The Mapuche-Chilean Land Conflict and Justice: Re-Contextualizing 21st Century Violence

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**Abstract:** The Mapuche, an indigenous population that currently resides in Chile and Argentina, have faced historical animosity from the Chilean state. Land grabs from the state have pushed the Mapuche off their ancestral lands and led to strains of violence from the terrorist groups CAM and RAM in attempt to reclaim land. This paper looks at both the history of the conflict and contemporary media coverage/developments to reframe violence as a response to historical and ongoing injustice/violence from the state. Neoliberal multiculturalism, institutional racism, Donna Haraway’s “God Trick,” industrial-state relations, media bias, and extractivism have all led to the economic and social debilitation of the Mapuche and current policy solutions have been ineffective. Co-management solutions may increase Mapuche autonomy in land reclamation. However, to make necessary policy changes, international coalition building and non-violent tactics of “blockadia” may be the key to garnering necessary international support and ultimately altering worldviews, placing a greater global value on justice for the Mapuche and other marginalized populations.

**Keywords:** Environmental Justice, Mapuche, Global, Indigenous, Policy, Chile

**Introduction**

This paper contextualizes the recent developments in the Mapuche-Chilean land conflict (focusing largely on events in the 21st century) within the scope of Chilean history and environmental justice to reframe Mapuche violence as a response to historical/ongoing violence from the state. Media coverage (especially domestic coverage) frames increased violence from Mapuche fringe groups in a criminalizing manner that reflects historical anti-Mapuche sentiment and delegitimizes the Mapuche case for land rights by occulting history. This paper draws from environmental justice theory, Chilean history, Chilean policy, and media coverage to provide a holistic view of contemporary violence from a justice-oriented perspective. Contemporary instances of violence are a reaction to a history of unjust land policies and anti-Mapuche sentiment from the state and Chilean society; past injustice both informs the present day conflict and continues to subjugate the Mapuche through biased media coverage, ineffective policy measures, and hegemonic worldviews.

The paper will first provide necessary history and policy precedent to understand the roots of the present conflict. It will then relate this history to recent developments in the conflict (with an emphasis on violence) as well as justice theory to re-frame violence as a response to both historical and contemporary injustice from the state. The paper will then highlight some
potential solutions to the conflict, focusing on both policy solutions and transnational coalition building as necessary tools to fighting the hegemonic worldviews that continue to debilitate the Mapuche.

Providing Context: History and Policy

The current conflict cannot be understood without a look at the history on which contemporary Chilean politics and society are based on. This section grounds anti-Mapuche sentiment and government land-grabs in history, highlighting how the phenomenon are not unique to the 21st century. The current attempts to silence Mapuche resistance and subjugate a population that constitutes roughly 9% of the total Chilean population have a racist, authoritarian history.¹

History of the Mapuche and Anti-Indigenous Sentiment in Chile

The Mapuche are the largest indigenous population in South America with a present population of around 1.5 million: about 9% of the total Chilean population and 90% of the total indigenous population residing in Chile.² The Mapuche currently and have historically inhabited the Central Valley of Chile, south of the Biobio River; a population currently lives in the Neuquén province of west-central Argentina as well.³ The traditional Mapuche economy has revolved and continues to revolve around agriculture. They speak Mapudungun and their cosmology emphasizes relationships between spirits that coexist with human and animals and are deeply interconnected with the natural world.⁴ The Mapuche history in present-day Chile far outlasts European settlers as archeological evidence dates the Mapuche to as early as 600-500 B.C.E.⁵ The history of the European-Mapuche relationship begins with the Spanish arrival in Latin America in the mid 15th century.⁶ Unlike many other indigenous populations, Mapuche resistance to the Spanish was successful and the Spanish conquistadors granted the Mapuche sovereign land rights over their territory in the Central Valley. Thus, Mapuche-European/Chilean relations were founded on indigenous triumph and sovereignty, a unique case among indigenous populations.

² Ana Mariella Bacigalupo, Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture (Detroit, Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008).
⁵ José Bengoa. Historia del pueblo Mapuche: (Siglo XIX y XX), (Santiago: LOM Ediciones, 2000), 19.
By the mid 19th century, relations between the Chilean state and the Mapuche turned more towards the hostility that has come to define contemporary relations. This change in discourse lies partly in the validation of the castas system, a hierarchical, taxonomic system of racial classification and hierarchy with roots in the 16th century. This validation came from both the greater acceptance of eugenics and other pseudo-scientific racist theory and increased sentiments of nationalism following Chile’s independence from Spain in 1818. Thus, both political and social discourse became increasingly hostile towards the Mapuche population as well as other indigenous populations in South America. Post legislation policy reflected the state’s desire for the integration of the Mapuche into Chilean culture. Consequently, both the state and society at large validated means of economic and social debilitation such as manipulated debt as a means of Pacificación, a supposed “triumph over barbarity”. This racial Darwinism continued to garner social and academic justification into the 20th century à la the nationalist, racial purist narratives of theorists such as Nicolas Palacio (1904). This anti-indigenous sentiment founded on racist ideologies remains ingrained in Chile’s sociopolitical history and helped to drive 19th century land grabs that informs contemporary land conflict.

