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DOSSIER: Words and Rhythm, Sound and Text**Underwritten Voices: Resonant Spaces and Unsound Silences
in Dani Zelko, Soraya Maicoño, and Daniela Catrileo**

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ABSTRACT: This article reflects on how twenty-first century Mapuche writers Daniela Catrileo and Soraya Maicoño upend notions of “silence” as corresponding to emptiness or absence through their experiments with poetic form. I begin by examining patterns and forms of silence and silencing in Mapuche poetry, mainly in dialogue with the poet Liliana Ancalao, as well as Mapudungun’s polyphonous conception of a “language” or “poetics” of the land that destabilizes colonial modes of listening, voicing, and sense-making. I then analyze the poetics of the line break, as well as the notion of poetic “white space,” as contesting narratives that attempt to silence and make invisible Mapuche communities through settler colonial frameworks. I finally evaluate the relationship between form, the caesura or the line break, and silencing or absence in two recent works: *Pewma Ull: El sueño del sonido* by Soraya Maicoño and Dani Zelko, and *Río herido* by Daniela Catrileo. Through a notion I term “underwriting,” I posit that these poets politicize form and blankness in order to not only make resonant Mapuche voices that have been previously construed as silent and absent by the settler state, but to propose alternative and active conceptualizations of “silence” as poetic modes of theorizing notions of mourning, restitution, and justice under settler colonialism.

KEYWORDS: Mapuche poetry, comparative Indigenous poetics, voice, silence, Daniela Catrileo, Soraya Maicoño, Dani Zelko

RESUMEN: Este artículo reflexiona sobre cómo las escritoras mapuches del siglo XXI Daniela Catrileo y Soraya Maicoño cuestionan la noción de “silencio” como sinónimo de vacío o ausencia a través de sus experimentos con la forma poética. En primer lugar, reviso patrones y formas de silencio y silenciamiento en la poesía mapuche, especialmente en diálogo con la poetisa Liliana Ancalao, así como la concepción polifónica del mapudungun de una “lengua” o “poética” de la tierra que desestabiliza los modos coloniales de escucha, voz y creación de sentido. A continuación, analizo la poética de la cesura y la noción de “espacio poético en blanco”, como narrativas contestatarias a procesos y sistemas coloniales que intentan silenciar e invisibilizar a las comunidades mapuches. Por último, evalúo la relación entre la forma, la cesura o el salto de línea y el silenciamiento o la ausencia en dos obras recientes: *Pewma Ull: El sueño del sonido*, de Soraya Maicoño y Dani Zelko, y *Río herido*, de Daniela Catrileo. A través de un concepto que llamo “sub-cripción” (underwriting), propongo que estos poetas politizan la forma y la opacidad no sólo para hacer que resuenen las voces mapuches que han sido previamente interpretadas como silenciosas y ausentes por el Estado colonizador, sino también para proponer conceptualizaciones alternativas y activas del “silencio” como modos poéticos de teorizar las nociones de duelo, restitución, y justicia bajo el colonialismo del asentamiento.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Poesía mapuche, poéticas Indígenas comparadas, voz, silencio, Daniela Catrileo, Soraya Maicoño, Dani Zelko

In an essay on Mapuche diasporic literature entitled “El idioma silenciado,” the poet Liliana Ancalao, who lives in Püelmapu or within the borders of what is currently known as Argentina, writes of the Mapudungun language: “Mapuzungun significa el idioma de la tierra. La tierra habla, todos sus seres tienen un lenguaje y todos los mapuches lo conocían” (49). Ancalao alludes to the formulation of “Mapudungun” as composed of two conjoining words: Mapu (land/territory) and Dungun (Tongue/Voice/Language). This combination speaks to the Mapudungun and Mapuche cosmology as viewing the notion of *dungun*, or language, as not limited to the properly “human” realm. Ancalao shows us that *dungun* is situated in the language of the land, as well as the language of plants and animals, of rivers and forests, of the living and the dead. Ancalao’s proposal, however, is complicated by her own learning of Mapudungun as an adult, and the encounter between the colonial language of Spanish and an estranged mother tongue of Mapudungun in her work. Her poetics echoes this encounter in the bringing together of orality and writing, voice and text, sound and speech, and word and world.

Ancalao has written of the collision between the oral and the written occurring in anthropologists’ and linguists’ attempts to “conserve” the Mapuche language and culture: “Antropólogos-lingüísticos, ka mollfunche [gente extranjera], hicieron intentos de escribirlo, armaron diccionarios y gramáticas. Así como intentaron atrapar el territorio entre los alambrados, intentaron atrapar el sonido del mapuzungun en grafemas occidentales” (“El idioma” 50). Ancalao extends the settler colonial practices of occupying land and territory, or what Patrick Wolfe famously called the “elimination of the native” (387), to trapping the unfixed sounds of Mapudungun within Western writing systems and alphabets, as well as within written sources. I emphasize Ancalao’s connection between trapping territory within barbed wires and trapping sounds within Western graphemes as a theme that recurs in Mapuche diasporic poetics with regards to questions of the oral and the written, as well as learning the mother tongue of Mapudungun from a place of estrangement that must reckon with settler colonial dispossession and centuries of genocidal practices in the Southern Cone. Daniela Catrileo, a contemporary Mapuche poet and philosopher living in Wallmapu (Chile), writes of the voice in a related sense: “Mis muertos / no son la historia. / Caminan sin lengua / aúllan / como réplicas del signo” (*Río herido* 22). This emblematic line has been read as mourning the censored or unheard voices of Catrileo’s ancestors (Barros Cruz 72); however, Catrileo’s words also allude to a limitless or uncontained voice that cannot be trapped within the framework of “la historia” or “el signo” (or even “la lengua”), that exceeds the terms of Western notions of legible and intelligible language and writing. For Catrileo, “caminar sin lengua” does not necessarily, or only, silence the voices of her Mapuche ancestors, but rather leaves them with something that scrambles the limits between silence and sound, between noise and legible language or vocality: with the *ullido* or the howl

or scream, which also appears in Ancalao’s work as the demand to “gritar hasta el abismo del silencio” (*Tejido* 61).

In *Unclaimed Experience*, Cathy Caruth famously wrote of the scene of listening to the wounded voice as an ethical imperative:

The figure of Tancred addressed by the speaking wound constitutes, in other words, not only a parable of trauma and its uncanny repetition but, more generally, a parable of psychoanalytic theory itself as it listens to a voice that it cannot fully know but to which it nonetheless bears witness. (9)

If the wounded voice is constantly emitted in the limit between the known and the unknown, or assimilated and unassimilable experience, where can the line between a voice that is “known” and one that “cannot be fully known” be drawn? What constitutes the voice to which we must bear witness? And how is this voice expressed in writing, from within a previously “silenced” language, a language that demands a necessary reinterpretation of what constitutes an audible or intelligible voice? What does it mean to hear this voice in writing, in a writing that is necessarily troubled and troublingly necessary, in a writing that is, for all intents and purposes, “silent” when compared to the voice? What are the stakes of reading, hearing, perceiving, and dialoguing in the wounded voice, and how does it unsettle these limits between listening and voicing?

