Villarrica and has published *Puliwen ñi pewma sueños de un amanecer* (2002). In “Identidad” / “Tuwun” she explores some of the same

Y si se van tus sueños	Fey amutule tami pewma
Y olvidan la palabra de los abuelos tus labios,	Fey moymatulmi pu fúchake che ñi dungun,
¿Adónde quedan los hijos de la tierra?	vvIni am kimeltuafillin mawidantu
¿A quién enseñamos el silencio de nuestros bosques?	ñi ñükúf?
Donde sólo florecen nuestros ecos	Chew püle ñi rayüken taiñ aukiñko
Donde sólo cantan las aves	Chew taiñ ülkantuken inchiñ müten
que conocemos desde tanto tiempo.	ñi kimnielchi üñüm, fütira
Podemos ir lejos de nuestros montes,	Kuyfi mew.
Ir lejos de nuestras vertientes,	Pepi amuafullin
Para volver hermano,	Ka mapu ñi nelfün püle,
Para volver . . .	Welu taiñ wiñomeal lamgen,
Porque aquí está nuestra tierra,	Taiñ wiñomeal,
Porque aquí está nuestra gente,	Feytamew müli taiñ mapu,
Un espacio del kultrung	Feytamew müli taiñ pu che
Donde hoy caminamos mirando las	Kiñe kultrung ñi wall
araucarias,	Chew taiñ trekamun fachantú
Donde hoy sonríen nuestros ojos.	Adkintuniel pewen,
	Che taiñ alleken ñi pu nge . . .
	(Lara Millapán 2002, 60–61)

Figure 3

traditional concepts as Chihuailaf Nahuelpán and Aillapán Cayuleo, with verse that is steeped in Mapuche culture but noticeably different in presentation (figure 3).

Lara Millapán's decision to place the poem in Spanish first, followed with Mapuzugun is notable, though this order is not consistent throughout the collection. This perhaps mirrors a generational difference rather than a stylistic one, where in her upbringing she was not as entrenched in the struggle for cultural independence, through linguistic expression, that many Mapuche enjoy the fruits of today.<sup>29</sup> Again, dreams and, more importantly, the sayings of the ancestors and the persistence of memory is key in the preservation of cultural identity—an identity so deeply rooted in the surrounding nature that some knowledge is only passed through teachings about the significance behind the silence of the trees, the bird's song, the hills and streams. Invoking the symbol of the *kultrung* [sic] again and local topography, this young poet receives not only the cultural traditions of her ancestors, but she also passes on the literary (as well as oral) traditions begun by that older generation of poets that came before her—specifically Aillapán Cayuleo and

29. The struggle for cultural autonomy continues, but there have been significant advances since the signing of the Ley Indígena of 1993, and subsequent programs developed along these lines.

Chihuailaf Nahuelpán.<sup>30</sup> Lara Millapán demonstrates that the continuation of culturally and geographically pertinent knowledge is a vibrant, rich, and historically complex theme among contemporary indigenous writers in southern Chile.

Thematic similarities end and cultural referents become obscure, though equally if not more complex, when we explore the literary expressions of their counterparts further to the south.<sup>31</sup> The poets who self-ascribe as Huilliche propose a less reverent position toward traditional practices and a cultural identity closely tied to ancestral territories. Their public discourse goes beyond the cultural referents that their northern neighbors espouse, incorporating stylistic analyses and aesthetic critiques of world literary figures, public political figures, themselves and their own generation comrades.

Bernardo Javier Colipán Filgueira, the eldest of the Huilliche poets presented here, was born in Rahue, Comuna Osorno, in 1966. He is a high school teacher of history and geography and currently resides and works in Coronel, in the eighth region. His poetry has been published in several anthologies, including *Zonas de emergencia, antología crítica de la poesía joven del sur de Chile* (1994), which he edited, and he has also worked in the compilation of testimonies of rural Huilliche elders, resulting in a publication titled *Pulotre: Testimonios de vida de una comunidad Huilliche* (1999). His collection *Arco de interrogaciones* (2005) is his first extensive collection of poetry, and its content plays with the ambivalent, sometimes difficult, negotiation between the rural and the urban, indigenous and western styles of life.<sup>32</sup>

“Inventario” clearly situates the reader in an urban or semi-urban environment. Though the indigenous language makes an appearance, it does not appear as a separate version of the poem, and it is appreciatively not referencing Mapuzugun in oral terms as seen in the previous authors’ works, but precisely the opposite, as we read the voice writing the words on the steamed-up window pane.<sup>33</sup>