Mapuche-Chilean Land Conflict: Historical Roots

The decades at the end of the 19th century marked another shift in Chilean-Mapuche relations: successful state seizure of Mapuche lands. The Chilean government, as a means of carrying out goals of cultural integration following its independence, began to occupy and seize Mapuche lands. The campaign, known as the occupation or pacification of Araucanía, entailed a series of forceful military land acquisitions. This campaign paralleled movements of violent land grabs and genocide in Argentina known as the Conquest of the Desert, driven by comparable social Darwinism and attempts to limit indigenous economic power. By 1883, the Chilean government captured 95% of ancestral lands and divided the remaining land into “reducciones,” state controlled reservations. Thus, a historically autonomous group fell under the Chilean domain: though not with complete assimilation. This land seizure notably gave the Chilean government complete control over natural resources on captured lands and following pressure from the United States, the Chilean government opened that land to private economic resource development in the sectors of forestry and agriculture. Although the Mapuche were

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18 David R. Ader. “People of the land without land: A socio-demographic study of mapuche
able to reclaim about 850,000 acres of land under the government of Salvador Allende, land rights remained minimal and declined rapidly when Pinochet rose to power in the 1970s. The Pinochet government culturally marginalized the Mapuche by failing to recognize its cultural identity and continued to reduce land rights by reclaiming the 850,000 acres then transferring Mapuche land to forestry companies. By the end of the Pinochet regime, only 20 of the original Mapuche communities remained and average farm size decreased from 1.9ha/person to .8ha/person. Here direct racism, although still present, became rebranded as institutional racism: adverse effects of state decisions on minority populations based on a precedent of racism. Institutional racism remains an integral part of the conflict in the 21st century as direct racism, though still prevalent, especially in media coverage, the racism becomes covert as effects of policies have adverse effects on the Mapuche. Much of Chilean agriculture and especially forestry, whose industrial history began largely with the seizure of Mapuche lands, is grounded in a history of racism and coercive cultural hegemony.

The legacy of the reducciones and Pinochet’s privatization and land seizure lingered throughout the 20th century. As a result of increased privatization of ancestral lands, forestry, water, and agricultural development projects in the late 20th century and beyond have threatened the Mapuche. For example, in 1990 Chile’s National Electric Company (ENDESA) planned to build the Ralco Dam in the Mapuche heartland which threatened relocation and ecological destruction. Despite resistance from both Mapuche leaders and the National Corporation for Indigenous Development (CONDAI), a body created by the 1993 Indigenous Law (which is crucial in understanding the current conflict and will be discussed further), ENDESA successfully completed the dam in 2003. Additionally, the advent of large scale forestry and monocrop agricultural in nearby seized lands threatens Mapuche water security and access. Torres-Salinas et al. highlights the adverse effects of adjacent forestry development on Mapuche water quality, highlighting the disparate environmental consequences of a privatized commons. Therefore, the privatization of natural commons, further driven by neoliberal globalization, is a crucial driver in the Mapuche case. Although federal attempts to elevate Mapuche political standing exist, such as the creation of the CONDAI and the passage of the ILO Convention 169 which aim to recognize indigenous rights, the conflict remains volatile. Thus, with inadequate solutions, the Mapuche conflict and resistance are equally as strong today, grounded in both a

poverty”, (The Pennsylvania State University, 2013), 28; Torres-Salinas et al. “Forestry development, water scarcity,” 121.


21 Torres-Salinas et al. “Forestry development, water scarcity,” 121


23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.; Torres-Salinas et al. “Forestry development, water scarcity,” 123

25 Torres-Salinas et al. “Forestry development, water scarcity,” 132


fight against environmental degradation and resource privatization as well as an attempt to recapture land seized by the state.

