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When Silenced Language Sings: Poetry, State Violence, and the Mapuche Memory-Making of Liliana Ancalao

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In her essay, "The Silenced Language," the Mapuche poet Liliana Ancalao writes from Puel Mapu, or what is perhaps more commonly known today as territorial Argentina, that "Mapuzungun is the language of the recovery of pride, the language of the reconstruction of memory" (2022, 165). With that statement, Ancalao is proposing a crucial link between language, identity, and memory. Indeed, that link is so meaningful to her that it founds her poetics. More precisely, for Ancalao, Mapuzungun, which means "the language of the Land" ("Memory of the Sacred Land" 2022, 29), is a rich and vital conduit for the people of Puel Mapu to reconstruct Mapuche memory and recover Mapuche pride. Accordingly, she has developed a mode of creating poetry in Mapuzungun that partakes in that symbiotic process of reconstructing memory and recuperating pride.

As mentioned, Ancalao's poetics is grounded in her foundational belief in the link between language, identity, and memory. As she explains, "Mapuzungun was the first language, and it was taught and learned in optimal conditions [for millennia before Contact]… The women would sing their *tavüles*, which transmitted power, and the pride of being who one is was not a philosophical question" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 159). In her poetry in Mapuzungun, Ancalao strives to be like her foremothers, proudly singing their *tavüles*, the sacred songs of one's family lineage. Through a resuscitation of such singing as poet, Ancalao believes herself to be doing

the important work of reconstructing transhistorical familial and cultural connections. More broadly, she is partaking in contemporary processes by Mapuche people to clarify Mapuche memory and grow Mapuche community. Thus, with her sacred labor as Mapuche poet, she sees herself as helping to cultivate Mapuche "pride of being." Such is the scale of her ambitious project as poet.

Projects like Ancalao's—which aspire to reconstruct Mapuche memory and recover Mapuche pride—are especially important and salient because the Mapuche people have been genocidally targeted and oppressed since Conquest, and their suffering continues to this day. Thus, Ancalao's poetics functions as both a means and a metonym for the broader, crucial project of Mapuche cultural reclamation and (re)circulation. After five hundred years of Eurocentric colonial violence in Mapuche land, first committed by the Spanish and then by Chile and Argentina, the historicity of Puel Mapu is as complex as it is violent, and the official historiographies of the region by its colonizers are riddled to this day with imposed erasures of people, communities, and cultural memory.

Through and against such loss and pain, Ancalao writes. She writes to identify injustices suffered by the Mapuche people and their misrepresentation in national imaginaries. Simultaneously, she also writes with tremendous tenderness and empathy for all those who have suffered in the region. And perhaps most of all, she writes in stalwart advocacy of all the beauty and richness of Mapuche culture. Such is her pride in being Mapuche. As a result, her oeuvre, which now spans more than thirty bountiful years of published writing, provides a critical framework for thinking through rupture, violence, and oppression in Puel Mapu, as well as the life-affirming, community-building alternatives to them.

Poetry, Memory, and the Politics of the Double Witness

To realize her ambitious project, Ancalao uses the tropes and figures of poetry. They are her primary tools, and she deploys them artfully in Mapuzungun. Together they create verse that enacts her poetics of Mapuche memory-making, and that poetic memory-making strengthens the Mapuche community. It strengthens community by contributing to shared efforts across Puel Mapu at cultural reclamation and preservation, and that cultural industry generates pride in being Mapuche.

Importantly, too, her poetry helps to complicate official historiographies of the region. Her writing makes more fully present the diversity of languages, memories, cultures, experiences, worldviews, and peoples of Puel Mapu/Argentina, including

those often marginalized and/or censored by the state. In other words, her poetry (re)opens possibilities for life in the region. It conducts a network of symbiotically linguistic, ontological, cultural, social, and political possibilities for being present in the region as Mapuche. In short, this is how Ancalao operates as an exemplary memory-maker through poetry. As she herself explains it in her essay "Fervent Lucid Poetry":

> Today we write in a land of hazy boundaries trying to come clear. The role of our poetry as a Mapuche practice is to add to the collective work of returning clarity to the land. A land of times and places reconstructed by memory and militancy. We live in a land about which much has been written, a land about which the military and financial victors of the War of the Desert and the pacification of Araucanía have lied for 120 years. We live in a long plundered land that's still circled by vultures with their sacrilegious talons at the ready. To clarify is to demystify, decolonize, recuperate, and resanctify. (2022, 207)

In other words, Ancalao's memory-making work as poet is as innovative as it is ancestral, and it possesses an auspicious potential to influence the imaginary of Puel Mapu/Argentina. That auspiciousness derives at least in part from the amplitude of the significance of her writing. In reconstructing Mapuche memory and encouraging Mapuche pride, her poetry in Mapuzungun not only critiques centuries of abusive state power in Puel Mapu, but also introduces alternatives to the violent political schema and their consequences. And there is hope in such work. Her poetry both interrogates the lies, violence, and erasures in official historiographies of the region, and offers the visionary grounds for Mapuche life to (re)surge to prominence, and with pride, expanding the field of possibilities for living openly, proudly, and with agency in Puel Mapu/Argentina.

In this manner, Ancalao's writing is both profoundly ontological and politically transformative. It is both personal and collective, individual and plural. With each poem she writes herself into clearer being as a proud Mapuche woman, and she also writes into more clarity the Mapuche community. Put differently, she explores her personal suffering as a means to bear witness to both her oppression as a Mapuche person and the longstanding oppression of the Mapuche people of Puel Mapu/Argentina since Contact. Her resulting poetry of witness also makes Mapuche suffering more comprehensible to all readers, whether Mapuche or otherwise, and regardless of however much they may have previously known about Puel Mapu or its people.

Here several insights into the Shoah by the Argentine sociologist Elizabeth Jelin might help to illuminate Ancalao's Mapuche poetics through juxtaposition. In her book *State Repression and the Labors of Memory*, Jelin notes how survivors of the Shoah may feel "the overwhelming need to narrate" their experiences as witnesses to personal and collective suffering, but at the same time they also "may always feel betrayed by the lack of adequate words or the insufficiency of symbolic vehicles to convey his or her life story" (2003, 62). Therefore, a memory-making wordsmith might help other witnesses to find such language. And perhaps Ancalao does this as a Mapuche person for the Mapuche community writ large.

