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Shamans' Pragmatic Gendered Negotiations with Mapuche Resistance Movements and Chilean Political Authorities

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In this article, I look at the ways in which gendered national discourses and the discourses of Mapuche resistance movements coerce and construct shamans (machi) and the ways in which machi appropriate, transform, and contest these images. I explore the contradictions between machi's hybrid practices and their traditional representations of self and why they choose to represent themselves as they do. My interest lies in the ways in which studying gendered representations by and about machi, especially machi's nonideological political practices, can contribute to current discussions of power and resistance, agency and structure, and the practice of power itself. Recent anthropological work has focused on the particular historical, social, political, and economic contexts shaping how and why indigenous groups decide to protect and promote particular images of themselves. I focus not on the community politics in which machi are involved, but on machi's public faces in relation to national political figures and Mapuche political leaders such as longko.

Key Words: Mapuche, shaman, Chile, resistance, state, gender

Machi María Angela smiled straight at the camera and beat on her shamanic drum as she posed for photographers beside Chilean president Eduardo Frei at the presidential palace on 5 August 1999. María Angela wore the festive garb of Mapuche shamans, or *machi*: heavy silver jewelry, a black wool shawl, a blue apron with lace, and multicolored head ribbons tied in a rosette on her forehead. Frei performed Mapuche traditions by holding a branch of the sacred *foye* (*Drymis winteri*) tree and drinking *muday*, a beverage made from fermented maize. He recognized the ethnic dimension of Mapuche problems and promised to “construct a democratic coexistence based on respect and equal opportunities for original ethnicities” (*Las Ultimas Noticias*, 6 August 1999b). A few journalists asked the male Mapuche community chiefs, or *longko*, who were present how they viewed the encounter. But the machi—women and a few partially transvestite



FIGURE 1 President Frei and his minister of the interior stand for the national anthem with foye leaves in their hands at the presidential palace while female machi and other Mapuche women sit in the background with their drums. Photograph by the Consorcio Periodístico de Chile.

men—were never interviewed. When the *longko* spoke, the machi legitimated them by beating their drums in the background.

Outside the presidential palace, other machi drummed to express support for Mapuche resistance movements that were attempting to retake Mapuche land from forestry companies, private energy companies, and state highway authorities. They also backed a request for the suspension of Frei's martial law in Mapuche communities and the release of Mapuche political prisoners.¹ Most Mapuche, including machi, were aware of the contradiction between Frei's public pro-indigenous performances and his government's neoliberal policies. Mapuche protest groups created a pamphlet featuring a much-publicized photograph of Frei drinking *muday* with machi, over the ironic caption "Cuanto Vale el Show?" (How much is the show worth?). Chilean democratic presidents since 1990 have used machi in their political campaigns to present themselves as pluralistic. Yet they perpetuate national gender ideologies and the neoliberal policies instituted under the military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet (1973–1989), even while instituting new forms of power and reaping the legitimacy gained from democracy.

The history of the more than a million Mapuche living in Chile today (ten percent of the Chilean population) has been punctuated by Spanish colonialism, missionization by Catholic priests, resistance to Chilean national projects of assimilation and development, and the incorporation and resignification of Chilean



FIGURE 2 President Frei drinking muday with machi at the presidential palace in order to create an image of himself as a supporter of indigenous people. Photograph by the Consorcio Periodístico de Chile.

majority discourses. Once accomplished guerilla warriors who resisted the Incas and Spaniards, the Mapuche were finally defeated by Chilean armies in 1884 after Chile's independence from Spain. These armies seized the Mapuche's territories and massacred their people. The survivors were placed on reservations with small plots of eroded land in the Mapuche heartland in the Bio-Bio, Araucanía, and Los Lagos regions; the fertile land was sold to settlers and, more recently, forestry companies. The landless Mapuche now have to work as wage laborers for farmers or forestry companies or migrate to the cities, where they become impoverished secondary citizens (Bacigalupo forthcoming). Eighty percent of Mapuche are now *wariache* (city dwellers), and fifty percent of Mapuche *wariache* live in the Chilean capital, Santiago. The Chilean majority continues to discriminate against Mapuche, who must speak Spanish fluently in order to be hired for wage labor.

The Mapuche suffered further assimilation and expropriation of their land under Pinochet's dictatorship. Chile's return to democracy saw the passage of Indigenous laws in 1993 recognizing Mapuche culture and language (Mapudungu), protection of some land and water rights, and the creation of The National Corporation of Indigenous People (CONADI) that implements state policies on indigenous people. The law, however, does not grant Mapuche any significant political or participatory rights within the state.² Contemporary Mapuche have the right to vote, but they are marginalized from national politics and their own political

systems go unrecognized. The Indigenous laws do not recognize the Mapuche as a people or grant them the basic right to self-determination and autonomy. The protection of indigenous land was violated by democratic presidents Eduardo Frei (1994–2000) and Ricardo Lagos (2000–2006) in the name of national development. They built a series of hydroelectric plants along the Bio-Bio River in Mapuche-Pewenche communities and a highway that ran through other Mapuche communities. Frei and Lagos subsidized forestry companies that logged Mapuche ancestral territories, destroying ancient forests and depleting the water resources in the area (Instituto de Estudios Indígenas 2003; Muga 2004). Frei argued that national development projects were necessary to “modernize” Chile and make it competitive in the global market, but those projects effectively threatened the livelihood and identity of Mapuche. Even though most Mapuche are now urban dwellers, the southern ancestral territories remain central to Mapuche cosmology, shamanic practices, and identity politics.

After the “celebration” of the Columbian quincentenary in 1992, indigenous groups throughout Latin America organized both pan-indigenous and local resistance movements.³ Mapuche resistance movements gained momentum at the end of the 1990s in response to an increasing number of national development projects in Mapuche territories. The two most important of such movements, Consejo de Todas las Tierras (Council of All Lands), led by Aucan Huilcaman, and Coordinadora Arauco Malleko (Coordinator Arauco Malleko), struggle for the cultural rights, autonomous self-government, and equal political participation of the Mapuche nation within the Chilean nation-state. The Chilean constitution, however, recognizes only one people, one nation, and one state, denying the multicultural and pluri-ethnic character of Chile (Instituto de Estudios Indígenas 2003). Chilean presidents have viewed Mapuche demands for self-determination and autonomy as threats to that state (Bengoa 1999: 199–200).⁴

The administrations of Presidents Frei and Lagos view Mapuche demands in terms of development and equality instead of recognizing their cultural rights (Richards 2004: 148). They have used two strategies against Mapuche resistance movements. First, they increased the number of development projects handled through CONADI. CONADI’s policy of indemnifying Mapuche for their land, however, contradicts state policy of prioritizing national and transnational economic interests in Mapuche land over Mapuche interests and seeking to incorporate the Mapuche into the global economy.⁵ Second, these governments have treated Mapuche’s actions in exerting their political demands as terrorist acts, to be punished through judiciary measures. As of this writing, Lagos is applying Pinochet’s antiterrorist law against Mapuche protesters.

Machi and longko, as icons of Mapuche society, have become key symbols in confrontations between Mapuche and the state. Machi—nowadays predominantly female, although male machi, who predominated in earlier times, are again growing in numbers—play the traditional role of contacting ancestral and nature spirits and deities through altered states of consciousness in order to transform

illness into health and conflict and unhappiness into well-being. Longko, the male, secular heads of communities who inherit their posts, address community needs and conflicts and carry the knowledge of Mapuche history, genealogy, social organization, and hierarchy. Members of Mapuche resistance movements have used machi and longko as representatives of Mapuche spiritual and political traditions, respectively, and as symbols of an autonomous Mapuche nation. As I show later, the images ascribed to machi and adopted by them in relation to resistance movements—images that rely heavily on notions of gender roles in Mapuche and Chilean society—are varied and often contradictory.

Participants in Chilean national discourses since the early nineteenth century have used gender analogically to express a relationship of power and subjugation between the modern state and the traditional Mapuche, with machi and longko as their main cultural symbols. National gendered constructions of the Mapuche, sometimes internally inconsistent, stem from what Gerald Sider (1987: 7) has called a “contradiction between the impossibility and the necessity of defining the other as the other—the different, the alien—and incorporating the other within a single social and cultural system of domination.” Participants in Chilean national discourses use gender to folklorize, marginalize, and assimilate female machi and male longko in the interests of diverse nationalist agendas.

The Chilean ruling class is the “beneficiary of economic, social and symbolic power expressed in economic and cultural capital and society’s institutions and practices” (Bourdieu, quoted in Tarifa 2001: 26–27). Power, however, is not just the ability to use state images and discourses to coerce others, but also the ability to produce pleasure, new systems of knowledge, goods, and discourses (Foucault 1980: 119). Resistance of any kind is what Leila Abu-Lughod labels a “diagnostic of power.” Resistance to one system of power often means conformity to a different set of demands (Abu-Lughod 1990: 42, 53) and conformity to and transformation of systems of power create new forms of resistance and power relations. Mapuche have developed responses to national images of themselves that range from embracing folkloric, gendered images of machi and longko to transforming those images and challenging nationalist discourses through resistance movements. Machi in turn draw on national images of male and female, and tradition and modernity, in order to devise their own gendered strategies for negotiating with national and Mapuche political authorities.

In what follows, I look at the ways in which gendered national discourses and the discourses of Mapuche resistance movements coerce and construct machi and the ways in which machi appropriate, transform, and contest these images. My general statements about machi, the Mapuche, and the Chilean political situation are drawn from my experience living in Chile between 1978 and 1988, my fieldwork with twenty-five Mapuche machi between 1991 and 2002, my participation in numerous machi rituals with political connotations, and representations of Mapuche and machi in the Chilean media. Interview excerpts are taken from my field research between 1997 and 2002, when I interviewed fourteen machi who

participated in Mapuche resistance movements and presidential political rallies, or both, as well as six Mapuche leaders. I have used pseudonyms for those Mapuche who participated in this study in order to protect them.

In analyzing the many and often contradictory views of machi and their participation in Mapuche and national politics, I underscore the way in which Mapuche activists and national politicians use images of female machi in the pursuit of their own agendas. I argue that female machi and male longko play complementary leadership roles in their dealings with Chilean political authorities and that Mapuche resistance movements have manipulated public images of female machi in ways that emphasize their roles as icons of tradition. These images reinforce national gender restrictions while promoting pan-Mapuche agendas.