The 1993 Indigenous Law and the 1984 Anti-Terrorism Law

Furthermore, to understand the present conflict and to contextualize the recent developments in the Mapuche resistance, one must look at two crucial pieces of Chilean policy: 1) The 1993 Indigenous Law and 2) The 1984 Anti-Terrorism Law. In 1993, following the country’s return to democracy, the Chilean government passed the Indigenous Law (Ley Indígena) on September 28, 1993. The law appeared to be a glimpse of hope for the Mapuche in contrast to Pinochet’s strict refusal to recognize Mapuche rights or identity. Rather, the law continued to uphold the Chilean government’s commitment to industria, the capitalistic, profit prioritizing system that governs global economic systems; the law protected indigenous rights only when they were compatible with economic interests. The law notably established the Land and Water Fund for land reacquisition (see article 20 in the Ley Indígena), which has become the primary institutional means of re-purchasing historical Mapuche territory. The fund however, has proven largely ineffective, largely because of competing concepts of “land” and “territory” in which the fund prioritizes purchase of “land” with economic value while the Mapuche value the political concept of “territory,” historical land claims with cultural significance. This disconnect in value limits the purchasing power of the Mapuche, limiting institutional means of purchase to lands not necessarily true to Mapuche cultural or historical significance and limiting the capabilities function (i.e. maximized community functioning based on community values) of the Mapuche. Furthermore, the Fund’s emphasis on formal land titles conflicts with the Mapuche’s emphasis on historical connection; this disconnect has lost Mapuche land based on a lack of legal standing (which conflicts with the ILO 169) and does not uphold culturally sensitive historical land use. Other economic barriers to purchase exist: land prices have continued to rise beyond the purchasing power of the Mapuche and the Fund. Therefore, both the Chilean government’s assertion of an economistic worldview on reclaimed lands and socioeconomic barriers to reclamation make the primary mechanism for Mapuche land reclamation largely ineffective. Extremist fringe groups have thus resorted to violence as a means to land reclamation.

As a result of this violence, the Chilean governments has revived a Pinochet-era Anti-Terrorism Law to justify arrests, espionage, and other means of counter-resistance. In 1984 the Pinochet regime enacted the “Law of Terrorist Conduct” (Ley Sobre Conductas Terroristas). During this era, terrorism was largely perpetrated by the state as a means of exercising control.

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31 Ibid.
32 Carruthers and Schlosberg, “Indigenous Struggles,” 15
33 Bauer, “Land versus territory,” 633-636
over the Chilean population; the 1984 law only furthered state control and methods of terror.\textsuperscript{35} The law notably authorized the state to limit due process rights, justify excessive police force (beginning with the death of Mapuche youth Alex Lemún in 2009 at the hands of the police), and, in recent years, justified spying via G.P.S., drones, and other means.\textsuperscript{36} This act, historically used by the state to silence ideological dissidents, became entangled in the Mapuche conflict when the Chilean government began to apply the law to arrested Mapuche beginning in the early 2000s but especially in recent years (2016-2018). The use of this anti-terror legislation is grounded in both the historical anti-Mapuche sentiments in Chile and a global anti-terrorist sentiment following the September 11\textsuperscript{th} attacks that validated any anti-terrorist legislation in the public mind.\textsuperscript{37} The prominence of this law in the arrest and trial of Mapuche violent dissidents continues to validate anti-Mapuche public sentiment and validates their classification as “terrorists”; the following sections explore the ramifications of this classification. It is these two crucial policy measures, an ineffective means of institutional land reacquisition and a law validating coercive anti-terror means to subdue the Mapuche voices, that inform the present day conflict. These pieces of legislation incentivize extreme responses: violence from extremist Mapuche fringe groups and responsive government spying, violence, and arrests. The history of this conflict is one of authoritarian, economistic, and racist anti-indigenous sentiment and these themes remain present in the modern conflict.

Recent Developments Contextualized

This section will highlight the most recent developments (as of May 2018) in the Mapuche-Chilean conflict, relating them to both the previously discussed historical/political context as well as social/environmental justice theory. Contemporary instances of resistance, notably violent resistance, have been present since the Ralco Dam controversy.

Violent Resistance

As a result of the inadequacies of the Land and Water Fund in reacquiring ancestral Mapuche land, Mapuche fringe groups have vented their frustration through violent sabotage and land conquest. There were 43 Mapuche attacks in southern Chile in 2017, according to the Guardian, while the district attorney offices of Bio Bio and Araucania reported 227 acts of “Mapuche related violence” in 2017.\textsuperscript{38} The beginning of 2018 has seen a continuation of Mapuche violence against the state, private environmental development firms (largely logging), and farming communities. In 1997 Mapuche activists burned three logging trucks, symbolizing

