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# Restoring a Mapuche World: Resistance to Settler Colonialism in Chile's Child Protection System

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**Restoring a Mapuche World:**  
Resistance to Settler Colonialism in Chile's Child Protection System

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## **Abstract**

How do Mapuche families engage with and resist settler colonialism in order to move toward decolonization? I argue that Mapuche families, especially youth, who are subjected to settler colonialism, envision and fight for a decolonized world. Grounded in the dispossession of indigenous land, settler colonialism permeates Chilean institutions including the child protection system, SENAME. SENAME targets indigenous families with tactics such as child removal, confinement, and criminalization, and its attempts at intercultural reform further assimilate families into settler culture. Yet, Mapuche people sustain their indigenous world. Youth promote Mapuche autonomy and knowledge through their discourse. Their vision might serve to decolonize Chilean child welfare. Recognizing Chile as a settler colonial state reveals that decolonization may require the restoration of ancestral Mapuche territory.

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## Introduction

It is a sunny November day in the southern hemisphere. A small circle of Mapuche youth sit on the grass of a schoolyard and chat excitedly about the harvest festival their community will soon be hosting, their Mapuzugun classes, and the relationships between their families. They discuss the role of their *lonco*, or chief, in planning the festival and brag about their first time participating in community ceremonies on behalf of their families.<sup>1</sup> This group was established by an organization called the *Oficina de Protección de Derechos* (Office of the Protection of Rights or OPD) in an effort to better support vulnerable youth in the region. The OPD is a partner organization of the *Servicio Nacional del Menor* (SENAME or National Service of the Minor), Chile's child protection system (Lombaert 2016). SENAME and its collaborators increasingly introduce intercultural programs, like this indigenous youth group, to serve populations from diverse backgrounds. Interculturalism is the idea that encounters between people from different cultures can be based on mutual respect and understanding.

SENAME's intercultural reforms have been targeted at recognizing and accommodating Mapuche families (Manquian 2016). The Mapuche are Chile's largest indigenous group, comprising 84% of the indigenous population. Besides significant Mapuche populations in Chile's urban centers like Santiago and Concepcion, the Mapuche are mostly situated in the Araucania region south of the Biobio River, with the city of Temuco at its center (Minority Rights Group 2018). SENAME's growing commitment to interculturalism and Mapuche families is in part a response to the historical trauma and oppression Mapuche people face at the hands of the Chilean State. Though it is rarely considered as such, Chile is a settler colonial state, which

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<sup>1</sup> Participant observation by author. Cunco, Chile, November 11, 2016.

means that since its inception, it has used a variety of tactics to eliminate the Mapuche in an ongoing campaign to control Mapuche territory. Settler colonialism permeates the institutions of the State, including the child protection system, to eliminate indigenous peoples, but Mapuche families continue to find ways to thrive and strive towards decolonization.

In this project, I attempt to answer the question: how do Mapuche families engage with and resist settler colonialism in Chile in order to move towards decolonization? I argue that Mapuche families, especially youth, who are subjected to settler colonialism, envision and fight for a decolonized world.

Mapuche people have long faced violence from Chilean settlers. Throughout the 1800s, the newly independent State of Chile invaded and conquered Mapuche territory, a process that included murder, enslavement, assimilation, and incarceration of the Mapuche (Gott 2007). Settlers often kidnapped Mapuche children and sent them to become servants (Milanich 2009). By the early 1900s, many Mapuche people were confined to a system of reservations. The Chilean State continued to expand its apparatus of control, including educating Mapuche youth to speak Spanish rather than their native Mapuzugun. In 1970, however, Salvador Allende was elected President of Chile, and as part of his socialist agenda, he encouraged collective land ownership, including reparation and recognition of Mapuche ancestral territory. His government's legislation seemed to represent a significant turning point in the relationship between indigenous groups and the Chilean State (Gómez-Barris 2012).

In 1973, the military staged a coup against Allende and began to put in place neoliberal economic systems that intensified the violence against the Mapuche. As a result of this coup, General Augusto Pinochet rose to power and ruled Chile as an authoritarian dictator until 1990.

His regime implemented a neoliberal doctrine of economic freedom and profit-making, including decentralizing, privatizing, and devolving State services such as health care, education, and pensions. Pinochet privatized all collectively held Mapuche lands in 1979 in an effort to promote individual economic development, a move that subjected the Mapuche to another major dispossession of their lands as corporations purchased their territory (Richards 2010). Pinochet sought to enforce obedience and complete subscription to State values by assimilating all Chileans into the State's vision of citizenship in a process his regime called "Chileanization", erasing indigenous identity. To quash any opposition, Pinochet passed an Anti-Terrorist Law in 1984, which he leveraged against opponents to his regime, including effectively criminalizing indigenous resistance (Llaitul 2014).

Beginning in 1990, Chile has transitioned to democratic governance, but it has yet to cast off many of the organizing principles of Pinochet's dictatorship. It continues to adhere to the doctrine of neoliberalism, disregarding the legitimacy of collective ownership and the drawbacks of privatized social services. Chile has also done little in the way of reparations for the land Pinochet stole from the Mapuche when he privatized their territory in 1979. Mapuche youth still attend boarding schools away from their communities where they are taught the value of private property, the appropriate State channels for dissent, and the dangers of political resistance (Radcliffe, Webb 2016). The Anti-Terrorist Law remains in effect and continues to be wielded against Mapuche activists who participate in resistance against the State (Llaitul 2014). Intercultural reforms give the appearance that Chile welcomes diversity without shifting power away from the neoliberal economic structure towards marginalized groups (Gómez-Barris 2012).

Thus, the settler colonial structure maintains its dominance in Chile and characterizes the Chilean State's actions against the Mapuche population.

Mapuche people have never been passive recipients of settler colonial violence; they play an active role in resisting and shaping the settler colonial structure. Mapuche resistance takes many forms. More radical factions directly oppose the seizure of Mapuche territory by private and State interests. They occupy privately owned land, burn trucks that belong to forestry companies, or block roads. The State classifies these activists as terrorists (Llaitul 2014). Other Mapuche people navigate resistance within State structures. Mapuche people who work for the government support Mapuche activism, embody their Mapuche identity, and advocate for Mapuche families who are in contact with the State (Park & Richards 2007). Many Mapuche people who have left ancestral Mapuche territory in search of economic opportunity in urban centers redesign indigenous rituals, practices, and resistance, demonstrating to the State that there is no singular Mapuche identity. Mapuche people create diverse channels that force the State to renegotiate its tactics, confront its hypocrisy, and reconsider its occupation of Mapuche lands.

Mapuche youth are instrumental in fostering Mapuche resistance and envisioning decolonization of the Chilean settler state. The Federation of Mapuche Students (FEMAE) demands official recognition of State violence in Mapuche territory, incorporation of Mapuzugun into school curricula, and autonomous Mapuche educational institutions (FEMAE 2015). Embedded in these goals is Mapuche cosmovision: conceptions of personhood, relationship building, and transmission of community wisdom. Thus, FEMAE grounds its decolonial project in Mapuche students' indigenous world as they assert their power and vision for its restoration.

FEMAE operates in direct resistance to the settler colonial tendency to target indigenous families with tactics like child removal and re-education policies. In this project, I focus on children and families because native children present the biggest threat to the settler colonial structure: their very existence guarantees indigenous futurity. The settler state sequesters native children in education and child protection systems in an effort to maintain domination, often in a way that undermines indigenous families by declaring native parents unfit to care for their children. Once indigenous children are forced into these systems, they are taught how to work within the settler economy. In Chile, Mapuche children were kidnapped from the Araucania region and sent to work as servants for the Chilean upper class; establishing poor children as servants for wealthy families was one of the primary interventions of the child welfare system at the time (Milanich 2009). Training indigenous children as workers accomplishes the process of social reproduction, whereby capitalism is reproduced across generations as children are taught to contribute productive labor (Marx 1867). Indigenous child removal by settlers in the name of protection not only seeks to divorce children from their indigenous identity but also renders them productive laborers subordinated to the settler economy. SENAME executes Mapuche child removal and assimilation on behalf of the Chilean State.

Mapuche children are not simply victims of a vicious child protection system, however; they use their strengths to resist it from within. In 2010, Luis Marileo, a 17-year-old Mapuche community member, was detained in his high school and incarcerated by SENAME after being accused of terrorist activity. After five months of imprisonment, Marileo initiated a hunger strike with fellow incarcerated Mapuche youth. By engaging in a hunger strike, Marileo was decolonizing his body in resistance to a settler regime that seeks to govern indigenous physicality

by occupying Mapuche territory and incarcerating Mapuche bodies (Gómez-Barris 2012). His protest also sparked institutional response from SENAME as it began to grapple with its own violations of Mapuche children's rights. He participates in a tradition of youth and other Mapuche community members thwarting the settler state as they lift up their voices and celebrate their Mapuche identity. In the following three chapters, I investigate this tension between settler colonialism and indigenous worlds by looking at the practices of SENAME and the discourse of the Federation of Mapuche Students.

In Chapter 1, I build an interpretive framework using historical examples from well documented settler colonial states, which allows me to identify five diagnostic elements of settler colonialism and describe how these elements manifest in Chile. I use moments of interaction between indigenous peoples and the State from the United States, Canada, and Australia to illustrate the defining elements of the settler colonial process: dispossession of land, confinement, assimilation, structural violence, and criminalizing resistance. This allows me to show how Chile fits these categories and must be considered a settler state as well as to discuss why Chile is usually omitted from this cohort. I also draw attention to the settler colonial focus on indigenous children and families and the tendency for settler colonialism and capitalism to flourish together.

In Chapter 2, I describe the Chilean child protection system's role in upholding the settler colonial structure and the difficulty of implementing effective reforms to better serve Mapuche families. Interviews with SENAME and UNICEF officials in Chile inform my understanding of how the child protection system has historically worked with the Mapuche as well as the structure of its new reforms. In conversation with the theoretical work of indigenous scholar

Glen Sean Coulthard, I discuss how SENAME's reforms function to translate Mapuche families into an acceptable form within the confines of the settler state rather than unsettling settler state structures and providing autonomous space for Mapuche families to care for their children.

In Chapter 3, I perform a discourse analysis of FEMAE's mission statement in order to visibilize not only how the organization seeks to decolonize the Chilean education system but also how Mapuche youth resistance is deeply rooted in an indigenous world. The settler colonial system intends to disempower and erase all but its own hegemonic worldview. In an attempt to contribute to decolonial science, I assert the productive power of Mapuche youth in generating their own discourse regarding their indigenous identity and vision for a decolonized Chile. Their work is rooted in the living knowledge traditions of their community.

Acknowledging Chile as a settler state enables me to visibilize settler colonialism at work in SENAME and the need for ongoing decolonization. Though Mapuche students provide many insights into possible approaches to decolonization, dismantling settler colonialism may require more than comprehension of Mapuche knowledge and being. The Chilean settler state is based on stolen Mapuche territory. Only by relinquishing its false claims to that land can settlers be unsettled and an indigenous world restored (Tuck, Yang 2012). FEMAE's work is essential to the process of self-affirming Mapuche identity and knowledge traditions in resistance to the settler state, but restoration of Mapuche lands is key to decolonizing settler colonialism.

In this project, I hope to contribute to decolonial science by dismantling settler colonial knowledge production in my own academic context.<sup>2</sup> I do not pretend that I have discovered

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<sup>2</sup> I have struggled throughout this project to understand my own positionality in relation to the Chilean State and the Mapuche people as I attempt to contribute to decolonial science. I am a white citizen of the United States, a country with its own settler colonial history, and the source of the neoliberal logics that have devastated Chile and the Mapuche people since their introduction in the 1970s. I condemn the efforts of SENAME's Mapuche employees seeking to reform the system though I have never had to navigate the tension of supporting my community while

something new in these pages: Mapuche territory was never empty, and Mapuche people are equipped with the knowledge to inhabit their indigenous identity in a settler colonial world. I am excited, though, to share aspects of their knowledge and to illuminate the role of indigenous families, both as resisters of settler control and facilitators of knowledge transmission and care.

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working for a State system that was built to destroy my people. I suggest a particular vision of a Mapuche world even though presenting a single definition of indigeneity advances settler hegemony; Mapuche people have survived and even thrived by finding means to adapt to a settler colonial society, and there is no one way to be Mapuche. I discuss the shortcomings of FEMAE's approach as Mapuche students confront settler colonial violence in their communities and at school and still cultivate plans of resistance while I attend an elite liberal arts school on stolen American Indian territory.

## Chile's Settler Colonial Legacy

Between 1826 and 1990, 94% of Mapuche territory disappeared - it was devoured by white settlers and the Chilean State (Gómez-Barris 2012). Settler colonial studies is intended to illuminate the relationship of ongoing violence between white settler states and their indigenous populations. The Chilean State is rarely included in the cohort of settler states despite its conflict with the Mapuche population, in which it utilizes tactics associated with settler colonialism. In this chapter, I describe five strategies that often characterize the settler colonial mission to eliminate indigenous peoples: dispossession of indigenous land for settlement; confinement on reservations or in prisons; assimilation by child removal and re-education; structural violence by limiting access to resources; which is reflected in health, social, and economic services; and finally, criminalizing the indigenous resistance movements that inevitably arise.

Using this interpretive framework built from the settler colonial theory of scholars like Lorenzo Veracini (2010), Patrick Wolfe (2006), and Evelyn Nakano Glenn (2015), I provide examples of how settler states like the United States, Canada, and Australia have employed these practices to erase their native populations. Engaging these examples in the context of the framework I created shows that Chile exhibits each of these five characteristics of settler colonialism in historical and ongoing crusades against the Mapuche. I also propose explanations for why it has been excluded from this category, including its mestizo identity and its exploitation by powerful Western states. Throughout, I emphasize the intersections between settler colonialism and capitalism because capitalism's expansionist and exploitative nature has been integral to the formation of white settler states. By classifying Chile as a settler colonial

state, I reveal how State institutions subjugate Mapuche families and interrogate how youth understand their Mapuche identity as they work to decolonize the State.