My interest lies in the ways in which studying gendered representations of machi, especially political practices by machi that are not tied to the ideologies of political parties, can contribute to current discussions of power and resistance, agency and structure, and the practice of power itself. I explore the fluidity and ambiguity of ideologies in terms of both the opposition between hegemony and counterhegemony and the ambivalence and contradictions that exist in particular group and individual ideologies. Recent anthropological work has focused on the historical, social, political, and economic contexts shaping how and why indigenous groups decide to protect and promote certain images of themselves (Conklin 2002; Dombrowski 2002; Hodgson 2002; Li 2000; Ramos 1998; Sylvain 2002; Warren 1998). I focus not on the community politics in which machi are involved, but on machi's public faces in relation to those of national political figures and longko.⁶ I begin by describing the stereotypical images of Mapuche in general and machi specifically that have been created by the larger Chilean society, stereotypes that machi sometimes resist and sometimes transform and use for their own ends.

Chilean gendered constructs of Mapuche and machi

Since colonial times, Chileans have dealt with Mapuche in any of three primary ways: by "folklorizing" them, by marginalizing them, and by attempting to assimilate them. These three approaches are mutually contradictory, in that marginalizing is an attempt to exclude Mapuche from national society, assimilation is an effort to include them—if only on terms set by the nation-state—and folklorizing encompasses elements of both. Each approach involves its own set of stereotypes of Mapuche, particularly of *machi*. The negative images that gave rise to and were created by the marginalization of the Mapuche—that they are barbaric, ignorant, dirty, and so forth—are the same images that assimilationists aspire to overturn by educating the Mapuche, de-Indianizing them, and converting them to Catholicism. Therefore, I neglect assimilation in favor of establishing what the key images of folklorization and marginalization are, before turning to Mapuche's and machi's adaptations of and challenges to these stereotypes.

All such images are directly related to dominant Chilean notions about female “domestic” and male “public” spheres (Rosaldo 1974), notions that Mapuche themselves have adopted. Both Chileans and Mapuche characterize public presentations of self, formal political and religious leadership roles, political ideology, law, rationality, urbanity, and formal negotiations with state powers as masculine. Mapuche of both sexes see women as marginal to the world of formal politics, which they consider to be the realm of men. In contrast, emotion, intuition, pragmatism, rural life, the intimate domestic realm of the family, the informal roles of healers and shamans, and the world of altered states of consciousness and spirits are characterized as feminine (Bacigalupo 1994, 1996; Degarrod 1998). Mapuche believe that when social norms and spiritual orders are transgressed and relationships become strained, Mapuche women are better than men at negotiating between people and appeasing offended spirits.⁷ Machi, whether male or female, are especially viewed as effeminate because of their connection with the spirit world. Regardless of a machi’s sex, he or she dresses in female clothing and jewelry during certain rituals in order to “seduce” the spirits (Bacigalupo 2004).

These gender notions, though important signifiers in both national and Mapuche discourses, are not entirely borne out in Mapuche’s everyday lives, where women’s and men’s roles do not always fit neatly into the domestic–public dichotomy. In traditional rural settings, a degree of custom and division of labor certainly exists that fits the stereotype: men usually till and harvest the fields, sell agricultural products, mend tools, and do business in town, whereas women tend the gardens, spin wool and weave textiles, gather herbs, fetch water, and do the cooking. Men have more independence to travel to the city by themselves and to drink alcohol, whereas women must constantly guard their reputations against accusations of being *mujeres de la calle* (street women). In other ways, however, gender roles conform less strictly to the stereotype and often overlap. Mapuche expect women to cater to their men in public, but family decisions are negotiated collectively at home. Rural men and women both tend children and animals and cut firewood, and I observed women tilling the fields and selling their vegetables and textiles, and men cooking, tending gardens, and fetching water (Bacigalupo 1994).

Machi’s challenges to traditional gender roles are especially noticeable because machi represent tradition in other respects. Female machi are unlike ordinary women in that they prioritize their roles as machi over their marriage, family, and domestic chores. Female machi travel as they please and are independent, forthright individuals who make their own decisions. Female machi’s spiritual power and the central role they play in community, pan-Mapuche, and national politics have also challenged the notion that men should solely take on leadership roles and practice politics. Male machi are unlike ordinary rural Mapuche men in that they do not work the land and are rarely married. Male machi often perform traditional Mapuche women’s roles such as preparing herbal remedies, cooking, and spinning wool, but they participate in local and national politics, as other Mapuche men do.

Mapuche's traditional gender roles have shifted as young men leave the communities to work as wage laborers on nearby farms or as bakers and construction workers in the city and young women leave to work as domestic servants in urban areas. It is easier for young women to find such jobs and they often earn more than men who work as bakers or construction workers. The earning power of Mapuche domestic servants challenges urban notions that men should earn more than women. The independence and mobility that Mapuche women gain as servants in the city challenge rural Mapuche gender notions that women should remain at home and travel accompanied by men. Mapuche women who become educated and work as professionals or in nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) also challenge rural gender roles.

Despite the complexity of gender roles in Mapuche's daily lives, Mapuche women often reinforce the ideological polarization between the male, urban, public, political and the female, rural, private, family realms. On 8 March 2002, for example, a group of Mapuche women interrupted President Ricardo Lagos's celebration of International Women's Day to criticize him for honoring women in public positions of power while ignoring rural Mapuche women (*La Tercera*, 9 March 2002). They argued that Lagos constructed discrimination against Mapuche women in terms of national gender inequalities,⁸ erasing racial, cultural, and class differences among women. These Mapuche women in turn ignored the existence of the many urban Mapuche women, those who are professionals and those who work in Mapuche NGOs.

Female machi and male longko are cultural symbols that publicly express tradition, history, and the various relationships of power, subjugation, and integration between the state and the Mapuche. Under the folklorizing approach, participants in national discourses have constructed the Mapuche as the folkloric soul of the nation—as symbols of the Chilean past to be celebrated in exhibitions and performances at special times, places, and events. This folkloric discourse is strongly gendered. The Chilean state, which constructs itself as modern, masculine, urban, and civilized, views Mapuche warriors of the past—and, when convenient, longko—as appropriate symbols of virility and military zeal.⁹ It idealizes such warriors, who fought for their freedom, as emblems of independence and the basis for a patrilineal, patriarchal Chilean nation. The army, for example, named its regiments after Mapuche heroes and places and a popular football team is named after the Mapuche warrior Colo-colo. The Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (1951), nineteenth- and twentieth-century indigenist novelists (Blest Gana 1968 [1862]; Lira 1867, 1870), and the jurist and politician Andrés Bello all lauded the heroism and mythical qualities of colonial Mapuche warriors while ignoring Mapuche political demands of their time. A statue of the Mapuche warrior Caupolican was placed on Santa Lucía Hill to commemorate the founding of Santiago, the capital of Chile—though it depicts a near-naked North American Plains Indian with feathered headdress rather than a Mapuche man in the traditional poncho and *chiripa* (breeches).

At the same time, national discourses reject contemporary Mapuche leaders who sympathize with resistance movements, wear traditional ponchos, and carry *waki* (spears) as subversives who threaten national sovereignty. Mapuche leaders may in some instances present themselves as “colonized males who question their masculinity and virility” (Degarrod 1998: 348), but in others they promote images of virile Mapuche warriors both as icons of ethnic resistance against the state and as symbols of Chilean patriarchal nationalism. On 30 May 2003, the Consejo de Todas Las Tierras movement requested that the statue of the conquistador Pedro de Valdivia—a symbol of colonization and domination in Santiago’s central plaza—be replaced by one of the Mapuche hero Lautaro as a symbol of the Chilean nation (*El Pais*, 30 May 2003).

In folklorizing Mapuche women, participants in national discourses have stereotyped them as passive retainers of the nation’s soul, either as rural, folkloric mothers of the nation or as wives of the nation. Female machi in particular symbolize the way in which Chileans conceptualized Mapuche throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—that is, as exotic remnants of past folkways who must remain unchanged in order to be authentic. Machi are often depicted on postcards and tourist brochures as symbols of the “authentic” Chile and Chilean politicians use such images to gain the votes of indigenous sympathizers. In what Renato Rosaldo (1989: 68–87) called “imperialist nostalgia,” the dominant class mourns the loss of indigenous traditions that have been destroyed through “progress.” Machi, whether female or male, are feminized in these nostalgic representations and cherished because of their symbolic value as bearers of pristine tradition. Meanwhile, living machi and their healing practices remain stigmatized.

While glorifying Mapuche warriors, the state has historically infantilized and feminized contemporary Mapuche in order to justify its policy of military occupation of the Araucanian region and its establishment of the reservation system (1830–1884), the colonization and redistribution of Mapuche land (1884–1929), and the suppression of Mapuche’s rights under Pinochet. The neoliberal state projects itself as the epitome of modernity, a European nation in South America. It assumes the role of a father struggling to bring development and economic progress and characterizes Mapuche as “feminine and puerile” because they are “incapable of self-organizing and easily manipulated by the left, terrorist groups, ecological groups, and foreign nongovernmental organizations” (*El Mercurio*, 7 March 2002). The state believes that it must subjugate Mapuche through military action and violence as well as protect and civilize them and legislate and solve Mapuche problems (Bengoa 1999; Villalobos 2000).

Chilean presidents, constructing themselves as representatives of the masculine state, have related to women and indigenous people in general by using gendered kinship metaphors. Salvador Allende (1970–1973) perpetuated existing national notions of women as the wives and mothers of the state (Boyle 1993: 158), but unlike other political regimes, he also addressed them as workers and



FIGURE 3 Cover of the magazine Rocinante titled “El Estado Contra Los Mapuche” (The Chilean State against the Mapuche). The state is represented by Chilean riot police and the Mapuche by Mapuche women and girls dressed in traditional costume. Photograph by Manuel Morales.

citizens and created the National Women's Secretariat (SERNAM) to incorporate women into national society (Valdés et al. 1989). Augusto Pinochet (1973–1989) cast himself as father and husband of the nation and addressed women as mothers of the nation, who were morally superior and keepers of the faith (Boyle 1993: 160–61). Chilean presidents in the post-Pinochet era continue to view women as mothers, wives, and victims, who need to be protected, although current president Ricardo Lagos has taken a somewhat more progressive stance on women's rights (Richards 2004: 53–54). These democratic presidents have claimed to support indigenous people on their own terms, but remain paternalistic, imposing what they believe to be economic progress while negating Mapuche's rights to self-determination and disallowing Mapuche from participating in local politics as mayors or regional authorities.