30. Chihuailaf writes a brief prologue to her publication.

31. This is not to say that the following poets do not explore indigenous traditions in their work. One needs only to look at the work of Osorno natives, such as Jaime Huenún’s *Ceremonias* (1999) or *Oratorio al señor de Pucatrihue* (2004) by César Millahueique, to find such evidence, but I have selected poems and collections that reflect a somewhat different tendency, one that does not entirely exclude the first but significantly differs and underscores a less confrontational experience with both the historical and contemporary other, and cohabits the self and the ancestral indigenous territory of Chile.

32. Colipán has explained to the author in a personal interview that the “arco” is the arrangement of branches of *canelo* as entry and exit points for the horseback riders who arrive from other communities to participate in the *nguillatún* rituals.

33. In “La textualidad poética en la escritura de Bernardo Colipán” (*Crítica situada. El estado actual del arte y la poesía Mapuche* (2005), Verónica Contreras highlights the poliphonic and complex intertextuality character of his work.

Una manta de castilla mojada de rocío.  
 Un pasaje de micro, un frasco con semillas.  
 Alas de ganso colgadas en la ventana.  
 Junto a la foto de un candidato a diputado, un poster  
 De Leo Dan.  
 En el brasero hierve un tarro  
 Con hojas de eucaliptus.  
 La radio toca una ranchera que habla de nosotros.  
 En un rincón el silencio juega un solitario.  
 Escribo "Kuifi rupai, kuifi rupai", en los vidrios  
 Empañados de la casa:  
 (Mucho tiempo ha pasado  
 mucho tiempo ha pasado).  
 Sólo quedan algunas migas esparcidas  
 En la mesa.  
 Te necesito.  
 Esta noche la soledad se niega  
 Dibujar una mujer a mi lado. (2005, 63)

The western and mestizo components set the scene, from the Castilian *manta*, to the bus ticket, to the political candidate's photo, to the Leo Dan poster.<sup>34</sup> However, there are clear indications of rurality, if these are not clearly indigenous references. Besides the words written on glass—on a significantly nonpermanent, and transparent, surface, we see the container of seeds, the goose feathers, the pot boiling with leaves of eucalyptus. The list (inventory) paints for the reader a scene of poetic and experiential hybridity, in which the linguistic reference weighs heavily upon the signified, incorporating the translation for the reader, as if in an attempt to demonstrate the double register with which the poetic voice works on a daily basis. Colipán Filgueira raises the question of identity in the symbol announced in the title of the collection, *Arco de interrogaciones*, which he develops throughout the text. Sections of the text explore the author's identity, from the section, "Arco del vacío," where his own ancestors are chronicled, to the section, "Arco de la memoria y su transparencia," where memory problematizes the transparency of his being. In "Ese difícil oficio de leer a Encina," his questioning of his own profession comes to bear:

Por años estuvo en boca de muchos  
 maestros de escuela,  
 Puzzles  
 y varias calles aún  
 Llevan hoy su nombre.  
 Todo lo aprendido  
 Con buena razón fue olvidado.

34. Leo Dan is a musician, singer-songwriter from Argentina, popular in the 1970s and 1980s throughout most of Latin America.

La historia es un ojo,  
 Sumergido en las noche,  
 palabras  
 para no ser dichas  
 Sino para mirarnos en ellas  
 como si fueran  
 un espejo roto.  
 Y fue difícil leer el lenguaje  
 oculto  
 detrás de lo nombrado.

Hoy,  
 Bailamos *purrrún* al mediodía  
 sobre nosotros  
 Vuelo circular de gaviotas.  
 Mañana  
 tendremos respuesta  
 De cartas enviadas a parientes lejanos.  
 Nuevamente  
 Se hablará del Séptimo de Línea.  
 El silencio  
 será lo más mano que se tenga.  
 También en los territorios del vacío  
 Se juega su sentido la palabra.