In this article, I analyze two recent works that dialogue with these questions in Puellmapu (Argentina) and Wallmapu (Chile) and their relationship to notions of silencing, vocality, and poetic form: Soraya Maicoño and Dani Zelko’s *Pewma Ull: El sueño del sonido* and Daniela Catrileo’s *Río herido*. I begin by outlining how questions of the oral, the aural, and the written that have recurred within Mapuche diasporic poetics generate resistant forms of listening within writing, specifically with relation to dialogues by scholars of Indigenous sound studies such as Dylan Robinson and Ana María Ochoa Gautier. I then home in more closely on the role of silence in Zelko/Maicoño and Catrileo’s work. Departing from a long history around the significance of “silence” in Mapuche diasporic poetry, I argue that these writers theorize silence and soundlessness as a complex political strategy through their experiments with poetic form, and specifically the caesura or the line break. For Catrileo and Zelko/Maicoño, as for other Mapuche poets such as Adriana Paredes Pinda, David Aníñir Guiltraro, and Liliana Ancalao, poetic form does not serve as a neutral vessel for ethnographically-based content about Mapuche life or tradition, but rather thinks with and through silence as a political and aesthetic strategy in order to upend multicultural, neoliberal frameworks and to reckon with notions of disappearance, mourning, and justice under settler colonialism in the Southern Cone. This is a poetics and a politics that critically repositions notions of “poetry,” a genre that has been deeply engrained in canonical constructions of Argentine and Chilean literature. I argue that the silence as indexed in the line break or the cut shows us how

the notion of the “literary” itself is underwritten by dissonant, disruptive, and in this case, absolutely vital sounds.

Otros ritmos, otras pausas: Unsettling Silences

Soraya Maicoño and Dani Zelko’s *El sueño de sonido* takes part in a collaborative project by the Argentine artist and writer Dani Zelko entitled “Reunión.” Zelko describes this project on his website, where he emphasizes the voice as central to the breach between politics and aesthetics. As an experiment in writing and listening, “Reunión” involves the compilation of oral histories and encounters in regions of political and environmental conflict and struggle, ranging from migrant communities in Madrid to testimonies of the Mexico City earthquake in 2017. In the case of *El sueño del sonido*, Zelko worked with Soraya Maicoño, a Mapuche singer, actress, and political activist, in order to document her process of re-learning ancestral Mapuche chants or *üll*. This collective poetic experiment also takes place across a backdrop of renewed anti-Indigenous violence and occupation in Argentina, specifically with regards to struggles for ancestral land rights in what are currently designated as national parks and privately owned land in Bariloche (Briones 110, Briones and Lepe-Carrión 3, “NAISA Statement”). The state-sponsored violence and repression is carried out against the Lof Lafken Winkul Mapu, a Mapuche community recuperating ancestral lands in modern-day Argentina. Beyond *El sueño del sonido*, Zelko also co-wrote *Lof Lafken Winkul Mapu: ¿Mapuche Terrorista?* with community members in the wake of the murder of Mapuche activist Rafael Nahuel by state militia in 2017 (Briones and Lepe-Carrión 10; Zelko 12, 22).

According to Zelko, “Reunión” performs an experimental practice of transcribing the voice: “Me hablan y yo escribo a mano todo lo que dicen. Cada vez que hacen una pausa para inhalar paso a la línea que sigue, creando un nuevo verso. Está prohibido grabar” (Zelko, “El procedimiento”). The written document is later circulated freely and read aloud in public meetings, converting what appears to be a process of testimonial writing into a multi-vocal experimental project that occurs somewhere between performance and poetry, writing and sound, closed book and oral tale. Zelko’s work becomes both political statement and aesthetic proposal, grounded in a poetics of listening to the breath. Each line is separated by the natural pause of the speaker, an inhalation marked as a caesura that becomes obvious in the large blank spaces that recur in “Reunión.” *El sueño del sonido* complicates this practice because Zelko’s collaborative listening steps into direct dialogue with the multifaceted experiences of vocality and audibility in Maicoño’s background as a spokesperson and *Pillan Kushe*, or chanter, for her community. She recounts, and he writes by hand, experiences as a *vocera* asked to speak for the Lof Lafken Winkul Mapu:

Quando me paraba como vocera de una comunidad
de una circunstancia o de un conflicto

me podía afianzar en lo que decía
no solo porque creía en lo que estaba comunicando
sino porque me agarraba de todo lo que había recorrido
escuchado
visto,
cuando hablaba como vocera
ante los medios o hacia un grupo de personas
no me refería a una situación particular
con algunas palabras que encontraba:
el contenido y la profundidad de mi voz
venían de la soledad, el silencio
el enojo, la fuerza
las historias y las memorias
de muchas personas y muchos territorios que conocí.
(Maicoño and Zelko, 30)

Maicoño rejects the notion of being a conventional spokesperson for her community, claiming instead that her voice is composed of numerous voices, of countless experiences of listening not only to the legible words of community members but also to their silences, songs, and inhalations. The notion of her voice as composed of solitude and silence, of sonicities that escape what is conventionally known as a “voice,” decenters her subject position and proposes other modes of political and aesthetic representation informed by Mapuche cosmology.¹

In one moment of listening, Maicoño describes the following attention toward silence:

La escucha hace que aprendas un montón
o que no aprendas absolutamente nada
la escucha hace que estés atento a un montón de cosas
que pasan afuera
entre los animales, los árboles, las estrellas
y eso implica un silencio que no solo es un silencio de la boca
de la kegun
de la lengua,
es un silencio de la mente también
apagar un poco la mente y dejar entrar la voz del otro
los gestos del otro

A veces creía que iba a aprender tal o cual canto
y terminaba aprendiendo hechos
situaciones
historias
llantos
lágrimas que caían
...
Ahí
escuchar quiere decir saber esperar
esperar al tiempo del otro

no avasallar
hablar en un tono bajo
esperar a que el otro hable
acompañar su silencio
ver esos revoleos de ojos internos
ver cómo la otra persona está hurgando en sus
pensamientos
como si estuviera debatiéndose
entre qué decir y qué no decir
en cómo contar lo que quiere contar. (41-43)

Maicoño advances an ethics and politics of listening that do not valorize listening as a pure, unmediated practice of accessing the others' words, or of compiling chants to be saved for ethnographic or anthropological purposes. Instead, she attests to how the practice of listening is necessarily fraught, attuned to the silence and illegibility of the pause, of the moment of decision "entre qué decir y qué no decir" (43). She describes how she arrives to these communities hoping to learn and conserve these oral forms, but such a practice of conservation is inevitably thwarted by what is produced by sounds outside of legible vocality, such as the sob or the falling tear, or the sounds of animals, trees, and stars, to whom *dungun*, or voice or language, is extended as well. She cultivates "otros ritmos / otras pausas" in order to prevent her language from falling into silence, and to attend to the terms between the said and the unsaid, silence and sound, and breath and speech. Maicoño does not extend these categories or sort sound from speech, but rather exercises a mode of listening that is counter to what the *xwélmexw* musicologist Dylan Robinson has called "hungry" or "fixed" listening: "Listening regimes imposed and implemented 'fixed listening' strategies that are part of a larger reorientation toward Western categorizations of single-sense engagement, as well as toward Western ontologies of music located in aesthetic appropriation" (40-41). Robinson returns to the notion of a "haunted" listening positionality informed by Indigenous cosmologies and traditions of song and music:

To take the metaphor of the palimpsest at its most material means understanding a palimpsestous listening to be similarly oriented toward aural traces of history: echoes, whispers, and voices that become audible momentarily, ones that may productively haunt our listening as significantly as ghosts that linger ... a decolonial practice of critical listening positionality actively seeks out (or allows itself) to be-come haunted. (62)

Maicoño's decolonial listening practice takes place outside of a certain kind of fixed listening, or what musicologist Ana María Ochoa Gautier has called "vocal immunity" (171), which aims to parcel out the legible, hearable, or intelligible voice for ethnographic aims in service of Western knowledge production. In this sense Ancalao's

comment on the intent to "atrapar el sonido del mapuzungun en grafemas occidentales" ("El idioma" 50) is not to banish such hauntings of words and sounds that refuse to be contained, but rather to allow listening to become inundated by what is most uncontainable within it, by what escapes it and shifts its terms.

The Mapuche scholar Luis Cárcamo-Huechante has written that "Mapudungun, by tying language to the earth, detaches from an anthropocentric logic and expresses a linguistic territory of multiple resonances: the phonetics of a world populated by beings that whisper, mumble, talk, shout, sing, weep, scream, whistle, trill, bleat, or moo" (103). This multisensorial and multivocal "acoustic ecology" (103) that Cárcamo-Huechante describes with regards to the *üll*, or the chant or song, in Lionel Lienlaf's poetics, stands in direct resistance to an "acoustic colonialism imposed by the dominant state, corporate, and media actors in neoliberal, contemporary Chile" (103), and in this case, Argentina. I am interested in Cárcamo-Huechante's and Robinson's emphases on certain difficult and dissident vocalities as central to Mapuche acoustic ecology (and in Robinson's case, *xwélmexw* acoustic ecology), a concept that is mirrored in Maicoño's listening practices and her deep attention to not only *what* the other is saying, but her critical stance on expanding the notions of "saying" and speech themselves. This is a theme, however, that is not independent from concepts of literary and poetic form: the poetics of Zelko and Maicoño's *El sueño del sonido* uses the structure that serves as one of the key separations between poetry and prose, or the line break. Zelko's grounding of "Reunión" in the breath also creates a throughline to the line break, the caesura, or the enjambment in poetry and its subsequent creation of the white space that fills the page of *El sueño del sonido*. As Gabriel Giorgi writes, "*El verso es, entonces, fundamentalmente la huella de la respiración del otro en la escritura, su propia inscripción*" (219, emphasis in the original). Giorgi emphasizes the role of what he calls "la respiración del otro" as an ethical marker whose pulse we hear in *Reunión*: "El poema es...una relación formal con la potencia y la vulnerabilidad del otro en tanto que cuerpo" (222). Giorgi argues that these formal line breaks express the vulnerability of the lives made most precarious and unlivable by settler colonial frameworks and state violence, while at once speaking to what he calls their persistence through "potency" and "affirmation." Giorgi writes: "Una forma no es otra cosa que un espacio de relación, un dispositivo de relación abierto entre cuerpos. Aquí esa forma está dada por la respiración tal es la invitación incesante de la *Reunión*" (222). He emphasizes the central role of form—in this case, line breaks that proliferate blank space—as corresponding to the ethical significance of breath and breathing, of the role of listening to another's breath that is also their persistence and their survival.

The link between "form" and "space" (or "forma" and "espacio") is especially resonant when frameworks of settler colonialism are concerned. Is it possible, then, that these spatial and formal dynamics become modes of interrogating and critiquing the silences

and absences that are both produced by settler coloniality and suffered by those dispossessed by it? What is the significance of form and space if we read Zelko and Maicoño's work in dialogue with notions of poetic and literary form, as Zelko instructs us to do? How do these poetics situated in Mapuche cosmology and resistance envision the notion of "silence" differently, as otherwise than emptiness or privation, thus further complicating the breach between sound and its absence?

Zelko's blank spaces surrounding Maicoño's words, the line breaks designating a pause or an inhalation, are echoed in Maicoño's stance on listening to a speaker hesitating "entre qué decir y qué no decir / en cómo contar lo que quiere contar" (43). This blank space speaks to listening to the "historias / llantos / lágrimas que caen" (42), to a silence that emerges in the voice and the experience of listening itself—a silence that Maicoño hears from within her experience of imprisonment following a struggle over territorial land claims. She and Zelko write:

En agosto de 2016 caí presa
pasé mi cumpleaños presa
sola en una comisaría
y apenas me metieron
apenas entré a ese lugar
me puse a cantar,
no a llorar
no a gritar
no a putear
me puse a cantar fuerte
sin parar
y parece que todos los presos escuchaban
Una maestra que daba clases en esa comisaría
después me contó
que sintieron una sensación extraña
muy extraña
dicen que se hizo un silencio en la comisaría
un silencio inexplicable. (1)

Mapuche poet David Aníñir also writes of this notion of silence as a strategy for resistance during an encounter with military police:

ir, hacer y decir
acción directa
recuperando memoria
levantando la vista
observando al fascista
al poeta de pelos en pecho
y en el agua
y en el silencio que lo acusa
porque el silencio también es resistencia. (33)

In a related sense, while Ancalao's notion of the "silenced language"

refers to the repression of the Mapuche language that extends to the so-called "Conquest of the Desert" and through the military dictatorship and its afterlives, it also complicates the relationship between silence and silencing and highlights its harboring of an aesthetic and political proposal:

El mapuzungun se volvió el idioma para expresar el dolor, el idioma del desgarrar cuando el reparto de hombres, mujeres y niños como esclavos. Un susurro secreto en los campos de concentración. El idioma de consuelo entre los prisioneros de guerra ... El mapuzungun fue el idioma de la conversación de los ancianos, el idioma para convocar a las fuerzas en la intimidad del amanecer. El idioma para guardar. Para callar. (50)

Ancalao's poetic rendering affirms the survival and endurance of Mapudungun through years of colonial violence and repression. The references to whispers, to a language "para callar" (50) (translated as "of silence" by Seth Michelson ["The Silenced Language"]), to a language passed clandestinely through generations as a form of intimacy, safekeeping, and resistance, complicates what it means to listen to the voice, to the voice's silences, to unsound silences that may, in some sense, be voices in themselves. These Mapuche poets and thinkers write of "silencing" as a strategy extended by the imperial and settler-colonial state, an attempt to erase a language, a culture, and a world. There is an explicit violence in such a strategy operating under what Wolfe called the "logic of elimination," a *terra nullius* principle that understands a land as implicitly empty or operates under the goal of emptying it for future settlement and extraction (Gómez Barris 85), and thus has the positive effect of erecting a "new colonial society on the expropriated land base" (Wolfe 388). Following these arguments, I read formal and poetic strategies that appear to be "silent," empty, or absent as harboring their own sense and significance, as to ignore them might be to operate under a kind of aural settler colonial logic that attributes "emptiness" not only to forced silencing, but to alternative cosmologies, epistemologies, and theories of sound and voice.