National images of machi and longko as representatives of folklore who are ineffective as politicians or negotiators with the modern state have allowed Chilean presidents to construct themselves as inclusive and pluralistic. Ricardo Lagos, for example, manipulated folkloric images of machi and longko by having some of them stand onstage with him during his election campaign, while in the background a choir sang in Mapudungu. When Lagos took office in March 2000, he sent minister of development and planning Alejandra Krauss to the southern city of Temuco, where she danced with machi in a collective ritual.

The state encourages the use of distinctive indigenous symbols as markers of cultural difference. Yet real communities of indigenous people are hidden beneath such symbolic markers in the discourse of cultural diversity and pluralism (Hill and Staats 2002). The report by Lagos's Commission for Historical Truth and New Treatment of Indigenous People, which appeared in 2003, promised to recognize the Mapuche as a people and to grant them greater political participation in parliament and communal government. It also promised to recognize Mapuche territorial rights. But the commission said nothing about easing the state's repressive policies toward the Mapuche or about self-determination, autonomy, or the legitimacy of Mapuche local authorities. Dozens of Mapuche leaders have been arrested and made political prisoners under Lagos's "antiterrorist" laws, which deprive detainees of the right to a speedy trial and allow prosecutors to withhold evidence from defense lawyers (Guerra 2003).¹⁰ Some Mapuche have been tortured or killed by police, who receive impunity for their actions. Ironically, the Mapuche anthropologist Rosamel Millaman—one of the members of Lagos's commission for indigenous people—was beaten and detained by police during a raid on the community of Rofue.

By fossilizing the actions of machi and longko in a folkloric past, nationalist discourses erase contemporary realities of exploitation and domination (Alonso 1994: 398) and obscure the roles that machi and longko play in contemporary national politics.¹¹ They devalue the contemporary roles of machi as spiritual leaders and of longko as political leaders of a people with its own history, demands, and agency and they ignore the dynamism of Mapuche cultural practices. Chilean

national discourses envision the nation of the future as a modern one composed of assimilated citizens who have forgotten their indigenous past, colored by occasional performances of indigenous culture as a folkloric construct. Perhaps the global economy will transform the “people without history” into “cultures without people” (Hill and Staats 2002).

Just as national discourses folklorize Mapuche in gender-specific ways, so do they marginalize them. Nineteenth-century novelists depicted the Spanish conquerors as masculine and the conquered indigenous people as feminine (Del Solar 1888; Larraín 1870).¹² Nineteenth-century historians constructed the Mapuche as barbaric and excluded them from Chilean history (Pinto 2002: 343–46). In order to justify their invasion and expropriation of Mapuche land and the relocation of Mapuche on reservations in the 1800s, Chileans portrayed them as lazy drunkards and savages who obstructed state progress.¹³ As recently as the end of the twentieth century, the historian Sergio Villalobos claimed that the Mapuche were barbaric and effeminate because they engaged in homosexuality, witchcraft, revenge practices, and polygamy. Even today, national discourses stand Mapuche in opposition to Chileans of European descent, who are associated with the upper classes, education, masculinity, and power.¹⁴

Above all, it is machi—including male machi, because they are partially transvestite during rituals—who have become the ultimate symbols of the stigmatized margin of Chilean society: the feminine, the sexually deviant, the traditional, the indigenous, the rural, the poor, the spiritual, and the backward. The Chilean press and church perpetuate an association between passivity, domesticity, reproduction, womanhood, and lack of political power, depicting female machi as fertile Catholic earth mothers who perform private healing rituals.¹⁵ Machi’s drumming and singing, their trance states, and their use of herbal remedies and massages are considered backward feminine superstitions, inferior to the knowledge of the Chilean intellectual elite. As bastions of the past who heal with the help of herbs and spirits, machi are often seen as irrational sorcerers, threats to the church and Western medicine, and impediments to the Mapuche’s becoming modern Chilean citizens (Bacigalupo 1994, 1996; Degarrod 1998). Alternatively, female machi are sometimes portrayed in the media as archaic women who are disappearing with modernity and pose no threat to the state or to Catholic morality (*El Mercurio*, 2 June 1999).¹⁶

Male machi are marginalized in national discourses because they are viewed as effeminate and therefore challenge male-dominant national models. Male machi often perform chores considered “womanly” by Mapuche and Chileans alike. They cook, heal from their homes, and wear women’s scarves and shawls during rituals to call on the spirits (Bacigalupo forthcoming). National homophobic discourses often depict male machi as deviant, effeminate homosexuals who threaten national masculinities and Catholic morality and therefore are inappropriate as national symbols.

Some Mapuche themselves subscribe to national images of machi as marginal, apolitical, irrational country folk who are easily manipulated by both

Mapuche and Chilean politicians. Some organizations created by urban Mapuche leaders in the early twentieth century, such as Unión Araucana and Sociedad Caupolicán, became complicit in national discourses to produce demonized versions of female machi. They viewed female machi as ignorant, deceitful women who disobeyed their husbands and knew how to manipulate poisons and weaken men (*El Araucano*, 1 September 1927; Foerster and Montecino 1988: 59–60; Degarrod 1998: 348).¹⁷ These organizations petitioned the government to prohibit machi practice because it was “fraudulent” and to prohibit collective, community-wide rituals (*ngillatun*) because they were “immoral” and “irrational.”¹⁸ In a classic case of Gramscian ideological hegemony, the dominant group’s meanings and values permeated the whole of Chilean society without appearing to be imposed and Mapuche organizations themselves legitimated the interests of the dominant Chilean classes. Unión Araucana negated ancestral culture and argued for assimilation and modernization. Sociedad Caupolicán argued for the gradual incorporation of national values into Mapuche culture (Degarrod 1998; Foerster and Montecino 1988). As recently as December 2001, a thirty-five-year-old Mapuche woman who worked at the National Center for Indigenous Issues (CONACIN) told me, “Machi are wise in their communities, in their culture, but ignorant about politics. . . . The state and the Mapuche politicians manipulate machi. . . . A politician or anyone can convince them and they will go and march.”

Whereas assimilation eliminates indigenous identity, folklorization and marginalization undermine it more subtly. What is at stake in all three processes is who has the power to define indigenous identities. As we will see, machi themselves both conform to and defy national stereotypes and systems of power, sometimes employing them for their own ends and sometimes ignoring them as they go about their business. Next, however, I want to show how Mapuche resistance movements themselves adopt and elaborate on such images of machi—especially female machi—for purposes never intended by the state.

Machi in Mapuche resistance movements

Mapuche have developed diverse responses to Chilean national images, challenging Chileans’ assumptions about the boundedness and homogeneity of Mapuche culture and politics. The contradictions, conflicts of interest, doubts, arguments, and changing motivations and circumstances of indigenous politics are best approached through what Leila Abu-Lughod (1990: 42) calls “ethnographies of the particular.” Some Mapuche participate in resistance movements that seek political recognition as a people and promote Mapuche autonomy as a nation. Others believe empowerment comes only by Mapuche integration into a modern Chilean state and by participating in existing national structures of power. Some support either right-wing ideologies and Pinochet’s legacy, others the ideologies of the democratic governments. Mapuche sociologist Marco Valdés (2000) argues that Mapuche political demands for autonomy or integration and

their requests for economic benefits from the state are not mutually exclusive. Mapuche seek benefits such as health, education, social security from the government, and the return of ancestral lands regardless of their political ideologies. Some Mapuche question national images of machi and longko; others appropriate these images but use them for their own ends.

Mapuche resistance movements such as Consejo de Todas las Tierras and Coordinadora Arauko Malleko, in which machi and longko play important roles, have both reinforced and challenged national images of machi. Mapuche activists' contradictory uses of gendered images of machi enable us to trace the ways in which conflicting notions of power work together and the ways power relations between Mapuche and the state are transformed. I argue that the resistance movements reinforce national gendered restrictions and stereotypes, but resist national interpretations of machi, instead promoting pan-Mapuche ones that advance their own agendas.

Mapuche resistance movements are increasingly supported by the civilian population, NGOs, and the United Nations. Eighty percent of Chileans now believe that the Mapuche are victims of illegal assaults against their property and of repressive state apparatuses (Vergara et al. 1999: 129). Foreign governments criticize Chile's violations of Mapuche human rights and international NGOs and environmental movements support Mapuche resistance against the forestry industry.¹⁹ Rodolfo Stavenhagen, the human rights commissioner for the United Nations who visited Chile in July 2003, criticized the Chilean government for violations of human rights and for the corrupt judiciary system used against Mapuche. He recommended that the Indigenous law should prevail over other national laws for exploiting resources, that CONADI be granted more money to buy indigenous land, and that Mapuche be consulted about development projects that take place in Mapuche territory. He also stated that Mapuche's legitimate protests and social demands should not be criminalized and that the government should grant amnesty to Mapuche political prisoners (Marimán 2004).

In a strategic move, Mapuche activists appropriate national folkloric images of female machi as symbols of the traditional, the feminine, the ecological, and the marginal and politicize them as representing ethnic history, pan-Mapuche cultural integrity, and ancestral rights.²⁰ They capitalize on the rhetoric of marginality and oppression for political aims, constructing female machi as links to the past and to nature rather than offering any empirical evidence for such connections.²¹ Consejo de Todas las Tierras uses machi images in legitimating its claims for ethnic sovereignty and territorial autonomy, in periodically negotiating with the government and forestry companies for land, and in gaining international support for the Mapuche cause. Coordinadora Arauko Malleko does not engage in dialogue with the government and uses machi solely as symbols of Mapuche tradition and resistance. Both movements argue that the ideals of modernization and progress proposed by the Chilean government do not benefit the Mapuche and trample their individual and cultural rights.