*Hasta yo puedo recordar el día en que los  
 historiadores dejaron en  
 Blanco sus paginas por todas aquellas cosas que  
 ignoraban*

*Ezra Pound (2005, 107–108)*

Here the famed Chilean historian, Francisco de Encina, required reading for any Chilean history course, is made into a buffoon. More conspicuously, history itself is undermined as an authoritative field of research, and the text is questioned as a source of knowledge and real meaning. He ends on a quote from Ezra Pound, who, in his own *Cantos*, attempted to reconstruct, in epic poetic fashion, the history of civilization itself, but is ultimately denied by doubt and uncertainty of the validity of his sources.<sup>35</sup> Again, Huilliche traditions surface in the mention of the *purrrún*, a dance, but it falls into the background as the letters from relatives and the historical novel, *Adiós al séptimo de línea* (Inostrosa 1955) become reference texts for the reconstruction of memory—one constructed from the populous and not from academia. The intertextual referents and the irony with which Colipán Filgueira treats the subject

35. Encina is part of a polemic in which he is accused of plagiarizing Diego Barros Arana's *Historia de Chile* and of making up facts, all the while being quoted as saying: "La historia exige más imaginación que escribir un cuento o una novella." (Memoria Chilena)

sets him apart from the culturally pertinent and geographically rooted poetry of the previous three writers.

Irony and popular culture become greater poetic factors and significantly stronger determiners of identity in the worldview expressed through the poetry of Juan Paulo Wirimilla Oyarzo.<sup>36</sup> Born in Calbuco in 1973, in the province of Llanquihue (a community located on the Chacao channel, west of the regional capital, Puerto Montt), Wirimilla Oyarzo became a professor of Spanish, with a degree from the Universidad de Los Lagos, and has finished a program in Bilingual Intercultural Education (EIB) from the same institution. He recently returned to live in Calbuco and teaches at the Universidad de Los Lagos Chinquihue campus in Puerto Montt and at a rural municipal school. His first collection of poetry, *Ojo de vidrio*, was published after winning the Luis Oyarzún regional prize for poetry in 2002. In addition to appearing in various anthologies, his work has also been published the bilingual elementary school instructional book, *Cantos para niños de Chile* (2005a), with the collaboration of Víctor Cifuentes, another Mapuche poet from Temuco, who also helps translate his colleagues' work into Mapuzugun. *Palimpsesto* (2005b) provides a refreshing view of cross-cultural dynamics and ethnic hybrid tensions and aspirations.<sup>37</sup> Like Colipán Filgueira, Wirimilla Oyarzo's cynical perspective regarding his own profession floats to the surface through much of his work:

Oh! Lector! Mi objeto de estudio  
 El más occidental del laberinto  
 Corrige esta baba tan espumosa  
 Porque poesía es un largometraje verde  
 De películas de Cowboy  
 Y tú eres el indio que nunca alcanzará  
 La diligencia  
 Porque John Wayne te ha puesto el rifle  
 Entre dientes  
 Y el cuchillo del cara pálida está  
 Muy escondido en esta escritura  
 Oh mi lector! Enemigo  
 Corre el reloj a tu izquierda  
 Las entrañas se te llenan de sangre. (2005b, 97)

"Poética," as this poem is titled, mixes contemporary literary theory (reader-response), and inverts the relationship of the writer and the reader, with intertextual references to classical Spanish poetry (Luis de

36. His Huilliche last name has been transcribed as Huirimilla and Wirimilla, linguistic variations that occur in the written language quite frequently.

37. Hugo Carrasco discusses his poetry as an expression of ethnic hybridity in "Juan Paulo Huirimilla: ¿Correlatos escritos posmodernos?," part of *Crítica situada. El estado actual del arte y la poesía Mapuche* (2005).

Góngora y Argote) and modern pop culture. He makes the reader the object of study, a western subject, distinguishing himself and his work from the “other” and places the reader in the place of the subaltern. Pop culture takes center stage, both as entertainment and as subtle cultural criticism of the promotion of ethnic stereotypes—as the Indian on horseback never reaches the stagecoach led by Hollywood (and Western culture) star, John Wayne.

“Mitad siniestra” on the other hand, splits the poetic voice, and forces the readers to look at themselves in the process of reading and question their own point of enunciation, their own origins.<sup>38</sup>

El lector se figura escribir  
 Una historia con final abierto  
 Con la imposibilidad de su castellano  
 En tanto el otro yo  
 Se descascara la cara  
 Sus zapatos puntiagudos  
 Patean víctimas—editores—  
 Corta sangre con la navaja  
 Escucha un tema de Camilo Sesto.  
 El lector se deshace en la historia  
 De un entierro simulado  
 Y la frase:  
*Los pájaros están volando otra vez* (2005b, 108)