Moreover, just as the witness may struggle to articulate personal experience, so, too, may the general public struggle to hear and comprehend the witness. As Jelin explains, "[w]hat was missing [from the public] was the human capacity to perceive, assimilate, and interpret what was going on. The outside world was not able to recognize it… One could argue that the available cultural interpretive frameworks were short of the symbolic resources needed to account for and make sense of the events" (2003, 63). While the genocide of the Shoah is by no means the genocide of Conquest against the Mapuche, there assuredly exists a conceptual commonality in that the public can benefit from gaining interpretive frameworks for processing these catastrophic events that exceed the facticity of their experience and therefore exist beyond most readily available interpretive frameworks. Hence the importance of Ancalao's Mapuche poetics for the general readers: it generates one such framework.

Through poetry writing she quite personally creates a way to reconstruct her Mapuche memory and grow her pride of being Mapuche, and through poetry writing she convokes Mapuche community. More broadly still, she creates poetry that might lead any reader to ways of empathically discerning and considering Mapuche experience and life. This is one way of interpreting Jelin's insight that "[t]he issue of transforming personal feelings, which are unique and untransferable, into collective and public meanings, remains open and active" (2003, 40). In many ways the impact and consequences of her poetry are tied to her artfulness with the craft of poetry as much as the reader's fluency with Mapuzungun. Because those two factors vary wildly across demographics, so, too, does the potential for her finest verse to reconstruct Mapuche memory and nurture Mapuche life. Still, this is precisely the ambition of her project. She aspires towards such communicative transformations, believing deeply in the potential of poetry to simultaneously struggle to resist hegemonic logics of state-

sponsored violence, oppression, and death, and to offer in their place a life-affirming mosaic of alternatives to those necropolitical, colonial schema.

Ancalao, Mapuche Memory, and the Spark of the Quincentenary of Conquest

In 1991, with the quincentenary anniversary of European contact with the hemispheric Americas fast approaching, many state governments and groups around the world unfurled national programs to celebrate Contact and Conquest as global triumphs. In contrast, many Indigenous communities felt acute pangs of existential, cultural, and historical pain, particularly when witnessing the widespread, Eurocentric celebrations of an anniversary of a historical moment that launched centuries of displacement, oppression, and genocide against Indigenous people. Rather than solely despair at those tone-deaf celebrations of atrocity and grief, many Indigenous people drew upon their indignation as a source of personal motivation and cultural power. They channeled their energies into a recommitment to the vigorous reconstruction of Indigenous vitality. Ancalao was one such Indigenous person.

In other words, the celebrations of genocide against Indigenous peoples in 1991 sparked Ancalao to redouble her commitment to her project of cultural rememorating in poetry. From Puel Mapu, overlaid as it was and continues to be by territorial Argentina, she intensified her interrogation of the significance of Conquest for Mapuche people. She was especially concerned with the violence, suffering, and humiliation that her family had endured and, by extension, the Mapuche people of Puel Mapu. Accordingly, her writing grew to function both personally and collectively. To this day it remains embedded in her experience as a Mapuche person, and it stands to illustrate what human beings have lost on account of genocidal campaigns against Indigenous people over the past five hundred years. As she writes of the impetus for her oeuvre, "I'm talking about *Puel Mapu* and the history of my family, which is the history of so many families, and which explains the loss of our language as mother tongue by the majority of my generation. I'm talking about an ancient language and the ignorance of men who mapped a country over a territory full of names, elements, and meanings, silencing it. I'm talking about what we lost. All of us" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 163). Again, then, one sees the clarifying relationship in her poetics of language to memory and identity.

Ancalao's specific process for actuating that poetics emerged from her rededication of herself as writer to reexamining the relationships of Mapuzungun to an interwoven symbiosis of family history, Mapuche memory, and cultural pride. To

that end, in 1991 she committed to study Mapuzungun with more intensity and formality. This quickly proved existentially and culturally revelatory for her. As she intimates with joy in her essay "The Silenced Language," "[t]o learn [Mapuzungun] is to travel a path of amazements" (2022, 165).

Those amazements include a sacred, restorative capacity for the recuperated, ancestral language to become a conduit for reconnecting to Mapuche family, culture, and history with pride. To wit, as she writes in her poem "this voice" (2022), a Mapuche *ars poetica*:

> she breathes through the membrane
> of a drum soaked in her throat
> from a skin of leather stitched
> to a distant
> watery lapwing. (1-5, 38)

Of note, the "drum" in her throat is a *kultrún*, which is "our sacred instrument, represent[ing] the planet, the *wenu Mapu* that is the atmosphere, and the *trufken Mapu* that is the surface, and the *minche Mapu* that is the underground" ("Memory of the Sacred Land" 2022, 29). Hence, in revealing to the reader the *kultrún* inside of her, Ancalao is explicating the manufacture of her poetic voice. It is thoroughly and inextricably Mapuche. It arrives filtered through and energized by the sacred Mapuche instrument of the *kultrún* in her throat. That sacred instrument mediates and reverberates in her every intonation and voiced interaction in the present. Moreover, it imbues those intonations and interactions with millennia of Mapuche people, history, culture, and community.

In that manner, the *kultrún* in her throat further functions not only as a symbol connecting her to the Mapuche people who have come before her, but also as a nexus extending outward to include Mapuche people in the present, who can connect with her through her verse. The *kultrún* is thereby a symbol for reconstructing memory and for the sound of building community. In other words, through her voice in poetry in Mapuzungun, Ancalao is a proud memory-maker, convoking Mapuche people across Puel Mapu and across time. For her, this began in her redoubled dedication to studying Mapuzungun and discovering its ontologically and politically transformative "amazements." Her linguistic study of Mapuzungun as poet inspires her explorations of possibilities for affirming Mapuche life. And those explorations, that Mapuche poetics, born of outrage at celebrations of genocide against Indigenous people, has bloomed into an existential curiosity about herself and a life-affirming pride in her Mapuche community.

This is no small achievement, given the centuries of genocidal campaigns waged to eliminate the Mapuche people and occupy Puel Mapu with the colonizer's geography. As Ancalao explains with stark clarity, "death… has crept towards the First Peoples of the Americas since 1492" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 159). Through and against that creeping death, she offers a poetry that contributes to the reconstruction of Mapuche memory and therefore life. And this is the crux of the hope of her work. It is the hope that her poetics so crucially generates.