In this sense, I am not arguing that these poets celebrate legacies of enforced silencing and erasure under colonialism, or that they deny the emancipatory power of the voice. Rather, through formal and poetic experimentation they seek to affirm the survival and endurance of the Mapuche language and culture, even when it appears "hidden" in Spanish language writing or unmentioned explicitly in the poem's content (and made "present" by the manipulation of poetic space through form, as I show in my reading of Catrileo's work below). The Anishinaabe theorist and poet Gerald Vizenor has called this notion "Survivance," a neologism of survival and resistance: "Native survivance," he writes, "is an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion," referring to active modes of Native resistance to "domination, detractions, obstructions, the unbearable sentiments of tragedy, and the legacy

of victimry" (1). Vizenor's term is a political, aesthetic, and rhetorical strategy, speaking to the "Survivance" of Indigenous languages, cultures, and literatures that shape the dominant linguistic and cultural frameworks they come into contact with as well. In a related sense, Gloria E. Chacón has called this a "double gaze" (*kawb'il*) in the case of Maya and Zapotec writers, a "method that must account for two particular linguistic and diverse cultural codes" (ix),² which in this case becomes a double vision of the encounter between Spanish and Mapudungun, and the temporal encounter between present and past colonialisms that this entails. To write in Spanish is to break, interrupt, and undo it through these formal and rhetorical strategies that fracture its wholeness and authority (Sánchez Martínez 106; Arias et al. 9; Mora Curriao 335); it is also to resignify the notion of empty "silence" as advanced in Western philosophy, and to critique absence, emptiness, and blank space as uncomplicated visual and sonic tropes that reinforce poetry's binary between form and content. Ancalao experiments with this tension between silence and sound in an emblematic poem entitled "esta voz":

ella respira en la membrana
de un tambor remojado en la garganta
desde la piel de cueros costurados
hasta la aguada de los teros
lejos

a veces
cuando pienso las alturas
soy un cóndor que se arroja contra el frío
arrancándose las alas en el filo de los pinos

y los volcanes se hacen llamas en los dedos
y me truenan los potros torturados en las venas

y esta voz
que es ceniza en los labios
pretende ser cascada en el desierto

desde la sangre caer mi llanto
gritar
hasta el abismo del silencio. (*Tejido* 61)

Ancalao's words complicate the notion of the voice silenced by decades of settler colonial practices. The Mapuche language and cosmology are ever-present in Ancalao's work, whether alluded to or mentioned explicitly. In the bilingual collection *Tejido con llana cruda / züwen karükal mew*, "esta voz" is published alongside its Mapudungun equivalent, "fachi züngun," meaning that Mapudungun is explicitly named as what underlies and shapes the Spanish version. This is present in a veiled and explicit sense in the poem, where the infinitive form of "caer" and later "gritar" are deliberate grammatical errors in the Spanish that speak to Mapudungun's la-

tent presence beneath the poem's Spanish words.³ The beat of what is beneath the poem's surface, or what gets under its skin, is evoked in the allusions to the voice as a "tambor remojado en la garganta" or the thunder of the "potros torturados en las venas" (61). What is legible or apparent is underwritten by the traces of a past that has been silenced or ignored, shifting the terms of a temporality that seeks to suture or foreclose the presence of these wounds for good.

"Esta voz" evokes the descent of the condor that the poetic voice names. The allusion to both birds and the fall echo gestures that recur in other Indigenous poetics and cosmologies.⁴ The poem proceeds downward with words such as *caer* and *cascada*, the cry and the scream—which takes up its own line—falling toward the "abyss of silence." Additionally, the word *hasta* complicates this poem's formal and thematic notion of silence. Michelson translates the line "hasta el abismo del silencio" as "into an abyss of silence" (*Women of the Big Sky* 30). While yelling *into* the abyss is present in Ancalao's words, the poem's formal descent toward the silent abyss suggests that the abyss is a boundary that outlines the poem, a boundary that exists alongside the scream itself, in the blank space below the poem's "end." Perhaps Ancalao's speaker also screams until, toward, up against, the abyss of silence, an abyss of silence that exists *alongside* the scream but that the scream itself cannot eliminate or replace.

Authors such as Elicura Chihuailaf have used the term *oralitura* as a framework for Mapuche writing, informing Ancalao's poetics as well. Melissa Stocco writes of *oralitura* as a mode of confronting the placing of orality as *prior* to writing,⁵ and as fading into silence in order to be replaced by writing as a greater form of truth and permanence: "Written Indigenous literatures develop alongside orality, not 'above' it. Orality's presence, influence, tension, and complementarity with writing contradict the pseudo-evolutionary idea that orality is a previous, less-developed, or more primitive form of human communication that has been supplanted by writing" (712). Cárcamo-Huechante also writes of Lienlaf's poetry, and the concept of Mapuche oral and bodily poetry more broadly, as such: "The poetic event is in this way somehow unsettled since it is neither fully written nor fully oral; it is also a metonymy of the unsettled situation of the Mapuche subject in times of territorial crisis and struggle" (113). This claim to a poetics that is at once oral and written, or that refuses to mark orality with a prior-ness or antecedence under which it must fade into silence or irrelevance against the primacy of written language, emerges from Chihuailaf's notion of what it means to be an "Oralitor," expressed in an interview: "Estar al lado de la fuente, reitero, es escuchar para crear y recrear a partir de ello sin la pretensión de reemplazarla. Eso es ser un oralitor" (25). The significance of listening to *oralitura* is also present in Ancalao's text on the subject:

¿Cómo se escribe esto que siempre anduvo en los árboles, tirado a la sombra de los helechos y los musgos, descolorido por el sol en las piedras de la estepa, salado

en la transparencia de las orillas? ¿Cómo se escriben los colores escandalosos de los pájaros y la resistencia delicada de nuestros tejidos? ¿Cómo se escribe la voz gastada que nos cuenta de una Estrella que cae y se clava en el pecho de una niña? (33)

Ancalao's reading of "oralitura" speaks to the transmission and safe-keeping of ancestral Mapuche stories conserved through both oral storytelling and writing, a tradition that is also present in a quote she includes from Chihuailaf: "Escribo a orillas del fogón que arde en la memoria" (33). To *escribir al lado de la fuente* or *el fogón*, next to the campfire or the source (or the spring), is to listen to what occurs in the limits between silence and sound ("esto que siempre anduvo en los árboles") in order to *create poetry*, but not to "replace," as Chihuailaf and Ancalao tell us. If listening is a poetic method that does not claim to "replace" sound or even record it faithfully (recall Zelko's statement that he will not record sounds, and writes them down instead), this would suggest that the meeting between orality and writing, and between sound and silence, understands these figures as otherwise than *replacing*, displacing, or supplanting one another, but rather existing alongside one another in all of the contradictions and ambiguities this might imply. In this sense, to scream toward an abyss of silence is not to claim to eliminate the abyss, but rather to recognize the ways in which silence is already implied in, embedded in, and surrounding, whatever we may know as the abyssal "scream." Writing from and translating into a language that has been silenced for centuries, and from within a Mapuche "acoustic ecology," Ancalao and others here do not view silence as an emptiness to be filled with speech. Silence functions more ambiguously: it resonates of and with an oppressive past that cannot be erased, and becomes a form of resistance untethered from the notion of legible speech or vocalicity as linked to a single subject position. It is a demand to attend to the sounds and senses that might otherwise be read as insignificant, empty, senseless, or nearly gone, at once there and not there.