Table 1: Interpretive framework on diagnostic elements of settler colonialism

	Dispossession of Land	Confinement	Assimilation	Structural Violence	Criminalizing Resistance
United States/Canada	Settlement, Indian Removal Act, Dawes Act	Reservations, incarceration	Boarding Schools	Poverty, lack of resources	Anti-Terrorist Law
Australia	Settlement, pastoralism	Reserve system, incarceration	Child removal	Poverty, lack of resources	Demonizing protests
Chile	Pacification of Araucania, 1979 private property law	Reservations, occupation	Child removal, boarding schools	Lack of resources, integration into neoliberal economy	Anti-Terrorist Law

*This table provides a visual of the interpretive framework I used in establishing five diagnostic categories for settler colonialism. Though there are many other settler colonial states than the four represented here, I chose to share representative snapshots clearly detailed in the literature from these cases in the body of this chapter.*

### **Dispossession of Land**

The primary element of settler colonialism is dispossession of indigenous lands. Land value fundamentally distinguishes settler colonialism from traditional colonialism. Traditional colonies are established to exploit labor and resources for the colonial center abroad (Veracini 2010). Meanwhile, for settlers from a colonial power “it is exploitation of land that yields supreme value. In order for settlers to usurp the land and extract its value, indigenous peoples must be destroyed, removed, and made into ghosts” (Arvin et al. 2013, 12). Settlers subscribe to the *terra nullius* myth that lands were uninhabited before their arrival in an effort to discredit

indigenous land claims. The justification of emptiness allows settlers to engage in the violent removal of indigenous communities as they assert ownership over what they claim is uncultivated territory (Wolfe 2006).

Part of settler conquest is the transformation of land into property, which paves the way for a strong relationship between settler colonialism and capitalism. In his *Two Treatises of Government*, John Locke, whose work during the early modern period was foundational to the United States Declaration of Independence and Constitution, argues that man can only claim ownership of land if he has used his labor to make it productive. His land becomes property, which leads to the formation of political society as communities seek protection for their individual property holdings (Locke 1772). In precolonial North America and other indigenous societies, however, land belonged to the collectivity. Land rights were inalienable, and the community was inseparable from its relations with the land. Native communities would never have understood their treaties with settlers as transferring rights to property because land was attached to community history and the activities the community enacted there (Tully 1994, 155). As Locke's theories suggest, settlers used their understanding of private property to dismiss or make inferior indigenous relationships with land, which set the terms enabling them to usurp it.

The main tactics employed by settlers to seize indigenous lands included warfare, disease, and property laws. In the United States, military and vigilante violence accompanied infectious diseases to devastate indigenous populations, allowing settlement to progress before it was codified with laws like the Indian Removal Act of 1830 and the Dawes Act of 1887. In Australia, settlers obsessed with the *terra nullius* myth and establishing their permanency violently removed Aboriginal people that they saw as an obstacle to homesteading. In Chile,

initial settlement also deployed warfare and disease, and Pinochet's regime passed a private property law in 1979 that cemented settler control over the majority of ancestral Mapuche territory.

The murderous coincidence of armed campaigns with fatal bacteria formed the initial attack in the United States; settlers cleared and took over native lands. In the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there was near constant warfare between settlers and indigenous populations; these violent crusades by official military forces and vigilantes often involved slaughtering indigenous women, children, infants, and the elderly, and sometimes taking indigenous women and children as slaves (Glenn 2015, 55). Unfamiliar pathogens introduced by settlers tore through indigenous populations to the extent that one-third to one-half of the natives of the American continent were killed (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Smolewski 2004). The conjunction of ongoing epidemics with warfare against settlers destabilized native communities and left them vulnerable to poverty and chronic diseases, opening their territories for settlement.

As the United States government apparatus developed after independence, it was empowered to seek legal claim to tribal lands. Tribes were tricked into signing over their land in treaties, and their relocations resulted in many deaths. In 1830, U.S. President Andrew Jackson passed the Indian Removal Act, targeting the Five Civilized Tribes (Choctaw, Seminole, Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Muscogee-Creek) that inhabited the Deep South. The Cherokee and Choctaw had been well on their way to assimilation, but that could not protect them from the voracious hunger of settlers for land. Although treaties were ostensibly intended to include tribes in the decision making process, the Senate ratified these treaties whether the tribes signed them

or not.<sup>3</sup> The process of removal was violent, comprised of death marches thousands of miles long to reach the newly reserved “Indian Territory” in the central United States (Cave 2003).

After being forced to re-settle far from their ancestral lands, American Indians were subjected to the Dawes Act, which employed privatization to steal native land. The act divided up tribal territory based on settlers’ individualistic understanding of property ownership and habitation. Territory was redistributed such that each native man was allocated a forty acre swath of land. The leftover was then sold to white settlers (Glenn 2015, 56). The Dawes Act not only sought to disrupt tribes’ historical relationships with land and systems of land management but also lay the groundwork for their incorporation and exploitation by capitalist systems.

In Australia, the settler colonial legal structure did not recognize Aboriginal land claims with treaties but rather championed the *terra nullius* myth. From their arrival, British settlers “claimed all land for the Crown and turned all Aboriginal people into British subjects. Beginning in 1793 officers who administered the colony were eligible for land grants of unlimited size, and freed convicts and soldiers each received small land allotments of up to twenty hectares” (Jacobs 2009, 16). The Crown took control and distributed the land as though it were empty rather than inhabited by Aboriginals. As settlers spread across the continent, violent clashes with Aboriginal communities defending their territory enabled the Crown to send further militarized reinforcements to protect its white subjects. Australian settlers’ embrace of pastoralism signed a death warrant for Aboriginal peoples because sheep required huge swaths of land, and settlers felt unsafe keeping their sheep close to Aboriginal lands due to the threat of frontier violence. Over time, thousands of Aboriginal peoples were killed by unfamiliar diseases or white violence.

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<sup>3</sup> The Seminoles fought a series of wars during this time period in opposition to this removal from their ancestral lands. As a result, some Seminole were ultimately able to stay in Florida, but many were removed alongside the other tribes (Florida Department of State 2018).

Survivors were relocated to a reserve system and subjected to assimilatory processes as British settlers imagined that the “indigenous threat had disappeared altogether” (Moses 2000).

In Chile, Spanish settlers used similar tactics to decimate the Mapuche and occupy indigenous lands. After the Spanish arrival, two smallpox epidemics hit the Mapuche population in 1590 and 1620; the same epidemics whose contagion wreaked destruction in native populations across the American land mass. Diseases cleared the way for the encroachment of Spanish settlers, but they were never able to gain control over significant portions of Mapuche territory.<sup>4</sup> Eventually, the Spanish gave up on conquering the Mapuche and set the Biobio River as the border between the Spanish colony and the Mapuche. Chilean settlers resented rulings from the Spanish crown to abandon appropriation of Mapuche lands and continued to settle south of the Biobio. After independence in 1826, settler campaigns of elimination and assimilation against the Mapuche began to take root. Settlers of European descent dismissed the value of indigenous bodies and ways of life. New immigrants from Europe flooded indigenous territories, and the slaughter of indigenous peoples opened up these lands for settlement (Gott 2007).

In 1973, the rise of Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship and the subsequent institution of neoliberal economic policy had devastating consequences for Mapuche domain of their ancestral territory. Law 2568, passed in 1979, privatized all Mapuche land, forbade communal land ownership, and erased indigenous identity by categorizing all Mapuche people as Chilean peasants. Pinochet deployed the tenets of neoliberal economics that demand universal privatization to appropriate indigenous lands for private interests (Carter 2010). Even thirty years after military rule, the Mapuche cannot access much of their land; instead the neoliberal

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<sup>4</sup> Before Chilean independence, the Mapuche were known as a people that had never been conquered. The Incas had intended to subsume the Mapuche into their empire, but they were unsuccessful. When the Spanish arrived in Chile, they too sought to defeat the Mapuche in war with limited success (Long 1992).

economy privileges forestry and hydroelectric corporations that have no relationship with Mapuche territory or care for sustainable land practices.<sup>5</sup> The ongoing dispossession of Mapuche lands by settler and capitalist interests exemplify Chilean settler colonialism and its parallels to the violence perpetrated by settler regimes in the United States and Australia.

### **Confinement**

Confinement is a second key element of settler colonialism; once settlers have taken over indigenous territory and established their property regimes, they begin to confine or incarcerate remaining native peoples to keep them away from settler communities. Incarceration is paradigmatic of the modern state. It has become a legitimated form of State violence that ensures the geographic isolation, body immobilization, and civil/social death of the imprisoned and is emblematic of the settler state's efforts to eliminate indigenous peoples (Rodriguez 2017; Leong, Caprio 2016). In fact, indigenous peoples in settler regimes across the globe are incarcerated at disproportionately high rates, suggesting that imprisonment of indigenous bodies is another mechanism that maintains settler control (Grant 2016, 27). However, incarceration is not reducible to present-day, brick and mortar institutional spaces (Rodriguez 2017). Rather, the settler state has long used carceral practices to contain indigenous peoples on reservations or behind walls, rendering them immobile and severely limited in the territory they control. In the United States and Australia, the reservation system confined indigenous populations and indigenous groups continue to be disproportionately incarcerated. In Chile, the Chilean State

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<sup>5</sup> Since democratization, the Chilean state has sought to make amends; the indigenous law 19253 passed in 1993 after the fall of the dictatorship established CONADI, the National Corporation for Indigenous Development, which is a government entity that buys back Mapuche lands from private entities. This law, rather than redistributing territory or power in recognition of settler colonial violence, subsumes Mapuche land ownership to the logic of private property that obliterated ancestral land claims while privileging the ownership of corporations and white settlers (Gómez-Barris 2012).

established reservations and continues to use police forces to occupy Mapuche communities, wielding its carceral power to secure control of historically Mapuche lands.

Both the United States and Australia established systems of reservations or settlements to confine indigenous peoples and continue to confine them behind bars. The Indian Appropriations Act of 1851 established the reservation system in the United States, forcing natives onto small parcels of land after their removal from their ancestral territory under acts like the Indian Removal Act. This allowed the government to restrict tribes' access to hunting and fishing grounds, and although it promised to supplement food rations, it often failed to follow through on these commitments, leaving native communities without access to nourishment and livelihood (Heat-Moon 2013). Meanwhile, Australia never had an official system of reservations for Aboriginal people because for the most part the Australian government did not recognize the right of Aboriginal groups to own land. Still, it enforced boundaries between white settlers and Aboriginal peoples as a means of confining natives to limited territory and keeping them off of their ancestral land (Jacobs 2009). Today, the rates of incarceration of indigenous peoples in both countries far outstrips the rates for the population overall (Cunneen 2011).<sup>6</sup> Confinement has often been a response to settlers who feel threatened by native people living close to them and keeps the indigenous population inhabiting as little land as possible.

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<sup>6</sup> Chris Cunneen (2011) shares the statistics: "In the United States, on any given day, an estimated one in twenty-five American Indians eighteen years and older is under the jurisdiction of the nation's criminal justice system. This is 2.4 times the rate for whites and 9.3 times the per capita rate for Asians but about half the rate for blacks. The number of American Indians per capita confined in state and federal prisons is about 38 percent above the national average. The rate of confinement in local jails is estimated to be nearly four times the national average. In Australia in December 2009, Indigenous imprisonment rates were 2,338 per 100,000 of the adult Indigenous population compared to a general imprisonment rate of 171 per 100,000. Twenty-six percent of the total prisoner population was Indigenous people" (310-311).

The Chilean State has used both reservation systems and police occupation to confine the Mapuche. The occupation of Araucania began in earnest in the 1860s, and once the Chilean military had established control, it concentrated the remaining Mapuche people on reservations called *reducciones*. By 1929, there were about 3,000 *reducciones* that geographically separated the Mapuche from white settlers moving into the region in the region; the Mapuche held collective ownership over this territory (Calbucura 1996). Some Mapuche majority communities are presently occupied by the Chilean police force that treat community members as prisoners. Police regularly detain the Mapuche for participating in movements that fight for land restitution, and officers abuse the detainees. These detentions and instances of physical violence often have no explicit explanation and occur according to the whim of officers (Carrasco, Porrás 2010). The occupation of majority Mapuche communities keeps them from accessing or even fighting for greater access to ancestral territory. Like reservations and prisons in the United States and Australia, settler colonial mechanisms in Chile confine the Mapuche, ensuring that their lands stay under settler state control.

### **Assimilation**

When indigenous populations have been neutralized as an immediate threat, settlers mobilize a third element of settler colonialism, assimilating indigenous peoples, which often includes the establishment of a racial hierarchy.<sup>7</sup> The establishment of racial hierarchies is

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<sup>7</sup> Anibal Quijano's conception of "coloniality of power" addresses the interaction between race, capitalism, and modernity that leads to exploitative world systems that are Eurocentric. Upon the arrival of Spanish and Portuguese colonists in Latin America, race became the justification for the consolidation of power in the hands of a few white European elite as well as for the exploitation of the labor of other races, in particular black or African peoples. (Quijano 2000, 534). Hierarchies of race and class that allowed Europe to benefit from capitalist systems of subjugation continue to render Europe the center of relationships of power and exchange across the world. Race and capitalism both play important role in explaining how settlers maintain control and perpetuate violence against indigenous peoples like the Mapuche, but Quijano primarily describes this coloniality of power in the relations between Latin American states and Europe rather than within Latin American states. Settler colonial theory, with

common in settler colonial states as they seek to differentiate themselves from the “savage” native, which in turn allows them to manage native access to land, labor, and services (Glenn 2015, 59). One strategy that has been common to many settler colonial societies is the abduction and re-education of native children, which alienates indigenous children from their practices and traditions as they are indoctrinated to acknowledge the supremacy of the white settler, with potentially dangerous implications for the future of native populations and cultures. The United States and Canada enrolled indigenous children in boarding schools to assimilate them into white settler ideology and culture. Indigenous child removal policies implemented in Australia in the 1900s were intended to play a similar role of culture erasure as boarding schools in North America. The Chilean State also used child removal and residential boarding schools to violently integrate the Mapuche into settler society.

