

**“Indio No Estandarizado”<sup>1</sup>:**  
**Countering State Discourses of Indigeneity through Poetry Online<sup>2</sup>**

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**Abstract:** Mapuche poetry has become increasingly popular in Chile. However, the government primarily promotes those Mapuche poets whose vision of Mapuche identity is in line with its own views. How much scope does Mapuche poetry online offer for articulating and visualising counterhegemonic discourses on Mapuche identity? By examining Mapuche poetry videos on the Mapuche YouTube channel “Wetruwe Mapuche” and an extract from a government TV debate on Mapuche identity on YouTube, this article assesses whether the internet is an effective tool to disseminate counter-hegemonic views or whether the internet perpetuates the same power hierarchies that exist in the offline world.

**Keywords:** Mapuche poetry, YouTube, dissent, Anifñir, Manquepillan

**Resumen:** La poesía mapuche es cada vez más exitosa en Chile. Sin embargo, el gobierno suele fomentar en primer lugar los poetas mapuche cuya representación de la identidad mapuche es acorde con la suya. ¿Cuánto impacto tiene la poesía mapuche en línea en la articulación y visibilización de discursos no hegemónico <sup>145</sup> identidad mapuche? En este estudio se examinan vídeos de poesía mapuche en el canal de YouTube mapuche “Wetruwe Mapuche”, y videos del gobierno sobre la identidad mapuche, para evaluar si el internet es una herramienta eficaz para difundir visiones contrahegemónicas, o si existen las mismas jerarquías de poder que se encuentran en el mundo *offline*.

**Palavras clave:** poesía mapuche, YouTube, disidencia, Anifñir, Manquepillan

When considering the legal conventions for the Mapuche in Chile, it seems that their situation has improved. In 2007 and 2008 Chile accepted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the ILO Convention 169, which recognises many indigenous rights (see Richards, “Of Indians” 2010: 71). The rising popularity of Mapuche poetry appears to mirror this growing legal acceptance, but a closer look reveals unequal dependencies. For purposes of publication Mapuche poets often depend on state structures such as state-owned publishing houses or national literature awards (see Huenún 2007: 16). In this process, Mapuche poets that conform to a certain vision of indigeneity are favoured over more critical voices (see Crow, “Mapuche Poetry” 2008: 223). This invites the question whether there are forms of publishing counterhegemonic Mapuche poetry which are independent of state structures and thus allow for a more nuanced portrayal.

For Manuel Castells “mass self-communication provides the technological platform for the construction of the autonomy of the social actor [...] vis-à-vis the institutions” (2012: 7). In Latin America these means of mass self-communication, that is social media, are particularly popular. A survey in 2016 showed that among internet users worldwide, Latin Americans spent more of their online time on social media than internet users in any other continent (see eMarketer Inc.). Chile has “one of the highest internet penetration rates” amongst Latin American countries (Andrews/Steckman 2017: 41). In 2016, 78% of the Chilean population were using the internet; social media sites were among the most visited websites (ibid. 42). In view of its wide reach, social media seems the ideal place for Mapuche poets to circulate their vision of Mapuche identity free from state scrutiny. However, more recent studies question whether the notions of autonomy and freedom the internet once promised have become compromised. Internet corporations increasingly collaborate with states who act as gatekeepers to online spaces (see Schneider 2015: 192). Even if Mapuche poets pass these gates unhindered, the impact of their work may be reduced by other mechanisms such as “echo chambers” (Kahne et al. 2015: 51). The term describes a phenomenon according to which people mainly attend to like-minded and familiar opinions and narratives when online. Mapuche poets would therefore risk only reaching an audience that is already interested in their work. The political philosopher Danielle Allen has developed a framework to assess different levels of discursive impact in the context of the

digital age. She distinguishes between “influential” and “expressive” discourse (2015: 178). While “influential” discourse “flows through decision-making structures” and impacts “the decision-making mechanisms that define the lives of entire polities” (ibid. 178), “expressive” discourse “circulates within subnational and transnational communities” (ibid. 179). It therefore has a “more limited impact on particular communities of expression” (ibid. 178).