Ancalao, Aniñir, Zelko, and Maicoño show us that while the question of "silence" is a theoretical, ontological, and epistemological one, it is also a *formal* one: a question that must engage with the significance of line breaks, of linearity and lineation, and the visual and sonorous landscapes they create with regards to these intertwined dynamics of *form* and *space*. The role of the line break is a ubiquitous question in any discussion of literary or poetic form, so much that the philosopher Giorgio Agamben wrote that "No definition of verse is perfectly satisfying...unless it asserts an identity for poetry against prose through the possibility of *enjambment*" (39). In a related sense, the poet Don Paterson has written of silence as the defining feature of versed poetry more generally: "Silence is the poet's ground. Silence delineates the formal borders of the poem, and the formal arrangement of silences puts language under pressure. Silence—both invoked and symbolized by the white page, and specifically insisted upon by the gaps left by lineation, stanza, and

poem—underwrites the status of the poem as *significant mark*" (19, emphasis in the original). Patterson tells us that silence creates a tension between acoustic and semantic language that is "proper" to poetry, to both its visual white space and its sonorous pauses: "A poetic form," he affirms, "is essentially a codified pattern of silence" (20).

If this relationship between silence and speech, between empty space and the word, is what constitutes a poem's formal strategy, is there also a way in which silence or space's serving as a border, limit, or ground, proposes a political strategy as well? If "Silence is the poet's ground," or if the white page is a "sign to the reader that poems were *won* from silence," silence is marked as temporally prior to the word, as the "ground" which shapes speech and upon which poetic speech is constructed. If this is the case, Mapuche poetics' complex relation with the question of "silence" under settler colonial frameworks of land expropriation demands the necessity to theorize a notion of form that views silence, blankness, or absence of space as something other than an original ground on which the poem must be constructed, an emptiness of *terra nullius* from which the poem becomes legible or *takes up space*.

The Chickasaw theorist Jodi Byrd has interrogated this notion of a prior absence or silence with regards to the question of the "Indian," arguing that this errant figure should not be read as an empty, prior nothingness but as a "transit, the field through which pre-signifying polyvocality is re/introduced into the signifying regime" (19). Byrd does not view the figure of the "absent Indian" and all that is associated with them as a blankness. They write of a simultaneous coming together of words and cosmologies, "discordant and competing representations of diasporic arrivals and native lived experiences ... that vie for hegemony within the discursive, cultural, and political processes of representation and identity..." (xiii). Byrd's notion of the "cacophonies of colonialism," of the necessary discordance and over-signification inherent to the collision of multiple worlds, temporalities, languages, cosmologies, and ecologies, is a way of contesting Indigenous absence or silence and a horizontal methodology in which they "read the cacophonies of colonialism as they are rather than to attempt to hierarchize them into coeval or causal order" (xxvii). This discordance is present in *Oralitura*'s bringing together of writing and orality, Ancalao's juxtaposition of Spanish and Mapudungun, and Maicoño's references to the sounds of nature alongside repressive state forces on ancestral land. Byrd's refusal of the terms of "absence" allows us to think of silence as existing alongside these screams and sounds, as another element that exists within the cacophony of "competing representations" and dissonant collisions, as part of a cacophony that does not always have to be loud.

Elegir la poética es elegir el silencio: Writing (From) Caesuras in Río Herido

The Mapuche poet Daniela Catrileo begins *Río Herido* with the

dedication: “*Al fuego de las calles / y las voces bajo el agua*” (5). The poem’s opening alludes to a scene of violence, to centuries of Mapuche struggle against the Chilean state forces, and to the voices beneath the water from which this book originates. The first section of *Río herido* follows, titled “CESURA: TESTIMONIO DEL ACCIDENTE.” The words are outlined by the blank spaces common to her poetics, the title “Cesura” giving way to its own breakage, to the testimony that follows.

Cesura:

Testimonio del accidente

(4)

The poem’s immediate recourse to the word caesura or “Cesura,” to the poetic technique that stages a pause or a division in a line of poetry, and has its very routes in the “cut” itself, tells us that *Río herido* will propose an experiment with the poetics of the caesura, of the pause. To say here that the “testimonio” or witnessing occurs from, within, as, the pause or caesura is to say something strange or paradoxical about the poetics of witnessing: if witnessing occurs within or as a pause or caesura, then whatever is witnessed has occurred in silence, in the blank space, or between the lines.

What happens if we view what occurs in, as, the caesura, as otherwise than emptiness or non-sense? The poet and theorist Syd Zolf has written of Paul Celan’s famous line “No one bears witness for the witness” as refusing a notion of witnessing centered in an ontological subject position, but rather activating “a No One who/ that is paraontological and hauntologically informed by the nothingness that has been historically ascribed to blackness and that blackness enacts within, apposite to, and beyond the No One” (5). Zolf alludes to Black studies theorists Nahum Chandler’s notion of the “paraontological” and Denise Ferreira da Silva’s notion of the “no-body” which claims that full personhood or subjectivity is established against an affectable nonperson violently subjugated for the subject to persist. Speaking from the different historical and temporal context of Celan’s poetics and Black studies’ upending of the terms of “nothingness,” Zolf raises the necessity of inquiring into normative concepts of absence, nothingness, non-sense, and non-personhood. They attend to the ways in which those whom Ferreira da Silva calls the “others of Europe” are excluded from the normative subject position and are subject to its violence and made into an affectable “I” who is seen as unable to access the categories of self-determination or emancipation, and consequently, legible and intelligible speech or *logos* (xiii). For Zolf, “No one is an unhomed site to think about no-things that refuse received notions of subjectivity and objectivity, oneness, twoness, and thingliness” (5). To think of the “nothing” that is contained in the unsettled site of the caesura is to consider the testimonial “absence” that exists in Catrileo’s poetics as directly countering notions of legible testimony and audible “speech.” This absence is not empty, but speaks to the

ongoing persistence of voices that refuse the terms of their own silencing, confirming the notion that nothing occurs completely *in absentia*. The “NO” that opens the floodgates for her next vertical poem affirms this, raising the necessity of attending to the nothingness of poetry, the supposed nothing from which words and poetry begin: to the silences and caesuras that form it, the breaks and divisions that we think of as a form or a structure for content. These breaks are not, and necessarily cannot be, entirely empty, neutral, or apolitical forms for content alone.