Both the United States and Canada established boarding schools for indigenous children in an initiative to violently reimagine native futurity. Indian children from tribes across the nation were recruited, and sometimes coerced, to attend the schools. Once there, they were expected to cast off their native culture in favor of education and assimilation into white settler practices. At its peak in the early 1900s, the Indian boarding school system comprised 25 federally-funded boarding schools in 15 states and territories with about 6000 students in attendance from nearly 50 distinct tribes (Glenn 2015, 57).

The methods used by boarding schools to transform students from Indians to acceptable members of white society were often physically and emotionally abusive. Militarization and discipline characterized the activities and treatment of the students. Students were forced to cut

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emphasis on racial hierarchy and capitalism, more appropriately addresses the ongoing settler state violence against the Mapuche in Chile.

their hair, violating an important symbol of pride in many native communities. They were expected to dress according to strict codes and were forbidden from engaging in their traditional cultural practices, including speaking their native languages. There was a clear gendered division of labor as boys were taught how to be productive farmers or laborers, and girls were taught how to carry out the domestic labor of the farmwife (Lomawaima 1993, 228). Many students suffered corporal punishment and sexual assault. Children that died during their time in boarding school were not returned to their families and their homelands but were buried and left forever on the boarding school campus. Keeping children off-reservation and away from the influence of their communities disrupted the process of cultural teaching across generations in an attempt to destroy any possibility of native futurity outside the confines of the settler colonial structure (Trafzer et al. 2006, 19). Students were not only subjected to direct violence from their white teachers at school, but also a systematic initiative to eliminate their ties to their communities and their heritage in favor of white heteropatriarchal norms.

Though boarding schools attempted to eliminate the native from within the child, native youth subverted the boarding school, embracing their native identity and resisting State violence. They engaged in knowledge sharing by attending boarding school and accessed new economic opportunities; parents felt pride in their children for learning from the white man. Some youths describe learning more Indian cultural practices at boarding school than they had among their tribe. They would break school rules in order to smoke cob pipes under cover of darkness and build community with each other using their traditions (Adams 2006). Overall, boarding schools were not successful in wiping out native culture, which suggests that youth remained resilient and in some cases strengthen their cultural ties while attending boarding school.

Child removal policies implemented in Australia in the 1900s were intended to play a similar role of indigenous culture erasure as boarding schools in North America. White Australian settlers were convinced that Aboriginal people were naturally going to die out, so when white people and Aboriginal people began reproducing, the state considered the new generation of so-called “half-caste” children a threat to its carefully cultivated racial hierarchy. The government implemented a series of policies to remove Aboriginal children from their homes, place them into State institutions, and eventually adopt them out to white foster families. This initiative was intended to “whiten” native children and transform Aborigines into a productive source of labor that white settlers could exploit, much as boarding schools in North America sought to integrate native children into acceptable settler forms of economy (Jacobs 2006, 20). Although there is no official count of child abductions, some estimate that this policy separated about two-thirds of aboriginal children from their parents between 1912 and 1962 (Krieken 1999).

As in the United States and Australia, white settlers in Chile abducted and trained Mapuche children for productive use. While Chilean settlers fought for independence against the Spanish and began to conquer Mapuche territory in the 1800s, they increasingly trafficked Mapuche children to the capital to become slaves or servants in what “became an officially sanctioned aspect of frontier warfare” (Milanich 2009, 185). Despite the abolition of slavery in the 1820s, Mapuche children continued to be kidnapped and sold into servitude much later (Milanich 2009, 186). Children were removed from their indigenous context as settlers sought to control and oppress Mapuche families and then subordinated to the settler economy as servants for the Chilean upper class.

Today, many Mapuche students attend boarding schools outside their communities that, like Indian boarding schools in North America, execute an assimilationist agenda. Boarding schools isolate youth from their families and their territory to teach them Chile's neoliberal values, which often conflict with Mapuche conceptions of land and resistance. Students are taught that land is defined by ownership within a private property regime and that the State has the appropriate channels to address indigenous grievances without conflict, which criminalizes radical instances of Mapuche resistance such as setting fires to or occupying stolen territory (Radcliffe, Webb 2016). The assimilationist narrative of boarding schools has the potential to alienate youth from their communities' values as it normalizes the hegemonic settler structure.<sup>8</sup> The Chilean State sequesters and educates Mapuche youth to integrate them into its principles, erase indigenous ways of life, and maintain control over Mapuche territory, indicating that settler colonialism is at work in the relationship between Mapuche families and the Chilean State.

### **Structural Violence**

As settlement continues, settlers begin to embed a fourth element of settler colonialism into their society's institutions, structural violence against indigenous peoples. Johan Galtung (1969) introduced the concept of structural violence: it permeates institutions and practices to reinforce domination by the group in power.<sup>9</sup> It is not perpetrated by one identifiable actor but instead plays out continuously as marginalized groups interact with systems of power, in this

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<sup>8</sup> Of course, there are a multiplicity of Mapuche community values that differ across communities and even across families. There is not one way of being Mapuche or having Mapuche beliefs, and Mapuche knowledge systems have been shaped by their contact with settler colonialism, even as settlers are shaped by indigenous modes of being (Webb, Radcliffe 2015; Bacigalupo 2003).

<sup>9</sup> Galtung (1969) differentiates between personal or direct violence and structural violence by examining the actor that perpetuates each type of violence. In the case of direct violence, an actor causes harm to an individual or group. Direct violence includes physical, emotional, and sexual violence like warfare, kidnapping, and rape where people are hurt or manipulated by an identifiable individual (170).

case indigenous people with white settler states. As Galtung (1969) explains: “The violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as un-equal life chances”, which includes unequal health, economic, social, and political outcomes for indigenous populations in comparison with settlers (171).<sup>10</sup> A capitalist society may inherently contain elements of structural violence because it precludes impoverished individuals from accessing essential services like health care. Cycles of poverty are rooted in racial hierarchies that have been in place since the colonization of the Americas (Quijano 2000, 544). Settler colonialism must be conceptualized, then, as a structure embedded in State institutions, ensuring the continuous marginalization of indigenous populations by the State (Glenn 2015). In the United States, painting natives as dependents of the State has limited their access to resources by ignoring the ramifications of State-generated historical trauma. In Chile, similar discursive tools as well as the advent of neoliberal economic and social policies affect Mapuche peoples’ access to economic opportunity, health care, and education.

Many indigenous communities in North America experience structural violence and the negative outcomes that accompany intense historical trauma. The study of epigenetics reveals that longstanding violence by the State against native peoples and the resulting trauma to native communities affects the way their DNA is read and transcribed across generations. The effects of settler violence are felt at the biological level even as they continue to be felt at the structural level. Native communities are more susceptible to chronic diseases as well as prone to coping

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<sup>10</sup> Farmer et al. (2006) explains the impact of structural violence in the realm of public health. He describes how discrimination based on race and poverty led to increased mortality of African-Americans with AIDs in Baltimore because the structures in place barred them from receiving care. Physicians implemented interventions that addressed the disparities poor African-Americans experience, including lowering cost of care, paying for transportation, and treating comorbid conditions like drug addiction and mental illness. This led to a drastic improvement of health outcomes for this community because physicians were able to recognize the threat structural violence poses to public health (449).

with the intense pain of settler colonialism by resorting to alcoholism or drug use (Brockie et al. 2013). Despite the higher prevalence of these health conditions, settlers continue to limit native access to services including health and education in a way that impoverishes reservations and native families and maintains their dependence on the settler colonial structure (Nelson 2011). The high rates of disease, addiction, and poverty in the North American native population is in no way born out of damage inherent in the indigenous community. Rather, these statistics reveal that the settler colonial structure is very much still at work in its mission to eliminate native peoples. They also suggest the severe impact of settler colonialism on the physicality and spirituality of native communities, which in turn renders all the more striking the strength and vibrancy of native communities as they continue to celebrate and practice their native identities while under constant assault from the white settler (Tuck 2009).

The Chilean State exercises structural violence against the Mapuche community by appropriating or restricting access to economic opportunities. The Chilean state and associated private entities like forestry companies appropriated and now occupy Mapuche land without reparations to Mapuche people who depended on that land for subsistence. The Mapuche economic system before colonization was distinct from global systems of capitalism, but Mapuche people were forced to integrate into the world economy to access settler wealth (Alianza Territorial Mapuche 2012). Often, Mapuche people feel that to stay in Mapuche territory, which is primarily rural, is to live in poverty, so they migrate to urban centers. Many Mapuche people live in Temuco, the urban center of the Araucania region, or in Santiago, the capital of Chile. In the city, it is more difficult to live out Mapuche identities because it requires

leaving the land and the family, which are central to Mapuche life and assimilating to a lifestyle created by settlers (Gissi 2004).

Widespread poverty means that Mapuche communities often lack resources like healthcare and education. The Mapuche also endure discrimination because of their identity. They are unwelcome and shut out from employment opportunities and services because of cultural and language barriers, a manifestation of their ongoing dispossession by the settler colonial structure (Merino et al. 2009). For example, the healing practices of the Machi, Mapuche shamans, are excluded from many clinics, and the *mapuzugun* language of the Mapuche is not taught in the majority of schools. Mapuche families do not have access to their ancestral territory because of its privatization and distribution to settlers and corporations (Cancino 2013).

Structural violence in Mapuche communities has grave consequences for Mapuche youth. Mapuche youth may feel excluded by the settler society that dispossesses them. The rates of suicide among indigenous youth in Chile are higher than for non-indigenous youth, and more indigenous youth leave their school before completing their program of study (Pedrero 2016). Everyday interaction with a discriminatory and inequitable settler colonial system causes untold harm on Mapuche families; structural violence against the Mapuche in Chile furthers the settler colonial agenda of elimination and control, much as it does in the United States.

### **Criminalizing Resistance**

The settler state's ongoing abuse of indigenous peoples inevitably gives rise to native resistance movements, so settlers enact a fifth element of settler colonialism: the criminalization of indigenous resistance. In the era following 9/11, anti-colonial struggles around the world have

increasingly been conceptualized as terrorism against a legitimate state rather than reclamation of stolen territory and indigenous identity. Anti-terrorist laws in places like Canada and Chile have been utilized to quash and contain indigenous activism. Criminalizing resistance fits neatly under the helm of settler colonialism because it is a rhetorical and legal effort meant to accomplish the same goal as the *terra nullius* myth; that is, indigenous peoples are terrorists because they are understood as “nonstate actors, those groups that *lack* an officially recognized territorial foundation” (Wakeham 2012, 8). Erasing indigenous claims to land in order to violently remove or repress them has been the core of the settler colonial playbook for centuries.

In Canada, the criminalization of indigenous peoples began before 9/11 and intensified as global fear of terrorism took root. In 1990 during the Gulf War, the Canadian government announced plans to develop property on ancestral Mohawk lands, which included a tribal burial ground. When the native community formed a blockade in response, the government labeled it terrorist activity, cut the community off from the outside world, and subjected it to constant surveillance (Wakeham 2012, 15). In the wake of 9/11, Canadian officials quickly passed a new Anti-Terrorist Law, despite protest from the Assembly of First Nations’ demanding that the law explicitly exclude efforts by indigenous peoples to resist the settler state and reclaim indigenous lands. Over the next several years, the Canadian government regularly identified indigenous groups as counterinsurgents and deployed military force against First Nations activists (Wakeham 2012, 16). The Canadian government has made some attempts at reconciliation in recent years such as issuing official apologies but continues to employ many of the same tactics of surveillance and repression to keep a tight hold on indigenous lands. (Wakeham 2012, 18).

Chile's Anti-Terrorist Law was established and used to stifle indigenous resistance well before the impetus of the international "War on Terror." The Pinochet regime passed the law in 1984 as a means to subdue opposition to the brutality of the military dictatorship. After the transition to democracy, the reach of the law only grew as the democratic government expanded it to include arson. The more radical factions of Mapuche resistance against the State burn the equipment of forestry and hydroelectric companies along with occupying stolen territory and blocking roads, so this new measure was targeted at these forms of indigenous resistance. The law has been used countless times to indict and incarcerate Mapuche people resisting State violence and encroachment on Mapuche territory, and until 2011, was applicable and wielded against Mapuche youth. Between 2008 and February of 2010, President Michelle Bachelet called on the Anti-Terrorist Law in cases of Mapuche resistance seven times, resulting in the incarceration of 54 Mapuche community members (Llaitul 2014). As in Canada, the Chilean Anti-Terrorist Law is meant to communicate that the Mapuche do not have a legitimate claim to their ancestral lands, painting Mapuche activism to reclaim territory as terrorism and further embedding settler colonialism in the Chilean State structure.

### **The Significance of the Chilean case**

Though Chile exhibits five diagnostic elements of settler colonialism, it is not often identified as a settler colonial power. Each settler society including the United States and Australia has had a distinct approach to establishing racial hierarchy, which may have kept Chile from being considered settler colonial. Settlers in Australia were so concerned about the potential threat of "half-castes" to the settler establishment that they kidnapped a large proportion of Aboriginal children over the course of the 20th century. Blood quantum laws regulating

indigenous groups ensured that once natives had a small percentage of white blood, they were no longer entitled to tribal lands, which served the settlers' agenda of privatization and redistribution of lands that belonged to native collectivities. The question of how much native blood is required to be considered truly native continues to divide indigenous communities in the United States to this day as tribes look for ways to reclaim and maintain their hold on ancestral lands. Alienating natives from their tribal identities using blood quantum laws helped settlers accumulate land (Wolfe 2006, 396).<sup>11</sup>

By contrast, in Chile, Spanish colonizers used mestization as a strategy to consolidate power over indigenous peoples. Settler colonists were primarily male, and mixing with the indigenous population was welcome. According to Richard Gott, this was a strategy to "whiten" the indigenous population that so greatly outnumbered incoming white settlers (Gott 2007, 272). As the mestizo population grew, these new Chileans expressed an increasing sense of identification and ownership over the territory they occupied. The widespread mestization that occurred in Latin America allowed settlers to claim a connection with and inheritance of the land, even as they excluded, warred with, and assimilated indigenous populations (Rojas 2002).