Again, the act of writing and the language of literary studies works its way into the (Jorge Luis) Borges-like introspection, while the music of another pop star (Camilo Sesto) plays in the not-so-subdued background, and the reader, who was the main protagonist in the previous poem, disappears, or more exactly, unmakes him or herself in the story.<sup>39</sup>

Neither the reader or references to cultural difference are prevalent in the poetic work of Roxana Carolina Miranda Rupailaf, but her choice of profession does appear, quite effectively, alongside her religious syncretism and erotically charged verses.<sup>40</sup> The youngest of all the poets presented here, from the city of Osorno (1982), she has recently finished her degree in *pedagogía en lengua castellana y comunicaciones* (Spanish

38. Taken from feminist criticism, Walter Mignolo, in his book *Local Histories / Global Designs* (2000), suggests the discursive gap among cultures is based, primarily though not exclusively, on the speaker’s point of enunciation. Here, we see an attempt, by Wirimilla Oyarzo, to at once introduce the concept and bring the reader into a contemplation of themselves considering this perspectival difference.

39. Wirimilla Oyarzo cites Jorge Luis Borges and César Vallejo reiteratively in speech and written text.

40. The eroticism of Lorenzo Aillapán Cayuleo’s work, more visual and contemplative, is distinct from the experiential type we find here in Miranda Rupailaf’s, though Paulo Wirimilla Oyarzo has published a study comparing the two.

language instruction) at the Universidad de Los Lagos. Also, like Wirimilla Oyarzo, she is a winner of the Luis Oyarzún Poetry Prize and published *Las tentaciones de Eva* in 2003, the year she won the Oyarzún Prize. Also in 2003, she received a scholarship to study in Germany for a semester. She has commented to the author on planning a return to Germany in order to continue her studies in literature once she has completed her undergraduate degree in Osorno. In June 2006, she won a grant to publish her second collection of poetry, *Seducción de los venenos*.

Her literary approach is at times erotic, and provocatively iconoclastic:

Quiero sentir el calor de su boca  
y el animal desatado de su lengua  
y caminar sobre sus dientes,  
desnuda.  
Encontraré su aliento y volaré  
siguiendo la paloma que cruza las palabras,  
me tentará la manzana que cuelga en su garganta  
y la ignoraré porque 2000 años  
me han dado la experiencia.  
Un suspiro me arrastrará por todo su pecho  
y al fin, entre lágrimas rojas, encontraré a dios palpitando  
en su trono. (2003, 10)

This piece, "Eva," at the same time eroticizes the biblical character of Eve and associates the orgasm with finding God, as mystical poets before her have done. It is not an eroticism based in the naïve experiences of a teen (which she must have been when writing this), and the reference and image of the temptation is controlled and avoided, so as not to fall into the same trap, by the knowledge and passing of 2000 years of history. In striking contrast, "Julieta" is disdainful of any emotional attachments while referencing the classic and at the same time clichéd Shakespearean drama.

¿Me traes flores del cielo Romeo?  
No las quiero,  
la luz se marchita y muere en las sombras.  
¿Me traes bombones?  
Bonito, pero estoy a dieta.  
¿Me traes canciones y versos Romeo?  
Tengo sueño y me duele un tanto la cabeza.  
¿Me traes champaña para celebrar?  
No tengo sed.  
Hay cascadas y olas en mi boca.  
No quiero nada Romeo.  
Sólo decirte una cosa:  
Se acabó.  
Me cansé de esta pareja perfecta. (2003, 16)

There is a cynical appreciation of love, and a sarcasm toward relationships that denote unpleasant experience (perhaps more literary than real). Flowers, bonbons, song, poetry, and champagne, are not enough to make her change her decision to end an otherwise fruitless and unsatisfactory relationship. In a hedonistic twist, though also in a significantly iconoclastic stance, "Yo, Pecedora" reiterates a traditional literary confessional, invoking Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and is confrontationally unrepentant.

Confieso, que le he robado el alma al corazón  
de Cristo,  
que maté a una flor por la espalda  
y le disparé a la cigüeña.  
Confieso  
que me comí todas las manzanas  
y que suspiro tres veces  
al encenderse la luna.  
Que le mentí a la inocencia  
y golpeé a la ternura.  
Confieso que he deseado a mis prójimos  
y que tengo pensamientos impuros  
con un santito.