In this article I will compare governmental and counterhegemonic discourses of Mapuche identity on YouTube. I focus on YouTube because its popularity suggests that it is a powerful platform for influencing public opinion. Videos of the Mapuche poets David Aníñir and Faumelisa Manquepillan performing their poetry will be examples of counterhegemonic discourse. A video of a TV show with the former and current Chilean president Sebastián Piñera will serve as an example of governmental discourse. By choosing these videos for comparison, I am comparing two different types of discourse. Piñera’s video falls into the category of political discourse. I adopt Fairclough’s and Fairclough’s understanding of political discourse as “a form of argumentation ... for or against particular ways of acting, argumentation that can ground decision (2012: 12). In contrast, poetic discourse is often associated with the artistic expression of “feeling, emotion, attitude” (Hungerland, 1977 [1958]: 1). However, I agree with Hungerland that this association is not always useful as poetry can be highly political, as my analysis will demonstrate (ibid. 12). Moreover, the YouTube videos represent different genres; one is part of a TV debate and the others are poetry videos. Nonetheless, all have the same objective of convincing the reader of their vision of Mapuche identity. Given this shared aim and the shared space the authors pursue their aim in, i.e. YouTube, a comparison of these videos shall provide valuable insights.

The analysis will be carried out in two steps. Firstly, I will analyse how Piñera, Aníñir, and Manquepillan try to influence the viewer’s perception of the Mapuche, both discursively and visually, by using the medium of the video. Secondly, I will examine how successfully they utilize YouTube to circulate their message. By analysing and comparing each portrayal’s potential for influencing the viewer, I will be able to assess whether YouTube is a useful platform to oppose state discourse or whether it merely perpetuates the power dynamics of the offline world. The use of Allen’s categories of discourse for this analysis will allow me to

simultaneously assess her theory's applicability for determining the influence of online discourse.

As the two main themes of the article, "identity" and "influence", are contested concepts, I will define how I use them here. I understand "identity" as a collective of "markers that delineate group membership", more specifically Mapuche group membership (Edwards 2009: 16). As such, the word can and will be used interchangeably with the term "Mapuche-ness" as coined by Joanna Crow ("Mapuche Poetry" 2008: 223). I use "influence" to describe "The capacity to have an effect on the [...] behaviour of someone" (Oxford Dictionaries). I adopt two elements of the work on social influence by psychologist Herbert Kelman to describe different reactions to influence. While some forms of influence lead to a recipient's "compliance", which is "a superficial change" the recipient adopts to gain approval or avoid punishment, other forms of influence lead to "internalization", which is "a lasting change in attitude and belief [...] integrated into the person's value system" (Kelman 1958: 51ff.).

### **State Discourses on the Mapuche**

The Mapuche are one of the only indigenous peoples who defeated the Spanish conquerors (see Crow, *The Mapuche* 2013: 10). However, since their violent inclusion into the Chilean nation-state in 1869, the Chilean government has been trying to tame their spirit of resistance by forcing them to perform Mapuche identity a certain way (see Richards, *Pobladoras* 2004: 127). Sarah D. Warren goes as far as saying that Mapuche identity has come "under siege" by state policies (ibid. 695). In post-dictatorship Chile the government has implemented a policy of neoliberal multiculturalism (see Richards, "Of Indians" 2010: 62ff.). Initially, the concept promises the coexistence of multiple cultures. But as Hale has analysed, in the context of neoliberal multiculturalism Mapuche identity is limited to the "indio permitido" (Hale 2004: 16). It is a socio-political category which describes the mechanisms by which the government rewards Mapuche that behave a certain way, while punishing deviant behaviour (ibid. 16). Those Mapuche who collaborate with state agencies perform the "indio permitido" by being "fully conversant with the dominant milieu" (ibid. 20). However, the laws put in place over the past decades do not address all Mapuche

concerns such as the redistribution of land or demands for autonomy (see Richards, *Pobladoras* 2004: 129f.). Moreover, they do not foresee any structures for the Mapuche to make demands on the state. Therefore, those who disagree with state policies often turn to direct action, which can range from “land occupations to the destruction of plantations and forestry equipment” (Warren 2017: 700). For the state they become the *indio permitido*’s “undeserving, dysfunctional Other” who “is unruly, vindictive and conflict prone” (Hale 2004: 20).