The Mapuche intellectuals Pedro Cayuqueo and Wladimir Painemal argue that the Chilean government's indigenist policies have been designed to disarticulate Mapuche resistance by institutionalizing Mapuche life in organizations such as CONADI and replacing traditional leadership with administrative leadership. The government has also fostered conflict and fragmentation among Mapuche organizations by legitimating the specific territorial identities of some groups with concrete, nonpolitical goals rather than engaging with the political demands of the Mapuche movement as a whole (Cayuqueo and Painemal 2003). The Mapuche intellectual José Marimán criticizes both territorial fragmentation and Mapuche fundamentalist notions that Mapuche who are intellectuals, urbanites, or professionals are "colonized Mapuche."²² Such perceptions, Marimán argues, have effectively blocked the creation of a Mapuche nation with a common political project for autonomy and self-determination (Cayuqueo and Painemal 2003; Marimán 2003, 2004). Marimán, Cayuqueo, and Painemal all agree that Mapuche's common experiences of colonization and domination must be used to strengthen Mapuche identity and to create awareness of the Mapuche as a nation that spans Chile and Argentina. This is one of the purposes of *Azkintue* (www.nodo50.org/azkintue/), the first Mapuche Internet newspaper, created in 2003.

Mapuche activists use folkloric national discourses in ways never intended by the state. They selectively manipulate symbols and discourses for purposes of resistance, political mobilization against forestry companies, and attempts to create a new Mapuche nation with a territorial base.²³ Although most Mapuche are urban dwellers, territory has remained central to Mapuche identity, autonomy, and self-determination.²⁴ At a time when the actual locality of an increasingly urban Mapuche culture is uncertain, the idea of a culturally and ethnically distinct homeland becomes even more salient. It is at such times that displaced people cluster around remembered or imagined communities that are attached to imagined homelands (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 39).²⁵ Being "from the motherland" is a more important form of engagement with Mapuche identity than is the reality of being fixed to a rural community.

Because the United Nations views indigenes as bound to cultural and territorialized practice, this is also the point from which indigenous people have been able to argue most convincingly for rights to land and natural resources and self-determination (Muehlebach 2003: 251, 253). Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld (2002) argues that indigenous self-determination is not bounded by indigenous territories and shows how the Ecuadorian Otavalo engage in "relational" and "situational" autonomy linked to the geographical mobility of peasant careers. Urban Mapuche are not bound by their ancestral lands, but they do not have the political clout to negotiate the terms of their "relational self-determination" disconnected from cultural and territorial demands. As Andrea Muehlebach argues, "the rights to self-determination and territory are a starting point from which indigenous peoples could properly negotiate more equitable futures for themselves" (2003: 258).

Mapuche notions of tradition are less about preservation than about transformative practice and the selective symbolization of continuity. Like most other indigenous peoples, Mapuche use their historical consciousness to create themselves in history rather than simply inheriting static traditions from the past. Because the practical limits on invention are primarily political, not empirical, a tradition can accommodate a great deal of interaction and hybridity without losing its integrity (Clifford 2000; Hill and Staats 2002).²⁶ Unlike participants in the national agenda, who appropriate indigenous traditions as agentless symbols of indigeneity, members of resistance movements actively create relations between past and present, spirits and land claims, *machi*, and the struggle for Mapuche autonomy.

The logging of Mapuche ancestral land by forestry companies has become the key sector for physical and symbolic confrontations between Mapuche and the Chilean state. Heavy logging has produced severe soil erosion, crippling the self-sufficiency of Mapuche communities (Millaman 2001: 10–11). Majority discourses often depict Mapuche who pursue environmental causes as subversives who oppose national development and become pawns of foreign environmental groups. Mapuche resistance activists view *machi*'s bodies and souls as inextricably bound up with ancestral land and with the environmental and sacred knowledge that is critical for the survival and reproduction of the traditional Mapuche lifestyle. They portray *machi* as guardians of knowledge of the forest who obtain their life force and powers to heal from nature spirits, or *ngen*, and who need herbs that grow only in their ancestral native forests. *Machi* experience *perimontun* (visions) of nature spirits who grant them knowledge to heal. Some *machi* powers are believed to reside in the forest. Mapuche believe that female *machi* will suffer bodily illness, spiritual harm, and loss of power if ancestral land is appropriated by others or affected by ecological disaster. When the forestry company Forestal Mininco eroded the land of the community of Lukutunmapu, a *machi* from the area said, "The *ngenko* [spirit owners of the water] and *ngenlawen* [spirit owners of herbal remedies] from around here have all left. There are only pine trees. No herbal remedies, no water. I cannot heal anymore, and I'm very ill. We will fight the forestry companies with our lives. Because without our forests there is no life."

The construction of a highway bypass through Mapuche land in 2001 destroyed sacred places where the spirits of rivers and waterfalls lived, making *Machi Javiera* and *Machi Rayen* ill. "They destroyed the source of my spirit, my herbal remedies. I cannot diagnose patients and heal with the noise of the machines. I no longer have any strength," said *Javiera*. "I became very ill with the bypass. I had bad dreams. Dreams about conflict, dreams about police. My altar became darkened," explained *Rayen*. Several *machi* protested the building of the section of the bypass that ran through ancient Mapuche burial sites in *Licanco*. When the construction proceeded anyway, two *machi* from the area prayed for the peace of the ancient souls and asked the local spiritual forces to be



FIGURE 4 Mapuche protest graffiti featuring the machi's kultrun (drum) as a symbol of Mapuche identity and resistance. The expression "Fuera Usurpadores de Tierra" (Leave Land Usurpers) is a protest against Chilean farmers, forestry companies and the state highway system that have usurped land from Mapuche communities. The expression "Fuerza Peñis" (Power or Strength Mapuche brothers) incites Mapuche to unite and against the usurpers. Photograph by Ana Mariella Bacigalupo.

benevolent to Licanco and to the Mapuche working on the construction project (*Diario Austral*, 7 April 2001).

Forestry companies and the government are aware of the symbolic relationship between machi and ancestral land and know of the central role that machi play in Mapuche resistance movements. After a confrontation between Mapuche protestors and police in the community of Catrio Ñancul, Forestal Mininco cut down the community *rewes*, or altars, with chain saws (Barrera 1999: 186). By symbolically destroying machi's powers and legitimacy, Mininco attempted to prevent machi from performing rituals in which spiritual powers and the appeal of tradition could be used to mobilize Mapuche against the forestry industry.

Mapuche resistance movements' images of female machi as earth mothers and guardians of the land, which correspond to national folkloric images of machi, are strategically chosen and situationally deployed to engage Mapuche from different communities and to legitimate an autonomous Mapuche nation with a fixed, rural territorial base. These movements have used what Gayatri Spivak calls "strategic essentialism," an appropriation of essentialism—the idea that people have essential qualities, properties, or aspects—by oppressed groups.

Such groups are aware that their “essential attributes” are cultural constructs, but invoke them in particular circumstances as powerful political tools (Landry and MacLean 1996: 124). Mapuche resistance movements, for example, draw on essentialist notions of a utopic motherland defended by traditional machi for purposes of ideological and political mobilization. Yet just like Chilean national assumptions, these notions disregard the changing dynamics of Mapuche culture, as reflected, for example, by Mapuche proposals for industrial development and by Mapuche who sell their forest land to the lumber industry in order to survive.²⁷ The image of a utopian Mapuche motherland has also created identity problems for the predominantly urban Mapuche. Although many such people maintain ties to relatives in rural communities, their identity is not predicated on a rural land base.²⁸

Some Mapuche intellectuals, such as anthropologists, have rejected strategic essentialism, exploring the constructed aspects of Mapuche culture and the dynamic and context-specific aspects of particular communities. The Mapuche historian and sociologist José Ancan (1997), for example, criticizes the perspective of strategic essentialists because they hail the rural community as a timeless, uncontaminated refuge of the “real Mapuche,” glossing over the complexities of urban Mapuche ethnicity. Yet as the rural land base, associated with motherhood and the bodies of female machi, has come to stand for Mapuche society, Mapuche increasingly see recovering their land as the only way to regain their identity and self-determination and to create alternative forms of power in resistance to those of the Chilean state.²⁹

At the same time, that machi and Mapuche activists adopt national images for their own ends, they also challenge national gendered discourses by offering new readings of the relationship between machi and politics. Although traditional Mapuche gender ideologies associate femininity with spirituality and masculinity with politics, machi do perform some local political functions in their communities. They hold spiritual, moral, and judiciary authority and, to the extent that they represent the forces of good and control the forces of evil on behalf of the ritual community, they play a political role. Machi legitimate local community events, conflicts, and political processes, as well as the authority of longko (Dillehay 1985) and they celebrate the restoration of Mapuche communal land.³⁰

Female machi and male longko play different but complementary leadership roles in local Mapuche society and in their relationships with national political authorities. Mapuche view longko as active, gregarious, and pan-Mapuche and as both urban and rural, traditional and modern in their secular leadership roles. They associate longko with political activities and warfare, traditionally the masculine domain. They view female machi as passive, local, rural performers of spiritual roles and of roles associated with Mapuche women, such as healing, making herbal remedies, and tending gardens. Female machi must negotiate their broader political roles with other Mapuche leaders—longko and *presidentes* (elected, nontraditional political representatives of the community)—who are

most often men. Longko who lead Mapuche resistance movements appropriate and elaborate on national images of female machi and resignify them as symbols of ethnic history, cultural integrity, and ancestral rights in order to legitimate claims to land and to a Mapuche nation.

In their rendering of machi, Mapuche activists have combined machi's spiritual roles, traditionally the feminine domain, with political activities and tropes of warfare, traditionally associated with masculinity. Instead of linking epic masculine warriors solely with contemporary male Mapuche leaders, resistance movements have masculinized female machi as political agents and spiritual warriors against forestry companies and the modern state.³¹ These hybrid images of the feminine and spiritual but warlike political machi are used to gain support for resistance movements among native and non-native citizens alike.

Some machi participate directly in resistance activities, willingly adopting and enthusiastically enacting the images assigned to them. On 21 December 1997, I participated in a *weichan ngillatun*, or collective warring ritual, performed by forty-two-year-old Machi Tegualda in Lukutunmapu, one of the communities whose land has been exploited by Forestal Mininco. The ngillatun, traditionally performed by machi to request fertility and well being, has acquired political implications. It expresses a sense of community and a spiritual relationship to homeland territory and helps to create a boundary between what is traditionally Mapuche and a perceived outside world of non-Mapuche. Even though machi's performances of ngillatun rituals have become increasingly generic in order to address the needs of a Mapuche nation rather those of a particular community, they are tailored to specific conflicts with forestry companies and the government. During the ritual, Tegualda propitiated ancestral spirits and the Mapuche deity Ngünechen in order to battle Forestal Mininco and President Frei. She and the male longko exhorted the community to be brave warriors:

Tegualda: Lift your *chuecas* [sticks] every time you scream, "Marichiweu" [We will win ten times over]. As if you were winning. You are brave men. You are Mapuche; before, you always won.