Confieso que me vendí por dinero.  
Que no soy yo  
y que he pecado de pensamiento,  
palabra y omisión  
y confieso, que no me arrepiento. (2003, 18)

Miranda Rupailaf, distinct from her own regional counterparts, asserts that while her poetry lacks any references to her indigenous origins, she claims ownership of her Huilliche ancestry and professes that a poetic discourse does not necessarily have to project identity, which can be maintained independently.<sup>41</sup> Her inclusion in studies and in the anthologies of critical papers (edited by García Barrera and Galindo G, 2004) and of Huilliche poetry (edited by Jaime Luis Huenún, 2003) indicate this negotiation of cultural identity. This makes her uniquely interesting regarding the question of the relationship between identity and literature.<sup>42</sup> Her blend of religious blasphemy and the exploration of the darker side of the self, similar to Wirimilla Oyarzo and Colipán Filgueira, are evident and seemingly characteristic of this generation of

41. Miranda Rupailaf's statements to this effect were made in the context of a reading and paper presentation on her work at the *I Congreso Internacional de Lenguas y Literaturas Indoamericanas y XII Jornadas de Lengua y Literatura Mapuche*, held at the Universidad de la Frontera, Temuco, from October 16–20, 2006.

42. Perhaps Miranda Rupailaf warrants a closer, independent look, but her literary corpus is still limited, though two master's theses (at the Universidad Austral and Universidad de la Frontera) based exclusively on her work are already in progress.

writers.<sup>43</sup> Many, if not most, of them explore the more obscure, drunken, and elusive subculture of the shadows rather than the pure, idealized, and romanticized “*azul*” of their northern counterparts.<sup>44</sup>

Contrastively, Adriana Paredes Pinda, who is older than Miranda Rupailaf but a contemporary of Colipán Filgueira and Wirimilla Oyarzo, provides us with an example of the permeable nature of these literary and cultural distinctions we attempt in studies such as these.

Born in 1970, also in Osorno, she obtained her degree of profesora de estado en castellano (Spanish language professor) from the Universidad de la Frontera in Temuco. She has recently returned to establish residence in Osorno and exercises her profession as a teacher in a local school. Her only publication, aside from selections in various anthologies, including that published by LOM, and edited by Jaime Huenún: *Epu mari ũlkatufe ta fachantii: 20 poetas mapuche contemporaneos*, is *Ūl* (also published by LOM in 2005), where she delves into the complexity of a hybrid identity, all the while maintaining, unlike the three poets discussed above, the indigenous, oral language and the natural, rural scenery as an audible and visible backdrop to her work (figure 4).

This fragment of the poem “Gen ko” (its Spanish version has been given the title of “La palabra del dueño del agua”), is provided with a dedication to Sergio Treuquil Catalán, and presents the reader with various culturally significant markers, as is the *lonko* (chief), the *gijatun* (planting and harvest ritual), the *genpin* (the master orator), along with the geographic references, an emphasis on the spoken word and, like Chihuailaf Nahuelpán and Millapán, citations of the visionary dream and the ancestors most prevalently.<sup>45</sup> As an exception to the other three self-ascribed Huilliche poets presented here, she exemplifies the diversity and contradictions among indigenous, and more precisely, Mapuche, writers. Other parts of her poetry, and other quotes in interviews and in the introduction to this collection, demonstrate similar traits to those of her regional Huilliche colleagues.<sup>46</sup> She is, however, more culturally and thematically aligned with those from the north.<sup>47</sup>

43. Not circumstantial is an affinity with authors such as Arthur Rimbaud, as professed by Jaime Luis Huenún Villa.

44. Wirimilla Oyarzo and Huenún Villa have joked about the “*poetas azules*” who invoke this sacred color, symbolic of *Ngnechen* (the creator), and sometimes criticize their cultural idealization of the Mapuche in the process.

45. *Gijatun* and *genpin*, are Tsezungun (Huilliche dialect) versions of *nguillatun* and *weupife* nomenclature specified above, in relation to the work of Chihuailaf Nahuelpán and Lara Millapán.

46. In “Adriana Pinda: Luces de estrellas arcaicas,” Hugo Carrasco argues her rootedness in traditional Mapuche wisdom, oral creativity and sacredness of place and time. *Crítica situada. El estado actual del arte y la poesía Mapuche* (Universidad de la Frontera, 2005).