In short, it conjures a belief and a means for the people to understand the indelibility of the continuity of Mapuche life, even in hostile, occupied territory. Mapuche presence today runs counter to the failed attempts at genocide against the Mapuche people of Puel Mapu. Similarly, Ancalao's poetry runs counter to official historiographies aiming at the cultural genocide of the Mapuche people. Against such physical and cultural death, Mapuche people have struggled continuously to reconstruct and nurture memory, thereby affirming the possibilities for Mapuche life to thrive in Puel Mapu. Put differently, with each poem in Mapuzungun, Ancalao is encouraging Mapuche people to insist proudly on their presence in Puel Mapu/Argentina. This is some of what she means when she explains that "[o]n the 500th birthday of the discord, we [Mapuche people] began to emerge from the brush, and with each step we returned closer to our roots, making ourselves visible. We'd say *Mapuche ta iñche* ["I am Mapuche"] to recognize ourselves and repair the damage they'd done to us but by bit" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 165). As in that excerpt, her project centers the memory-making, life-affirming power of the existential politics of language. Through a reassertion of identity and life in Mapuzungun by Mapuche people in Puel Mapu, a declarative statement ("*Mapuche ta iñche*") becomes a mode of bringing Mapuche people into public presence, of connecting them, and of thereby generating a community of solidarity.

In a more literary register, Ancalao uses the concept of "*Mapuche ta iñche*" to create poetry for reconstructing memory, community, and pride. A good example comes in her striking poem "buffalo in the water" (2022, 76-77). Therein she reaches from Puel Mapu across the hemispheric Americas to connect with Indigenous people in North America, or Turtle Island as she prefers to refer to it, like many Indigenous people. Through that transcultural link with Turtle Island, she invokes the enormity of the scope of the violence of Conquest, which spans the hemisphere, and within that broadened context, she writes of buffalo as an extended metaphor for how to live a Mapuche cosmovision of equanimity.

In other words, the poem is as transnationally communitarian for Indigenous people as it is locally identitarian for a Mapuche woman of Puel Mapu. To evoke and modulate these many layers of meaning throughout the poem, Ancalao masterfully manipulates multiple tropes of the genre. For example, the tone of the poem is expertly summoned and controlled by Ancalao such that it manages somehow to blend longing, joy, melancholy, and nostalgia into an overall sense of ease. She grounds this narratively in her pitch-perfect description of a halcyon dreamscape, wherein she imagines herself as a buffalo relaxing:

> in summer
> alone
> [mid-river] to soak my legs in the Leleke arroyo
>
> its water running unbroken over the stones
> as its babble wraps my ankles
>
> i want to stay there
>
> seek its depth. (12-18, 76)

Besides the tonal and narrative precision, the writing is filled with richly meaningful and interwoven layers of metaphoricity that enhance the significance of the extended metaphor of the buffalo. For example, the running water in the poem can be understood as a metaphor for the fluidity of the Mapuche cosmovision coursing through the planet and enveloping her tenderly. So, too, can the water be a metaphor for Mapuche memory, which flows through the speaker and through the poem, emanating outward through it to envelope readers, too.

Moreover, through its artful use of tone, narrative, and metaphor, the poem inundates the present with beauty, complexity, and pride in a Mapuche vision of life. This in turn repositions Mapuzungun and the Mapuche people in the national imaginary of Puel Mapu/Argentina, and beyond, as an aspirational model for being. In other words, the cultural consequence of Ancalao's writing is profound, and it begins precisely in her literary work as memory-maker. She writes a powerful Mapuche poetry at the intersection of language, memory, and pride, and it works to recalibrate the very conceptions of human experience.

Worldviews, Community, and the Power of Daughters

Such claims about the power and importance of Ancalao's decolonial poetry to reconceive human experience and community are not hyperbolic. The importance

and urgency of such work cannot be overstated. As Ancalao writes, Conquest has tried to violently reduce Mapuzungun to a "stigma, the mark of inferiority" in Mapuche people ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 161). Through and against such linguistic and cultural mutilation, she writes to transform perceptions and uses of the language. She works through her poetics to reclaim Mapuzungun, the first language, as the conduit for reconstructing Mapuche pride and memory. She is a rebellious Mapuzungun memory-maker, and she aspires to nothing less than to write into being a new, proud, and defiant Mapuche mode of existing in oneself and in relation to others, through a recovered ancestral tongue and pride. And such work is urgently needed. To quote Ancalao, "[w]ithin our [Mapuche] community, the politics of shame [has] wreaked havoc" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 161), but now her poetry conducts a Mapuche politics of presence, pride, and love.

This is her struggle as a Mapuche artist. She strives to structure and share a counter-foundational, memory-making poetry that affirms the beauty of Mapuche life, even amidst the ongoing violence deriving from centuries of Conquest. A prime example of this comes in her poem, "daughters" (2022, 107-109). It comprises a touching reflection on motherhood, particularly in its meditation on love in the face of poverty, suffering, and displacement. To wit, the poem opens with Ancalao confessing that prior to the birth of her daughters, she had "walked / through life so defeated" (1-2, 107). But then her two daughters "were born to [her] / with brilliant restless / innumerable eyes" (7-9, 107) and she realizes they "came to repair [her]" (10, 107). Nevertheless, their subsequent, shared experience has been permeated by the precarity of life for Mapuche people in Puel Mapu/Argentina. For example, she intimates that the nascent family of three quickly "learned the biting fear / of having no bread / or shelter" (20-23, 108). Still, they persisted—and in their persistence against the buffeting of their lives by exposure and deprivation, they become a microcosmic rendering of Mapuche life, struggling to survive and endure.

In other words, her family story in the poem becomes allegorical of transhistorical Mapuche struggle, particularly in relation to long-standing, colonial themes of enforced poverty, vulnerability, and exposure. The poem thereby becomes a nurturing paean to Mapuche life, celebrating its continuity and community through a politics of love. And that politics of love positions Mapuche life to endure like "one of those yellow flowers / wet with perfume from wild land" (42-43, 108). In other words, the natural beauty of Puel Mapu is life-sustaining, even in times of struggle. In parallel terms, this is why Ancalao explains of her beautiful daughters that even:

when the wind slaps me with blows of ash
and pins me
there
near extinguished

[they] shout open the heaviest door. (36-40, 108)

Of note, besides exemplifying the girls' vitality, the section exemplifies their agency. That is, even in the midst of a battering storm of ash—perhaps symbolizing the remnants swirling in the air and in the poet's mind after the centuries of destruction wrought by Conquest—Ancalao's daughters can "shout open the heaviest doors." In other words, they can create a refuge in a storm. They can protect the family by creating an escape. And there is power and hope in that. There is power and hope in these young Mapuche people's acknowledged agency. As a concept and as a reality, it is sustaining, even salvific. It is intergenerational and futural. It is the power and the hope of the continuity of Mapuche life.