The party programme of the recently elected Chilean president Sebastián Piñera suggests that his government will continue to divide the Mapuche into “indios permitidos” and their Other. While the programme recognises “en los pueblos indígenas un elemento relevante de [...] nuestra identidad” (Piñera 2017: 122), it defines the terms on which the Mapuche can be part of the national identity very narrowly. It promises to work towards the constitutional recognition of indigenous people and promote indigenous culture (ibid. 123ff.). In exchange it wants to create “emprendedores indígenas” (ibid. 124) who become productive members of the neoliberal nation-state. Anyone who does not conform to these aims is reminded that the government will continue “aplicando todo el rigor de la ley a quienes no respeten el Estado de derecho” (ibid. 125). This section alludes to the controversial antiterrorist law from the Pinochet dictatorship that Chilean democratic governments primarily use to punish direct action by the Mapuche (see Warren 2017: 700; Richards/Gardner 2013: 265).

The YouTube video of Piñera also creates a dichotomy between the good and the terrorist Mapuche. On 13 June 2017 Piñera appeared on the programme “Aquí Está Chile” by Chilevisión and CNN Chile. During the show Piñera answered questions posed by selected members of the live audience. On 15 June 2017 a twenty-minute clip of the interaction between Piñera and a member of the audience, the Mapuche leader Juan Pichún, was uploaded on the YouTube channel “Política Chile” (Política Chile). In the video Piñera uses specific rhetorical devices to assert his authority as an expert on the Mapuche: “el pueblo Mapuche, yo lo conozco bien, es un pueblo trabajador, es un pueblo que quiere vivir en paz, es un pueblo emprendedor, no es un pueblo violento, ni mucho menos un pueblo terrorista”. The enumeration combined with the parallel structure “es un [...] es un [...]”

converts his statement into a stream which is difficult to interrupt. The viewer can only listen while absorbing the message further with each repetition. Piñera resorts to the same mechanism to show the Mapuche's subordinate position when collaborating with companies in the context of the government's development projects. While the Mapuche provide "la tierra, [...] y ponían cierto trabajo", "los otros ponían tecnología, ponían insumo, ponían recursos, ponían acceso a los mercados". He suggests that the Mapuche should be grateful to the government because they receive so much for the little they give. The contrast between "tierra" and "tecnología" also highlights the Mapuche's supposed backwardness.

Any Mapuche who is not content with the government's proposal and demands more political rights becomes the dysfunctional Other and will be contained, as any Chilean would be, by 'la ley antiterrorista cuando corresponde'. To justify the law, Piñera describes terrorism as 'un enemigo formidable, cruel, implacable que mata ..., que quema iglesias ... que quema maquinarias, que quema cosechas, que quema camiones'. While he does not mention the Mapuche directly, he implicitly links them to terrorism by describing crimes that Mapuche have been accused of in order to define terrorism. By personifying terrorism, it appears even more dangerous. While the parallel, alliterative structure of 'que quema... que quema...' makes terrorism seem like an unstoppable force, it converts Piñera into an uninterruptable speaker. His emphasis on terrorism feeds into a wider narrative of the Mapuche as terrorists in mainstream media (Warren: 700).

The video's title emphasises the opposition between the government and the Mapuche even more: "Sebastián Piñera vs Lonko Mapuche: 'Más Respeto con los Carabineros'". The abbreviation "vs" establishes Piñera and the Mapuche as opponents. A split screen reinforces this image because it visually opposes them. However, it is not an opposition among equals. Pichún's name is not included in the video's title. Unnamed, he becomes an exchangeable symbol representative of all Mapuche. During the clip Pichún only speaks once. He expresses his concern regarding the government's plan to militarize his region and demands an open dialogue to resolve the conflict. Rather than engaging with him, the presidential candidate follows Pichún's explanation with the words "Yo recuerdo muy bien" and then repeats what Pichún has just explained. Pichún is not allowed to intervene again. Instead, the dialogue unfolds between Piñera and the non-Mapuche

anchor-man. This instance shows that “discourse is organised along lines of *power* [...]; [and] *status*, as elites [...] seek to retain their privilege to define issues and solutions” (Hauser 1999: 58, emphasis in the original). Entering into a dialogue and admitting that there are different viewpoints would undermine Piñera’s solution to form a unified nation. He determines: “somos un solo país y somos todos chilenos”. While the camera captures Pichún’s disapproving facial expression during this claim, it does not reproduce the words he seems to mouth in this moment: “Yo soy Mapuche”. Piñera tells the listener who the Mapuche are, regardless of whether they agree. His discourse confirms what some scholars, following Foucault, have argued, namely that neoliberal multiculturalism “represents a new form of governmentality involving the subjectification of a new type of citizen” (Richards, “Of Indians” 2010: 60). One mechanism of fashioning this new type of citizen is through discourse, as it feeds into “opinion formation, subjectivity formation, identity formation [...] and intersubjective understandings amongst individuals” (Allen 2015: 185).