Chile also may not be identified as a settler state because of its position in relation to Western foreign policy. As Ella Shohat (1992) points out, "in Latin America, similarly, formal "cre-ole" independence did not prevent Monroe Doctrine-style military interventions, or Anglo-American free-trade hegemony" (Shohat 1992, 105). As recently as the 1970s, Chile has been treated by the West as a peripheral experiment ground for the capitalist economy. The

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<sup>11</sup> United States settlers defined the composition of other races according to each group's relationship with settler property. People in the United States with even one drop of African blood were considered black and eligible for enslavement, which served the same purpose of property accumulation that blood quantum laws did with indigenous communities (Wolfe 2006, 396).

subjugation of the white Chilean state by capitalist systems centered around Europe and the United States must not obscure lopsided power dynamics that exist within Chile. Though neoliberalism exploits and disadvantages many Chileans, its effects are felt differentially by those who identify as Mapuche (Shohat 1992, 102). Despite its peripheral position on the global stage, the Chilean settler state continues to enact structural and direct violence against the Mapuche.

Much of settler colonial theory excludes Chile from its analysis in part because of the complexity of mestization and hierarchy of world systems, but recognizing it as a settler colonial state can give us new insights. When we acknowledge the presence of settler colonialism in Chile, it reveals the deep-rooted and systematic nature of the marginalization of the Mapuche people. It forces recognition of the need for decolonizing processes to continue in Chile including the restoration of indigenous lands as well as the great potential for anti-colonial organizing and knowledge cultivation for indigenous groups subjected to settler colonialism internationally. I explore these consequences of recognizing Chile as settler colonial in the next two chapters, first by discussing how settler colonialism manifests itself in the Chilean child protection system's approach to care and reform, and then by engaging a Mapuche youth movement's discourse on decolonization.

## **Mapuche Families and Chilean Child Protection**

Child protection systems express the intention to support vulnerable children and families in the mission of fostering a thriving society. For example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child guides Chile's child protection system, el Servicio Nacional de Menores (SENAME or The National Service of Minors). The Convention promises children not only basic fundamental rights, but also rights to autonomy and citizenship, including political participation and community membership. Indigenous families, who may be particularly vulnerable to poverty, violence, and other structural injustice due to settler colonial regimes, could derive significant benefit from the guarantee and provision of these rights and services.

Child protection services, however, often participate in and even amplify violence against indigenous families. Settler colonial states employ child removal as a tactic to destabilize and force the assimilation of indigenous families. SENAME is an unusual example of a child protection system because it not only provides protection to children who have experienced a violation of their rights but also rehabilitates youth who have broken the law. Both of SENAME's departments oversee residential care facilities for youth. This means that SENAME performs some of the carceral work of the state, which is often integral to upholding settler colonial structures. SENAME's incarceration of Mapuche youth is one manifestation of the continuing role of child removal in the Chilean context. Another is its legal basis for determining if children have experienced a violation of their rights and need to be entered into the system, which targets impoverished families. Once in the system, Mapuche youth are denied access to

what child protection systems claim to provide: various aspects of their indigenous world including family, land, and culture. This denial harms their mental health and well-being.<sup>12</sup>

In this way, SENAME perpetuates both direct and structural violence against Mapuche families entering the system, and their attempts at intercultural reform may simply serve to further incorporate the Mapuche into an assimilationist state apparatus. First, I discuss the politics of recognition in terms of how systems like SENAME erase, subsume, or accommodate indigenous identity. Then, I examine the history of SENAME, emphasizing how it has developed to fit the needs of the settler colonial state apparatus. Next, I describe the relationship between SENAME and the Mapuche population, including lack of recognition and incarceration by the institution. Finally, I explore the work of Mapuche individuals and international organizations like UNICEF to reform SENAME to better address the needs of Mapuche families. I use the case of Luis Marileo, who was incarcerated in SENAME for violating Chile's Anti-Terrorist Law and initiated a hunger strike in response to his unjust treatment, to illustrate the impact of SENAME's discriminatory practices and the shortcomings of its intercultural approach. Through his strength to resist, Marileo also demonstrates the potential for Mapuche self-affirmation even from within settler colonial systems.

### **The Politics of Recognizing Mapuche Families**

Recognition can be a key political tool because it connotes the power to verify or affirm individual and group identity. The politics of recognition relate to how States choose to include or accommodate different groups in policies and practices, with the expectation that the State

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<sup>12</sup> Gone (2013) describes instances where counselors in North America used culturally sensitive therapy to engage indigenous clients on indigenous identity, community, and spirituality. This approach allowed clients to draw on the wisdom of their communities to heal, effectively neutralizing the harmful mental and emotional effects of colonization.

recognizes the full complexity of each individual's identity.<sup>13</sup> Marginalized peoples are left to feel excluded and disempowered without access to parts of their identity when the state and society refuse to recognize them (Taylor 1992).<sup>14</sup> SENAME exercises the politics of recognition in its intercultural reforms aimed at Mapuche families in an effort to address its previous erasure of Mapuche identity. According to Park and Richards (2007) and Coulthard (2014), however, these reforms for recognition further assimilate the Mapuche into the settler state. Coulthard (2014) recommends a process of self-recognition by indigenous peoples to liberate them from the controlling gaze of the settler.

Recognition initiatives often manifest as neoliberal multiculturalism, even when indigenous peoples employed by the State oversee intercultural reforms. Neoliberal multiculturalism refers to State programs that promote the inclusion of diverse populations in order to mitigate marginalized people from organizing for more radical change without changing the structures that marginalize them. Employment discrimination means that job opportunities for Mapuche people are limited, so working for the government can be the best option, even for Mapuche people who oppose the State's treatment of the Mapuche. The State employs Mapuche people, especially in programs targeted at the Mapuche population, to demonstrate what it considers to be acceptable forms of indigenous political participation.

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<sup>13</sup> Hegel (1869) imagines a mutual process of recognition, even between actors with power differentials. He describes a master-slave dynamic in which ongoing recognition affirms each actor's personhood. At first, the master subordinates the slave, but as the master becomes dependent on the slave's labor, she becomes dependent on the slave's recognition even as the slave begins to recognize herself through her labor. Hegel claims that this ongoing process of misrecognizing and self-recognizing will lead to freedom for the slave.

<sup>14</sup> Taylor (1992) uses the example of Canada to demonstrate the potential for a liberal politics of recognition. Canada employs the language of universal rights, but implementing those rights in Quebec, a region that is culturally different, must be distinct from how they are implemented elsewhere. The people of Quebec must have access to their language and be able to maintain their culture without being subsumed by the universal principles of liberalism employed by the Canadian state (55).

Many of SENAME's attempts at reform have been spearheaded by Mapuche professionals; Park and Richards (2007) discuss how Mapuche people employed by the State navigate assimilation and resistance in their work. Park and Richards (2007) describe the various actions of Mapuche workers within the system: many participate in anti-state resistance movements, critique the State for its indigenous policies, and encourage Mapuche people to take advantages of State resources to promote equity. Despite their ambivalence towards the system in which they work, these individuals help to justify neoliberal multicultural State programs and foment greater buy-in to government work by the Mapuche population. Although they can support other Mapuche people in navigating oppressive State systems and accessing State resources, they have little effect on the settler colonial structure that continues to dispossess, assimilate, and criminalize Mapuche people.

Coulthard (2014) questions the value of any State politics of recognition and suggests that indigenous groups must engage in their own process of self-recognition. He is skeptical of settler state efforts to include indigenous peoples in their policies and practices as they continue to carry out settler colonial violence, including the dispossession of lands. He argues that multicultural initiatives attempt further assimilation of indigenous peoples, reproducing them in the image of the settler state and rendering them productive for the settler economy. He also doubts the settler state is suited to recognize the autonomy of indigenous peoples because to endow the State with the power of recognition is to legitimize settler occupation of stolen indigenous lands. The settler state can only recognize indigenous groups within the context of its own statehood, which fundamentally dispossesses indigenous people. Instead, Coulthard recommends not only that there is "critical individual and collective *self*-recognition on the part

of Indigenous societies”, but also “with the understanding that our cultural practices have much to offer regarding the establishment of relationships within and between peoples and the natural world built on principles of reciprocity and respectful coexistence” (48). Indigenous peoples can exercise their power to inhabit their indigenous identity and build connections with the world around them based on their community’s culture and practices.

Recognition remains fundamental to understanding SENAME’s violence against the Mapuche, attempts at reform, and inability to divorce its work from the settler colonial structure. SENAME’s mistreatment of Mapuche families is born in part out of the system’s limited recognition of the existence of the indigenous children it serves or the violence these children face at the hands of the State. The collaborative reforms of Mapuche professionals and UNICEF are predicated on the idea of a better politics of recognition but instead perpetuate neoliberal multiculturalism, which translates Mapuche families for assimilation into the State. As Coulthard suggests, autonomous self-recognition may allow indigenous communities to best identify and serve themselves outside the confines of the settler state.

### **Child Protection in Chile**

Since its inception, the Chilean State has used child protection as a channel to determine acceptable family structure and care. In the latter half of the 19th century, Chilean child protection focused on the abuse and neglect of poor children; the child welfare system would either place vulnerable children in an asylum or under the care of a wealthy benefactor where they would be trained as servants. Nara Milanich (2009) explains that kinship structures are essential to determining class and rights in Chile. When poor and illegitimate children entered the child welfare system, it negated many of the rights to which present and legitimate kinship

ties entitled them as their wellbeing became based on the largesse of their benefactors rather than the personhood bestowed upon them by their familial relationships. The model for acceptable family structure in Chile was determined by upper-class families, many of whom could identify their ancestors over the course of many generations, demonstrating the importance of kinship. In response, the child welfare system reproduced class hierarchy by basing its protective acts and care on the upper-class model through targeting mostly impoverished and illegitimate children (Milanich 2009, 7). During this time, Chilean settlers were kidnapping Mapuche children, whose families were facing occupation and pacification by the new State, and sending the children to wealthy families to work as servants (Milanich 2009, 186). Thus, Mapuche children were also entering a child welfare system that judged their families unacceptable and destined them to a life in an impoverished class.

In 1979, the Chilean government established el Servicio Nacional de Menores (SENAME) to protect the rights of children who were in vulnerable situations. SENAME fell under the umbrella of the Ministry of Justice and had two major departments. One department was established to respond to the needs of children who had their rights violated and the other reintegrated youth who had broken the law into their communities. The State tasked SENAME with creating programs and residential care facilities for children in dangerous situations or who had broken the law. SENAME was also intended to oversee and inform the policies and practices of private organizations that could provide services in collaboration with SENAME's protection work (Chile Ministry of Justice 1979). The system functioned retroactively; it worked with children at the court's discretion in cases where parents had subjected the child to abuse or neglect or if the child needed to be incarcerated. The courts were most concerned with whether

children had their rights violated by a parent, and often, parents accused of violating a child's rights were poor and unable to provide for all of a child's needs for healthy development (Lombaert 2016). Poor families were targeted because the Chilean upper class still determined the family paradigm and children's rights. Thus, from the start, SENAME carried out the same principles that the Chilean child welfare system had always acted on, entrenching class hierarchies by targeting poor families and negating poor children's kinship in the name of protecting their rights.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Chile ratified in 1989, became the primary legal basis that was intended to shape the provision of service by SENAME, but its structure changed little in response to the new declaration. The Convention on the Rights of the Child first guarantees the fundamental rights of children, such as food, water, shelter, and security, but it is concerned with political and social rights of children as well. It states that children be able to participate in political processes and access quality and affordable education. Article 30 of the Convention outlines the rights of indigenous children, declaring that they "shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion or to use his or her own language", promising indigenous children not only the rights guaranteed to all children, but also access to their indigenous culture and practices (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989).

SENAME adopted the Convention as the legal foundation for its services but did not adjust its policies and practices to reflect its new commitment. Instead, the judicialization and privatization of the system continued. SENAME's reliance on the courts to admit youth to their system means that the basis for determining whether youth need care or rehabilitation is legal.

The court has the capacity to determine whether children have had their rights violated or broken the law based only on codified law. The judicialized approach facilitates the criminalization of parents because they are accused of abuse or negligence under the letter of the law; it does not enable preventive or restorative care with children and families (Lombaert 2016). The process for admittance to SENAME is judicialized, while its provision of services is privatized. The State always intended for SENAME to collaborate with private actors in its provision of care. The privatization of residential and counseling services make it difficult for SENAME to establish universal standards of care across its many collaborators and force the doctrine of neoliberal profit-making into the realm of child protection (Miranda 2013). Critics of SENAME argued that these factors corrupted the system, making it impossible for SENAME to provide adequate care to the children and youth under its supervision.

In 2016, SENAME faced a crisis when the public discovered the mistreatment children faced in the system. Countless stories came to light of healthy parents who were bereft at having their children removed and placed in residential care because parents had been accused of negligence. Children experienced so much physical, emotional, and sexual abuse in SENAME programs that they often ran away because they preferred to be homeless than interred in one of SENAME's centers. Children receiving psychological treatment from SENAME regularly overdosed on the drugs they were prescribed. The media reported that hundreds of Chilean children had died in SENAME's care. Estimates differed dramatically, from 200 to 1300 deaths, because SENAME does not keep careful records of what happens to the children that pass through the system (Lorca 2017).

In 2017, Chile passed a law to separate the two departments of SENAME. The juvenile justice department will remain under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice while the protection of children will become the responsibility of the Ministry for Social Development. A new Subsecretary of Infancy position will better address the need for public policy regarding the rights of Chilean children. There are also now many rules in place regarding the accreditation and record-keeping required of SENAME and its partner organizations (Figueroa 2017). Through these new reforms, SENAME hopes to confront that it abuses the most vulnerable children in Chilean society, including poor, homeless, and orphaned children, rather than protecting them. It is refocusing the system to work more on public policy and child development, not the criminalization of Chilean parents and youth. Still, none of the changes begin to address SENAME's contribution to the violence against Mapuche children and families.

### **Mapuche Families and SENAME**

Luis Marileo, a Mapuche youth, was first incarcerated by the Chilean State when he was 17 years old. As a child, Marileo had experienced direct violence at the hands of police officers who invaded his home and left him with a head injury. When he was attending high school in 2010, he was accused of terrorist activity under Chile's Anti-Terrorist Law for burning trucks and blocking roads, and the court sentenced him to incarceration in a SENAME facility. Within five months of imprisonment in SENAME, Marileo condemned the system for depriving Mapuche youth of liberty, keeping them from their families and communities, ignoring the harm the State caused them, and mistreating them in SENAME facilities (Parra 2017).