Impressively, too, that life is difficult to suppress. Historically, the Mapuche are one of the few Indigenous groups of the hemispheric Americas to continue to dwell in their ancestral lands, however abridged and disfigured. In the poem, even Ancalao is surprised by the resilience of her children. For example, in stanza three she exclaims epiphanically of her daughters' will to self-determination, "what resistance by such little people[!]" (25, 108). Their example encourages her, too, to keep fighting to live. For Ancalao, her daughters embody a wonderfully "disordering light" (29, 108), one that can illuminate and recalibrate perception of reality and being, hence the narrative arc of the poem. At its start Ancalao, yet to become a mother, explains that she "walked / through life so defeated" that others would liken her to a person "lost at sea" (5, 107). But by the poem's end, a proud mother of two daughters, she is no longer lost at sea; instead she has returned to land, to the *mapu*. There, she too has become part of its landscape. She has become an organic, ineradicable *presence* in the land, in Puel Mapu. As such, she will be forever:

remembered
like a stone

who says
i will be here
every time
you return. (48-53, 109)

Such is the urgency and hope of her poetics, which aspires to reconstruct Mapuche memory in all of its pride, intricacy, tenderness, and beauty. Thus, the

aforementioned simile involving the stone is not simply a literary trope used to conclude a poem with gusto, clarity, and plangency. It is also flush with Mapuche cosmovision. As Ancalao explains, "[Mapuche] history has always been tied spiritually to nature. Our relation to nature is not only one of extraction to collect its fruits, but also one of veneration. We renew ourselves cyclically with its power" ("Memory of the Sacred Land" 2022, 25). The stone in the poem encapsulates the Mapuche belief that all things (whether animate or inanimate) possess spirit, including this stone. In this case, the simile likens the stone to the spirit of the love of a mother for her daughters. It is a strong and enduring love, and it is natural. It is also venerated, and it emerged cyclically from the life cycle. After all, this is a poem about generations of Mapuche life. It is a poem about family that reverberates as a cultural allegory for cyclical renewal of Mapuche people and culture, even amidst the ongoing ash storm of Conquest. The poetics that drives it was sparked in 1991 by global celebrations of the quincentenary of a genocide against Indigenous people. In response, Ancalao, a formidable poet, has created an oeuvre overspilling with artful ways to conceive and share Mapuche life. She is a life-affirming memory-maker of Puel Mapu. She poetically (re)builds a proud and vital Mapuche community word by word in Mapuzungun, the Mapuche mother tongue.

Ancalao and Quijano: A Convergence in Decolonial Theory

While Ancalao in 1991 was busily developing her incipient poetics of Mapuche memory-making, the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano was writing his groundbreaking essay on decolonial theory, "Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad". In it, he writes that Conquest "consists in the first place of the colonization of the imagination of the dominated. That is, it acts in the interiority of the imagination" ("Colonialidad" 12, translation by author). Immediately this pertains herein to the analysis of the role of language in Ancalao's oeuvre. More specifically, if language can be understood through Quijano as a primary tool of "the colonization of the imagination of the dominated," then its decolonial potential in Ancalao's writing becomes evident. Colonizers have worked in Puel Mapu for centuries to displace local memory and Mapuzungun by imposing in their place Eurocentric master narratives of Conquest in Spanish. By writing counter-foundational narratives in Mapuzungun, Ancalao is dislodging and exposing one major tool of colonization. She is revealing and countering the Spanish-language

colonial narratives of (non)belonging that have been imposed on the Mapuche imagination.

Such is the foundation of Ancalao's poetics within the framework of decolonial theory. In writing poetry in Mapuzungun, she is creating and mobilizing a counter-foundational, memory-making politics of language and being that attempts to decouple Mapuche imagination from colonial imagination, and language is her tool for that decoupling. She aims to use Mapuzungun to reconstruct Mapuche memory and return it to presence. In this manner, she is struggling existentially against what Quijano calls "the coloniality of power" (1992, 2000).

By "coloniality of power," Quijano means the schema conducting an axis of global control extending directly from coloniality to modernity, which is intact to this day. As he explains, it is the framework for reorganizing "the world's population around the idea of race, a mental construction that expresses the basic experience of colonial domination and pervades the more important dimensions of global power, including its specific rationality: Eurocentrism" (2000, 533). Again, then, the interior life of individuals is demonstrably at stake. The colonization and domination of imaginations is instrumentalized systemically in the service of creating and conducting that broader network of control known as the coloniality of power. For example, its presence in Wallmapu dates back to its being overlaid by the construct of the Viceroyalty of the Río de la Plata in 1776.

Of course, the coloniality of power is by no means restricted to Mapuche land. Rather, as the Argentine decolonial theorist and semiotician Walter Mignolo explains:

> 'America'…was never a continent waiting to be discovered. Rather, 'America' as we know it was an invention forged in the process of European colonial history and the consolidation and expansion of the Western world view and institutions. The narratives that described the events as 'discovery' were told not by the inhabitants of Anáhuac or Tawantinsuyu, but by Europeans themselves. (2005, 2)

This reveals first and foremost the linguistic violence of Conquest, which conducted genocide on many fronts, including the cultural genocide driven by the attempted colonization of the imagination of the people targeted for oppression, exploitation, and displacement by arriving European colonizers.

In other words, upon naming genocide "discovery" and celebrating it as triumphal, official historiographies have worked for five centuries to assert and maintain Eurocentric controls over the so-called Americas and their Indigenous

inhabitants. The resulting colonial domination and global power are conducted by the forcible imposition of Eurocentric rationality on the imagination. In the case of Puel Mapu, for example, this was conducted in Spanish. It intended to displace Mapuzungun and occupy Mapuche consciousness with a language of denigration, oppression, and domination. Through and against such linguistic and narrative violence, Ancalao does her decolonial work as writer. She strives to use Mapuzungun to review and contest the official historiographies of Conquest in Puel Mapu while also offering alternatives to them.

This is especially important in terms of the connection between language, memory, and pride. As Ancalao herself chronicles, Mapuzungun under colonization had become "the language for expressing pain, the language of despondence during the divvying up of men, women, and children as slaves. The clandestine whisper in the concentration camps" and "the language of the long road of exile, the distance of banishment. Of the harsh march of our great-grandparents to reservations, *ka mapu*" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 161). But through her project, Mapuzungun could become a decolonizing conduit. It could reconstruct Mapuche agency, memory, and beauty. It could reassert itself as a language of pride in Mapuche culture and life.

Such decolonial interventions are all too sorely needed to this day. Official historiographies of Puel Mapu/Argentina continue to be marked by violent erasures of Indigenous life from the region. But through the tropes and figures of poetry, Ancalao is working paradoxically to make present those erasures. She is writing against the colonization of the imagination of Mapuche people by the coloniality of power, and she intends for her writing to challenge it with reconstructed Mapuche memory. This is how she aspires as a poet to recover pride in Puel Mapu. She writes to replace the colonial politics of shame and oppression with an affirmative politics of pride in Mapuche life.