The government controls this opinion formation not only by disseminating their own discourse but also by policing the citizens’ discourse. At the beginning of the clip, Piñera scolds Pichún for having used the derogative term “paco” when referring to the military police: “Ahora yo hablo de carabineros [...] y no hablo de paco porque esto es [...] muy agresivo”. Piñera silences his critique in a highly infantilising way, speaking to him as if he was a misbehaving child, or in this case, a not yet fully formed citizen. This treatment extends to the viewer as Piñera’s dogmatic discourse does not engage him either.

### **Counterhegemonic Mapuche Poetry on YouTube**

Mapuche poetry also reflects the “indio permitido” dichotomy (see Crow, “Mapuche Poetry” 2008: 222). It has been defined as “una poesía que privilegia temas [...] surgidas del inevitable y friccionado contacto que las sociedades Mapuche, criolla y europea colonizadora han mantenido” (Huenún 2007: 15). However, the Mapuche poetry which is most popular consists of “bilingual verse that re-projects a glorious Mapuche past and a utopian rural community” (Crow, “Mapuche Poetry” 2008: 223), instead of frictions. It is in line with governmental discourse. In the Piñera video the candidate repeatedly emphasises and romanticises the Mapuche’s relationship with nature: “el pueblo Mapuche tiene una

ligazón muy fuerte con la tierra [...] que es ancestral". Poetry which reflects this relationship is considered marketable and therefore widely circulated and promoted. But state sanction also has disadvantages. The focus on marketable indigeneity means that Mapuche poetry is often judged by how stereotypically Mapuche it is. Some critics lament that Mapuche poetry is delivered in written form rather than orally, and in Spanish rather than Mapudungun, the Mapuche language, because it seems "anti-indigenous" (Crow, "Mapuche Poetry" 2008: 228). Moreover, politicians quote Mapuche poets "as an alibi against ethnic and racial discrimination in Chile" (ibid. 222). At times they misquote them, thus obscuring notions of criticism or resistance in the poems.

The "iniciativa autónoma y autogestionada" Wetruwe Mapuche provides a platform for artistic, counterhegemonic Mapuche voices (Mapuexpress). According to their Facebook page, Wetruwe Mapuche is a "medio audiovisual Mapuche que trabaja en la difusión y promoción de la poesía y música Mapuche" (Wetruwe Mapuche, "About"). They organise events such as a "La música es resistencia", a festival which took place in Temuco and Santiago, but are mainly active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr and YouTube (see Mapuexpress). Their YouTube channel was created on 11 June 2011. They use it to promote Mapuche art by uploading videos of Mapuche music or poetry performances.

One of the poets represented on the channel is David Aníñir. Some of his work has been published by publishing houses, but he has also distributed his work on leaflets and the Internet (see Crow, "Mapuche Poetry" 2008: 197). His support for Mapuche activists might be one of the reasons why he remains on the margins of the national poetry canon (ibid. 199). In the YouTube video 'DAVID ANIÑIR GUILTRARO – POEMA I.N.E (INDIO NO ESTANDARIZADO) – (WETRUWE MAPUCHE) (Wetruwe Mapuche, "DAVID", emphasis in the original) he opposes the government's portrayal of Mapuche identity. The poem Aníñir reads out in the video ridicules the government's bureaucratic language and problematizes its attempts to categorise the Mapuche. This becomes already apparent in the title. The acronym INE stand for the Institution Nacional de Estadísticas (INE) in Chile. However, Aníñir reappropriates the acronym in the title by suggesting that it means Indio No Estandarizado, thus subverting institutional discourse. The rest of the poem continues to present a tension between institutional discourse and Aníñir's expression of Mapuche-ness. The first line is