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(*Río herido* 12)

Catrileo’s poem tells us, when read vertically, that it has no structure or origin (“No hay estructura ni origen”). However, if we pay attention to the way form functions, we see that the poem without origin originates in the “NO,” which is also preceded by the negative space around it. The poem proceeds from the “NO,” makes “NO” a procession against precedence, originates in the blankness and the emptiness that surrounds it, an origin that is at once a non-origin and an origin that questions, upends, the notion of emerging from “nothing” itself, from experiences and subject positions that have been systematically annulled through histories of colonization and genocide. Alison Boise Ramay points to this “NO” as impossible origin: “The ‘origin’ or beginning of the poem is ‘No’ and this seems to recall colonial negation of Indigenous language and ways of being. The verticality is reminiscent of colonial power, expanding over indigenous land, territory, and epistemologies” (84). Ramay suggests that the words combat colonial power, as well as what

Macarena Gómez-Barris has called the “extractive view” which “rendered Native populations invisible, which legally rendered the settlement of foreign populations onto communal properties, and facilitated the taking of those territories’ resources. European colonization throughout the world cast nature as other and, through the gaze of *terra nullius*, represented Indigenous peoples as non-existent” (6). This extractive, vertical gaze, or what Gómez-Barris terms “seeing like the state,” is especially relevant here given Catrileo’s reference in a co-written article to the “la comodificación del agua bajo un sistema neoliberal” by the “modelo de aguas chileno instalado en 1981” (Amaro et al. 65-66). This dictatorship-era code originated in the extractivism of resources and settler colonial land expropriation. Barros Cruz also suggests that “El río es la herida que portan los mapuches urbanos exiliados en las riberas del Mapocho, el Zanjón de la Aguada y otros caudales que recorren las periferias de la capital,” pointing to the Mapocho River’s essential significance for diasporic Mapuches living at the edges of Santiago, to the *warriche* figure that Catrileo alludes to as the Mapuche diaspora in Santiago and other urban, peripheral spaces (66).

I agree with Boise Ramay’s reading of “No hay estructura” as a critique of both erasure and verticality; however, I also read the negative spaces that pervade this poem as shaping an experimental poetics that hinges on the very force of negation and negativity to interrupt language and writing. Catrileo’s emphasis on the poetic caesura from which *Río herido* opens suggests that there is an experimental poetics of form that occurs with regards to notions of nothingness, of blank space, and of silence. For beyond the NO that both negates and gives form to the vertical structure of this poem is the space beyond it, and the cuts between the words, the way each letter is separated by yet another break, suggesting that there are unsound silences inhabiting and fragmenting the languages we claim to know, and that these silences resound within a written language as well. Before the NO and the caesura from which the poem originates comes the dedication, once again, to the “fuego de las calles / y las voces bajo el agua” (5). If *Río herido* has its origin in these submerged voices, what does it mean to hear them in Catrileo’s poetics? How do we hear these submerged voices from fragmentations, from the cut, from the break or the between that both defines and undoes any stable conception of a “poetics,” of a relation between form and content?

Catrileo continues in the poem following “No hay estructura”:

No hay pureza
ni casa propia
en
el movimiento de las aguas

habitar

el corte

sentenciada la boca
rota la lengua.

(*Río herido* 13)

Catrileo begins with the “no” again, the poem’s opening a negation of opening or origin *as opening or origin*. The poem originates from an absence, from the “No” and the blank space that precedes it, from the absence of origin: an absence that Catrileo also locates in the “movimiento de las aguas” from which her submerged voices emerge. The notion of inhabiting the cut, of a broken tongue and a condemned mouth, takes us to the structures of settler colonial violence that Catrileo and others locate as occurring against Mapuche bodies, livelihoods, land, and language—or what the poet Adriana Paredes Pinda, one of Catrileo’s central interlocutors, expresses as such: “nos robaron nuestro mundo,” (9) “la palabra nos ha sido ultrajada” (8). Catrileo writes of the difficulty of writing from this place of violence in one of her readings of Paredes Pinda’s poetics of a “lengua desgarrada”: “Es difícil pensar sobre lo propio cuando todo nos ha sido robado...por eso lo propio no es más que del otro, tanto así como la escritura” (“El nacimiento” 1). Both Catrileo and Paredes Pinda affirm the simultaneous impossibility and necessity of writing from a place of dispossession, of enforced *nothingness*, in which everything that is “proper” belongs to a settler colonial aggressor, including the Spanish language, including writing itself. Catrileo bases the notion of writing from the *corte*, *herida*, or *cesura* in ongoing state violence against Mapuche land and lives: “Desde las marcaciones de cuerpos [cortes, despedazamiento, quemaduras] en el desarrollo de la reducción, invisibilizar lo mapuche en lo campesino, incluso la vergonzosa ley antiterrorista chilena [18.314] que sigue vigente en la actualidad, herencia dictatorial y conservada por la democracia ficcional” (2). Catrileo tells us that in these recurrent violent and genocidal practices exists the notion of an eradica-

tion or being made *invisible*, of an original “absence” perpetuated by the Chilean state and Spanish colonizers before them.

Rather than returning to this absence in order to definitively recuperate lost knowledge and voice, Catrileo originates her poetics in the necessary challenge of writing from a place of fracture, and a fracture of place. She writes of the notion of “hacer presente aquella fractura,” a necessary paradox of making present what is *empty* and fractured, of writing from and within this space of what has been silenced, made absent, and wounded. She defines her poetic process as “Elevando nombres ausentes de los pueblos que se aferraban a mi piel, habitantes silenciosos esperando ser llamados entre las cosas del mundo ... Esa lengua da nacimiento al río, mi cuerpo en el prisma de otros cuerpos arrojados al paisaje del abandono que nos vio crecer” (3). To write with and from the absent voices of her ancestors, the submerged voices with which she opens *Río herido* and from which the river begins its flow, is to write from the space of fragmentation as denial, an original denial that cannot deny itself:

Esa geografía se ancla a todos los muertos que se arrastran con la fuerza de las aguas y te acompañan en cada paisaje. Por eso escribir es un soplo al oído de otros sonidos, trazar el bosquejo de un otro no por medio de la representación, sino como un oficio de composición y montaje polifónico. Las voces nos entregan la imagen, la labor es traducir esos ruidos para no perderse río abajo e intentar que esa justicia de la escritura se transforme en poética ... Por eso ante todo está el diálogo, escuchar lo que imaginaba sumergido. (“El nacimiento” 3)