\begin{itemize}
\item 37 Richards. “Of indians and terrorists,” 70.
\item 38 Mat Youkee. “Indigenous Chileans defend their land against loggers with radical tactics.” \textit{The Guardian}. June 14, 2018; Max Radwin. “Chile aims to end decades of violent land disputes with the Mapuche people.” \textit{USA Today}. March 5, 2017.
\end{itemize}
the start of a radicalized conflict with strains of violence that have continued to the present.\(^{39}\) Recent headlines suggest that neither violence from fringe groups nor resistance from the Mapuche population are slowing down, even though the government has been successful in arresting resistance leaders. Two Mapuche fringe groups, *La Resistencia Ancestral Mapuche* (Ancestral Mapuche Resistance: RAM) and *La Coordinadora Arauco Malleco* (Arauco-Melloco Coordination: CAM) have heightened violence and garnered large domestic and international media attention.\(^{40}\) RAM, led by Facundo Jones Huala, began launching attacks on foreign landlords, landowners, and farmers in a campaign to violently reclaim ancestral lands.\(^{41}\) RAM has launched incendiary attacks on their targets; on April 2018 they were suspected of burning an oil outpost in the zone of Vaca Muerta, one of 70 RAM linked arson attacks since their formation.\(^{42}\) Huala has been held in Argentina since 2016 and as of March 6\(^{th}\), pending Chilean Supreme Court approval, will be extradited to Chile.\(^{43}\) Other resistance leaders have been arrested in recent years; ancestral authority Machi Celestino Cordova was jailed in 2014 for his participation in a high profile arson and murder case.\(^{44}\) It is important to note that many scholars have criticized this conviction as unjust, as the judiciary, enabled by Pinochet’s 1984 terrorist law, used “faceless witnesses” and assumed guilt and thus did not hold the Mapuche equal under the law.\(^{45}\) Such a conviction highlights the inability of dominant legal frameworks to either treat indigenous people fairly under the law or uphold indigenous land values (i.e. imposition of hegemonic Western legal framework). In early 2018, Cordova began a hunger strike in order to petition to attend a ritual healing ceremony; his demands were not met and he has been hospitalized as of April 24.\(^{46}\) The dominant [domestic] media narrative has focused on such extremism in resistance even though the narrative constitutes only a small fraction of the Mapuche population and ignores past and present injustices.\(^{47}\)

Furthermore, the violence has largely concentrated in the Araucania region, where intense forestry has drained Mapuche ground wells and threatened water security and Mapuche agriculture.\(^{48}\) Forestry’s continued threat to water security, corroborating the text of Torres-Salinas et al., highlights the imbalance of negative externalities in forestry management on vulnerable populations.\(^{49}\) The failure of the state to either give reparations to the Mapuche or

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\(^{41}\) Ibid.

\(^{42}\) Ibid.; AFP. "Denuncian Que Un Grupo Mapuche Atacó E Incendió Un Puesto En La Zona Petrolera De Vaca Muerta." (April 3, 2018).

\(^{43}\) AFP. "Argentine Court Confirms Extradition of Mapuche Activist Leader." *TeleSUR English*. (March 06, 2018).


\(^{46}\) "Mapuche Hunger Striker Admitted to Hospital, Chile Gov't Still Rejects Dialogue." *TeleSUR English*. (April 24, 2018).


\(^{49}\) Bottaro, Giorgia, Lisandro Roco, Davide Pettenella, Stefano Micheletti, and Julien Vanhulst. “Forest plantations' externalities: An application of the the analytic hierarchy process to non-industrial forest owners in central chile,” *Forests* 9, no. 3 (2018): 1, 14
ensure community involvement in the forestry industry highlights the top-down approach of the neo-liberal “extractivism” and the low value of Mapuche health to the Chilean government and forestry firms.50 Relating these narratives of exclusion from industry reform and adverse effects to environmental justice theory, there is an infringement on both the aforementioned community capabilities (as water access is necessary for any community functionality) as well as Schlosberg’s additional tenets of recognition, distribution, and participation.51 Both the distributive inequities of forestry externalities on neighboring Mapuche communities as well as the lack of Mapuche participation in the industry are compounded by the Chilean government’s failure to recognize indigenous water rights.52 The failure to recognize water rights is further crippled by the Chilean constitution’s current failure to recognize indigenous populations as separate from Chile, preventing the derivation of culturally sensitive rights from a constitutional basis (where Hiskes says human rights can be most pragmatically granted).53 Even with recognition of Mapuche water rights (or even more broadly land rights), Bakker still argues that a rights agreement would not curtail the extractivist practices of forestry companies, and argues that localization or co-management of forestry management, certainty made more feasible by constitutional recognition, would be most effective in combating the industry’s unjust externalities.54 Thus the concentration of violence and presence of negative externalities of decreased water security on the Mapuche highlight an issue of environmental injustice with global and national drivers. The Mapuche showcase an extreme frustration against the unjust land policies of the past and present while media coverage of the issue highlights present day violence over complete sociopolitical history; violence cannot be understood without relation to the Land and Water Fund’s failures, a history of land grabs, and continued repression of the Mapuche cause.