phrased as a question on the national census form: "Usted se considera". The poet then presents a list of adjectives as if they were multiple-choice answers to the question. The nature of the adjectives clashes with the formality of the census. One group of adjectives consists of insults that are usually directed at the Mapuche: "Flojo / Hediondo / Borracho". Some of them present a play on words that challenges those insults which depict indigenous people as stupid. For one of the options, Aníñir has changed the word "homo sapiens", the Latin description for "wise man", to "mono sapiens". "Mono" can mean "monkey" or "overall", alluding to construction workers. Both associations question the Mapuche's intellect. However, the pun based on the Latin definition for human being shows that the insult underestimates the Mapuche's creative and intellectual potential. Moreover, Aníñir ridicules supposedly politically correct adjectives. By placing certain adjectives next to each other, the poet reveals the harmful potential of their apparent neutrality: "Precolombino / Post Punx Rocker". The alliteration connects these two lines. "Precolombino" appears to innocently describe the Mapuche as a people that had already lived in Chile before Columbus's arrival. However, the fact that the subsequent description "Post Punx Rocker" seems out of place, emphasises that the Mapuche are often associated with the past instead of with modernity.

The poem's message is strengthened by the way it is embedded in the video. Before reading the poem, Aníñir introduces the text: "Tiene que ver con el contexto de cómo nos contaron con los dedos, con las balas y con el lápiz, el instituto nacional de estadísticas". The contextualization by the poet leaves less room for co-option. The use of the word "balas" denounces the violence directed against the Mapuche. By equalling "lápiz" to "balas" in the enumeration, he implies that this violence is continued by the National Institute for Statistics. At the same time, his poem shows how words can be used to disarm institutional discourse. His voice increases in velocity as he reads out the long list of adjectives used to define the Mapuche. He sounds increasingly enraged, shouting at the viewer who is placed in the position of the Mapuche who have been called these names. This is where the potential for change through poetry lies: "The social power of activist artists emanates from their ability to provoke movement constituents and other publics to see, think, imagine, and even feel in meaningfully new ways" (McCaughan 2012: 6). The audience's reactions

embody this effect. While the camera focuses on Aniñir, one can hear the audience clapping, laughing and shouting in response to the poem. The fact that Aniñir wears a denim jacket and speaks into a microphone further contradicts notions of backwardness inherent in the insults. Aniñir challenges governmental discourse both through the poem and its delivery.

In the video entitled “David Aniñir Guilitraro - Perimontú - (Video Oficial) - (Wetruwe Mapuche)” (Wetruwe Mapuche, “David”) Aniñir destabilises fixed images of the Mapuche by linking urban culture to indigeneity. In Chile over 60 percent of the indigenous population lives in urban areas (see Richards, *Pobladoras* 2004: 127). Nonetheless, the Mapuche are still strongly associated with nature, as Piñera’s discourse demonstrates. In the poem “Perimontú”, which serves as the voice-over for the video, Aniñir creates a counter-vision of Mapuche identity through language. He forms neologisms of the word-stem “ma” of Mapuche and supposedly non-indigenous words such as “punky” or “urbe”, resulting in “mapunky” or “mapurbe”. While he uses natural imagery when describing how the girl in the poem dances “al son del sol/en clave de luna/ en llave de estrellas”, he also introduces English words such as “hardcore”, “power metal” and “mosh”. He calls her a “mapuche 2.0”. In the video she breaks out of the natural imaginary space that governmental discourse affords her.