Though the Convention on the Rights of the Child includes articles on indigenous rights, SENAME has created little of its own policy addressing structural violence against indigenous

youth. SENAME has only recently begun to recognize the existence of Mapuche children within its system. It officially acknowledged State violence against Mapuche children in 2014 when police brutality was escalating in the community of Ercilla but has not followed up with policies or practices that address the ongoing trauma to families as a result of this violence (Cooperativa 2014). For the most part, the institution perpetuates settler colonial violence against the Mapuche by confining, assimilating, and even criminalizing Mapuche parents and youth, as evidenced by the case of Marileo.

Mapuche children that inhabit communities occupied by Chilean police forces regularly experience the violence and trauma of police brutality, violence that SENAME does not address. Mapuche children in these contested communities are shot at, hit, and taken hostage as police forces invade their homes and lands (Barbureau, Martel 2017). Between 2011 and 2015, 130 Mapuche children were victims of police violence in the Araucania region (Manque 2017). Mapuche children experience this violence directly and stand by as their parents and other family members are abused and detained by police forces, which has grave consequences for the health and well-being of the children. Police violence is the most extreme example of the violence Mapuche children face; they also confront the ongoing psychosocial harm of living in a settler colonial society that seeks to eliminate them at every opportunity. As a State institution, SENAME cannot condemn the State for its actions against Mapuche children despite its duty to provide all Chilean children with protection; it has no protocol to protect children when their abuser is the State itself (Manquian 2016).

Not only does SENAME fail to acknowledge settler colonial violence against Mapuche communities, it also has only recently begun to recognize that Mapuche children are part of its

system at all. Intake forms for children entering SENAME now include a question on whether a child belongs to an indigenous group, but this is a recent development within the last five years (Painemal 2016). In a discussion with a UNICEF official, the director of the SENAME branch in Araucania commented, “these problems of interculturalism are new for us because never before have we had Mapuche children in SENAME” (Zanzi 2016). Given SENAME’s poor record-keeping, it is nearly impossible to ascertain from its archives how many Mapuche children it served in the past. However, SENAME’s position as an institution in a settler colonial state that focuses on intervening with impoverished families suggests that this cannot be the case. Additionally, Mapuche communities are afraid of SENAME, a mistrust born out of many years of abuse in the name of child protection (Salas 2016). By refusing to see the Mapuche children it serves, SENAME performs the work of erasing indigenous identity and assimilating Mapuche children into a homogenous Chilean culture on behalf of the settler state.

Erasure of indigenous identity permits SENAME to mistreat the Mapuche youth within the system because it ignores their distinct background and needs. One SENAME functionary tells how Mapuche youth incarcerated in a SENAME center became depressed due to the distance from their communities and denial of their culture, including traditional food and artisanry as well as practices like taking mate. Mapuche youth would be targeted and bullied by other incarcerated youth because of incomprehension and discomfort of their differences and experienced violence at the hands of the guards as well. When their families would come to visit, the guards would pat down the elder women - physical contact that is unacceptable and disrespectful in Mapuche culture (Painemal 2016). Without culturally sensitive therapies and other approaches to care grounded in Mapuche culture, Mapuche children and youth in

SENAME cannot access the community and heritage that roots them and could restore them (Gone 2013). Far from caring for and rehabilitating Mapuche children and youth, SENAME makes them feel invisible.

In its interactions with Mapuche families, SENAME also performs some of the criminalization and carceral work of the State. The system's judicialized approach to sending children into child welfare criminalizes parents by accusing them of abuse or neglect, usually with a focus on poor families that cannot access sufficient resources. The settler state intervenes and assesses the care practices of Mapuche families using the measuring stick of the Convention on the Rights of the child, a Western legal doctrine from the international human rights regime, to determine whether or not parents are fit to care for their children. If the family tribunal decides parents are harming their children, it sends the children to residential care, effectively criminalizing parents for violating their children's rights. SENAME incarcerates Mapuche youth, who often receive harsher sanctions for their crimes, thus aiding the State in confining its indigenous population than other youth (Painemal 2016). Its carceral role sometimes connects with criminalizing indigenous resistance, such as in the case of Marileo, who was incarcerated in SENAME for activism labeled terrorism by the State.

SENAME participates in settler colonialism against Mapuche communities by ignoring direct violence towards Mapuche children, assimilating them into the culture of the system, and confining and criminalizing Mapuche children and families. SENAME will not officially recognize the brutality of the police forces that occupy Mapuche communities even though it affects children. It has only recently begun to see and record that Mapuche children are receiving care from the child welfare system in the first place. Without a log of its Mapuche population,

SENAME has no incentive or ability to implement culturally sensitive care for Mapuche children, leaving them vulnerable to assimilation and violence within the system. Finally, SENAME's use of residential care to remove children from their parents and incarcerate them in institutions contributes to the confinement and criminalization of Mapuche families. For Mapuche families, rather than providing protection, SENAME is another perpetrator of settler colonial oppression.

### **SENAME's Intercultural Reforms**

While Marileo was incarcerated in SENAME, a team of professionals worked with him and other Mapuche youth to create an intercultural care plan.<sup>15</sup> These care providers wanted to address the differential needs of Mapuche youth in the system by supporting them in accessing their indigenous culture and diffusing the violence these youth experienced at the hands of the guards and other incarcerated youth. Their intercultural approach to care was echoed by SENAME when it hired an intercultural manager from a Mapuche community for its Araucania office in 2014. His position was intended to incorporate the needs of Mapuche families in SENAME's work as SENAME responded to criticism that it ignored or amplified State violence against Mapuche children. UNICEF has been collaborating with SENAME and the intercultural manager over the course of a decade to introduce intercultural care to the system in an effort to mitigate the harm SENAME causes to Mapuche children and to improve its capacity to support Mapuche families. SENAME's partner organizations have also introduced intercultural reforms as they seek to appropriately address the needs of Mapuche youth under their care.

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<sup>15</sup> Interculturalism is related to multiculturalism in that it concerns the inclusion of diverse groups in State systems but with greater emphasis on mutual respect and value between different cultures (Manquian 2016).

On an individual level, Mapuche functionaries in SENAME collaborated with other service providers to deliver intercultural care to Luis Marileo and other Mapuche youth incarcerated by the Chilean State. Some of their biggest victories as an intercultural care team included securing separate visit space for Mapuche youth and their families. One functionary describes the scene: “It was necessary because their grandmother came. Their mother came. The children came. The head of the community came. A machi came. And they came in their traditional clothing that they had no reason to change into Chilean clothing to visit their son who was imprisoned. They have the right to dress as they thought they should” (Painemal 2016). Another was providing the youth with boiling water and herbs to have mate because “mate is an element of coexistence, socialization, establishing mutual care, and conversation” (Painemal 2016). As Park and Richards (2007) describe, these Mapuche workers knew that the Mapuche youth in SENAME were being unjustly criminalized and mistreated. They had some knowledge both of Mapuche culture and resistance, and they incorporated their own indigenous identity into the care of these youth in opposition to the demands of the State system.

On an institutional level, SENAME hired an intercultural manager in 2014 to incorporate interculturalism into its work with Mapuche families in Araucania. The position was created to appease Mapuche communities and human rights groups after SENAME received widespread criticism for its failure to address the protection of Mapuche children who were victims of police violence. Carlos Torres Manquian, the chief of a Mapuche community in Araucania, took the position and transformed it from a symbolic role into a role integral to SENAME’s work in the region. Manquian contests the idea that intercultural care means reducing the needs of Mapuche children to drinking mate and crafting traditional artisanry; he fears that this understanding

folklorizes Mapuche families. Instead, he trains SENAME functionaries, administrators, and collaborators to approach their care to Mapuche families with a critical eye towards their own position of power within the institutional structure. He explains interculturalism as working to comprehend and respect the value of cultures other than one's own and employing that respect in every aspect of work with indigenous families. Manquian also occasionally accompanies SENAME officials on interventions with Mapuche families and attempts to minimize the number of Mapuche children taken from their families and placed into residential care. He, too, hopes to alleviate the harm SENAME causes to Mapuche families by demanding that employees at every level of the institution fully recognize the humanity of Mapuche people and allow that recognition to transform their approach to their work (Manquian 2016).

UNICEF Chile has collaborated with SENAME, including Manquian, on a long-term project to introduce intercultural practices and policies with a focus on protecting indigenous children, particularly Mapuche children in the Araucania region. In order to address the structural violence that Mapuche children experience, UNICEF Chile trains professionals before they enter direct work with children. It collaborated with the Catholic University of Temuco to design an intercultural curriculum for students that want to work as psychologists, lawyers, or social workers. This curriculum includes theories of interculturalism and how to have a more critical perspective on society and how it treats "others". It teaches the importance of respect for people of different cultures, acknowledgment of their differences, and collaboration with them on the provision of services. It also created guides for practices and workshops to carry out with Mapuche children in the child protection system in collaboration with Mapuche and non-Mapuche professionals from the region who work with Mapuche families (Carrasco 2016).

UNICEF also participates in discussion groups regarding interculturalism and the formation of intercultural policy. These groups include public and private actors in order to address the best ways to protect the rights of Mapuche children and incorporate intercultural strategies in their care. The police force is part of these conversations, and UNICEF has performed trainings with police to encourage them to incorporate interculturalism into their practices. Now, UNICEF is working with the Araucanian branch of SENAME to include intercultural policy as part of SENAME's national reform. They have presented proposals based on their experiences with intercultural work in Araucania to national directors of SENAME. The current restructuring plan for SENAME includes an article about special protection of marginalized children including indigenous, migrant, and LGBTQ+ youth, and they hope that SENAME will begin to use an intercultural approach across Chile (Carrasco 2016).

Some of SENAME's partner organizations seek to be intercultural in their provision of services. These organizations are often private, so they can choose to use their resources to establish intercultural practices. Some organizations in Araucania have long recognized the need to create their own policy regarding interculturalism to work with Mapuche families. For example, the Fundación Tierra de Esperanza is a non-profit organization that supports children who have had their rights violated in the Araucania region, with financing from SENAME. Until 2009, the professionals working for the organization followed protocols of state institutions that financed them, but they began to realize that these protocols were not effective. They formed an Intercultural Team of professionals with a commitment to train on interculturalism, gain a historical comprehension of the Mapuche people, and begin to create intercultural policy and practices especially focused on the Mapuche. Now, they make their interventions with a critical

perspective on their position of power as part of the system that oppresses the Mapuche. They understand that Mapuche families are complex actors that live distinct realities, so they plan their interventions in collaboration with these families. They strive to include the extended family and show respect towards the elders and ancestors. They have also incorporated the therapeutic work of machis into their interventions with Mapuche families (Arce 2015).

SENAME's execution of intercultural reforms is part of the regime of neoliberal multiculturalism implemented by the Chilean State. To divert calls for more radical reforms, SENAME acquiesces to include Mapuche professionals and intercultural ideas in its provision of care, which has the concurrent effect of demonstrating appropriate channels of participation for Mapuche families within the existing settler colonial system. Though Mapuche employees of SENAME seek to provide better care for youth like Marileo, and the intercultural manager promotes a critical intercultural approach in SENAME and its collaborating organizations, these individuals cannot dismantle the incarcerating, assimilating, and criminalizing work that SENAME performs on behalf of the Chilean settler state. Manquian and UNICEF Chile have sought to implement their reforms across the Araucania region, but SENAME has yet to adopt their work as official policy at the regional, much less national, level, demonstrating the tepid nature of SENAME's commitment to upholding the rights of indigenous children.

### **Mapuche Self-Recognition in SENAME**

During his incarceration, Marileo was not a passive subject to settler colonial violence; he engaged in a hunger strike to protest and decolonize the system. Hunger strikes have been a common tool of Mapuche resistance since 2004. Gómez-Barris (2012) explains that this tactic showcases Mapuche agency because it reveals the State's agenda of elimination and asserts

Mapuche control over their own bodies. Choosing not to sustain oneself also connects Mapuche hunger strikers to a decolonial future: they sacrifice their physical being so the Mapuche community can persist.

In 2010, Marileo demanded that SENAME declare its contribution to settler colonialism and cease its violations of the rights of Mapuche children. After 41 days of Marileo's strike, SENAME conceded that it would acknowledge the Mapuche struggle and attempt to meet the needs of the Mapuche children it admitted (Comunidad de Historia Mapuche 2017). Marileo's actions resulted in many of SENAME's intercultural reforms, including establishing an intercultural care team and hiring an intercultural manager (Salas 2016). Engaging in his own process of recognition, Marileo affirmed his indigenous body through his hunger strike. He also forced SENAME to recognize itself as a participant in settler colonialism. Marileo shows that in spite of the violence of state systems and its limited commitment to reforms, Mapuche youth still fight to recognize themselves and strengthen their communities.

## **A Mapuche Youth Vision of a Decolonized Chile**

Like Luis Marileo, indigenous people across the globe persist, surviving, thriving, and resisting in the face of the settler colonial regimes that would eliminate them. In earlier chapters, I discussed how Mapuche resistance acts, such as occupying ancestral Mapuche territory and burning equipment belonging to predatory forestry or hydroelectric corporations, led the settler state to deploy false terrorist claims against indigenous activists. I also described how Mapuche political prisoners, including youth, have engaged in hunger strikes to protest the criminalization and incarceration of Mapuche activists. Mapuche activists are often motivated not simply by settler colonial abuse but also by the endurance and richness of Mapuche modes of being that root many Mapuche communities.

In this chapter, I investigate how Mapuche resistance is embedded in the indigenous world that Mapuche people inhabit alongside the settler world. This is not to suggest that there is a pure Mapuche identity untouched by settler colonialism, but rather that the elements that constitute indigenous identity go beyond the definitions that settlers impose. First, I discuss the settler colonial state's use of discourse to preserve its hegemony and the counterhegemonic potential of recognizing the productive power of indigenous discourse. Then, I use Campbell and Burkholder's model for rhetorical analysis to examine the Federation of Mapuche Students (FEMAE) mission statement. This analysis allows me to highlight the ways in which this document of the Mapuche youth movement is founded in the Mapuche world, in part by using anthropological accounts of the Mapuche to draw relationships between FEMAE's work and Mapuche conceptions of selfhood, child rearing, ritual, and law. This reveals a Mapuche vision for a decolonized Chile.