It bears immediate mention that such decolonial work is as exhausting and it is crucial. The coloniality of power is as deeply entrenched in the national imaginary of Puel Mapu/Argentina as it is relentless in its self-perpetuation in the region. To wit, in 2021 no less a figure than the very President of Argentina, Alberto Fernández, repeated in public to the Prime Minister of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, an all too well-known, anti-Indigenous "joke" about Argentine national identity. To quote President Fernández directly, "[t]he Mexicans came from the Indians, the Brazilians came from the jungle, but we Argentines came from boats, and they were boats that came from Europe" (Calatrava 2021). This "joke" is little more than a localized slogan for the

coloniality of power. It illustrates the linguistic violence conducted to this day by anti-Indigenous, Eurocentric logics of power that have ravaged the Puel Mapu since the beginning of European narratives of discovery in 1519. In other words, President Fernández's "joke" is but a reiteration of a ubiquitous narrative of nation-building that perpetuates the coloniality of power by actively denying the historicity of Puel Mapu and the presence of Mapuche people.

Such is the prevalence and persistence of anti-Mapuche violence in the region, and it reinforces the importance of decolonial projects like Ancalao's. They aim to counter the linguistic violence exemplified by President Fernández's "joke," which works to maintain "the colonization of the imagination of the dominated" through censorship. That is, the coloniality of power seeks to silence Mapuche subjectivity and agency just as it seeks to silence opposition to official historiographies of Puel Mapu/Argentina. This is its modus operandi for maintaining the non-autochthonous state's power over its colonial territory and its people. In effect, then, it is domination by erasure, and with the threat and promise of real physical, cultural, and psychic violence and even death against anyone resisting it. For proof of this one need look no further than the recent assassinations with impunity of the twenty-two-year-old Mapuche man Rafael Nahuel in Villa Mascardi by Argentine security forces, and the recent abduction and assassination of the Mapuche-ally Santiago Maldonado in Chubut. Hence Ancalao's courage in designing and disseminating her dangerous poetics: she is raising her voice in Mapuzungun to expose those gaps, palimpsests, and lies that permeate official memory and facilitate the function of the state.

Her resulting verse is inspiring in its courage, clarity, insight, and compassion. One example of this comes in the poem "hug" (2022, 202). Therein Ancalao boldly and defiantly intones: "may the conquered noises come together / may grandparents sing in my blood / may heartbeats explode in throats" (6-8, 202). The lines are evocative, rhythmic, and emphatic with its anaphoric use of "may," and in this manner they ritualistically summon her Mapuche forebearers to sing through her. Adding to the fervor of this ancestral conjuring to overload, each sacred "may" commences a strong, stable line. That is, each line comprises a complete claim, thereby adding to the force of the stanza in its syntactical, spiritual, and rhythmic strata.

As aforementioned, the tercet is also importantly summoning a resurgence of Mapuche memory. It seeks to conjure both the "conquered noises" and the singing grandparents, and its aim is ultimately to create a disruptive explosion "in throats," meaning the eruption into audible presence of a pulsating decolonial politics in

Mapuzungun. If the verse succeeds, then that will burst forth in multiple, transhistorical voices of ancestors, showering Puel Mapu with courage, pride, and vitality. Moreover, with that explosion of resurgent, multigenerational Mapuche singing, Ancalao aims to disrupt the smooth and steady flow of official, oppressive language (i.e., Spanish) and the systems it courses through to nourish the coloniality of power. Put differently, Ancalao wants her Mapuche poetry in Mapuzungun to interrupt and trouble people like President Fernández, who would simply repeat and perpetuate false national narratives of belonging that elide Indigenous life in Puel Mapu and beyond.

This is but one lucid example of how Ancalao aims to use the tropes and figures of poetry to reconstruct Mapuche memory and encourage Mapuche pride throughout Puel Mapu/Argentina and beyond. In broader terms still, she is aiming like this to clarify and recompose the historical record of Conquest, across the Southern Cone in particular and the hemisphere in general. Through her writing she is defiantly insisting on returning Indigenous life to proud presence in official historiographies and narratives of belonging. Accordingly, as she explains in her essay "Fervent Lucid Poetry," she wants readers to understand that "[t]o decolonize the dominant discourse is to topple monuments, question heroes, scrape away that discourse that taught us to be ashamed of who we are" (2022, 209). As a poet, she purposefully attacks the very roots of the linguistic and semiotic violence that founds and maintains the coloniality of power in Puel Mapu/Argentina. And this again reveals how courageous and crucial her decolonial poetry is to the Mapuche people of Puel Mapu, whom she is exhorting to memory and pride.

Ancalao, Mapuche Memory, and the Quincentenary of Conquest

That proud circulation of reconstructed Mapuche memory through Ancalao's poetry is meant to counter the relentless historicity of anti-Indigenous violence in Puel Mapu. It is a territory tragically riddled with centuries of Eurocentric attempts at the genocidal erasure of Mapuche presence and life, including by the current colonial power, Argentina. That truth has led the U.S. sociologist Sarah Warren to note that "historically, the Argentine state did little to recognize indigenous peoples or their rights. Campaigns of physical extermination followed by state-led assimilation processes have obscured the continuing significance of race…while simultaneously implying a process of whitening of indigenous groups" (2009, 769). Without contestations like Ancalao's, the official memory and historiography of Puel

Mapu/Argentina will continue to perpetuate this insidious precedent, perpetrating violent erasures of Mapuche life.

This broaches yet another facet of anti-Indigenous logics within the coloniality of power besieging Puel Mapu/Argentina: the denial of the current presence of Mapuche life and culture in the region. As the U.S. sociologist Barbara Sutton explains, official historiographies teach that "[t]he 'others' who have also inhabited the country are seen as having conveniently disappeared" (2008, 107). In other words, Mapuche life is no longer present. Such narratives relegate it to the past. Consequently, Mapuche people today lose visibility and audibility. They are stripped of agency.

With each poem that she produces and disseminates, Ancalao counters such erasures. Line by line she is reasserting the presence of Mapuche life today in Puel Mapu. This is yet another way to understand how Ancalao works in a decolonial vein to reconstruct Mapuche memory through poetry in Mapuzungun. She is making Mapuzungun present today. She is making beautiful and powerful Mapuche art today. She is writing verse that pulses with Mapuche vitality today. This is the ethics of contemporaneity at work in her oeuvre, which continues to grow with each new poem or essay.