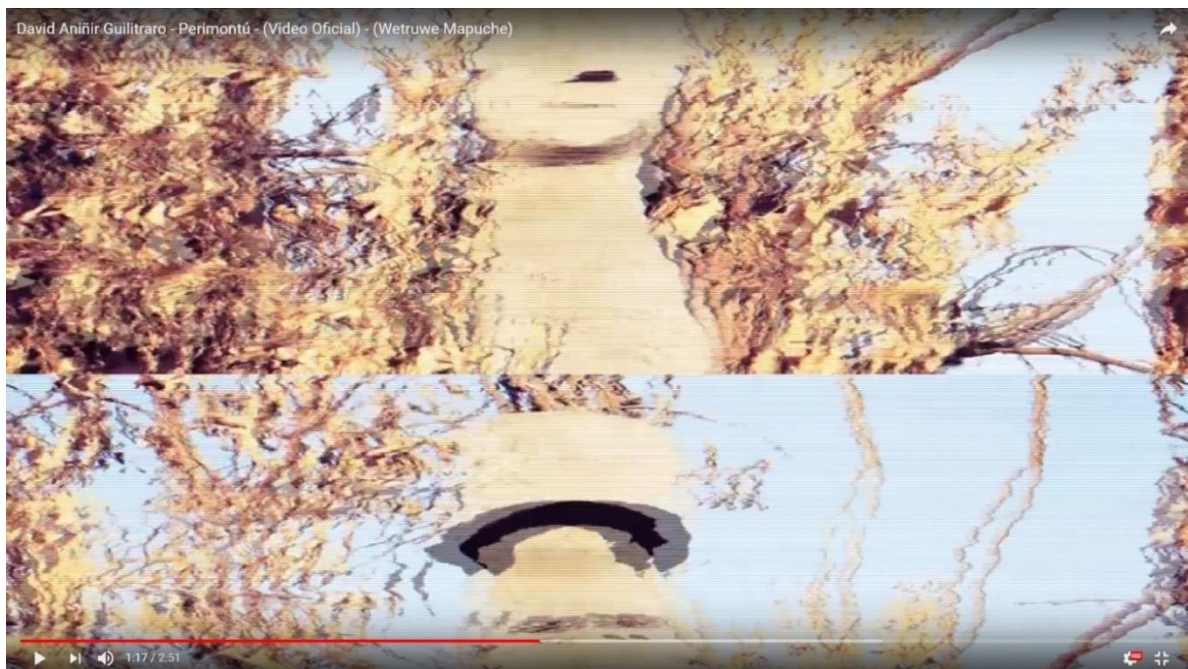


Fig. 1 Screenshot taken from Wetruwe Mapuche. “David Aniñir Guilitraro - Perimontú - (Video Oficial) – (Wetruwe Mapuche)”, *YouTube*, uploaded by Wetruwe Mapuche, 14 July 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfPzB5rIWK0>. Accessed 22 Mar. 2018

The video’s aesthetics further destabilise traditional imagery. The camera follows the female “machi” described in the poem. While traditionally a “machi” is a healer who mediates between humans and the world of spirits, in the context of the poem the girl becomes a mediator between natural and urban surroundings (see García 2012: 56f.). Images of the girl in nature rapidly alternate with images of pylons and neon-signs in the city.

At one point she presses her lips against a tree, only to draw on a cigarette in the next. This unconventional portrayal is emphasized by rapid camera movements that disorientate the viewer (see fig. 1). Bundles of leaves swish in front of the camera lens. It seems as if the video cannot be contained in its frame and attempts to shake off the preconceptions the viewer might have. This sensation is intensified by the heavy metal guitar music accompanying the video. The viewer is made to experience the same disorientation a Mapuche might feel, when trying to reconcile his sense of identity in an urban environment with what has been presented to him by the state.

The video “FAUMELISA MANQUEPILLAN – POEMA LA MATERIA – (WETRUWE MAPUCHE)” (Wetruwe Mapuche, “FAUMELISA”, emphasis in the original) opens with a more conventional scene. The poet is standing on a stage singing in Mapudungun, thus conforming to the canonized vision of Mapuche poetry. Manquepillan is closer associated with the government than Aníñir. Her work has been funded by government agencies and she has attended events with former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet (see Falabella et al. 2009: 105). However, after a rather traditional opening, she reads the poem “La Materia” which presents a very visceral relationship with nature and thus contradicts the romanticised relationship presented by Piñera. She re-formulates Mapuche identity by describing the fusion of her body with nature in morbid terms. Her body is “frío” as “se sumerja entre los makis” and the “olor putefacto” of her “visceras” is meant to attract birds. Instead of relying on Mother Earth, the body becomes nutrition for nature: “Dejo que mi boca y mi nariz sean alimento y cuna de moscas y sus larvas”. Manquepillan’s case shows how “many Mapuche intellectual-activists shift between two different ways of ‘being Indian’ or play both roles at the same time” (Crow, *The Mapuche* 2013: 187). On one hand, Manquepillan has collaborated with the government to publish her work and is proud of this collaboration (see

Falabella et al. 2009: 105). On the other hand, the video of her poem becomes subversive in the context of the *Wetruwe Mapuche* channel, where it undermines the romanticisation of the Mapuche's connection to nature.