Longko: You shall win. You are a warring woman, a warring machi. Give us your wisdom, your words, your advice. With your help we shall have strength. We will unite to continue our struggle. Marichiweu, Marichiweu.

Tegualda: That's right. You should scream "Marichiweu" all the time. It is the cry of our ancestors, which you should not forget. We are in the struggle. We are a united people and we should recover what is ours. Our land, our ancient forests. We have done this before. We shall not be afraid. We shall not forget our language. We shall remember our ancestral laws. Machi should meet and put their wisdom together.

Longko: That's right, that way we will have strength and we shall not be shamed. Marichiweu—all of you scream Marichiweu.

Tegualda: We have started our warring ngillatun. We are visible. We are making news. Many will think we are right and will be happy because of what we are doing. The *konas* [young warriors] will explain what we are doing. We are brave people. People of struggle. Cry Marichiweu!

Tegualda beat her drum above her head and demanded that the participants echo her cry. She resignified traditional rituals in political terms, gaining the support of ancient warriors to battle the spirit of neoliberalism. She defied national stereotypes of machi as passive and apolitical.

Mapuche resistance movements have fostered an increasing “shamanization of indigenous identities” (Conklin 2002: 1058) and a politicization of shamanic roles that offer a new understanding of power. During Pinochet’s dictatorship, militant Mapuche such as Santos Millao drew on the icon of the Mapuche warrior of the past and brandished spears to assert their demands and oppose the government. Since the advent of democracy in 1990, machi have worked side by side with Mapuche chiefs in resistance movements, opening new possibilities of interaction with the government and other Mapuche groups. Unlike longko, machi do not have to prove themselves to gain local Mapuche support. Machi have become symbols of Mapuche identity because their legitimacy stems from their links to ancestor and nature spirits; their knowledge and spiritual powers; and their symbolic value as representatives of the land, tradition, and forests. As indigenous identity is redefined throughout Latin America in terms of knowledge rather than of practices, shamans are increasingly recognized as bearers of valuable knowledge and are increasingly viewed as representatives of their peoples. Shamanism itself is being redefined as shamans become politically active. Shamans have always mediated between the human and spirit worlds. They now use those skills, perspectives, knowledge, and imagery in the realm of interethnic politics and in mediating relations with the state (Conklin 2002: 1050–1051).

Female machi often feel that Mapuche movements have manipulated them by politicizing their role as icons of tradition and fail to treat them with the correct protocol. Machi Javiera explained: “The Consejo de Todas las Tierras invited me to perform a prayer, but it really was a protest. They used me. I asked them for a new drum, but they brought me nothing.” In 1990, Consejo de Todas las Tierras took machi and longko to the city of Valdivia, where King Juan Carlos of Spain was visiting, and asked to meet with him to discuss land treaties dating from colonial days. Chilean officials prevented the meeting from taking place. Machi Hortensia complained about this event: “The leader asked me to support Mapuche traditions. . . . He said we were going to meet the kings of Spain to talk about Mapuche problems, but we never saw the kings. He nearly killed us of hunger. We marched through the whole town. We shouted, we played our drums, but there was no food. Is that the way to treat a machi?” Other machi resent leaders’ inability to protect them from police violence. Machi Rocío said, “I don’t go with the Consejo de Todas las Tierras anymore because they don’t take care of machi.

Machi who went to the march in Temuco with their drums were wet and beaten by the police. Is that how you respect your machi?"

Machi's actions raise questions about the relationship between agency and practice. In what contexts are machi comfortable with being produced by the hegemonic gender discourses and images of Mapuche resistance movements and national imaginaries? When do they speak in terms of these master narratives? How do they use these constructions to their own advantage and when do they produce their own? As we will see in the following sections, machi's practices and their relationships with political authorities both support and resist the images deployed by members of Mapuche resistance movements and participants in Chilean national discourses.

Hybridity and the commodification of machi practice

Both Mapuche and non-Mapuche often view machi as guardians of tradition who oppose modernization and the modern Chilean state (Bacigalupo 1994: 220–221, 1996: 94–95; Degarrod 1998). Machi present themselves as traditional in order to maintain legitimacy, but in practice they show the traditional–modern dichotomy to be artificial and transgress it by engaging in dynamic, hybrid healing practices (Bacigalupo 2001).³² Mapuche are called to machi practice by ancestral and nature spirits through dreams, visions, and altered states of consciousness. Machi heal their patients by the traditional means of drumming, praying to spirits and deities, and prescribing herbal remedies to drink or use as poultices. They also incorporate and resignify Catholic, national, and biomedical symbols and modern technologies in local terms and use them as sources of spiritual power. Spanish horses transport spirits between worlds, the Virgin Mary merges with Kuse Domo Ngünechen (Old Woman Ngünechen), the sacred heart of Jesus is associated with the beat of the drum, and antibiotics become exorcising remedies. The Chilean flag is an emblem of power used in some machi healing rituals as well as in collective ngillatun and even General Pinochet can be a symbol of authority propitiated for good or evil. Machi juggle these various religious, medical, and political symbols and represent themselves diversely according to who else is present and what the others' intentions and context may be. Such processes have been described as the "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

Machi have also commodified their practices, both using and defying folkloric stereotypes as they independently develop strategies for marketing themselves and their services in modern Chile. Machi, both male and female, are not just rural practitioners, but also flourish near urban centers. Despite their being stigmatized in Chilean national discourses, they increasingly attract clients from among non-Mapuche as well as urban Mapuche. They make appointments with their patients by cellular phone and travel to Chilean and even Argentine cities to exorcise houses and bring patients luck in love, money, and work (Bacigalupo 2001). They treat Mapuche for spiritual illnesses produced by maladjustment,

discrimination, and poverty and non-Mapuche for stress, depression, and insomnia. They bless indigenous monuments, universities, schools, and intercultural hospitals.³³

An increasing number of machi maintain offices in major cities, where they see their urban patients. Machi María Cecilia and Machi Juana, for example, traveled to Santiago five days every month in 2002 to treat patients in a room they rented in a dilapidated building. Their cell phone numbers and schedules were posted outside and a steady stream of patients arrived from nine in the morning until nine at night. Most of the patients came for depression or soul loss, bad luck or evil spirits or for physical ailments such as liver, kidney, and stomach problems; swelling; fevers; and arthritis. The machi curtained off part of the building's central courtyard, where they had a gas stove on which they prepared herbal remedies, and they kept a drum in their room to perform prayers and divinations.

Some male machi have productively inserted themselves into modern life by exercising a "moralistic Catholicized shamanism" (Chaumeil 1992: 108) and by experimenting with new shamanic forms inspired directly by modern medicine. Male machi liken their practices to those of doctors and Catholic priests, both prestigious male professions nationally. Machi Sergio claimed he was a "celibate Mapuche priest" and sometimes performed mass with the bishop, although he was never ordained. Jorge, who was also a certified nurse, prescribed antibiotics and gave injections to his patients for exhaustion, flu, evil spirit possession, and soul loss. José Bengoa (1999: 124) described a male machi who wore a white lab coat to legitimate himself as a paramedic and distance himself from other Mapuche's accusations of sorcery, to which machi are often subject.

Machi practice has entered the mainstream and some male machi work with doctors in diagnosing the ailments of patients at intercultural hospitals (*El Sur*, 14 March 2002; *El Mercurio*, 20 September 2001). Manuel Lincovil, a machi working at the intercultural health center in La Pintana, Santiago, said he could no longer handle the enormous flow of patients who came to see him, eighty percent of whom were nonindigenous (*Apples for Health* 2001). Those male machi who are effectively able to construct themselves as masculine Mapuche spiritual doctors and priests gain popularity with the media. Juan, a Mapuche intellectual, said, "Machi Ignacio went to meet the president. I think the president said a few things. But then Ignacio asked to speak and he became the star with the press. He appeared beside the president in photographs and interviews."

Although female machi incorporate elements of modern medicine and Catholicism into their practices, too, they do not identify themselves with mainstream medical or religious practitioners. Machi Javiera said, "When Minister Krauss came . . . we asked her not to control the sale of herbal remedies, to allow us to collect herbal remedies because that is where our wisdom is. We told Minister Krauss that we are machi, not doctors, and that we wanted to continue to work by ourselves, not with doctors in intercultural health hospitals."

Like other Mapuche, machi present one image of themselves to fellow Mapuche and another to Chileans. Machi sometimes enact national perceptions of shamanic practices, playing on their customers' sense of the traditional in order to retain their clientele. This became apparent to me one winter evening in July 1995, as Machi María Cecilia, her family, and I watched a soap opera on an old black-and-white TV plugged into a car battery. When a truck driven by Chileans came up the driveway, everyone jumped up. María's brother hid the television set and the car battery.³⁴ Her sister helped her put on her machi scarf while her mother went outside to greet the visitors. María Cecilia explained later that because Chileans had a "mental picture" of what it meant to be a machi, if they saw her watching TV or speaking in Spanish instead of Mapudungu, they would question her authenticity and her power to heal.

Machi's dynamic notions of authenticity and tradition challenge the Chilean government's perception of tradition based solely on a salvaged past. Machi argue that their practices are traditional while stretching and reinventing the notion of tradition for their own ends.³⁵ For example, machi's brightly colored, laced aprons, which have become symbols of traditional Mapuche womanhood, are closely patterned on the clothing of Chile's former colonial elites. Machi's traditional forms of expressive behavior have expanded rather than disappeared under the pressures of modernity. Machi Hortensia's "traditional" *ngeykurewen*, or machi renewal ritual, for example, included guitar and accordion music and she invoked Jesus, not her *filew* (spirit), as her teacher. Machi practice is a system in which meaning, identities, and relations are continually created with every performance (Guss 2000: 12). This flexible notion of tradition is crucial to the maintenance of Mapuche culture. As the Mapuche writer Elicura Chihuailaf put it (1999: 48–49), "traditional culture is what allows the Mapuche to transform their communities in their social, political, and economic aspects without relinquishing being indigenous."