Furthermore, Ancalao is deeply committed to her process. As she explains in boldly decolonial terms, "[t]he function of poetry today, for the south from the south, is to make clear our time and place by using the powerful weapon of the word when its aesthetic is grounded in ethics" ("Fervent Lucid Poetry" 2022, 209). This is certainly evident in her poetry. The poem "a photo of route 40" (2022, 236-239) posits Mapuche memory as organic, indelible, omnipresent, and available. It is also layered with a transhistoricity that makes the Mapuche past present and immediate today. In other words, it reconstructs memory through language to encourage pride in Mapuche history, extending it through the present.

Formally, this artifice of historicity-contemporaneity emerges from Ancalao's deft use of the literary trope of verisimilitude in the aforementioned poem. The poem reads with the loose, intimate, and casual immediacy and fluidity of a conversation with a close acquaintance in the room. Rather than some kind of stilted or stumbling literary experience, it is as if the speaker's consciousness were being poured gently through the reader, however intense the emotional depths of the narrative. Through that inundating consciousness, readers might begin to discern a subtle but steady contestation of the official historiography of Puel Mapu that colonizers have

attempted to use to try to colonize the imagination of the Mapuche people. However, as the poem attests, such attempts will always fail in the end. They will fail because they are crude artifice. They are cynical actions born of selfish, cruel thinking, whereby colonizers attempt to abridge and defile language until it becomes a tool of oppression.

In contrast, as the poem celebrates, the Mapuche people have Mapuzungun. It is the language of the land and the language of memory, and as Ancalao intimates in the poem, in Puel Mapu "the groundwater of memory / surges from the land" (12-13, 236). In other words, Mapuche memory is everywhere present and upsurging, like the water giving life to the region. It is also threaded unbreakably across time, not matter the attempts of colonizers to clip it. It is indomitably elusive and vital, folding itself always ineradicably into the present.

Adding to the sense of presence in the poem, Ancalao invokes the trope of onomatopoeia. For example, her readers hear the "snort" of nineteenth-century horses as if they were present right in front of them today (20, 236). Likewise, readers hear Ancalao chanting one of her *tavüles* in the present. In this instance, it is a sacred, self-styled divine invocation reaching back to embrace her ancestors, and it reads "*Kalfuwenufuchá kalfuwenukushe*," meaning "Elders of the Blue Above" (25, 237). Such is the artful use of sound throughout the poem, and it serves to fortify the permanence of Mapuche presence in and through the poem.

Moreover, that poetically melodic, sacred refrain ("*Kalfuwenufuchá kalfuwenukushe*") communicates the ethical foundation of Ancalao's Mapuche politics. It also comprises a basic tenet of the Mapuche cosmovision. For the Mapuche believer, the Mapuche metaphysical system both espouses a sacred belief in life as a quest from the present back to its blue origin, which is the origin of the universe and of being. This is why the color blue remains to this day the sacred color of the Mapuche people. And once attuned to even those very basic tenets of the Mapuche cosmovision, its presence becomes clear throughout Ancalao's oeuvre.

Those evocations in poetry of a Mapuche metaphysics also stand as yet another decolonial gesture aiming to undo Eurocentric rationalisms containing and oppressing Mapuche mind. To better understand this, one might look to Ancalao's poem "i've seen the chulengos" (2022, 216-217). Therein Ancalao describes seeing a herd of wild, free-roaming chulengos, which are an autochthonous mammal similar to a llama or guanaco. In that herd of chulengos, she discovers an aspirational

metaphor for herself as a Mapuche woman in occupied, restricted territory. In her words, she longs:

> to be freedom to be tenderness
> galloping with them
> loosed
> across the land. (24-27, 217)

In part, what is loosed is Mapuche presence, vitality, and life. What is loosed is Mapuche memory.

That memory-work is as crucial as it is agonistic. Where genocidal campaigns against Mapuche life have explicitly targeted Mapuzungun for oppression and even elimination in order to impose the "colonization of the imagination" that Quijano details, the consequences continue to be devastating for inhabitants of Puel Mapu, including Ancalao. Indeed, Ancalao testifies to those devastating consequences in writing. More precisely, she paradoxically makes present through her writing many of the absences that the genocidal state has conceived, enforced, and maintains. This is why she writes, for example, that her Mapuche contemporaries and she "were born in the time of *amnesia*. We were young children and teens without memory. That amnesia so convenient to states born of slaughter and robbery, and convenient to military dictatorships, too" ("Memory of the Sacred Land" 2022, 29, emphasis added). Again, then, what is at stake is the reconstruction of Mapuche memory. Stripped of land and language by Eurocentric genocide, the Ancalao family, like most Mapuche families, has a personal history of being repeatedly besieged, displaced, and disaggregated from its ancestral beliefs, practices, and communities of belonging by five centuries of Conquest. And one of the many devastating consequences of that continuously compounding violence has been the enforced loss of memory, including linguistic memory.

Consequently, Ancalao laments being born into that amnesia, and she also simultaneously tries to write her way through it, reconstructing memory. Thus, she writes, for example, in the aforementioned essay that "we didn't know who we were, from what people, what roots, what history. The state had been busy erasing our memory" ("Memory of the Sacred Land" 2022, 27). She documents the pain of struggling to exist amidst "the occupation of [Mapuche] territory by the Argentine state" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 159). That occupation includes repeated attempts by colonizers to occupy the imagination of the Mapuche people of Puel Mapu. Ancalao is well aware of how this is conducted linguistically. Hence her

counter-foundational memory-work in Mapuzungun. With deep existential angst, she acknowledges how "Mapuzungun became the language for expressing pain, the language of despondence during the divvying up of men, women, and children as slaves. The clandestine whisper in the concentration camps. The language of solace among prisoners of war" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 159). And she notes how Mapuzungun became "the language of the long road of exile, the distance of banishment. Of the harsh march of our great-grandparents to reservations, *ka mapu*," ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 161). But she also finds hope.

Ancalao and Mapuche Hope: Another Link Between Language, Memory, and Pride

Most often in Ancalao's writing, hope inheres to the links between language, memory, and identity. But to access or arrive at that hope, the reader must journey through intergenerational layers of Mapuche suffering. Thus, for example, she explains in "The Silenced Language" her familial history of experiencing cultural genocide. That history includes the bald and terrible truth that "[o]ur [Mapuche] grandparents were sent to rural schools and made bilingual by force" (2022, 161). This is a terrible violence in that it displaces people from their land and attempts to exterminate their language by beginning to inculcate the language of the colonizers, meaning Spanish in this case. Thankfully, though, she attests to the inadequacy of those attempts at cultural genocide through a targeting of Mapuzungun. As she explains, "however banned by the schools, where teachers shamed children for their home language, Mapunzungun endured" ("The Silenced Language" 2022, 161). Therein lies that decolonial hope of language: however embattled and banned, Mapuzungun endures.