In the video “Faumelisa Manquepillan - Poema: Paseo Ahumada - (Wetruwe Mapuche)” (*Wetruwe Mapuche*, “Faumelisa”), the poet presents the Mapuche urban experience very differently from Aníñir. The poem describes a woman who does not claim city space for herself but feels as if she is held hostage there. This is expressed by words that demonstrate fear such as “se asustaba” and “atrapada”. These are coupled with expressions of submissiveness. She walks “cabizbaja [...] un ruego en la boca [...] ‘Ayúdenme a salir’”. This submissive, imploring attitude is embodied by the rhyme scheme of the poem, which is written in rhyming couplets as if no line dares to end differently from the previous one. The “Paseo Ahumada”, of which Manquepillan writes, is one of the main boulevards in Santiago de Chile. It could be seen as a symbol of the neoliberal economic system, which does not provide a way of comfortably accommodating Mapuche people in the urban setting except in positions of economic dependency, for example working as a maid, as the poetic voice describes. In such a hostile environment it is not surprising that the poetic voice is eager to return south “soñando su tierra siempre esperanzada”. In both videos it is the calmness with which Manquepillan presents her alternative vision of Mapuche identity that is striking. Her behaviour stands in stark contrast to the Mapuche as terrorist as depicted by Piñera. At the end of the video, she looks at the camera, as if awaiting a response from the viewer, ready to engage in meaningful dialogue.

### **The World Wide Web: fighting with a two-edged sword**

All speakers analysed in this article use the format of the video to strengthen the delivery of their message. But how effectively can they each use YouTube to promote their video? YouTube is a video sharing website which was launched in 2005 and became part of Google Inc. in 2006. It is famous for its user-generated videos (see Schneider 2015: 229). In 2016 it was the most visited website in Chile (see Andrews and Steckman 2017: 42). Today, states and Internet corporations increasingly collaborate for purposes of surveillance, which infringes activist mobilisation and communication online (see Schneider 2015: 192ff.),

thereby creating an “unequal power field” (Trottier and Fuchs 2015: 34). By using YouTube, Wetruwe Mapuche opens itself up to this unequal power dynamic. While the Mapuche videos oppose the government’s portrayal of Mapuche-ness, the government could still co-opt them. By using YouTube, the Mapuche poets become “emprendedores indígenas” (Piñera 2017: 124); they support YouTube as a corporation by sharing their content for free, thus contributing to the neoliberal system. They could therefore be portrayed as a testament to the success of governmental programmes aimed at closing the digital divide in the country (see Andrews and Steckman 2017: 42).

The videos’ viewer numbers further emphasize this unequal power dynamic. Viewer numbers are displayed beneath each YouTube video. While the Piñera video has been viewed more than 500,000 times, the poetry video that has been viewed most of those compared in this article has had 6,373 views (21 March 2018). The Piñera video is therefore more “viral”, which means that it reaches a large audience and spreads quickly (see Fung/Shkabatur 2015: 155). When considering virality only, the videos fit Allen’s categories of “influential” discourse, in the case of Piñera, and “expressive” discourse, in the case of Wetruwe Mapuche. However, Allen’s definition of “influential” discourse does not consider the quality of influence exerted by the videos. Viewer numbers do not reflect to what extent the videos influence the viewers’ beliefs, especially because viewer numbers can increase for different reasons. Firstly, YouTube views can be bought to exaggerate the image of a candidate’s popularity (see Welbourne/ Grant 2016: 709). Secondly, recent empirical research by the scholar Zeynep Tufekci suggests that YouTube’s algorithm, which recommends further videos to viewers who have finished watching one YouTube video, has a bias towards videos that contain inflammatory content (see Tufekci 2018). The Piñera video might have more views, because its provocative title makes it more likely to be recommended to users. Finally, clicks do not always turn into action. The slacktivism hypothesis claims that the use of social media leads to superficial political conversations and is ultimately counterproductive to civic engagement (see Howard et al. 2016: 55f.). And it is questionable whether the Piñera video wants viewers to engage, considering that Piñera’s last “campaña digital representó mucho más una herramienta de branding que una de participación política” (Cárdenas *et al.* 2017: 26). This attitude towards social media is

reflected in the president's dogmatic discourse in the video which does not invite participation on behalf of the viewer. It therefore is more likely to achieve "compliance" rather than the "internalization" of its message amongst its viewers.