An increasing number of machi of both sexes argue that the less secretive aspects of their knowledge and practices can be commodified and adapted to the needs of museums, anthropologists, and tourists, so long as machi reap the benefits. Machi Jorge agreed to have his initiation ritual filmed by anthropologists for a fee. He traveled to a museum in the United States to consult on an exhibition of Mapuche culture and sold his old *rewe* (altar) to the museum instead of leaving it in the river to rot, as is traditional. Machi José taught a course in Mapuche medicine and belief at an intercultural hospital and sold his *kultrun* (ritual drum) to a museum in Chile. Mapuche believe that female machi are more traditional than male machi and therefore less willing to commodify their culture, but this does not hold true in practice. Machi Javiera charged a fee to have herself videotaped by a national film crew and Machi María Cecilia sold her life story to an American writer for a hefty fee.³⁶

A machi's prestige, however, can be threatened by his or her economic success, which some Mapuche view as a sign of unethical capitalist practice. Machi

Javiera's husband criticized the money-making healing practices of Machi Lisa and Machi Abel and the consumer goods they had accumulated: "Lisa knows nothing about herbal remedies, she only knows how to charge, and she charges huge amounts of money. That's the worst thing. She charges 140,000 pesos for a basic treatment. . . . She has a car, she has a huge number of things. . . . Machi Abel has a two-cabin truck. He got money through research projects and abroad. He became a machi overnight with no preparation, and although has many clients he doesn't have a lot of herbal remedies. He gives all his patients the same ones" (personal interview with the author, 18 December 2001).

Machi also respond to the growing global interest in shamanism by taking part in paid performances for tourists. The folklore festival held in Villarica every February exemplifies this practice. Mapuche performers are brought by bus from surrounding communities, lodged at the local high school, and fed. At the festival, a Chilean man announces each group of performers and briefly previews the event for the audience, which consists mainly of American and European tourists.

In 1998, an urban Mapuche woman videotaped the event. Among the performers were two machi, one of whom who staged a *ngeykurewen* with herbal remedies, musicians, and dancers. The machi climbed an altar that had been rigged with microphones covered with foye branches. The machi shook the branches violently and began to quiver. Two musicians from another group argued over whether the machi was in trance or was faking it for the benefit of the tourists. The machi stated that the event was a performance: "It was not a machi *purun* [machi initiation or renewal ritual]. It was a celebration, a dance. . . . Gringos came to see ancient traditions that they don't have in their land." Machi at festivals feel they are teaching tourists something about Mapuche culture. They maintain their legitimacy by distinguishing between rituals performed for patients and communities and paid performances that are adapted to suit tourist images of the exotic.

Machi's engagements with the media, however, are heavily criticized by many Mapuche and even the spirits themselves. The Mapuche feminist Isolde Reuque (2002: 73) tells of a machi whose machi spirit punished her with an illness and facial paralysis for neglecting to renew her powers in a *ngeykurewen* ritual, for speaking publicly on the radio, for accepting an interview, and for allowing her grandson to videotape her. Machi Pamela claimed she became ill every time journalists came to film her and many Mapuche blamed the death of Machi Carmen Currin on having made an ethnographic video with anthropologists. "Nothing happened to Machi Carmen straight away, but many years later she died. . . . She was going to die anyway because she had cancer, but people said she was sick because of the video. She was almost a paraplegic sitting in a wheelchair," said Machi Javiera in December 2001.

Machi engagement with discourses of tradition is complex. They are guardians of tradition punished by spirits if they engage with the media, but are rewarded by satisfying consumer images of the exotic. At the same machi pragmatic hybrid

practices engage productively with biomedicine and Catholicism in urban contexts as long as they construe these practices as traditional. As we will see, machi use these strategies creatively in their negotiations with political authorities.

Machi's pragmatic negotiation of political authority

In negotiating with national and Mapuche political authorities, machi draw on precisely the gender stereotypes that have been produced by national power relations, demonstrating that "resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (Foucault 1990 [1978]: 95–96). Female machi encourage national and Mapuche notions of themselves as traditional, apolitical, and marginal to the masculine world of politics. Doing so allows them to legitimate their spiritual practice in both national and Mapuche discourses while stretching and reinventing the notion of tradition for their own ends. It also allows them to devise shamanic, nonideological ways of engaging political authorities without being constrained by the agendas of politicians.

Ideology is closely tied to the concept of power and refers to "shared ideas or beliefs which serve to justify the interests of dominant groups" (Giddens 1997: 583). Male machi are expected by other Mapuche to define themselves in terms of political ideology, like other Mapuche men, and they engage with political authorities primarily through such ideologies. Female machi, in contrast, engage with politicians not through particular ideologies, but through the lens of spiritual power, attempting to propitiate, honor, and manipulate politicians for pragmatic ends. I label this process the politics of spirituality. Female machi's hybrid healing practices and their "strategic essentialist" gendered representations of self for pragmatic purposes illustrate a nonideological way of exercising power independent of the agendas of Mapuche resistance movements and Chilean politicians.³⁷

Through their pragmatic negotiations with political authorities, machi, like longko, try to transform a hierarchical relationship with the state in which the masculine state stands over them, into one of mutual recognition. Although female machi do not assume formal political positions and tend to avoid discussions of political ideology, their engagement with political authorities in itself can be read as a political act. Machi discourse is concerned with interpersonal power, recognition, and identity. Machi project Mapuche social and spiritual models of personalized, reciprocal relationships with authorities and spirit beings onto their interactions with representatives of the Chilean state, taking advantage of the diverse possibilities that Chilean politicians and political parties offer them. In 1986, General Pinochet legitimated machi and longko from the city of Nueva Imperial and they in turn legitimated him as "*ülmen, fütta longko*," or powerful elder and chief. They hoped Pinochet would return the land he had usurped and the machi believed their powers were increased by the encounter.

Historically, the Mapuche's relationship to the order established by the state was also nonideological and their resistance contextual. Although today they

resist state neoliberal policies and control of their territories, at the same time Mapuche believe that their autonomous position is marginal to the state and will have little effect. Consequently, they participate actively in the space made available to them by civil society (Foerster and Lavanchy 1999; Millaman 2001: 12). During resistance in the eighteenth century, the Mapuche incorporated new social forms and developed new identities. Institutions of colonial power were transformed into local Mapuche political mechanisms and became part of Mapuche consciousness. The concentration of power in the hands of a few representatives and parliaments became the local way of practicing politics (Boccaro 1999: 448, 458–61). Mapuche today want their autonomy, but also seek associations with representatives of the state and military who hold national political power and who they believe will grant them benefits (Marimán 1990: 26–27). They often vote for right-wing candidates who promise order, progress, and jobs (*El Mercurio* 30 December 2001). In December 2001, a Mapuche man stated, “I voted for the right because it is the party of the rich people. If I vote for the rich people who have money, there will be jobs. Lagos works for the poor people, but he is also poor.”

Political mobility, situational engagements with different political actors, and relational autonomy are common among indigenous people.³⁸ The novelty of female machi’s negotiations lies in their maintenance of machi identities as peasant, traditional, and apolitical while transcending traditional practice by engaging with national authorities. They approach those authorities, however, not in terms of their political parties or policies, but as powerful beings who can be propitiated for good or evil. In their rituals, machi greet spirits and deities using the honorary titles “king,” “queen,” and “chief” and shower them with offerings and prayers. In turn, the spirits recognize machi as powerful and worthy of the knowledge they give them. In the same manner, machi forge relationships with Mapuche, national, and international figures of authority, honoring them with rituals to bolster their own power and gain recognition and benefits. Machi believe these associations will grant them spiritual power and money, bring them clients through their popularity in the media, and help them regain land and protect their communities. Machi Ana for example, views Pinochet as a hypermasculine figure of military power who has the ability to destroy others. She propitiates him to exorcise evil spirits or to bring harm to others: “Since Lagos has been president there has been a lot of disorder. People are insolent and don’t respect the police. I have less power. In the time of Pinochet people did not rebel because Pinochet would kill them. People need to respect the authority. They need to respect me like they need to respect Pinochet. He has strength and I admire him. I need that kind of power to chase the devil away.”

I argue that female machi’s simultaneous participation in Mapuche resistance movements and the campaigns of Chilean politicians is not contradictory, because they are motivated primarily by personal desire for recognition and power, not by the agendas of political parties. Despite popular stereotypes, machi are neither passive, apolitical retainers of tradition nor political bastions of resistance;

they are pragmatic negotiators of power who use the opportunities presented to them by Chilean politicians and political parties. "Female machi go to different authorities because they are invited with the correct protocol. Machi want to meet and talk with the authorities. This does not mean that the machi supports the political party and ideology of that authority but that they want to be known and negotiate with them," Machi Javiera's husband explained in December 2001.

Not all Mapuche agree with machi's need to be recognized by political authorities and with their nonideological negotiations. Some Mapuche interpret machi's engagement with authorities as their subordination to state powers. When a female machi gave President Frei a poncho in recognition of his authority in 1999, Julia Rulepan, a Mapuche woman, screamed, "You don't have to give them anything. They have to give us our land, you dumb Indian" (*Las Ultimas Noticias*, 6 August 1999b).

Female machi view the state in the role of father and donor to the Mapuche, replicating national gendered kinship tropes and mirroring the relationship between the Mapuche deity Ngünechen and the ritual community. Just as Ngünechen grants blessings, good crops, and remedies to machi who perform rituals, so associations with the state, machi think, will bring them social and economic benefits. Machi Javiera said, "We pray to Ngünechen, we do ngillatun rituals; there we give him wheat, sheep blood, and he gives us good harvests, animals, rain. If we don't do ngillatun, then he punishes us. We will have drought and frost. We also stand beside the president, we play *kultrun* [the drum] for him, and we give him gifts so that his government will be good to us. Then maybe he gives us fertilizers, zinc roofs, good laws, and money before Christmas. If we don't support him then we will be poorer than before and other people will be benefited."