Catrileo’s poetics gives Chihuailaf’s notion of “escuchar al lado de la fuente,” new significance: to listen to, and write from, the source of the river is to write with and for these submerged voices, and to complicate whatever resides in both notions of enforced silence and silence as resistance, giving us other modes of silence that are polyphonic, cacophonous, and something other than absences. It is as if Catrileo tells us that emptiness, too, makes noise, and in the sounds of that emptiness lies a critique of a poetics and politics that views absence as an uncomplicated prior from which language, poetry, and content, emerges, or only attempts to counter erasure with presence, silence with sound. To write in this way, against and with the emptiness of silence or blank space, or the neutrality of form as an uncomplicated vessel (Dowling 21), is to literally “habitar el corte,” the line the poem presents as necessary inconclusion, as an inconclusive necessity. The cut from which the river runs is not nothing, but it also cannot be something still. Catrileo asks the following questions which are constitutive of her poetics: “¿Qué tonos brindarles a aquellos sonidos que viajaron durante años hasta llegar a nosotros? ¿En qué lenguas escribir nuestras heridas? ¿Cuál es la *dungun* del exilio?” (“El nacimiento” 3). When Catrileo asks these questions, she refers to “aquellos sonidos” in part because they are what fracture writing, and present writing as necessary fracture, as

the caesuras between letters, lines, and voices. She writes further on: “Al final aquellas voces que tanto tiempo me persiguieron clamaban su visibilidad sobre la hoja en blanco” (5). The reference to the “hoja en blanco” or blank page makes blank or empty space a key part of Catrileo’s poetics. She tells us that these submerged voices are not to be made visible, but are in some sense *already* visible in the page’s blankness, in the fractures and caesuras that the page harbors in its form. This is a poetics that means to disrupt the neutrality of form and the “emptiness” of blank *space*, to return to Giorgi’s notion that “una forma es un espacio de relación” (215). Catrileo writes that poetry is “trabajo que se quiebra al intentar componer su espacio” (“El nacimiento” 4). The composition of space through form, through the cut and the caesura, through the unsound voices that lurk in the blankness of the page, is to rule out the possibility of a unified space itself, of a form that does not harbor its own unsound silences, and its own palimpsestic hauntings between the lines.

This is why I read the following poem, as well as Catrileo’s question of the “*dungun*” or language of exile, as necessarily unanswerable:

¿Cómo escribir un nombre
que nació herido,
antes de ser escrito
antes del origen
de la letra? (*Río herido* 14)

Catrileo’s question of how to “Escribir un nombre” emerges from her fractured name’s translation of *katrüllewfü* or *río cortado* (“El nacimiento” 5). In the poem above, to return to her wounded name poses the question of what Catrileo calls “herir el lenguaje... erosionar y hablar desde la llaga” (5). Edith Adams, one of Catrileo’s translators, suggests that “It is only through this mutation or destruction of the name, a dismantlement that requires translation in order to unfold, that the wound ... can transform writing into poetry” (5). This is a name that proceeds from another “silent” origin, from an *antes* that precedes writing itself, from the blank space that precedes the poem. This is a silent or fragmented origin that reinterprets the notion of silence itself: “La fragmentaria corporalidad que nos invoca su voz y así, sin ambiciones, *elegir la poesía de pronto también es elegir el silencio*” (4). Or, as Catrileo writes in another poem:

El río voz
que no
calla.

¿Qué se abre
en el lenguaje de
las aguas?

(*Río herido* 19)

To give the river a voice is to think of both voice and hearing as informed by notions of Mapuche cosmology, and to hear what occurs

in the silence, in the break, in the caesura. "El río es voz / que no / calla," (19) Catrileo tells us, which in a semantic sense might translate to "The river is a voice that does not quiet," though the immediate break after the *no* might tell us otherwise. The river's unsilent voice is what takes place between and after the *no* and the *calla*, in the fragmentary opening through and between the lines and the water, in what Catrileo calls "instalando un 'entre' de movimientos, de imágenes, de identidades...por eso se acepta el río como principio, la inconstancia permanece en su viaje. Nunca es un espacio, es una llaga abierta que destila sin destino" ("El nacimiento" 5).

I am arguing that Daniela Catrileo's poetics, in her experiments with the space that forms, informs, and deforms the poem, provide us with a different philosophy of silence, emptiness, absence, and form. Feminist Philosopher Martina Ferrari has written of a decolonial "deep" silence as what underlies and is necessary to *sense* itself, refusing to dispose of the "non-sense" which is integral to sense-making:

Silence is signified negatively, as the mark of ontological nonbeing and epistemic non-sense or the index of oppression and displacement from the (purportedly universal but in fact colonial) subject position. I call the mechanisms that make invisible the depth of the phenomenon of silence the *coloniality of silence*. The outcome is that silence is perceived, at best, as a phenomenon irrelevant to meaning-making, to communication, and to the disclosure of being, and, at worst, as an obstacle to be overcome if meaning, communication, and the disclosure of being ought to be attained. But what does it mean for silence to be excluded from the domain of presence, being, and sense? This is also to ask, what does it mean, for *sense*, to be limited to (the) presence of (the colonizer's voice)? (134)

This is akin to what Black Studies scholar Kevin Quashie has called the "sovereignty of quiet," writing of a form of quiet that functions not as a hollowness, but an "expressiveness that is not entirely legible in a discourse of publicness" (23), where "the idea of quiet as the expressiveness of the interior is distinct from the general connotation of silence as an absence" (32). Quashie's argument is based in a conceptualization of Black subjectivity that places it outside of the frameworks we associate with legible political resistance. While conscious of oppressive forms of silencing, Quashie's parallel notion of "quiet" interprets silences as performances of illegibility, secrecy, safekeeping, and intimacy, as forms of expressiveness that contest expectations around what it means to speak publicly, or even to speak at all.

Catrileo writes in another poem of this relationship between silence and sound, between writing and absence:

El secreto de la rotura
de la lengua
como quién se apuñala

a sí mismo
para salvarse. (*Río herido* 20)

The references to the ruptured tongue are followed by the rupture of the caesura, of the line break, suggesting that the present blankness that surrounds and wounds language is necessary even while using a form of writing and expression that comes from the colonizer. This is why, in an almost contradictory sense, writing (in Spanish) is necessary for the very fractures, silences, and breaks that must inhabit writing: caesuras do not only signify empty space, but rather show us how writing is eroded and undone by the vengeance of that which has been considered empty. As Catrileo writes: "Desde ese cuerpo que se agita entre las ruinas de su historia, nace el río y la poesía, como justicia, pero también como venganza ante la violencia: palabra por palabra, letra por letra" ("El nacimiento" 5). These spacings that occur between the letters, the lines, and the words generate fissures that rewrite and unwrite silence as *underwriting* sound and speech's signification. What I am calling "underwriting" is a form of attunement toward the colonial and racial dynamics that are constitutive of speech, sound, and the speaking subject, or the space that the subject needs in order to project their voice. Ferrari, in her conceptualization of "deep silence" based in Jacques Derrida's writings on vocality, writes of "speech and voice [as] the mark of purity, presence, transparency, and fullness of being, whereas its other, silence, is the mark of impurity, absence, and lack of being" (133). Her argument implies that for each speaking voice a seemingly empty silence surrounds it and gives it form. Catrileo's work shows how this form fractures not only the monolingual, colonial domination of Spanish, but the space from and against which the subject speaks, and makes speech audible, readable, or legible.

In another poem, "Aprendimos a leer a golpes," Catrileo references the Chilean education system and its silencing of Mapuche culture and Mapudungun:

APRENDIMOS A LEER A GOLPES

Hasta negar la lengua.