**New Frontiers of Violence**

Mapuche resistance has begun to spread beyond the targets of forestry and agriculture and has developed a new enemy, nature preserves/national parks. In both Chile and Argentina, the Mapuche has begun to campaign against the establishment of national parks on ancestral lands. For example, Chilean Mapuche activists have called towards ILOs Convention 169 to fight the Villarrica National Park, showing how Mapuche resistance also works within existing frameworks rather than adopting the aforementioned violent, disobedient means that Klein would label as “blockadia,” a movement of civil disobedience resistance to extractivism that brings resistance directly to the location of extraction (e.g. sit-ins at logging sites).55 The adverse marginalizing effects of these “fortress conservation zones” corroborates literature that suggests that protected areas are often constructed without indigenous consent, forcing native peoples off of their lands and imposing an incompatible, exclusionary conception of natural conservation.56

50 Ibid.
54 Bakker, “The “Commons” Versus the “Commodity,”” 430-455.
In the case of the national park resistance, it is important to note that the most notable instance of contemporary violence was not propagated by the Mapuche. Rather, a state raid around a contested area of the Argentine Nahuel Huapi National Park, where many adjacent Mapuche claim rites, resulted in the death of a 22-year-old Mapuche, Rafael Nahuel, who was shot by the police while unarmed. This event suggests that contested areas of national park lands could begin to open up to Mapuche terrorist groups such as RAM and CAM (or their Argentine counterparts) if proposed co-management strategies are not adopted. The event more notably highlights the brutality of state resistance to the Mapuche, as justified under the 1984 terrorist law; the murder of a protestor had no judicial repercussions, reflecting the ability of the state to violently subdue indigenous opposition. Therefore, historical violence and injustice against the Mapuche lingers into the 21st century. The following section shifts focus to such state propagated violence as a crucial factor in the conflict.

The Terrorist-Narrative

The media has constructed a racist anti-Mapuche narrative that frames the Mapuche as terrorists, reducing their struggle against historical and continued violence into the actions of extremist fringe groups fighting that injustice (though using homicidal violence that may be morally indefensible). It is crucial to note that even though the violence from the Mapuche constitutes a small percentage of the Mapuche struggle, it dominates media coverage. The trend of using domestic media to highlight Mapuche violence, combined with the Chilean state’s reenacting of the Pinochet terrorist law, creates a social stigma against the Mapuche conflating their struggle as a whole with terrorism. This section does not aim to justify that violence; the fringe groups of RAM and CAM have committed extremely violent crimes that threaten stability in agricultural regions. Rather, this section aims to move focus away from the violence and towards the state/media’s manipulation of a terrorist narrative based in racist history that unjustly dominates discourse surrounding the Mapuche struggle. This section re-contextualizes Mapuche fringe violence, a response to historical and ongoing violence, from the state and extractivist industries; violence is traced back to the state and is a continuation of historical themes. Violence can be defined as more than physical violence. Violence can be defined as an institutional failure to neither recognize nor protect the Mapuche against the advances of the state or industry that constitutes a historical violence with far reaching consequences.

The current coverage of the Mapuche conflict stresses violence as the crucial component of the present day conflict. When looking at domestic news sources, a quick Google search of ‘Mapuche’ yields an array of grotesque, fetishized recollections of Mapuche brutality. Chilean media, especially leaning towards the right, fetishizes violence in a way that characterizes Mapuche claims as illegitimate or dangerous. This coverage looks at the present in a vacuum without recognizing past injustices of the state against the Mapuche. Richards compiles some...
of these headlines: ‘Alert in Arauco, Fearing Wave of Mapuche Violence’, ‘The Mapuche Intifada: The Indigenous Uprising Worsens’, ‘Mapuches Threaten’ and ‘Indigenous Communities on the War Path’. Some Chilean news sources, such as The Clarin, have undermined the Mapuche people by portraying them as a militant group. Their coverage of Rafael Nahuel’s death claimed that he was armed, which was later proved false.\footnote{AFP. The expert reports that never existed. Daily Page 12. February 19, 2018.} Even more, media coverage “emasculates” non-violent Mapuche resistance tactics in relation to dominant gendered conception of masculine violence as “good resistance”. Moreover, coverage often highlights either exaggerated violence or false skewed narratives of emasculating cowardice.\footnote{Joanna Crow. “From Araucanian warriors to Mapuche terrorists: contesting discourses of gender, race, and nation in modern Chile (1810–2010),” Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies 20, no. 1 (2014): 94} This skewed coverage is intrinsically tied to racist media coverage of the past. Emphasis on violence perpetuates “savage” narratives with racist histories and reduces complex Mapuche identity. This media bias, compounded by the enacting of the 1984 terrorist act as a response to Mapuche fringe groups, characterizes the entire Mapuche movement with the implications of a terrorist movement. Thus, anti-Mapuche sentiment, entangled with a racist history, is reborn as a result of the media and state framing the entire Mapuche population as terrorists.