Since the advent of democracy in 1990, Mapuche men have increasingly believed that they should align themselves along national political party lines and become more urban and modernized.³⁹ Mapuche view male machi's spiritual roles as incompatible with both these new expectations and the local political positions held by Mapuche men. The result is that male machi engage in negotiations only with those political authorities with whom they share political ideologies. They gain power specifically from these authorities, not others. Machi Sergio and Machi Jorge, for example, supported Pinochet and associated his military prowess with that of ancient Mapuche and Spanish warriors. They refused to go to events involving democratic candidates, even when Mapuche friends asked them to go.⁴⁰

Other machi perform collective rituals in honor of Mapuche who were murdered during Pinochet's regime, associate the dictator with evil spirits,⁴¹ and gain power from their relationships with Chile's democratic presidents. Machi José said, "Pinochet didn't respect machi. He had several machi shot on Puente Quepe and they were thrown into the river. I went to Carahue to meet Frei. I like meeting the powerful ones who respect me. . . . Lagos is the best because he works for the

Mapuche.” Some male machi have assumed formal political roles. When the king of Spain visited Chile in 1990, Machi Jorge presented himself as “the representative of Mapuche culture.” Machi Victor stood as a candidate for mayor of Carahue. Victor and Jorge were criticized by their communities for assuming political positions that might conflict with their spiritual roles, but female machi would not have been allowed to present themselves in these positions in the first place.

Mapuche often criticize female machi if they allow their ideological views to dictate their actions or if they get involved in local politics. Some Mapuche women do undertake elective positions as community presidents, but it is rare to find a Mapuche woman who is a community chief of the patrilineage. The idea that women should not take on formal political positions or practice politics prevails in the most traditional factions of both Mapuche and Chilean national society. Mapuche women take a personalized approach to national politics, supporting the political figures they believe will benefit them most. Similarly, female machi offer such support in order to return favors to family and friends, not because of their political views. Machi Rocío, for example, played her drum for President Lagos because her son belonged to his Socialist party. But she also went to any political event to which a Mapuche invited her, regardless of which political party sponsored it. A female machi’s unpredictable situational politics allows them to negotiate with a wider range of political authorities for pragmatic ends than a male machi, without being perceived as disloyal to a particular political party.

Female machi view democratic presidents as less masculine and less powerful than Pinochet, but as easier to negotiate with for pragmatic ends. The democratic government promises them practical gains through government projects, legal recognition, and respect for their traditions and healing practices. In December 2001, Machi Javiera said, “I meet with the people in the government because I want to demonstrate that our culture is valuable and that they should take machi into consideration. We go so that people understand what machi are and learn that they are not sorcerers but people who are central to Mapuche culture and traditions.”

Conclusion

The plaza of the Chilean city of Temuco features a statue of a female machi with her drum, which illustrates the diverse readings made of such women. The statue stands in the capital of the Mapuche homeland as a symbol of the Mapuche as traditional and rural. She represents a region and an ethnicity that have been politically and historically marginalized from the state, which is symbolized by statues of the founding fathers in Santiago. The positioning of a female machi at the center of the public political–administrative space of the Araucanian region, however, recognizes machi as symbols of national folklore. Mapuche resistance movements, in turn, have appropriated this statue as a symbol of the traditional Mapuche nation. She marks the place where such movements began and the

capital of what the Mapuche define as their autonomous nation. At the same time, the statue continually engages with actors and symbols of modern life, as machi do in their pragmatic relationships with national symbols and politicians. The Falabella department store and the Catholic church loom behind her, businessmen and doctors pass by her on their way to work, and Mapuche protests take place at her feet.

Power and resistance have been recurring themes in scholars' understandings of spiritual experiences of domination. On one hand, spirit possession has often been viewed as resisting political, gender, race, or age domination (Boddy 1989; Comaroff 1985; Stoller 1995). Local expressions and idioms of spirituality have



FIGURE 5 The status of a female machi with her drum in the plaza of Temuco illustrates the diverse readings made of female machi through gendered discourses of tradition and modernity. Photograph by Ana Mariella Bacigalupo.

been seen to destabilize the assumptions upon which state or Western logics of control are founded and to have become historically sensitive local modes of cultural resistance (Steedly 1993; Taussig 1987, 1993; Tsing 1993). On the other hand, anthropologists have argued that resistance theory has been overused (Abu-Lughod 1990; Brown 1996; Ortner 1995), that indigenous culture is not a site for spontaneous resistance to dominant cultural forms (Hall 1986; Williams 1977), and that hegemonic perspectives fail to address “the profound ambiguity and tension of living agents as they wrestle morally and socially with the inequities of change” (Knauff 1998: 207). Machi’s engagement with different discourses of authority demonstrates that the interworkings of power and resistance are complex. Mapuche, national, and machi forms of power sometimes work together and sometimes contradict one another. Machi’s simultaneous reiteration of and resistance to national and Mapuche gendered discourses illustrate how new forms of power are created.

Work on resistance influenced by Gramsci theorizes ideological practices in terms of an opposition between hegemonic ideologies, secured by the construction of political and ideological consensus among dominant and subordinate groups, and counterhegemonic ideologies, which resist through consciousness transformation (Burke 1999; Gramsci 1971: 323; Strinati 1995: 165). Contrarily, I have explored the fluid and ambiguous nature of ideologies in terms of the ambivalence and contradictions that exist within the ideologies of particular groups and individuals and in terms of female machi’s spiritual understandings of power, which do not abide by the ideologies of political parties or resistance movements. By resisting the ideological associations that members of Mapuche resistance movements ascribe to machi practice, machi partake of national notions in which machi are apolitical. At the same time, they use their shamanic beliefs, in which political ideology does not prevail, in order to redefine power.

Female machi’s ambiguous relationships with political authorities and their resistance to political ideologies offer a new spiritual reading of the discourse of power and resistance. Female machi believe they can use the spiritual power they gain from these encounters to influence the thoughts (*rakiduam*) and hearts (*piuke*) of Chilean presidents to gain support for Mapuche traditions and to regain ancestral lands. By reading political authorities through the lens of shamanic discourses of power and using them for their own ends, female machi resist Chilean national notions of power associated with partisan political authority. By refusing to be reduced to their political implications, machi offer a new understanding of the workings of power itself and the ways in which it can be propitiated and manipulated for multiple ends. The purpose of female machi’s pragmatic relationships with authorities and their selective borrowing of Catholic and biomedical symbols is not to resist the state, but to use these associations to benefit themselves in specific situations. At the same time, by supporting the Mapuche resistance movements’ ideals of tradition, which are associated with ancestral

spirits of the forest and the recovery of Mapuche territory, self-determination, and sovereignty, machi resist the Chilean government's neoliberal policies and national notions that machi are apolitical.

The politicizing of indigenous shamans and the shamanization of indigenous politics illustrates how indigenous strategies are being creatively reformulated in response to the need to negotiate among multiple political discourses, ideologies, and values. Machi's spiritual knowledge and their ability to heal with the help of spirits offer powerful symbolic tools for pursuing political goals without committing to any particular ideology. They also offer new possibilities for rethinking indigenous identities in which shamans serve as icons of the traditional knowledge used for the purpose of pan-Mapuche resistance.

Gendered power and resistance in societies with polarized gender roles has been shown to be especially complicated. Women both resist and support existing systems of power, but their experiences and motivations should not be misattributed to false consciousness, feminist consciousness, or feminist politics (Abu-Lughod 1990: 47). Machi practices are not strategies to empower women, nor are machi conscious about how their actions reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies. What, then, is the relationship between machi agency and the various gendered structures that shape their world? Chilean national and Mapuche gendered discourses objectify machi and constrain their lives and actions. Neither Mapuche nor Chilean politicians expect machi to be "modernized" by their participation in contemporary political events. Mapuche's traditional understandings of masculine political and feminine spiritual power shape machi's interactions with authorities. Yet machi do not let these images determine them completely, but use them to their advantage to promote their own understandings of power.

The ambivalent positions of male machi offer insights into how gendered understandings of power coexist with, conflict with, and affect machi practice. While local Mapuche ideologies legitimate female and male machi as bearers of spiritual power associated with femininity, who complement the political power of men, male machi must masculinize themselves in national contexts as men who practice politics. By allowing political ideologies to shape their spiritual understandings of power, male machi limit the number of political authorities with whom they engage and exchange favors. At the same time, their political ideologies allow them to negotiate a stronger place for machi as medical and religious practitioners in the modern Chilean nation-state and its biomedical system. Male machi who are able to masculinize themselves as spiritual doctors and celibate priests and who practice politics effectively protect themselves from being labeled homosexuals.

Female machi's nonideological, pragmatic, and shamanic reinterpretations of political authorities offer a new understanding of the workings of power itself and how it can be manipulated for multiple ends. Their spiritual reading of politicians, which Mapuche view as a feminine mode of power, is a radical departure from the gendered discourses of the Chilean nation-state, in which female machi

are viewed as subordinate folkloric symbols of indigeneity. The effectiveness of female machi's nonideological strategies for negotiating with political authorities in democratic Chile, where identity is increasingly politicized, remains uncertain. Whereas male machi define themselves in political terms, participate in intercultural hospitals, and speak to the media, female machi minister to their presidents by claiming the authenticity of tradition. Yet they have political stakes in maintaining their practices. How much longer will female machi be able to wrap themselves in the veil of tradition without identifying with the Mapuche and Chilean national authorities who grant them benefits and support their practices without politicizing their identities?

Notes

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1. When Mapuche protests against forestry companies began in 1997, Frei imposed the martial law of internal security and had Mapuche protesters arrested. He threatened to keep the Mapuche in line "by reason or by force," as the Chilean coat of arms reads. For a description of the results in one community, see Marimán 1998.
2. Until the nineteenth century, voting rights were restricted to literate, taxpaying men, which effectively excluded Mapuche. The notion of political rights of all Chilean citizens was developed in the twentieth century.
3. The most notable resistance movements were those of Indians in Ecuador, Brazil, Colombia, Panama, and Mexico (Chiapas) (Bengoa 2000: 2).
4. Chile is one of the few Latin American countries that has not ratified the International Treaty on Indigenous Peoples in Independent States, passed in Geneva in 1989, which states that "indigenous people should assume the control of their own institutions, ways of life and economic development and maintain and strengthen their identities, languages and religions with the context of the Chilean state in which they live" (Agreement 169 of the International Labor Organization). International Labour Organisation Convention No. 169 Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. Adopted on 27 June 1989 by the General Conference of the International Labour Organization at its 76th session. Entry into force 5 September 1991. <http://vedda.org/ilo169.htm>. Accessed 4 November 2004.
5. The Corporation for National Development (CONADI) was created as an organization co-managed by indigenous people and the government, but in practice it is a state organization that implements government policies regarding indigenous issues and in which the opinion of the indigenous minority does not prevail.
6. Beth Conklin (2002: 1052) focuses on the public faces of shamans in Brazilian Amazonia.
7. The role of Mapuche shamans in the dichotomy of male and female spheres is similar to that of Korean shamans; see Kendall 1998: 62.
8. Patricia Richards (2004) demonstrates how the Chile National Service for Women (SERNAM) reflects this policy.
9. Although the Chilean state constructs itself as urban, it has assimilated traditional rural images of masculinity, combining images of the Spanish conquistador with those of the criollo landowner,

or *huaso*, who becomes feudal lord and father through sexual and social exploitation of indigenous workers (Bengoa 1999; Valdés et al. 1995). Chileans may celebrate Mapuche men who participate in the project of the nation-state; for example, the public statue *Roto Chileno* glorifies blue-collar Chilean soldiers who protected the nation against the Peruvian–Bolivian Confederation in 1839. But, ultimately, it is the *huaso*, not the Mapuche *roto*, who is celebrated as a model of masculinity on Chilean Independence Day.