47. In the introduction to this collection she writes: “Por qué escribo, se me ha preguntado, y los truenos caen como montañas; escribo porque tal vez es cierto que tengo dos corazones,

Gen ko mvley, kiñe rupa piam.  
 "Gen ki pigen" –feypi.  
 "Gijatun mew re mapuzungolu ta  
 iñchin re  
 zugun, anay" –feypi ñi lonko chao.  
 –"Femuechi, iñchiñ ñi iñchiñ  
 Gen ko  
 mvley rakizuum mew.  
 ¿Cew amuay ñi Gen ko faciantv?"  
 –ramtufuy lonko.  
 Gen ko newen wvñotui  
 ina namun trallenko mew  
 mogelan mogelan ta newen ko.  
 "Kawiñí antv kawiñí antv" –feypi  
 Genpin  
 –"Gen ko newen wvñotuí".  
 Fentren leufu niey ñi mapu.  
 Leufu wentru pigev ka  
 zomo leufu kafey.  
 Kuifike leufu ñi nvtramkaken  
 Kuifike zugu tati leufu egu.  
 Gen ko zugukili iñchiñ  
 wallpaley kallfv mv.  
 Fvllantv mew  
 fey zuguley ñi newen  
 ni ta pu mapunche.

El dueño del agua vive, cuentan  
 antiguamente.  
 "Yo soy el dueño" –diría.  
 Cuando hablamos en lengua en el  
 Gijatun, dice el gran lonko  
 nos comunicamos con Gen Ko en  
 nuestra lengua  
 en nuestro pensamiento.  
 ¿Dónde ha ido Gen Ko? –pregunta el  
 lonko.  
 La fuerza del agua ha regresado  
 a los pies de la vertiente, vive la  
 fuerza del agua.  
 "Va llover, va llover" –dice Genpin, el  
 dueño de la palabra.  
 Porque hay fuerza del agua va llover.  
 Grandes ríos hay en mi territorio.  
 Algunos son madres y padres los  
 otros.  
 Ellos dos conversan a lo antiguo.  
 El dueño del agua nos habla mientras  
 todo se azula alrededor.

(83; 91)

#### Figure 4

These younger, southern artists (Colipán Filgueira, Wirimilla Oyarzo, and Miranda Rupailaf), are poets who reiteratively cite such writers as Gabriela Mistral, César Vallejo, Jorge Luis Borges and Alejo Carpentier (among other Spanish American authors—without avoiding the influences of Pablo Neruda or Nicanor Parra, as even these selections evidence, on the national front), and Arthur Rimbaud, Constantino Kavafis, Li Po (and others) as their literary models—western and oriental influences. Non-indigenous models which are overtly denied, though subtly evident, in the work of some of the poets from the more northern provinces is a significant distinction when issues of cultural identity and literary expression are concerned.<sup>48</sup> These are authors that express a complex

tal cual me señaló la machi Rosita Coñoemanque, (...). Escribo porque seguro no puedo cantar; si cantara sólo tendría un *piuke*, me habitaría uno un aliento, una sangre, entonces no me atormentaría la semántica, ni la cognición ni los enfoques interpretativos etc." [p.7] Her academic background, and hybrid identity are clearly underneath the surface of this, otherwise, indigenously grounded poetic project in her work.

48. References to western poets in "Kallfv Pewma Mew—Sueño Azul," from *De sueños azules y contrasueños* (Universitaria, 1995), are to his contemporaries, collaborators and

pluriculturality and a continuous, though somewhat stable, conflict with as much modernity as with an assumed mestizo identity. Critically and scholarly prepared, these poets propose, through their writings and their public discourse, another perspective regarding a perceived fractured society and are as conscious of their contradictions as they are accepting of them.<sup>49</sup> This, at the same time, projects itself as a fortified expression of today's urban (intellectual) Huilliche. Is it the expression, merely, of a group of writers who are a new indigenous intelligentsia in southern Chile, or are they proposing (perhaps, reflecting) this stance as the new and emerging identity of the urban Huilliche—a sort of ethnogenesis? Perhaps we are experiencing this birth, but only time will tell.