## **Productive Power, Discourse, and Decolonization**

Settlers are not the only actors able to exercise power in the settler-native relationship. Barnett and Duvall (2005) describe four types of power that complicate an understanding of power as simply the ability to make actors behave according to your desires. They explain that constitution is another essential aspect of power, where actors have the ability to shape conceptions, actions, and discourse in relation to other actors. Productive power in particular informs discourse because it concerns the capacity of actors to establish, communicate, and disseminate their understandings of the world.

Settler colonists often wield great productive power as they tend to control the dissemination of discourse in settler states. Settlers use discourse to embed the understanding in a society that they have legitimate claim over indigenous lands, such as assimilationist materials in settler education systems or anti-terrorist laws. Epstein (2008) is concerned with the way discourses become powerful, transforming into a frame of reference wielded by hegemonic systems. She uses the example of anti-whaling discourse to describe how when one discourse rises to prominence, it results in one particular meaning being ascribed to words, signs, and symbols until it becomes common sense. Powerful discourse thus excludes alternatives; it fills words with one hegemonic meaning and invisibilizes the history and possibility that any other expressions or understandings might exist. A singular meaning is determined, and all others are negated.

In the case of the relationship between the Chilean State and the Mapuche, the settler state seeks to wield its productive power to define indigeneity. The immense structure of control in place as a result of settler colonialism means that for many inhabitants of settler states, the

settler definition of indigeneity becomes the only one. Doty (1996) writes, “The fact that particular meanings and identities have been widely taken to be fixed and true is indicative of the inextricable link between power and knowledge” (7). This link suggests that the Chilean State employs its power to determine one Mapuche identity that is “fixed and true” in order to shape what the settler world knows about indigenous peoples in a way that becomes taken for granted (Doty 1996, 7). Doty argues that the process of creating hegemonic definitions must be examined because, in fact, the negation of other epistemologies is not a given, but rather a tool of oppression.

Recognizing the productive power of Mapuche students is vital; an analysis of productive power shapes my approach to Mapuche student discourse. The Federation of Mapuche Students exercises productive power in its relationship with settler colonial structures, including the Chilean State and the Chilean student movement. Through its organizing, actions, and discourse, it constructs its own definition of Mapuche identity and the process by which the indigenous world can be recognized and liberated from the settlers. Barnett and Duvall (2005) explain that “to attend to the analysis of productive power is to focus on how diffuse and contingent social processes produce particular kinds of subjects, fix meanings and categories, and create what is taken for granted and the ordinary of world politics” (57). Settler colonialism and indigenous resistance are processes deeply embedded in each other, even contingent on each other in certain respects.<sup>16</sup> Interrogating Mapuche student discourse reveals the role these youth play in producing knowledge of themselves, their community, and their participatory processes rather

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<sup>16</sup> Settler colonialism requires indigenous resistance; indigenous communities display their resilience and refusal to be erased again and again over the course of settlement and ongoing marginalization. The settler state often responds to indigenous resistance by putting in place new measures to control the indigenous population, such as utilizing anti-terrorist laws to delegitimize indigenous demands for sovereignty.

than taking their negation by the settler state for granted. It also presents a counter-hegemonic understanding of being Mapuche, Mapuche resistance, and decolonization that dismantles the settler state's grip on knowledge production.

Campbell and Burkholder (1996) contribute a specific methodology to my project for organically approaching discourse outside the mainstream. They define their style as “descriptive analysis” in contrast with traditional discourse analysis that attempts to fit discourse into categories like *pathos*, *logos*, and *ethos*. They argue that “Contemporary critics must examine and develop critical systems to describe and evaluate such rhetoric in ways that do not *inevitably* force them to censure its purpose and strategies” (18). Both Epstein (2008) and Doty (1996) describe the dangers of accepting mainstream discourse as common sense, and Campbell and Burkholder's (1996) approach works to subvert those well-established, traditional academic frameworks. Descriptive analysis is “a careful and exhaustive examination of the discourse itself”, which is “an essential premise of the organic approach” (Campbell, Burkholder 1996, 19). The method situates itself entirely within the discourse by investigating seven components of the work: purpose, persona, audience, tone, structure, supporting materials, and other strategies.

My goal in this chapter is to establish the productive power of Mapuche youth in envisioning decolonization of their indigenous world through their discourse. As Shilliam (2015) writes, “it is not possible to speak of a ‘decolonial project’ in the abstract, that is, as an academic enterprise separated from living knowledge traditions” (7). FEMAE's mission is steeped in the cultural wisdom of the Mapuche community, imbuing it with the potential to decolonize. FEMAE's choice to anchor itself in Mapuche wisdom demonstrates its commitment to

decolonization because in opposition to the hegemonic knowledge production practices of settler states, decolonial science “*cultivates* knowledge, it does not *produce* knowledge” (Shilliam 2015, 24 - 25). Cultivating their own ancestral knowledge traditions allows these Mapuche students to share with the settler and indigenous worlds their own understanding of their Mapuche identity. This chapter builds on the discourse of Mapuche youth and wisdom of Mapuche knowledge traditions to facilitate a discussion of indigenous agency in setting the terms for decolonization.

### **A Brief History of the Mapuche Student Movement**

The Mapuche student movement of the present moment was born in 2011 in conjunction with student mobilizations across Chile.<sup>17</sup> Chilean students were frustrated with the privatization of education initiated by the constitution of the Pinochet government. They found the costs of education prohibitive, as private firms were more interested in profiting from students and leaving them in debt rather than providing them an affordable and quality education. Most of the money that the government allots to education funds privately held institutions, so public options are severely limited. Students from public and private universities across Chile organized to demand reform, including an end to profit-making through the education system, and universal access to quality, affordable education. Their actions involved public demonstrations like strikes and marches in what came to be called the Chilean Winter of Discontent as well as the formation of the Confederation of Chilean Students (CONFECH) to represent student interests in negotiations with the government (Webb, Radcliffe 2013).

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<sup>17</sup> Mapuche youth activism in pursuit of educational autonomy dates back to the origins of assimilationist schooling in Chile. After the Mapuche were moved onto reservations in the 1880s, many of the children of chiefs were sent to be educated by Catholic missionaries and join mainstream Chilean society. Several of the graduates of these mission schools went on to use the language and customs they learned at school to become prominent Mapuche intellectuals and lead movements of land reclamation. In this way, their education became a weapon against the new conquest of the State (Webb, Radcliffe 2013, 326).

The Federation of Mapuche Students (FEMAE) began to represent indigenous, especially Mapuche, interests in CONFECH. Mapuche students experience the negative consequences of the education system's structure differently than other Chilean students. For example, the Chilean government instituted scholarships for indigenous students in the 1990s to offset education costs in the name of reparations for the harm the State had caused indigenous communities. Still, only about 20% of indigenous students qualify for this scholarship, leaving close to 30,000 students to shoulder the immense financial burden of private education (Lepin 2012, 32). Besides cost, Mapuche students were concerned with bringing an end to the discrimination and lack of recognition they faced within educational systems. They wanted to bring attention to the ongoing oppression of their communities, including a lack of discussion in the classroom of military violence against Mapuche people as well as the use of education as an assimilationist tool. Thus, they hoped to advocate for a greater commitment to interculturalism and reparation in the Chilean education system (Lepin 2012).

Settler colonialism within the movement obstructed FEMAE's work, but Mapuche students found alternative routes to foment educational equity for indigenous students. Though CONFECH was happy to have indigenous students augment its numbers as it pursued its agenda, the organization did not collaborate with FEMAE to incorporate interculturalism or other demands of indigenous students into its work. Mapuche students found themselves marginalized within the education system and the student movement that sought to resist it (Caniguante 2014). Still, FEMAE articulates its goals and acts on them by sharing its own vision for a more equitable education system, hosting conferences for Mapuche students to take charge of their education and leading workshops on the Mapuche language, *mapuzugun*, to support Mapuche

students in laying claim to their cultural heritage. Though many critics question the effectiveness of the Chilean student movement in increasing educational access, FEMAE continues to organize around themes of interculturalism, including a march for Mapuzugun held on February 16, 2018 (Federación Mapuche de Estudiantes del Wallmapu 2018).

### **FEMAE's Mission**

Throughout its work advocating for Mapuche students, FEMAE gathered information through discussion, surveys, and other feedback on the priorities of its program participants. It used this input to craft a mission statement declaring its organizing principles, first and foremost laying claim to the educational rights of Mapuche people. I performed a descriptive analysis of FEMAE's statement to reveal the purpose and foundation of the group. I found that FEMAE uses the language of human rights and other legal discourse deemed acceptable by the settler state to demand access, mutual respect, and autonomy to learn Mapuche knowledge practices, including education in Mapuzugun. I analyze each section of FEMAE's statement in an effort to identify the major themes that structure and motivate this group as I set its organizing work in the context of a Mapuche world.

The Federation of Mapuche Students presents its mission statement on its website along with other materials sharing the purpose and work of the group. The mission statement appears under the heading *Reivindicacion de derechos educacionales del pueblo mapuche* or "Claim to the Educational Rights of the Mapuche People". Most other headings on the navigation bar are labeled in Mapuzugun rather than Spanish, with the exception of *¿Quienes Somos?* or "Who Are We?". The links in Mapuzugun lead to pages regarding conferences in Mapuzugun, publications

by the group, and news. The bilingual presentation suggests that FEMAE's resources are intended first and foremost for Mapuche students who speak or hope to learn Mapuzugun.

FEMAE claims its right to an education in order to promote the value and development of Mapuche knowledge cultivation in the education system. Its mission is presented on a white page against a teal background and organized into two major blocks of text: background and demands. At the top of the page is a cartoon (pictured below) displaying the problem FEMAE hopes to address, the exclusion of Mapuche people from the education system. FEMAE's purpose is to construct an education that responds to the plurinationality, plurilingualism, and pluriculturalism that exist in Chile, and specifically in the Mapuche territory, as a right of Ancestral Peoples to conserve, develop, and practice their teachings, language, culture, and society, such as lifting up their own educational models with cultural pertinence (2015, 2). FEMAE frames its primary goal as both a desire and a challenge, asserting its agency in establishing an agenda and in executing it. It points out that many nationalities, languages, and cultures exist across all of Chile and that it is concerned with working in Mapuche territory for Mapuche people.

FEMAE takes on the persona of a key change agent for the Mapuche people. It portrays the group as a space for both Mapuche and non-Mapuche actors to work together as an empowering advocate of social change and catalyst of Mapuche identity that formed in an effort to voice indigenous educational rights as part of the student protests of 2011 (2015, 1). It thus identifies itself as an actor that has the power to establish change in the Mapuche community as well as to include non-Mapuche members. FEMAE's approach to decolonization is not novel. Other Mapuche people have sought to nurture Mapuche epistemology and reclaim

interculturalism from the neoliberal settler regime (Rivera, Sepulveda 2011). FEMAE utilizes these mechanisms in service of its direct action towards Chile's educational system, maintaining the integral role of Mapuche youth in forwarding decolonization. Its persona serves to indicate the importance of the group in contributing to decolonial thought and practice.

As a powerful actor, FEMAE engages its audience on its own terms, setting a polished tone for its piece. The official audience for the mission statement is the CONFECH, but FEMAE hopes to build connections with all actors, whether national or international, who are working towards the symmetrical construction between States and indigenous peoples based on principles considered fundamental to Western society: Human Rights, Collective Rights, customary law, and interculturalism (2015, 2). The reproachful tone at points in the statement, as well as the focus of the demands, suggests that FEMAE's work is also intended for State actors who are willing to recognize and support Mapuche-driven intercultural work. FEMAE employs human rights terminology and the language around interculturalism to set a tone for the piece that will lend it legitimacy with its intended audience.

In its introduction, FEMAE introduces the problem, the organization's purpose, its persona, and its demands. FEMAE presents four demands around which to organize in order to achieve its purpose. The four demands are numbered not in Spanish, but rather in Mapuzugun (kine, epu, kvala, and meli) (2015, 2). The demands FEMAE outlines in the introduction are:

1. intercultural dialogue regarding recognition and reparation of conflicts generated by the Chilean State and the institutions that constitute it, in terms of its homogenizing, assimilating, and colonizing policies in Wallmapu.

2. Mapuzugun as a fundamental right of the Mapuche People, its implementation, development, and generation of status in institutions of higher education.
3. pluricultural and plurilingual formation in all educational institutions of the country with Mapuche presence and in Wallmapu (the Metropolitan Region, BioBio, Araucania, Los Rios, Los Lagos, Aysen).
4. reliance on their own educational institutions at each level of education, one of those being a Mapuche university for Wallmapu with the end of deciding and practicing, through education, the wisdom and language of the Mapuche People in service of the needs of Mapuche society (2015, 2).

It goes on to explain the history and objectives of each demand in the body of the statement.

FEMAE begins with the call for intercultural dialogue regarding State violence against the Mapuche. In this section, FEMAE focuses on the concept of interculturalism as a tool not only for intra-cultural fortification but also for decolonization. In order for interculturalism to serve this purpose, the State must recognize its policies that execute domination and discrimination in Mapuche territory. FEMAE demands symmetrical communication and relation between cultures present in Mapuche territory, privileging Mapuche wisdom and allowing the integration and coexistence of diverse societies (2015, 2).

If this is FEMAE's vision for interculturalism, the organization is quick to acknowledge the subversion of the term by the Chilean State. FEMAE explains that the State and its institutions have implemented interculturalism unilaterally based on the dominant society's values, further embedding the already existing hierarchy. FEMAE accuses the State of promoting false interculturalism or "mono-culturalism dressed up as interculturalism" (2015, 3). As

FEMAE levels these claims against the State, it employs well-established liberal terms already subscribed to by the Chilean State to point out State hypocrisy and violence against the Mapuche. Demonstrating an effort to shift the term from the State's harmful understanding to one rooted in FEMAE's indigenous community, FEMAE's critique of the State's use of interculturalism is sandwiched between FEMAE's definitions of interculturalism.