The Chilean government’s decision to use the Pinochet terrorist act further criminalizes the Mapuche struggle. The discourse surrounding the act’s revival relates to the concept that Richards calls “Neoliberal Multiculturalism.”\footnote{Richards. “Of Indians and terrorists,” 65-67} Multiculturalism, the acceptance of the multiethnic makeup of a country, would appear to increase the recognition of historically marginalized minority groups, such as the Mapuche. In practice however, multiculturalism often promotes assimilation, ignoring the historical hierarchies that inform marginalization and racial relationships. When multiculturalist policies exist within a context of neo-liberalism, emphasis on deregulated free market economics, and cultural recognition only exists when it does not compete with economist worldviews. Thus, a dominant narrative arises in Chile that expects the Mapuche to conform to both the national, cultural, and economistic worldviews that the state has imposed on them without their consent. When the Mapuche respond with violence, no matter how small in the scope of the entire population, neoliberal multiculturalism responds with a criminalizing narrative that ignores histories of subjugation and fails to recognize the Mapuche worldview. This concept, heightened by the aforementioned increases in national sentiment (à la Pinochet’s nationalist legacy and anti-terrorist legacy of 9/11), justifies the revival of the Pinochet terrorist act. The Mapuche threatens the neo-liberal institutions of largescale forestry and agriculture therefore, making them enemies of the state. The enacting of the terrorist act simplifies the conflict into contemporary violence, explicitly failing to recognize both the history of the struggle and a Mapuche worldview that does not value economistic principles to the same extent as the state. The terrorist act attacks the cultural communities capabilities of the Mapuche in relation to worldview and simplification of conflict.

Multicultural neo-liberalism, nationalism, and anti-Mapuche racism all validate hegemonic logical positivism that limit resistance. In courts, aforementioned instances of injustice in which the Mapuche are seen as unequal under the law (see the Luchsinger Mackay trial) stem from the court’s logical positivist philosophy.\footnote{Brett, Chile, undue process.} That is to say that the dominant Western-centric conception of objectivity, grounded in science and influenced by an economistic worldview, dominates Chilean courts and prevents the adequate representation or protection of
the Mapuche worldview (for example, their non-economistic view of land). There is a
hegemonic acceptance of Western law and science (in this case economic science) as falsely
objective, relating to Haraway’s assertion of scientific objectivity as a false ‘God Trick’ that
invalidates opposing worldviews.65 Logical positivism allows the courts to imply guilt before
trial in the Luchsinger Mackay case and to continue to arrest and convict Mapuche dissidents
without recognition of their plight. In the Luchsinger Mackay case, logical positivism validates
Western legal doctrines which explicitly tied the actions of violent individuals to the entire
Mapuche population, further systematically validating the terrorist narrative/act. Furthermore,
Western legal doctrines à la the “God Trick” value economic “objective” value over Mapuche
cosmologies, thus invalidating Mapuche cultural claims for land in a court of law (as well as
upholding the Land and Water Fund’s emphasis on economic value). The terrorist narrative,
related to concepts of logical positivism, multicultural neo-liberalism, and continued historical
subjugation have skewed the Mapuche conflict against indigenous people and justified police
violence against the Mapuche (police murders against the Mapuche extend beyond Nahuel
incident). Violence from the state is both physical and psychological and has historical roots of
racism, colonialism, and unjust land policy. Mapuche violence is not primarily of terroristic
quality, to induce fear, but rather a reaction against continued violence from the state which has
and will continue to subjugate the Mapuche without a Mapuche resistance front.

Potential Solutions

Policy Proposals

The Mapuche-Chilean conflict has lingered throughout the 21st century; issues brought up
in this paper have remained on the forefront of scholarship since the early 2000s but just
solutions have yet to come to fruition. Solutions should consider both immediate conflict specific
solutions to violence, tension, and injustices as a means of pacifying the intensifying conflict as
well as broader long term social movements to weaken the institutions and worldviews that
subjugated the Mapuche in the first place. In terms of conflict specific solutions, it seems
necessary to amend the 1993 Indigenous Act with an emphasis on the Land and Water Fund’s
criteria for land acquisition. The gap between indigenous values and the Land and Water Fund’s
mechanisms for land reclamation (emphasis on economic value on land) highlight a crucial
failure of recognition that requires amendment. Assuming the Land and Water fund becomes
more effective in reclaiming lands, it is very likely that violent reclamation of land would
become less salient and less effective, thus weakening the violent ideologies of RAM and CAM.
Ideally, the Indigenous Act could be amended to place a greater emphasis on culturally valuable
land. However, this would likely prove difficult as the dogma of scientific objectivity that
dominates Western legal discourse has difficult legally codifying something as seemingly
subjective as indigenous cultural value (especially in comparison to something as seemingly
objective as economic value). Thus, criteria for “valuable” lands are likely incompatible with the
text of the Indigenous Act. Instead, the act could consider a greater emphasis on co-management
in the land reclamation process.