Their discourse reflects a profound knowledge and superior use of western academic and popular culture language and strategy—it should be stated that for most of the contemporary Huilliche writers their ancestral language, tsezugun, is unknown.<sup>50</sup> Albeit, their discursivities reveal a complex love-hate relationship with Castilian. They are markedly distinct to their older colleagues from the IX region, among whom confrontational discursive patterns develop explicitly from the violent imposition of the foreign word and the forcible separation of the Mapuche from their land. Theirs is not, in essence (I propose), a deliberation over indigenous identity, with overt political interests ranging from linguistic, to cultural, to territorial self-determination; nor is it an attempt of self-definition in direct opposition to the Chilean or European other.<sup>51</sup> But rather, we seem to be faced with an artistic, if not more generically a cultural naissance and a poetic existential debate (no doubt, with some exceptions as we can see in the work of Paredes Pinda, for instance). We can refer back to the historical differences outlined above to justify this

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friends, not to influences upon his work, which he alludes to almost exclusively (in interviews and prologues) as being aunts, grandparents, and other ancestors through oral communication and emphatically not written—though a reader can discover similarities to Neruda and Mistral, among others, throughout Chihuailaf's work.

49. Wirimilla, in a recent newspaper interview stated: "Mi propuesta no va por mostrar un mundo mapuche utópico como lo plantea Chihuailaf, donde el azul es todo su anclaje, ni tampoco ser un poeta de testimonio como Lienlaf, ni menos mostrar lo sincrético de una cultura como Huenún o Colipán, aunque este último poeta se acerca mucho a Chihuailaf, pero en una versión huilliche. Mi proyecto poético o mundo poético se construye en base a la hibridación cultural, vale decir, enunciar el mundo no sólo con los referentes de la cultura mapuche sino con referencias de la cultura popular como son: las letras rancheras, el western, los boleros y las canciones populares." (Interview: La Nación, May 9, 2006).

50. A notable exception is Adriana Paredes Pinda, who has learned the language through formal educational programs, but Colipán Filgueira has some knowledge, and Wirimilla Oyarzo is in the process of recuperating it, though neither are fluent by any means. Miranda Rupailaf, Huenún Villa, and others, however, simply do not demonstrate any interest in this venture.

51. Though perhaps it could be argued that they are differentiating themselves from their northern counterparts.

difference; however, aside from those distinctions we have a much more recent, societal, factor in their lives. The great majority of these Huilliche writers, in their formative years, grew up under, and in the waning years of, the military dictatorship and the transition to democracy (1985–1995), and have few experiences of pre-dictatorship Chile—except through the memory of friends and family. Their experiences have been significantly different from those of their colleagues to the north (noting the exceptions of writers from the tenth region, like Graciela Huinao).<sup>52</sup>

Through this reality, we are faced with as much a generational difference as a geographic one, with distinct modes of expression (the educational difference) and existence (a style of resistance to cultural generalizations and ethnic idealization), a unique cosmology (a blend of Huilliche and western religious and—popular—cultural motifs), highlighting their hybridity and stressing the nonspiritual and obscure side of this alternate subculture. Therefore, it is not plausible to speak of one literary trend among indigenous poets of southern Chile—as some have alluded. If we wish to categorize contemporary Huilliche poetry as distinct from the writings of indigenous authors identified here as from the northern region (in written, published format), aside from a certain heterogeneity of themes, styles, and language, one could defend the position that their poetry is rooted in a western aesthetic and a textual tradition, not the indigenous expression and oral standards that their northern neighbors espouse. This, perhaps, is best explained through their professional, and more specifically, literary, formation in the Chilean academy.<sup>53</sup> Social and cultural differences exist and can be significant factors (external) in the development of these literary distinctions, but individual circumstances and personal choices can also be instances with which we can measure levels of agency (internal) in their self-definition or self-denomination as indigenous writers.

Having experienced the benefits of Chile's democracy, some of these writers profess adopting the "positive discrimination" the government now demonstrates toward the indigenous populations.<sup>54</sup> In general, these poets are well aware that the "indigenous cultural tag" means, to a certain extent, greater exposure in readership and attention on the national and international public and academic scene. The academy, both local and global, has granted them space, voice, and literary legitimacy. This has made their work, and the authors themselves, the "object of

52. Again, noting what would be the "counter" exception of Lara Millapán who is also of a younger generation, but follows the aesthetic practices of her predecessors.

53. Though Colipán Filgueira is a historian, he is an avid reader of Latin American literature, and regards the Cuban Alejo Carpentier as one of his favorites.