La h muda se extiende al río
que tachaste con la herida. (46)

Adriana Paredes Pinda has written of this notion of language silencing and dispossession in a in an essay that opens her poetry collection *Úi*:

Algunos hablan de la 'era del vacío', VACIO, VACIO, quizás esa es la razón por la cual escribo ... el vacío de haber perdido la lengua es haber ultrajado el aliento y eso no tiene parangón, no tiene compensación...se trata de una pérdida irreparable, la muerte de un mundo no es un elemento de semiótica...si para nacer de nuevo hay

que romper un mundo...¿qué realidades se agazapan en la lengua violentada de nuestro pueblo? (12)

Pinda capitalizes and repeats “vacío” to make it resonate. This resonance is the breakage of a language, a fragmentation that cannot be entirely repaired but rather suggests a fragmentation residing within and undoing any attempts at restitution from within the context of Chilean neoliberal, multicultural society. Catrileo’s “Aprendimos a leer a golpes” places us in one of these scenes of language loss and negation,⁶ and concludes her poem with the very silences inherent to the word *herida*, the ghost letter h that begins the word itself, from which the (un)silent river must flow. The silent “h,” the void from which the word *herida* outpours and streams, is also the source of the river, what crosses out (“tachaste”) the river, not in order to *replace* the river, but to make the notion of crossing out or *tachar* a resonance in itself. If we understand silence, and the silence residing in poetry’s blank space, as otherwise than privation, the *h* is a demand for an impossible recompense as the demand for a different world, and the revenge of the silenced land and silenced tongue. Barros Cruz has argued that this is a poetics that problematizes “cualquier esencialismo y certeza sobre el origen” from within a place of exile and diaspora (70), but this is a problematization of origin that does not locate an original wound in order to suture it, or an empty void in order to fill it. “Absence” here is thus not a neutral, negative framework that precedes sense, but rather tests the limits of every extension of what precedes, advancing an interruptive and fragmentary poetics from which the river, in its torrential (un)silent flows, at once *needs* and *undoes* writing through un-writing itself.

Conclusion: Forms of Reckoning

In an essay entitled “Tras huellas luminosas: la literatura mapuche,” Catrileo has written of the enforced silencing and repression of the notion of a “Mapuche literature” against an official notion of an institutional “Chilean literature” (Cárcamo-Huechante 111) that placed Mapuche expression at its margins: “Decir ‘literatura mapuche’ no es un antojo estético ni una categoría estilística: es una forma de que nuestro pueblo siga existiendo en relación a sus múltiples tiempos, sin utopías pasadas ni idealizaciones históricas, sino testimonios complejos con todas sus contradicciones” (858). The need to attend to complex, multivocal, and cacophonous testimonies that are filled with their own silences is also what undoes the last word. Catrileo writes: “Hoy no existe un lugar único de lectura, enfrentemos los *textiles* y armemos/desarmemos la urdimbre de voces, vestigios y temporalidades de las que también formamos parte” (861). She destabilizes the notion of a single place, time, or (empty) space from which writing univocally emerges, emphasizing the warp and weft of voices (the “urdimbre”) as what underwrites a single voice, a poetics that Cárcamo-Huechante has also located in his own listening to the writings of Lienlaf: “His poetic journey transits through a heterogeneous territory of voices, sounds, and

images attached to the land, where whispers, creams, creaks, applause, sobs, groans, silences and noise happen and flow from the earth-tongue” (109). The “acoustic ecology” that is released in the cut is polyphonous, cacophonous, multivocal, and inconclusive, refusing to suture or memorialize the wounds of the past but rather flowing from the wound itself, as another philosophy of absence. This is in part why Catrileo’s essay about the disruptive and world-destroying possibility of a “Mapuche” literature, as well as the impossibility of uniting the heterogeneity of Mapuche poetic and cultural production (Mora Curriao 330), closes with a quote from one of her central interlocutors, Liliana Ancalao: “¡Ay de nosotros Ahora que los ríos nos están mirando para ver cómo los traducimos en palabras!” (*Resuello* 60).

To translate the un-silent river in all of its untranslatability, to witness the warp and weft of submerged voices that express themselves outside of normative modes of speaking and sounding, is not only to listen to the voices within writing but to listen to the writing, and writing’s silences and spaces, that exist in the poetic voice itself. In a poem in a recent bilingual collection, *Guerra florida / Rayülechi malon*, Catrileo writes of the original moment of Spanish conquest: “Esto era lo que llamaron Conquista / una colisión de fantasmas / intentando sobrevivir” (122). In a palimpsestic, haunted writing and listening practice, Catrileo refuses to banish the ghosts of the past: their silences—or what was attempted to be erased as past or nonexistent—remain in the present, undoing the linearity of time through a “double gaze” while refusing to make experiences of colonial erasure entirely legible or transparent to a Western eye or ear. In another fragment, she writes:

Le explico al dios
con rostro de pájara
que no tengo nada adentro
que es fantasía de creadora
que en mí no puede nacer nadie
porque nada sobrevive. (*Guerra florida* 154)

Guerra florida thematizes the absent origin through the absent womb and mother, an important subject beyond the scope of this essay. If we listen to Catrileo reading in a recent recording, however, we hear voice slow to emphasize the last line, “porque nada sobrevive,” and a brief inhale resounds between “nada” and “sobrevive,” where what (and who) has been negated rejects the circumstances of their own erasure through the living breath (“From Guerilla Blooms”). As I have shown in this article, while centuries of colonization and settler colonialism have attempted to negate Mapuche life and language, what has been negated still survives, comes back, returns, breathes, and creates poetry from all the echoes of presence and past that resound, even in moments of silence. To do so is to overturn and experiment with the binary between silence and voice, between presence and absence, between the word and its surrounding space: a (poetic) form of endless reckoning with the resonances of the past in the present, leaving space for the untimely futures to come.

NOTES

¹For a multifaceted notion of the role of voice and speech in Mapuche cosmology and storytelling, see Canio Llanquinao and Pozo Menares 125.

²The negotiation between Indigenous languages and Spanish, and the ways in which it scrambles linear temporality and stages creative modes of experimenting with Indigenous languages such as Maya, Zapotec, Nahuatl, and others, under duress and erasure, is highlighted in numerous scholarly texts. See Keme, *Le Maya Q'atzij/Our Maya Word: Poetics of Resistance in Guatemala*; Worley and Palacios, *Unwriting Maya Literature*; Lepe Lira, *Lluvia y viento, puentes de sonido*, among countless others.

³I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this important insight into the presence of Mapudungun in "esta voz."

⁴The centrality of birds in Mapuche literature and cosmology is of particular significance in the work of poets such as Lorenzo Aillapán. See Aillapán, *Hombre pájaro*. Additionally, see Canio Llanquinao and Pozo Menares 95-97 for their astronomical and cosmological significance.

⁵I would like to emphasize that *Orality* is part of a transhemispheric Indigenous movement that emphasizes the multiple crossings between orality and writing, and rejects Western frameworks of literacy that place "orality" as inevitably prior to or less than writing. Yanakona writer Fredy Chikangana is also a central part of this dialogue and the articulation of the concept. For more context surrounding this term and its corresponding dialogues and events, see Stocco 714, Brígido-Corachán and Domínguez 81-85, and Mora Curriao 328-330.

⁶I do not want to lose sight of the significance of these specific histories of language loss and dispossession in the context of the silencing of Mapudungun in the Argentine and Chilean education systems. Edith Adams argues that this makes the question of self-translation a particularly resonant one: "To translate, and specifically to self-translate," she writes, "is to free the ghosts buried in one's own mouth" (16).

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