Co-management in this case could include coalition between the Mapuche in which the
Mapuche, based on cultural criteria that does not necessarily have to be explicit or

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65 Donna Haraway. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the
comprehensible to a Western audience, and the Land and Water Fund blend “insider” politics and “outsider” (i.e. not Western) worldviews to reclaim the most desirable lands. Hill provides a possible framework for land co-management between indigenous groups and the state/stakeholders (based in Australia) that could translate to land reclamation for the Mapuche. Hill provides a possible framework for land co-management between indigenous groups and the state/stakeholders (based in Australia) that could translate to land reclamation for the Mapuche.66

The framework broadly follows four tenets: 1) Recognition of rights and legacy; 2) Effective organizations to support the roles of key actors; 3) Effective mechanisms for working together; 4) Shaping of an intercultural space for ongoing co-management.67 This framework notably employs organizations beyond the state to oversee the negotiations process (for example NGOs with specific ties to the Mapuche cause). NGOs, although not cultural insiders with knowledge of Mapuche value and belief systems, are powerful political insiders with longstanding commitment to the Mapuche claim and the capital to oversee and carry out negotiations. Is it crucial that these NGOs hold the government accountable in their representation of the Mapuche while not eclipsing Mapuche autonomy in the negotiations process; additional sub-tenants ensuring direct Mapuche involvement with the NGOs, government propositions requiring approval of both NGOs and Mapuche, and Mapuche veto power in the process may be necessary to prevent an eclipse of power by both the government and NGOs. Therefore, the role of the NGOs in the negotiations process for land reclamation would be to provide social and economic capital for the Mapuche and check the power of the Chilean government. Potential national and international NGOs to support the Mapuche may include the IWGIA and the UNPO, but the Mapuche should confirm all partners. It is imperative that these NGOs are historically tied and committed to the Mapuche cause in the negotiation process to prevent large scale NGOs or international development organizations from limiting Mapuche autonomy and overlooking local conditions.68

Coalition-Building and Transnational Movements

For the Chilean government to relinquish negotiation power to NGOs and the Mapuche may be unlikely considering continued animosity against the Mapuche. Furthermore, the lack of explicit cultural criteria would likely remain un-salient in a society of the ‘God Trick”; it is unlikely that the Land and Water Fund would value Mapuche cultural claims over industrial precedent in occupied lands. Thus, in order to reform the Indigenous Act and the Land and Water Fund, it is necessary to attack the close relationship between the state and extractivist industry in Chile that continues to allow the development of ancestral Mapuche lands. Furthermore, a shift in Mapuche resistance tactics, in addition to coalition building, will garner the Mapuche support comparable to other Latin American grassroots movements. Social movements are a powerful tool in attacking dominant worldviews and root causes of injustice, garnering just victories outside of institutional means.

Social movements counter to the dominant worldviews (that I call “alter-worldview” movements) of economism, racism, industrial-state relations serve as a necessary process to make political change more salient. “Alter-worldview” social movements levy pressure on the

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government to make changes when institutional means of reform have proven ineffective (such is the case with the Mapuche). The Mapuche movement must commit itself to defending the Mapuche in their specific case of injustice while also attacking the aforementioned drivers of that injustice. For example, racism remains a large part of the conflict as a historical and continued driver of the revitalization of the media’s terrorist narrative and the reuse of the terrorist act. A crucial driver of Mapuche racism is the continued segregation of the Mapuche in schools and academic curriculums, preventing an experiential understanding of a historical “other” and upholding unpractical and unjust narratives of forced integration.\(^69\) Movements could focus on integrated, multicultural education with accountability to prevent emphasis on integration and place a greater value on Mapuche history and traditional knowledge (of course while avoiding ecological Indian stereotypes that overshadow Mapuche identity).\(^50\) Additionally, Klein highlights the aforementioned blockadia movement (protest directly at the source of extraction) as a tool to combat extractivism.\(^71\) These types of protests have largely been carried out by the Mapuche without external support and this support that may be necessary to elevate the scope of the protest and draw it away from intense violence (e.g. non-violent disobedience à la MLK or CONAIE in Ecuador who clogged the streets of Quito with song and dance).\(^72\) Blockadia tactics should be sure to not fall into the same violent extremism as current tactics (i.e. murder) as to not gain too much opposing media coverage and criticism; it is the difficult task of the movement leaders to create a “responsible” civil disobedience. That is not to say that the Mapuche resistance will be without violence or violent resistance; the Brazilian Landless Movement (MST) highlights undulating patterns of violence in disobedient protest for land reform.\(^73\)