54. Jaime Luis Huenún Villa has stated the benefits of these government programs in certain sectors of the population, and that this "discrimination" is also a factor within academic circles.

study," as they are invited to universities, institutes, official events—at home and abroad—to discuss, promote, present, read, and expound upon their writings, Chile, and their own cultures. All this differs greatly from their predecessors, who only now are experiencing the interest and recognition from institutions and scholars that once discriminated and ignored them.<sup>55</sup> This, the adaptation and use of new technology (in this case, public policy and the academy), however, is not new in colonial histories. One need not look beyond the way in which indigenous populations throughout the Americas adopted and mastered the horse and other technologies such as the rifle in their battles against the Spanish during the Conquest—and later the U.S. army in its western expansion. The Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, more recently, has demonstrated their communications savvy in the media and deft ability in influencing and shaping world opinion.<sup>56</sup> From a forced acculturation, to a subtly beneficial assimilation of technology, policy, or strategies, they expertly manipulate the postmodern commodity of "cultural identity" and exploit their condition as "other" in a globalized society needing and constantly looking for difference due to and within an advancing homogenizing modernity. The popularity and the continual hybridization of ethnic minorities and their cultural traits are exemplified most acutely, in Chile, among indigenous who represent poetry and perform *vi* (song) and *purrún* (dance), sometimes in *mapuzugun*, blended with their own interpretations of hip-hop, thrash-metal, or new-age music.

The authors included here emphasize their Huilliche identity, but they do this in such a way as to clearly differentiate themselves from their progenitors, be they literary or biological. Theirs is not the same world or worldview, and they do not intend to return to that which once was. They do not distance themselves with nostalgia, regret, or contempt. Hybridity is not for them shameful, problematic, or a negation of self, it simply is—and it is progressive in a cultural sense. Perhaps most important, it is artistically a canvas upon which cynicism and sarcasm, prevalent in today's global societies, can be subtly and effectively expressed. They mock *winkas* (some of us academics) who look upon indigenous poets as "bearers" of a millennial tradition; they scoff at pseudo-intellectual analyses of their works that find obscure indigenous symbolisms in their choices of the *ranchera* ballads they cite in their poetry; they laugh among

55. It was Leonel Lienlaf's *Se ha despertado el ave de mi corazón* (Universitaria, 1989) that brought about a radical change in appreciation of indigenous writers within the Chilean academia. The government only changed its policy toward indigenous populations with the signing of the Ley Indígena in 1993—something that was perhaps significantly due to the influence of Raúl Zurita who supported Lienlaf and wrote the introduction to this milestone collection.

56. However, this movement's rootedness in indigenous practices and leaderships is in question in some circles.

themselves at their own references to cultural norms or religious icons, such as the Tata Wenteyao myth of the coastal zone.

Paradoxically, at the same time, they politically side with original peoples' causes, they maintain ties with family who do keep ancestral practices in rural communities, they are attentive and linguistically dexterous in handling ethnocentric criticism and unmasking institutional discriminatory practices. They manage all this without remorse or reserve. They handle it with respect, yes, but also with a heavy dose of irreverence, and also with the recognition that naïveté is not part of their worldview, but that it is, seemingly, part of those who wish to see the indigenous writer only in his or her quality of "other," without regard for those aspects that make him or her a global, hybrid, blended, multidimensional, and complex, citizen of the world.

This generation of poets is, perhaps, exceptional—but that is—is it not?—what differentiates a literary generation. They are, at the same time, the "other" and the "self," unfolding themselves, in Borgesian fashion (defining, explaining, and describing their cultural environment and their sometimes enigmatic experiences); living in both worlds, with both worldviews; creating, artistically and poetically, a third; contemplating themselves (and us), analyzing themselves (and us), at the same time from the banks of their own, new culture, from the banks of the culture of their ancestors, and all the while, introspectively, from ours.

Whether a proposal of ethno-genesis, or simply the expression of a rising new indigenous intelligentsia, the phenomenon is not one that should be ignored or passed off as a passing and superficial trend. The cultural image of the *frontera* established during the colonial era of the present-day ninth region is being displaced by, or at the least in competition with, this laboratory of societal change that the tenth region seems to be incubating. Although it is not absent of exceptions, we can appreciate here indications of an emerging group of urban indigenous intellectuals that may mirror a generational shift among the broader spectrum of indigenous peoples in Chile. This does not mean that the other expression, which is rooted in traditional indigenous culture and aesthetic, will disappear or cease to play an important role in the developing literary landscape of southern Chile; I believe they both will prevail and grow, and significantly enliven a somewhat stale global debate about ethnic literatures. However, this phenomenon can provide us with a precedent that follows from a continually evolving identity based in ancestral traditions but constantly renewing, adopting, and adapting other characteristics historically viewed as incongruous to the worldview and experience of indigenous peoples of the entire Latin American continent.

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