FEMAE's understanding of the Mapuche vision of interculturalism thus differs significantly from the State's. According to FEMAE, interculturalism should be an equitable, participatory process between the Mapuche people and Chilean society which foregrounds collective and individual rights to fortify respect and value of diverse cultures in the plurinational, pluricultural, and plurilingual Chilean context (2015, 3). FEMAE harkens back to the language of its claim by reminding its audience that there are many nationals, languages, and cultures within Chile. It defines what decolonizing interculturalism must look like: truly constituted by multiple actors. Finally, FEMAE demands that in order for interculturalism to be decolonizing, it must be based in State reparations for Mapuche conflict and oppression (2015, 3). This recognition, for FEMAE, would be the first step in any potential intercultural dialogue between the Mapuche and the State. FEMAE's definition of interculturalism differs greatly from the interculturalism practiced by SENAME, but it resembles Marileo's demands during his hunger strike as well as Coulthard's (2014) process of self-recognition.

Apart from the importance of reciprocal dialogue, FEMAE also stresses that it is crucial that Mapuche people be able to exercise their right to communicate in Mapuzugun. FEMAE understands learning Mapuzugun to be fundamental to knowledge transmission for the Mapuche people as they communicate with each other regarding cosmovision, culture, art, and science. It

sets the demand for Mapuzugun in a broader historical context, recognizing it as a demand for which Mapuche people have been organizing since Chilean settlers first occupied Mapuche territory (2015, 3). Reminding its audience that the education system's assimilationist structure erases Mapuche culture, which facilitates the loss of Mapuzugun, FEMAAE squarely places responsibility on the shoulders of the Chilean State.

Accordingly, FEMAAE hopes that learning Mapuzugun can be thoroughly incorporated into educational institutions. It suggests several strategies to promote education in Mapuzugun throughout the education system with emphasis on institutions in Mapuche territory. First, FEMAAE demands that Mapuzugun be integrated into curricula with participation from community members on creating policies regarding Mapuzugun's inclusion rather than Mapuzugun being available only as an elective. It recommends Mapuche and non-Mapuche students become bilingual in Spanish and Mapuzugun to advance understanding between Mapuche and Chilean culture. It asserts that education in Mapuzugun must be based in local wisdom specific to different areas within the Mapuche territory to strengthen linguistic diversity. Finally, it prescribes linguistic internships where students can be immersed in the language and community, a program FEMAAE already hosts. Learning Mapuzugun requires community participation, cross-cultural dialogue, and Mapuche knowledge practices (2015, 3). FEMAAE emphasizes reciprocity and cultural wisdom as it seeks to revitalize the Mapuche language the Chilean State has endangered.

In FEMAAE's third demand regarding pluricultural and plurilingual formation across Chilean educational institutions, the group calls for recognition of multiple, non-Western epistemologies. It identifies that the current education system relies on one Eurocentric

knowledge tradition, which negates the possibility of interculturalism as FEMAE understands it. FEMAE explains that this approach leaves students ignorant and unable to recognize the wisdom and rights of indigenous peoples, rendering them part of the problem. If the system acknowledged multiple epistemologies in the form of policies and practices that include participation by indigenous peoples, even non-indigenous students would have access to intercultural education that facilitated respect for diverse cosmologies, including those of Mapuche people (2015, 3). FEMAE focuses on promoting community wisdom to dismantle hegemonic knowledge production by the Chilean State in a process that facilitates exchange and space for multiple worlds in the Chilean education system.

FEMAE also hopes for autonomous Mapuche educational institutions that can disseminate Mapuche knowledge traditions in service of the Mapuche community. It explains that a Mapuche university has historically been a demand of the Mapuche people that was reinvigorated during FEMAE's participation in social movements in 2011. It claims that the laws it referenced in its introduction guarantee that the Mapuche people have a right to a Mapuche University in the Mapuche territory because these laws guarantee autonomous indigenous education projects aimed at securing the preservation of indigenous communities. The Mapuche University would be administered by the Mapuche people and based in Mapuche knowledge to diminish the assimilationist effects of traditional Chilean higher education. It would re-assess and construct reciprocal protocols of investigation so that rather than extracting and exploiting Mapuche knowledge and history, it would collaborate with traditional authorities for research. The University would be inclusive of regional differences in Mapuche traditions across Mapuche territory (2015, 4). FEMAE envisions a space for Mapuche learning that is autonomous from the

Chilean State, thus eliminating the legacy of settler violence from an indigenous space and allowing freedom to celebrate and promote community leadership and wisdom.

In its conclusion, FEMAEE makes a final call to action and acknowledges its supporters. It claims that all actors inhabiting indigenous territory must comprehend the wisdom, language, spirituality, and cultural activity of ancestral peoples. It gives thanks to Chilean students, Mapuche organizations, Mapuche homes, and finally, the communities from which it inherited the strength and conviction to engage in struggle and resistance. It draws the statement to a close by connecting its work with the work of Mapuche ancestors against the Chilean State, displaying that the Mapuche community, whether students' immediate families or ancestors historically engaged in struggle, is the base of FEMAEE's strength and wisdom (2015, 4).

FEMAEE employs the language of human rights to give itself standing to make its demands and to link its claim to an indigenous world with useful Western terminology to which the Chilean settler state already subscribes. The use of these terms encourages buy-in from organizations that identify themselves as promoting human rights or diversity. FEMAEE specifically names eleven local and global treaties, constitutions, or laws to which Chile is a party that either explicitly or implicitly guarantee various indigenous rights. Some examples are the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on Biological Diversity which recognizes indigenous wisdom and traditions, a few articles of the Chilean constitution, and three Chilean laws: the Indigenous Law and two laws regarding universal access to quality education (2015, 2). FEMAEE thus holds the Chilean State accountable to its legal commitments to acknowledge and support the claims of indigenous communities.

Another strategy FEMAE uses in its statement is communicating in Mapuzugun rather than Spanish. This includes the numbers of its demands, the Mapuzugun word for Mapuche wisdom, and references to Mapuche territory as *Wallmapu*. The use of Mapuzugun all through the piece coincides with one of FEMAE's primary goals, which is to reinvigorate education in Mapuzugun. FEMAE does not translate any of the Mapuzugun it uses, which also indicates how it is positioning itself and gestures towards its intended audience. FEMAE is grounding itself in an indigenous world by utilizing the Mapuche language and reinforcing its role as a catalyst of Mapuche identity, in part by inviting other Mapuche students who speak or want to learn Mapuzugun by incorporating the language. Non-Mapuche allies encountering FEMAE's work must do so on Mapuche terms, which signals that FEMAE is redistributing power away from settlers' hegemonic knowledge systems.

### **Mapuche Youth Decolonize an Indigenous World**

FEMAE's mission statement is not only an assertion of indigenous student needs in the context of the education system, it is also a presentation of how deeply embedded Mapuche resistance is in an indigenous world. The connections between student activist work and indigenous worlding along with FEMAE's concrete demands indicates great potential for decolonization, in part because it shows how fundamentally settler colonialism in Chile has failed in its efforts to eliminate the Mapuche. In this section, I highlight moments in FEMAE's discourse that reference aspects of Mapuche culture in order to draw out the idea that resistance is constituted in part by culture. Lebow (2009) explains that, "Constitution addresses the question of who becomes actors, how they are recognised as such and how they must behave to sustain their identities and status" (212). Thus, explicating the cultural element that constitutes

part of Mapuche youth's productive power exhibits how they will use their power to approach decolonization. I discuss Mapuche conceptions of personhood, child rearing, spirituality and ritual, and text as the foundation for two essential parts of FEMAEE's mission.

There are two fundamental aspects of Mapuche constructions of personhood woven through FEMAEE's mission: individual autonomy and its connection to expressions of agency in social relationships. FEMAEE demands that Mapuche people be recognized and treated with respect with epistemologies, culture, and language independent of the homogenous knowledge traditions into which the Chilean State seeks to assimilate indigenous people. FEMAEE envisions autonomous Mapuche educational institutions including a Mapuche University where Mapuche people can exercise their power to constitute their own curricula grounded in the wisdom of their communities. FEMAEE's call for autonomy is reflected in Mapuche conceptions of personhood, which emphasize each individual's autonomy to make choices that determine her course. The autonomy to choose one's actions is related to FEMAEE's repeated hope to promote change by dialogue and other exchanges of learning across cultures. The Mapuche people understand expressions of autonomy in how one chooses to relate with others in the family, community, and outside world. Deciding to care for and value others is an important element of what defines personhood; therefore, mutual respect and exchange constitute part of FEMAEE's vision of decolonization.

For the Mapuche, personhood is not fixed; one achieves and reconstitutes their personhood over the course of their lifetime by making choices to build relationships with others (Course 2013, 6). In this way, the process of becoming a person is ongoing and extending

outward.<sup>18</sup> It begins with interactions within the family before an individual's sociality grows to include the community, and eventually stretches across communities (Course 2013, 8).

Typically, these relationships emphasize expressions of individuality as each Mapuche person actively chooses how they share and relate with others. Though the Mapuche may have a strong sense of autonomous self that they develop from an early age, their relationships in society are not individualistic. Thus, "the Mapuche case becomes another example of how individualistic—collectivistic or autonomy—interdependence orientations are not contradictory, but rather coexisting aspects in dynamic tension within individuals and cultures" (Murray et al. 2015, 392). Being an active agent is an important aspect of identity for many Mapuche, but that agency must be expressed in relation to others to be recognized and valued by the community.

Care for others is an integral part of establishing personhood, particularly for Mapuche women. Caring shows that one is able to participate in social and community relationships, which is part of what identifies one as a Mapuche person. This includes intentionally remembering other community members and taking concrete actions as a result to build emotional linkages (Murray et al. 2017, 375). For example, Mapuche regularly share *mate*, an herbal tea, as a way to come together and catch up about the day. This is also a time when elders share advice with youth as an intentional expression of care and a transmission of cultural knowledge. *Mate* is also a reminder of the value of showing care by simply being present for

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<sup>18</sup> Course (2013) explains that the difference between how the Mapuche exchange wine in comparison with *chicha* is a reflection of the centrifugal nature of Mapuche identity. He writes that "[w]ine tends to be received from and given to potential affines, or in local parlance, "friends" (*wenu* "y), while *chicha* tends to be shared with con-sanguines, with those of *kin'e ku* "pal, "one descent." (9) For the Mapuche, there is value in establishing exchange relationships with people outside of the family, particularly because for much of Chilean history, they have been confined to reservations. This keeps individuals in close contact with their family and community, which are considered similar to that individual. It is only by sharing wine, a commodity produced outside the context of the community, with people who are "different" that the Mapuche can engage fully in exchange and thus constitute their personhood (9).

each other (Murray et al. 2017, 376). Murray et al. (2017) explain that “[t]he various ways in which [care] takes place among rural Mapuche women reveal the importance of a constant orchestration and calibration of one’s involvement in others’ needs and requirements in everyday life, together with the ability to ask for assistance in ways that do not question one’s autonomy and dignity” (380). In other words, it is ultimately the individual’s choice to participate in caring activities that give care such value in the community and contribute to building personal identity.

This sense of autonomy and individual self manifest in the Mapuche approach to child-rearing. Children are understood to be “little people” with all of the power that entails. From early on, children are expected to take on a high level of independence and manage without constant visual observation by their parents. Instead, Mapuche parents develop listening as an important skill to ensure the safety of their offspring while still going about the daily business of the household and giving their children a sense of freedom (Murray et al. 2015). Not only that, children are given small responsibilities from early on to allow them to participate in the activities of the household. An interview participant describes the child as a fully active member of the family from an early age:

*In the old days, they gave the child certain duties. The child was not a passive being...For example, they gave her an animal. A little sheep. And she had the duty to take care of it...The process of cultural learning is not realized in a special context but rather she is already participating; already learning in the large trajectory of life. This role is very important because it prepares her to be a member of a group from the time she is very small. Thus, the process of learning is not associated with one era but rather occurs from the beginning (Painemal 2016).*

Children’s cultural learning is interwoven with their participation in their family’s doings both in that they are contributing to the family and that they are fulfilling these responsibilities independently as they begin to constitute their personhood. Another example of this is that

children began to express ownership over their homeland from a very early age as well. Greeting is very important in Mapuche society, and young children begin to welcome guests into their homes or into outside spaces which they have inhabited for play (Murray et al. 2015, 390). These responsibilities and homemaking tendencies suggest that children are considered and treated as agents.

Mapuche children are encouraged to learn how to fully participate in their community's activities through observation. One interview participant describes the special crib that Mapuche people use to incorporate the child into the household:

*They would leave the child in a special crib so she could watch the activities that her parents were participating in. This cradle was a vertical cradle. They would tie the child in, and she would stay watching everything that happened around her. Thus, in this way she was participating in a sense in the world of the family (Painemal 2016).*

This is an example of learning by observations that is expected for Mapuche children as part of the development of their early autonomy, independence, and family/community membership.

Another interview participant shares how she chose to participate in this learning by observation because she wanted to contribute to her family's work from a young age:

*Of the culture, they first showed me respect and love because before there was a lot of unity: the family, neighbors, communities. For example, in the work of harvest, everyone was united. And work that my mother showed me. And she didn't obligate me to work as the only daughter. But I wanted to learn, and I helped. By watching, I learned how they worked. And I liked it, so I practiced it afterwards (Lincognir 2016).*

Once again, as a child, this interviewee was treated as an individual who could choose the extent of her participation in household activities, and it was ultimately her responsibility to take the initiative to contribute. Murray et al. (2015) reiterate that it is the responsibility of children to engage in observation, figure out what they have learned from it, and ultimately imitate it.

“Concomitantly,” they write, “parents do not attribute children's milestones to their own

involvement; they assume them to be a result of a child's own initiative" (387). Children are understood to be autonomous human beings that are integrated from the very beginning into the context of the family and the community.