Like the Mapuche, or "the people of the land," Mapuzungun, or "the language of the land," persists. Against all colonial assaults across time since Conquest, Mapuzungun has proven elusive and resilient. As Ancalao writes in "The Silenced Language," Mapuzungun has at times endured "in the air of orality," and it has become "[t]he language of defense" (2022, 161). It can be mobilized in a decolonial context, as in Ancalao's oeuvre, to identify, unsettle, and challenge the national historiographies of a coloniality of power that stem from the colonization of the imagination of the dominated by the linguistic hegemony of Spanish over Mapuzungun.

Such is the weight of Ancalao's literary project. She is aiming at nothing less than participating through poetry in the decolonial reconstruction of Mapuche

memory through a recuperation of Mapuzungun after centuries of terror, violence, and suffering. As the U.S. sociologist Barbara Sutton affirms, "[p]rocesses of exclusion with racial overtones have deep historical roots in Argentina" (2008, 107). Or as Ancalao herself explains anecdotally of the exclusions and erasures suffered by Mapuche people in Puel Mapu, "I live in Comodoro Rivadavia. Very young, my father, Ancalao, and my mother, Meli, arrived at this city, forced from the countryside, run off by material poverty. They were forced to abandon a limited space assigned by the Argentine state after the War of the Desert" ("Memory of the Sacred Land" 2022, 21).

Herein, Ancalao's reference to the "War of the Desert" merits special attention, too. She is referring to the exceptionally bloody latter half of the nineteenth-century, when both Chile and Argentina intensified their genocidal assaults on the Mapuche people and lands within their respective nation-states. As Sutton writes of Puel Mapu/Argentina, for example, "[t]he nineteenth-century nationhood project was geared toward making Argentina more economically powerful, white, and 'civilized'.[1] This involved the decimation of indigenous populations (especially during the 'Conquest of the Desert' in the late 1870s) and the annexation of the lands they inhabited" (2008, 107). In Mapuche terms, this period of genocide is known simply as the "loss of the world," as Ancalao laments in her essay "Memories of the Sacred Land (2022, 25).

That violence continues to reverberate to this day, reinscribing loss. As the Argentine anthropologist Andrea Szulc argues, even state-sponsored programs today that aim to empower Mapuche people typically result in "subordinating Mapuzungun (the Mapuche language) to Spanish, by treating Mapuche cultural elements as obsolete, and by reducing them to 'school logic'" (2009, 129). It is through and against such violent attempts at the disarticulations of Mapuche culture via assaults on its first language—which is the language of the land and the language for reconstructing Mapuche memory and recovering Mapuche pride—that Ancalao offers her memory-making poetry in Mapuzungun. Moreover, she does so with extraordinary sensitivity. She remains delicately alert to the urgency, precarity, and potentiality of the link in Mapuche life between language, identity, and memory. This is why she explains in "Memories of the Sacred Land" that it is "[w]ith tremendous *responsibility* [that] I share

[1] Here Sutton references scholarship on the anti-indigenous violence in Argentina committed by the colonizing politics of civility, including the work of Carballude, 2005; Quijada, Bernand, and Schneider, 2000; Shumway, 1991.

these words here, as a human being on this planet, as a woman, as part of the Mapuche people, a people who, after a massacre, after being shattered, are coming together slowly" (2022, 21). She is striving poetically to reckon with genocide from the position of centuries of victims. She is writing to overcome amnesia with reconstructed memory, and agony with recuperated hope.

This requires that she summon the suffering of Mapuche people since Conquest and concentrate that suffering in writing in Mapuzungun. In turn, that writing becomes a locus for bringing together and nurturing a shattered people after a massacre, and in occupied, hostile territory. As she explains it in "The Silenced Language," "I'm talking about an ancient language [Mapuzungun] and the ignorance of men who mapped a country over a territory full of names, elements, and meanings, silencing it. I'm talking about what we lost. All of us. All of us who were born without knowing the names of every plant, every stone, and every bird of this land. I woke up in the middle of a lake. In gasps I tried to give thanks but didn't know the words" (2022, 163). So she sought those words at their root, knowing "Mapuzungun was the first language" (2022, 159). She intuited Mapuzungun to be the prima materia of the reconstruction not only of Mapuche memory, but also Mapuche being, and she set out to recuperate it in her life and in her writing—and through the latter, she carried it into the lives of so many others.

Her essay "Charqui Words" exemplifies lucidly this quest to reassert Mapuche life in Puel Mapu. Charqui is a dried meat that is a traditional Mapuche staple. Thus, with the very title of the work, "Charqui Words," Ancalao is already focusing readers on the organic, elemental, nourishing, and enduring sustenance of Mapuzungun to the Mapuche people. She then goes on to enact that onto-political, decolonial linguistic claim across the essay. For example, she writes of "***Newentuy kürruf***," meaning "**the wind** that in [19]92 stirred up the muddy water and drove to shore the corpse of five rusty centuries of boats" (2022, 97, bold letters in the original). Here she is purposefully using Mapuzungun to identify and name the wind, a natural element, that suddenly, in a decolonial gust, unveils the Eurocentric national mythologies of "discovery" that mask five centuries of colonial violence against the Mapuche and other Indigenous people. With a similar decolonial bent, she writes in the essay against colonial historiography, explaining that "[t]he word of the powerful is **forgetting**. That's why for us the word **memory** has power" (2022, 97, bold letters in the original). Here the powerful (meaning, the State) wish to impose cultural amnesia on the nation. Argentina mapped itself over Puel Mapu and wishes to erase

the memory of its founding violence. But the *Newentuy kürruf* surges, blowing away the modern artifice of the nation-state and revealing not only Argentine violence against the Mapuche people but also "five rusty centuries" of violence. In short, to remember that violence is to resist its imposed erasure. Here again, then, Ancalao is explicating her memory-making poetics.

To Conclude: Language, Memory, and Ancalao's Mapuche Artfulness

Ancalao's literary project can be synopsized as an ambitious, important quest to help to reconstruct Mapuche memory and recover Mapuche pride through poetry in Mapuzungun. In this way, she is an admirable memory-maker working through a decolonial aesthetic. A final, artful illustration of this comes in her exquisite poem "to a piece of mapuche pottery seen in a museum in temuco" (2022, 248-250). As the title indicates, the poem narrates an encounter between Mapuche poet and Mapuche pottery. The speaker is from Puel Mapu (Argentina), and the pottery is in Ngulu Mapu (Chile), where the potter may have lived. Together, Puel Mapu and Ngulu Mapu comprise Wallmapu, the ancestral, unified homeland of the Mapuche people. Through her contact with this encased remnant of Mapuche pottery in/from Ngulu Mapu, Ancalao settles into a deep cultural connection that seems to compel her to meditate on the transhistorical, grounding pleasures and pride in being Mapuche in Wallmapu.