Furthermore, “Alter-worldview” movements are most effective with international support and effective, “love”-based coalition building. Pellow also highlights the importance of transnational movements based on shared struggle and empathy for the other in building resistance networks to hegemonic worldviews and policies.\(^74\) Pellow’s theory speaks strongly to the saliency of the issue; to make these Chilean “alter-worldview” movements more powerful, coalition building across national and racial identity seems necessary. That is to say that, in the case of the Mapuche, a transnational movement garners international attention on the plight of the Mapuche while simultaneously opposing extractivism and corporate-state relations globally. Transnational networks also bring in social and economic capital to spearhead movements that the Mapuche do not possess due to years of social and economic debilitation. Environmental movements have succeeded only with external international support in the cases of PepsiCo’s dumping in India and Anti-Incinerator Movements in the Philippines among others.\(^75\) Global networks elevate historically underrepresented and marginalized groups.

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71 Klein, *This Changes Everything*, 294-295


75 Ibid., 97-147.
To build networks in these global movements, Martin hypothesizes the following conditions: “a) when there are constraints and blockages in the domestic system; b) when there are international political opportunities and mobilizing structures which create openings for resource-poor actors; and c) when the interests of domestic groups and transnational actors complement each other.” Capital from NGOs and support from non-Mapuche parties in blockadia protests satisfy the first criteria; the Mapuche cause has already garnered attention from international media sources including the Washington Post and the Guardian. As a means of addressing the second and third criteria, Klein emphasizes a “love-based” approach. I employ the term “love” here to encompass global, transnational connections founded on empathy for the other, and non-market values (thus running alter-capitalistic). The “love-based” approach attempts to create a greater value on justice, universal well-being, and empathy to run contrary to economistic value systems of material, economically quantifiable profit. This approach compliments the disruptive blockadia tactics by garnering support from largescale international organizations as a means of lobbying the Chilean government (such as Big International Environmental NGOs and UNESCO). It is crucial that these organizations only act to lobby the Chilean government and not to negotiate if the Chilean government makes concessions. Large scale organizations have a history of eclipsing indigenous rights and value systems and therefore their involvement in the movement must be limited to only the global scale, where their influence is necessary. As previously mentioned, third parties involved in policy reform, negotiations, and land reacquisitions must have demonstrated historical ties and commitment to the Mapuche cause.

Additionally, social media is a potent 21st century mechanism for elevating social movements and creating global “love-based” connections. 21st century social movements depend on social media as the primary tool for communications and allows for “outsider” direct coverage that bypasses traditional media biases and barriers to coverage. Beyond the Mapuche, transnational movements of love will hopefully work to place greater global value on justice and alternate anti-capitalistic epistemologies, such as those the Mapuche hold. A change of global value systems aims to both weaken neo-liberal values that have subjugated the Mapuche for economistic gains and allow for increased salience of just policy decisions (e.g. reform of 1993 indigenous law and revoking of the terrorist act) through international pressure.

Conclusion

The Mapuche have endured centuries of racist, debilitating policies that have placed them at the bottom of the Chilean social and economic ladder. The current state of violence is a reaction to this historical injustice, injustice that lingers into the 21st century in the media, policy, and public sentiment. These violent responses in the 21st century have garnered increases in state and media resistance, but calls for justice have also become more prevalent. It is not through

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77 Klein, *This Changes Everything*, 337-366.
insider mechanisms that change is most likely, as racism, corporate relations, logical positivism, and multicultural neoliberalism remain potent. Rather, “outsider” social movements (i.e. blockadia and social media propelled movements of empathy) are the key to safeguarding justice for the Mapuche and building international networks. These movements also work to reframe the way we think: to not frame the Mapuche as violent terrorists but as a historically marginalized community lashing out in frustration against a state that has marginalized them. That is not to justify that use of violence; certainly the homicidal actions of RAM and CAM should be condemned. However, there is a necessary worldview shift that does not fetishize indigenous violence but rather empathizes with the root of that violence. To quote Mapuche Sergio Catrilaf, one of the 11 Mapuche acquitted in the Luchsinger Mackay case, “The origins of this conflict must be dealt with.”

We cannot hope to solve the Mapuche crisis without looking at the history of this violence, stemming from the Chilean state.

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