FEMAE integrates its calls for autonomy with a desire to learn from existing community wisdom, including the ancestral authorities of the Mapuche people. It places Mapuche knowledge practices at the core of its demands for education in Mapuzugun, pluricultural and plurilingual formations in all Chilean educational institutions, and autonomous Mapuche educational institutions. These knowledge practices must form the basis for Mapuche education in order to revitalize and live out autonomous Mapuche cultural identity. For example, FEMAE imagines that research protocols and projects in a Mapuche university would include deference to and communication with Mapuche authorities. Mapuche authorities facilitate autonomous rituals that connect the Mapuche to their communities and to the Earth. Mapuche students might use the ritual space to model autonomous Mapuche practices and to navigate intersections between Mapuche and settler worlds.

Ritual is a major part of enacting the Mapuche relationship with land as well as integrating children into community and practice. Ritual is one activity through which the Mapuche transmit cultural knowledge across generations, often enforcing the exclusion of non-Mapuche people from ritual spaces. The spiritual authority that presides over rituals is the *machi*, a Mapuche shaman responsible for healing the community who is adept at navigating many conjoining worlds, including the Mapuche and settler worlds. One interview participant explains how children who participate in the *ngillatun*, a ritual for healing and reconnecting with the land, are being integrated into the community:

*If there is autonomous space for the socialization process of infants, it is ceremonies...In ngillatun there is the connection with the spiritual world and furthermore the presence of specialists there like the machi that also does a healing for all of the community and for all of the family. They heal the Earth, they heal the family, and in that they involve the children. They participate in this activity, and they connect with something, with a root. A root is key for the process of child development (Painemal 2016).*

The first stage of Mapuche identity formation is connection with roots or lineage. Children are the products of their “four roots” or grandparents, from which they derive their “descent”, which may include physical characteristics, behaviors, or community responsibilities (Course 2013, 7). Children are able to formalize and enact this connection in the context of the ritual.

The Mapuche have increasingly sought to keep outsiders from attending their ceremonies in part because they understand ritual as a necessarily autonomous space for the socialization of children:

*Mapuche ritual is one of the institutions that has been maintained throughout periods of change and transformation. It is the one place where the State has not been able to enter, including that communities are careful that external folks do not attend (Painemal 2016).*

Children and other community members are welcomed into an indigenous world that connects them with their lineage and with the land around them out of sight of settlers who seek to define and confine Mapuche being. Autonomous ritual spaces allow youth to observe independent transmission of community knowledge practices and culture.

In the *ngillatun* ritual, the machi perform a ritual to heal the community’s land and families; machi mediate the connection between the Mapuche and the spirit world in community and individual healing rituals. Machi are primarily women, and their healing practices emphasize the importance of restoring wholeness after alienation from the community. This allows individuals to be re-integrated into their Mapuche body and resume their community activities, participation in which defines them as active Mapuche people (Bacigalupo 2003). Since the

primary role of the machi is to navigate between worlds as they interact with humans and spirits, they are adept at navigating the complexities of Mapuche identity in relation to the settler state. They do not construct their Mapuche identity as static but instead adapt themselves and their practices in conversation with the world around them.

A machi's adaptability allows her to use the tools of the settler state while maintaining her Mapuche practices and knowledge regime because her approach is born out of her role as a spiritual leader of the Mapuche community. Machi are impacted and shaped by what they learn from settlers, but they reclaim settler knowledge for use in a Mapuche context: "There has been a selective integration and resignification of foreign concepts, terms, medicine, and symbols into the preexisting Mapuche performance-based system of meaning" (Bacigalupo 2003, 43). Thus, Machi are constantly reforming what it means to be Mapuche; they "expand social, physical, and spiritual boundaries by creating an image of the empowered Mapuche body without boundary restrictions" (Bacigalupo 2003, 40). The content of a machi's knowledge as well as her approach to cultivating her knowledge, which is often transmitted through healing rituals, constitute part of FEMAE's incorporation of community wisdom into its vision of decolonization.

FEMAE utilizes Mapuche community wisdom as well as the Chilean State's commitments to international human rights regimes and national laws to claim a right to an autonomous Mapuche education. Mapuche people have used their own texts to craft counter-narratives to Chilean history as well as settler texts to learn from and resist the settler state. Machi's shamanic biographies assert their agency and present Mapuche people as victors in history. Mapuche people have often chosen which State laws or Bibles to subscribe to and put in conversation with Mapuche culture. For FEMAE to reference Chilean laws in the context of

their mission statement holds the Chilean State accountable to its legal obligation to indigenous people, establishes a widely recognized legal standing on which to base its claim, and appropriates Western laws in the creation of its own narrative.

Mapuche's selective use of shamanic biographies, Bibles, and other laws provide a textual basis for Mapuche history and resistance. Machi write biographies that connect them with past Machis through cycles of death and rebirth as well as present a linear historical narrative of Mapuche communities. As Machis carry on the spirits and spiritual traditions of the Mapuche, they "use shamanic biographical narratives to challenge conventional Chilean history—the history of their subordination to the state—and present themselves as the spiritual victors of that history" (Bacigalupo 2014, 652). Machis and other Mapuche people write texts like biographies to establish a Mapuche archive separate from histories officially recognized by the State. Learning alphabetic writing after colonization allowed Mapuche people to write both in Spanish and Mapuzugun as they co-opted State practices like making stamps or newspapers and made them Mapuche. Similarly, Mapuche people understood the Bible to be a tool of colonization but found aspects of Anglican and Catholic bibles to be useful in the context of Mapuche spirituality. They adopted elements of these texts and translated them into Mapuche settings (Bacigalupo 2014). In this tradition, FEMAE has translated "official" laws and put them in conversation with Mapuche wisdom in service of its work.

The Federation of Mapuche Students connects the decolonization of the Chilean education system with the restoration of a Mapuche world. Through its discourse and actions since it formed in 2011, FEMAE has asserted its productive power to establish a counter-hegemonic definition of Mapuche identity and shift the relationship between Mapuche

students and Chilean settlers. FEMAE's mission statement develops a Mapuche youth vision and claim to a decolonized Chile, articulating that it is the community's youth that has the power and responsibility to catalyze social change and develop Mapuche identity. The group bases its claim in part on legal commitments the Chilean State has made to the indigenous community, utilizing international human rights statutes and Chilean laws to give standing to its proposal. The first step towards decolonization that FEMAE identifies is recognition by the State, through dialogue with Mapuche people, of the violence it has caused in Mapuche territory. FEMAE suggests that this first act of recognition will clear the way for the State to respect, comprehend, and incorporate Mapuche epistemologies in its policies and practices as well as facilitating space for greater Mapuche autonomy.

FEMAE is most interested in the integration of Mapuche culture into Chile's education system. Integration requires both restructuring the curricula of Chilean educational institutions to include Mapuche language, history, and knowledge traditions and creating Mapuche educational institutions run by and for the Mapuche community. FEMAE focuses these demands in the Mapuche territory, taking into account diversity of practices among regional Mapuche groups. FEMAE imagines that through mutual respect and acknowledgment of autonomy between Mapuche people and settlers, the Chilean education system can be decolonized, allowing Mapuche students, their families, and their communities to inhabit and learn in their indigenous world.

The Federation of Mapuche Students creates a beautiful vision of a decolonized education system and asserts its power as a collaborator to realize that vision. Despite the decrease in activity of the Chilean student movement, FEMAE continues to work in solidarity

with other Mapuche organizations for Mapuche liberation. This included participating in the seventh annual march for Mapuzugun on February 16, 2018 and standing with Mapuche horticultural workers when the central market in Temuco banned peddlers in March 2018. Solidarity remains key to FEMAE's mission and a Mapuche worldview, not only because Mapuche personhood is predicated on individuals making the autonomous choice to care for others and build relationships, but also because settler colonialism permeates Chilean State institutions and demands a united response.

## Conclusion

Luis Marileo, Mapuche activist, force for decolonization, and prisoner of settler colonialism, died on June 10, 2017, the day before his 25th birthday. He and a fellow community member were shot by a former police sergeant. Everyone who met Marileo described his unwavering commitment to liberation for the Mapuche, even when it meant putting his own body on the line. He demonstrated solidarity with his people and left his mark on the systems with which he came in contact. His vision was born from his Mapuche world and is sustained by other Mapuche activists, like the youth in the Federation of Mapuche Students. In this project, I investigated how Mapuche families engage with and resist settler colonialism in Chile in order to move towards decolonization. I found that the resilience of Mapuche youth creates the potential for the restoration of a Mapuche world.

The Mapuche community fights for decolonization against Chile's settler colonial apparatus. The work of Wolfe (2006), Veracini (2010), and Glenn (2015), among others, allows me to identify five settler colonial tactics, dispossession of land, confinement, assimilation, structural violence, and criminalization of resistance, that the Chile State utilizes to eliminate and control the Mapuche people. Chile's child protection system, SENAME, perpetuates settler colonialism by removing indigenous children from their communities, incarcerating them, ignoring the violence against indigenous families, and erasing indigenous identity. The confinement, assimilation, and structural violence that SENAME performs are all integral mechanisms of settler colonialism.

SENAME's intercultural programs further assimilate Mapuche families without facilitating a Mapuche process of self-recognition. Park and Richards (2007) and Coulthard

(2014) discuss the danger of intercultural reforms and in contrast, the potential for indigenous self-recognition. SENAME's Mapuche employees and organizations like UNICEF seek to support Mapuche families within SENAME, but their efforts only reform settler colonial relationships without decolonizing them. Despite SENAME's mistreatment, Mapuche families resist and thrive against the system.

FEMAE provides invaluable tools for supporting Mapuche families in decolonizing oppressive State systems. Barnett and Duvall (2005) explain the importance of productive power like FEMAE's discourse in determining relationships between actors. Shilliam (2015) claims that decolonial science requires knowledge cultivation rather than production. The Federation of Mapuche Students asserts its power to imagine and implement a decolonized Chilean education system, laying claim to the right of Mapuche students to an education system that recognizes State violence and cultivates Mapuche autonomy and knowledge.

FEMAE illuminates elements of their vision of decolonization that might support other State systems like SENAME in dismantling settler colonialism. To break down structural violence, FEMAE first calls for the Chilean State to participate in a process of mutual recognition and dialogue with the Mapuche community, which requires the State to acknowledge the violence it perpetrates against Mapuche people. Then, it demands space for the Mapuche to practice and develop their living knowledge traditions, including their ancestral language Mapuzugun with oversight from community authorities. Next, it hopes for the establishment of autonomous Mapuche institutions, like a Mapuche university. SENAME could employ these same tenets of recognition, respect, and support for indigenous authority and identity to fulfill its

mission of protecting the rights of children and families. The system must also reckon with the State's responsibility to relinquish stolen lands and restore a Mapuche world.

According to FEMAE's mission, first, the system must acknowledge the settler colonial violence that Mapuche families experience at the hands of police and State institutions, SENAME included. This would require dialogue between families that have been criminalized and incarcerated by SENAME, Mapuche authorities, SENAME professionals, and judges from the family tribunals. Through intercultural communication, SENAME would be invited to grapple with the settler state's violence against Mapuche children and its own role in traumatizing these families. Such a discussion would foreground the value of Mapuche knowledge and experience as both the State and the Mapuche mutually recognize each other as powerful actors and explore the nature of their settler colonial relationship.

Then, SENAME must facilitate a shift in power over the care of children who have had their rights violated or who have broken the law back to the Mapuche. Placing responsibility for child welfare into the hands of communities enables the ongoing transmission of Mapuche wisdom across generations and ensures that children have access to their ancestral lands. This would resituate child welfare in Mapuche territory rather than in SENAME's carceral centers, which occupy stolen Mapuche territory. Even for those Mapuche families who no longer inhabit their ancestral lands, if SENAME were to recognize Mapuche epistemology and authority, Mapuche children could access culturally sensitive care across Chile without facing violent assimilation by Chilean State systems. FEMAE declares that it is up to Mapuche youth to promote and defend their rights and communities. SENAME can play a role in securing

Mapuche futurity by decolonizing Chilean child protection and supporting Mapuche youth and their communities.

In addition to FEMAE's vision, decolonization of a settler state may also require settlers to relinquish stolen indigenous lands. Settler colonialism is predicated on the dispossession of indigenous lands. Tuck and Yang (2012) discuss what decolonization must entail in a settler colonial context. They explain the dangers of conflating decolonization with initiatives that would provide indigenous people with rights under the currently existing settler regime. Tuck and Yang claim that using decolonization to describe anything other than restoring indigenous land and life allows settlers to "move to innocence" by continuing to identify themselves as part of the landscape that they occupy rather than as invaders (2012, 10). "Our goal in this essay is to remind readers what is unsettling about decolonization - what is unsettling and what should be unsettling," write Tuck and Yang (2012, 3). Though they do call for an interrogation of how settler colonialism permeates education systems and other settler institutions, they demand that the specific discourse of decolonization be employed unequivocally in relation to unsettlement of land and restoration of an indigenous world.

The existence of Chile, as well as the United States, Canada, and Australia, is made possible by settler conquest and theft. After illegitimately seizing indigenous lands, States establish private property regimes. Settlement and sale erases collective ownership and connection between indigenous groups and their territory. As forestry and hydroelectric corporations move into ancestral Mapuche lands, these private interests transform the landscape: they carve a path of destruction through deforestation and damming.

The Chilean State's occupation also disrupts the Mapuche relationship with land from which they draw strength, wisdom, and sustenance. Mapuche spirituality connects Mapuche people to the Earth, to their ancestors, and to their own bodies and minds. Mapuche people do not all inhabit the Wallmapu, understand their relationship with the land in the same way, or perform traditional spiritual practices. Still, settlers must withdraw their false land claims and return occupied territory to these communities.

What does it mean to restore a Mapuche world? The settler state has appropriated much of ancestral Mapuche territory and devastated it beyond recognition. Mapuche people have fled to the city in search of a new world to occupy and new pathways to explore their indigenous identities. Mapuche activists like FEMAE constantly reimagine Mapuche being and resistance in conversation with their community and the settler world around them. The Chilean State has a responsibility: to end its occupation of Mapuche territory, return it to Mapuche communities, and revitalize it. This restored land will welcome Mapuche people to inhabit their indigenous world. Until then, Mapuche youth and families will continue organizing autonomous spaces, practicing living knowledge traditions, and redefining what it means to be Mapuche. They guarantee the future of their world by growing, learning, and fighting together.

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