The poem also includes allusions to the suffering and pain imposed by Conquest on Mapuche people. This is made clear by the diction alone, which includes "whirlwinds" (13, 248), "blood and tears" (17, 248), "shame and rage" (20, 248), and "poverty without refuge" (31, 249). But as is quintessential of Ancalao's oeuvre, she not only writhes in the poem with indignation, agony, and revulsion at the memories of colonial violence that the pottery evokes in her, but also offers tenderness and empathy for those in despair and agony in Wallmapu across time. Thus, she opens the poem by summoning in the first three stanzas a deep and compassionate solidarity with the Mapuche potter, who has been anonymized by time and by the ravages of colonial domination. Nevertheless, she writes that maker into memory. Moreover, Ancalao as Mapuche artist celebrates the Mapuche potter's artistry, and that connection implies the continuity of Mapuche vitality of imagination across the temporal divide between them. That is, the ceramic remnant, even as an untouchable fragment, conveys in its sensory beauty the rich inner life of its maker, thereby humanizing that invisible artist across time and against forgetting or erasure.

Adding to the sumptuousness of the existential connection conducted across time by the art piece, the pace of the poem is unhurried. The encounter is artfully unfurled in a steady, immersive stream of expertly chosen detail. Time and again Ancalao discerns and praises how the Mapuche potter succeeded beautifully in creating the artwork. This begins in her recognition that the potter:

> mix[ed]
> the right ratio
> one part water from the thaw
> and one part clay from the *mapu*. (1-4, 248)

That is, it is from and through a proper attunement to the *mapu*, the ancestral land of the Mapuche people, that this art has emerged. It is a timeless clay that endures across time and brings into atemporal presence the simultaneity of the Mapuche potter and Ancalao, a parallel Mapuche artist today making beauty in Puel Mapu.

In other words, the poem fosters a transhistorical lyrical moment connecting the potter and Ancalao in Puel Mapu in the moment of their encounter in the museum. It is unexpected and profound. They are two Mapuche artists in communion. This is to say that they are two makers who struggle against tremendous adversity to perpetuate Mapuche cultural memory and life. Moreover, their connection in the museum through Ancalao's rememorating of the potter's art becomes a metonym, representing a genealogy of Mapuche life made present by a continuity of Mapuche creation and dwelling in Puel Mapu. In this manner, through art and through its consequently reverberating connections, Mapuche memory is reconstructed and broadcast by the poem. Mapuche memory is brought into being and it conjures pride in the beauty of enduring as a Mapuche people, even when besieged by a genocidal state. Through and against such violence, generations of Mapuche people have remained connected.

Such is the cause for hope that Ancalao details in her aesthetic experience of the Mapuche pottery. It is so moving and meaningful to her that it "leave[s] the heart in flight / so it can return to its parents / and the parents of its parents" (5-7, 248). The poem is grounding itself in the perpetuity of Mapuche life, which aspires via its cosmovision to journey back to its origin. Ancalao travels back trans-historically through her encounter with the pottery. Perhaps more tenderly still, Ancalao deepens her spiritual experience with the pottery by evoking the potter in discrete human detail through the poem. In this way, she brings the potter into the present. In other words, this is Ancalao making memory present and immediate by reconstructing the life of

the Mapuche maker of the pottery. There is joy, tenderness, and beauty in it, not to mention a glimpse of theological transcendence.

This is evident in Ancalao's delicate writing in the poem about the patient, loving work of the timeless Mapuche potter. Using the second-person informal, she writes affectionately of the potter's achievement in "model[ing] in your warm hands / the image of the beginning" (8-9, 248). By writing the poem, Ancalao, too, is tenderly taking into her warm and living hands this encounter with a transportative artwork that carries her through symbolism to the beginning of Mapuche life, which is the beginning of the universe according to Mapuche lore. Then, in a poetic gesture of time-dissolving parallelism, Ancalao commingles the artwork of the potter with the artwork of the poet. She explains how the potter would complete the artists' task of making transportative, transformational art, delivering an image of the origin of being and then "stow[ing] that image in your *ruka* / and head[ing] out to breath the sun" (10-11, 248). There is a timbre of relief and joy. There is also beauty in the poetics of solidarity that emerges from Ancalao's rememorating of the special work of this potter—even trapped, as the work is, behind colonial obstacles, like the very glass encasing it the Eurocentric construct of the museum, which keeps the pottery from Mapuche hands.

This is also to acknowledge that for all of its tenderness and beauty, the poem also includes a pained reckoning of the violence of Mapuche life in Puel Mapu/Argentina. Alluding to the aforementioned experience of the cultural amnesia of Mapuche people in Puel Mapu, for example, Ancalao writes in the poem of how "children will be born and inherit / shame and rage / unable to find themselves (19-21, 248). But art can help. In seeing the fragment of Mapuche pottery—meaning, in this instance, even a piece of expropriated Mapuche cultural production encased in glass in the Eurocentric framework of the museum—a Mapuche witness to this ancestral art might be moved by a flood of powerful Mapuche cultural memory. And that revelatory experience will be grounded in a reconstruction of Mapuche memory and community. As Ancalao writes:

> behind museum glass
> waiting for us
> with its earth with its water
>
> we will see ourselves in [this piece of Mapuche pottery]
> and a way of being more clear
> our watershed of shame of rage of nostalgia
> will begin to flow

it will be like the great silence
contained
in the beginning. (38-47, 249)

In other words, this experience will nourish Mapuche life, even in its reminders of the longstanding suffering of the Mapuche people of Puel Mapu. The poem evokes continuity, strength, beauty, and pride through its elicitation of rescued Mapuche memory in the piece of pottery. Through that effort, the realization of the reconstructed and cherished Mapuche continuity in Puel Mapu will empower Mapuche people to return to presence in their ancestral lands, where:

we'll go out
with our fresh image
to receive the sun
greet the sun

the sun of always. (93-97, 250)

This is the clarifying, empowering counter-foundational work of Ancalao's Mapuche poetics. It uses language to examine and reconstruct memory so as to cultivate pride in Mapuche life. This is why Ancalao herself explains in the essay "Fervent Lucid Poetry" that "[t]o be a Mapuche poet is to be a researcher, historian, anthropologist, semiotician, linguist, [and] officiant" (2022, 211). She has dedicated herself to the pursuit of this creative process of vibrant, crucial, and courageous memory-making for more than three decades, much to the benefit of readers both within and well beyond Puel Mapu/Argentina.

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