The slacktivism hypothesis could also be applicable to the *Wetruwe Mapuche* videos. But although *Wetruwe Mapuche* uses YouTube, it does so to subvert the governmental vision of Mapuche identity, thus engaging with technology on its own terms, which makes the *Wetruwe Mapuche* videos into a meaningful political gesture regardless of their reception. This feeds into a broader Mapuche desire to enact technological uptake free from patterns of digital adoption imposed on them by external powers: a project by Microsoft to launch a Windows Software package in Mapudungun was criticised by the Mapuche because they had not been consulted in the process (see Pitman and Taylor 2007: 9). Although the videos' viewer numbers are low, and they are tailored to the Mapuche as a subnational interest group, which qualifies them as "expressive" discourse, the use of poetry enables them to deeply engage the viewers that do watch their clips, thus initiating a process of "internalization". The literary scholar Hubert Zapf considers literature a "transformative force of language and discourse, which combines civilizational critique with cultural self-renewal" (2016: 4). Instead of presenting a solidified counter-model of Mapuche-ness, the *Wetruwe* channel shows diverse images of Mapuche identity, thus not only defying the government's specific portrayal, but also its broader underlying approach of homogenization and categorisation. Consequently, the viewer cannot adopt an alternative vision of Mapuche identity but has to think for himself about what being Mapuche means; this is when the transformation of the viewers' perception begins. There are examples of how Mapuche poetry has already initiated cultural self-renewal online. Aníñir's work has inspired the creation of "Mapurbe'zine" by Mapuche in Argentina; an online newsletter that aims at opening "un debate [...] a partir del interrogante 'general': ¿qué es ser Mapuche hoy?" (Balleta/Venturoli 2016: 64). In 2017 Aníñir performed his poem "I.N.E (Indio No Estandarizado)" at an event at the Universidad de Chile which included Mapuche and non-Mapuche attendants and was aimed at stimulating "reflexiones que necesitamos para tratar de construir [...] una sociedad diferente" (Ibáñez 2017). The broad impact of Mapuche poetry invites a revision of Allen's distinction between "influential" and "expressive"

discourses. While Allen focuses on the width of influence, the poetry videos draw attention to the depth of influence. Although the Mapuche videos could be described as "expressive" discourse, circulating within "subnational and transnational communities" (ibid. 179), they deeply influence its recipients and invite both Mapuche and non-Mapuche, Chileans and non-Chileans to rethink society as a whole, using Mapuche-ness as a point of departure.

## Conclusion

The analysis has shown that the Wetruwe Mapuche YouTube channel provides a space where Mapuche poets can present diverse images of Mapuche-ness that differ from governmental discourse. While the government cannot silence these critical voices as easily as in the offline world, it uses YouTube to communicate its own vision of Mapuche-ness, which it clearly divides between the good and the terrorist Mapuche. All videos display a series of rhetorical and visual devices to influence the viewers' image of the Mapuche and they all compete for the viewers' attention. The Piñera video is more viral and therefore seems more "influential". However, the different degrees of involvement that are expected of the viewer call for a more nuanced understanding of influence in the online world. Due to its dogmatic style, the Piñera video aims at the viewers' "compliance" with and passive acceptance of its message. In contrast, the Wetruwe Mapuche videos' complexity requires the viewer's active participation to be fully understood. The scholars Gruzd and Wellman note that "in a networked society it is easy to claim influence, but not as easy to exercise influence" (2014: 1252). My analysis reveals that, in addition to their claim, it is important to consider that those who do exercise mind-changing influence might be those that appear less "influential" because the depth of the online material required to produce a profound change in attitude does not lend itself to viral consumption. We should therefore revise the connection drawn so naturally between virality and influence. It would be very useful to develop tools and apply frameworks that can measure and evaluate the quality of engagement when considering influence on social media. Such a critical mindset towards online influence is particularly useful in view of the rising number of politicians in Latin America who artificially inflate their social media following to appear more popular and influential (see Filer/Fredheim 2017). On the basis of such a framework, we could justify

awarding the word “influence” more sparingly to these politicians to prevent them from obtaining actual, political influence and power by winning elections based on a seemingly influential online appearance rather than profound policy proposals.

## NOTAS

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<sup>1</sup> Capitalization taken from Ibáñez, María Jesús. Ad Mapu Constituyente: la crítica intervención del poeta David Aníñir - Universidad de Chile. 13 Oct. 2017, <http://www.uchile.cl/noticias/137853/ad-mapu-constituyente-critica-intervencion-de-david-aninir>. Accessed 22 Mar. 2018.

<sup>2</sup> I use the expression “poetry online” rather than “online poetry” to emphasise that the poetry analysed in this article first appeared in print literature and was then digitized, rather than being “digital born” (Hayles 2008: 3).



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