10. Among those detained have been the leaders of the resistance movement Coordinadora Arauco Malleko. Leaders Victor Ancalf and Mireya Figueroa and longkos Pichun and Norin have remained political prisoners for over a year without trial. There have also been documented cases of torture of Mapuche, secret investigations, the use of anonymous witnesses in trials against Mapuche, and sentences that are disproportionate to the alleged delinquent acts. This is contrasted with the impunity held by those who violate Mapuche rights. The policeman who killed the Mapuche Alex Lemun at a peaceful protest, for example, was set free (Cayuqueo and Painemal 2003; Muga 2004; Marimán 2004). Mapuche have characterized the Chilean democratic government as a “police state” (Cayuqueo and Painemal 2003).
11. Jonathan Hill and Susan Staats (2002) describe a similar process in Guyana.
12. National ideologies do not reflect the social organization of gender, but rather the ideological needs of the state. Male–female relations are often used to express power relationships between nation-states and indigenous subjects (Joan Scott 1999: 48). Nationalism and citizenship have traditionally been linked to heterosexual men and masculinities, whereas women, indigenous people, and effeminate homosexual men are marginalized. Theorists of nationalism have often used maleness and femaleness to distinguish between insiders and outsiders, respectively. In the same way that men and women are defined reciprocally (though never symmetrically), national identity is determined on the basis of what it (presumably) is not. With historical regularity, men tend to stand for national agents who determine the fate of nations in a metonymic relation to the nation as a whole. They are often imagined as rulers who claim the prerogatives of nation building (Mayer 2000: 2). In contrast, women and indigenous people are seen to function only symbolically or metaphorically—as signifiers of ethnic and national difference, marking the margins of nations—and as vehicles for male agency (Schein 2000: 107; Williams 1996: 6, 12).
13. The military dictator General Carlos Ibañez del Campo (president 1925–1931) called the Mapuche “lazy drunkards” (*El Araucano* 1 February 1929).
14. Eighty percent of Chileans have some Indian blood, but racially or culturally mixed persons identify themselves as either Chilean or Mapuche and not as mestizo. Chilean social hierarchies based on race contrast with those of Peruvians, who reject biological “race” as a basis for discrimination in favor of cultural categories such as difference in education or manners. In Peru, indigenous grassroots intellectuals appropriate the label mestizo for self-identification. No indigenous social movement currently exists in Peru that rallies around ethnic identities (de la Cadena 2000: 323).
15. Anthropologists, too, have viewed female machi as bastions of the past and guardians of tradition, in opposition to Mapuche men, who practice politics and struggle to fit into Chilean gender models (Bacigalupo 1994, 1996; Degarrod 1998; Faron 1964; Stuchlik 1976; Titiev 1951). Indeed, anthropologists have portrayed female and male feminized shamans from around the world in terms of deprivation from male-dominant state apparatuses. Female possession is seen as peripheral (Lewis 1971) and as resisting the power of men (Boddy 1989; Lambek 1981). Female shamanism is often depicted as the product of women’s motherhood and fertility (Glass-Coffin 1998; Sered 1994). Women and feminized men are portrayed as having become shamans to compensate for their marginalization from state bureaucracies and institutionalized religions (Basilov 1997; Lewis 1971) or because of their peripheral social status or sexual deprivation (Obeyesekere 1981; Spiro 1967). Machi practice did become predominantly a woman’s occupation in the mid-eighteenth century as other Mapuche institutions gained political power. But the increasing feminization of machi practice should not be read through the discourse of deprivation from dominant state apparatuses. Machi have been females or feminized men since the sixteenth century, 300 years before the creation of the Chilean state, and most machi today are Catholic, as is the Chilean majority.

16. Contrary to Chilean national images of machi as static cultural artifacts, the interrelations between nationalism and shamanism are multifaceted, multidirectional, and dynamic (Hill and Staats 2002: 13; Thomas and Humphrey 1994: 4). Latin American shamans have shaped their own relationships with nation-states, just as shamanic traditions have helped shape local indigenous histories—which range from open resistance to state authorities to covert resistance through syncretistic mergings with state-sponsored religions and even conversion of entire indigenous societies (Brown 1991; Conklin 2002; Hill 1988; Langdon and Baer 1992). Anthropologists have explored how shamanism has often been the target of institutionalized religions and state powers (Anagnost 1987; Atkinson 1992: 315; Balzer 1990; Taussig 1987) and how it becomes marginalized, fragmented, and feminized in relation to the state (Hamayon 1990). They have addressed the transformation of indigenous systems under colonialism, the relations between shamanic activities and state cults, and the ways in which shamanic powers may be used as forms of political agency to mediate resistance or operate as markers of ethnic difference (Thomas and Humphrey 1994).
17. See *Compra venta de Mapuches en valdivia* (*Diario Austral*, 25 October 1942) and *Los araucanos* (*El Mercurio* 11 April 1930).
18. The Capuchin newspaper *El Araucano* celebrated these prohibitions between 1926 and 1928, claiming that *ngillatun* and *machitun* rituals were pagan, immoral, irrational, stupid, and ridiculous traditions that included the sacrifice of animals in abominable and inhuman ways (*El Araucano* 1 August 1926; *El Araucano* 1 January 1928; *El Araucano* 1 April 1928). The newspaper constructed machi as frauds and their healing practices as “destructive,” lamenting that there were many machi and that their practices were increasingly popular (*El Araucano* 4 January 1928).
19. For recent discussions of Mapuche resistance movements and proposals for autonomy, see Vergara 2000, Saavedra 2002, Campos 2002, and Foerster and Vergara 2003.
20. Isolde Reuque argues that the strength of the Mapuche movement came from the fact that communities used their cultural practices in political ways—to rebuild solidarity and participation and to stress the importance of development and unity—although some Mapuche movements involved confrontation and class conflict, not cultural strategies (2002: 113, 115, 148).
21. The value of female machi as instruments for strategic essentialism became obvious to me when I saw women who were not machi presented as machi during Mapuche protests and marches. A Mapuche man explained, “It is easier to bring ordinary Mapuche women to play the drum. There is less protocol to follow, and then if the protesters are drenched or beaten it is less embarrassing when the women are not machi. . . . As long as the journalists think they are machi, that’s fine.”
22. Aucan Huilcaman argues that there are conflicts among Mapuche who look indigenous but have Chilean minds, those who are Mapuche both racially and culturally, and those who neither look nor act like Mapuche, but feel Mapuche because their grandfather belonged to a community (Morin 1999).
23. In 1860, Orelie Antoine de Tournens, a French citizen, and the Mapuche created the Kingdom of Araucania and Patagonia. This kingdom was never recognized by the Chilean state, but remained alive in the Mapuche imagination. In April 1989, Prince Philippe from France visited Chile as the successor of Orelie-Antonie de Tournens, king of Araucania and Patagonia. Philippe recognized the traditional authority of machi and longko near Temuco and said that his purpose was to help the Mapuche regain their sovereignty and territorial autonomy (Marhikewun 1989). Mapuche organizations supported Philippe’s visit, but the Chilean media reported that those organizations protested Philippe’s presence because it threatened the sovereignty of the Chilean nation. A man who claimed to be longko Kilapan rejected Philippe’s presence in Chile because it threatened Chilean sovereignty.
24. Saavedra (2002) argues that the Mapuche do not propose to be an independent nation, but the discourses of the Mapuche resistance movements themselves and the work of other academics such as Vergara (2000), Foerster and Vergara (2003), and Campos (2002) prove the contrary.
25. The Mapuche intellectuals Rosamel Millaman and José Quidel argue that traditional political alliances between Mapuche lineages should be revitalized and made permanent in order to create large, independent Mapuche political organizations.

26. Indigenous mobilizations of "authentic" tradition involve an ambivalent mix of local empowerment, self-stereotyping, alliance, and chauvinism, while differently positioned audiences consume cultural performances for tourists or by the "savage" (Clifford 2000; Conklin 1997).
27. Some researchers, such as Alejandro Saavedra, have drawn on notions of tradition as static and immutable to argue that Mapuche culture and identity are being lost (Saavedra 2002: 208–11, 263) and that the Mapuche problem is not primarily an ethnic one, but one of poverty and social class (Saavedra 2002: 111, 143, 190). Saavedra argues that Mapuche have multiple social identities, but draws on the ideological categories of Chilean national society to construct the Mapuche mainly as rural salaried workers or peasants (2002: 37–45). Such preconceived notions have made it difficult for researchers to comprehend the dynamics of Mapuche culture and the emergence of Mapuche urban identities. Andrea Aravena (2002) demonstrates that migration and distancing from rural community life do not do away with Mapuche identity, but create new identities centered on different Mapuche organizations. In the urban context, ritual plays an important role in the affirmation of Mapuche identity and the recovery of their cultural and political systems.
28. Anthropologists have argued that autonomy exercised within a defined territory does not meet the needs of native peoples in the contemporary world and ignores the political consequences of indigenous economic and social dispersion. The assumption of a unitary identity for intercommunity political action contradicts the promise of a plurinational system with alternative political values and the application of indigenous power in ever-wider settings of the state, market, and civil society (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2002; Legaré 1995). Mapuche essentialist notions of a traditional, utopic motherland also conflict with Mapuche proposals of "development with identity," which combine ecological interests with technological innovation (Ancan 1997; Chihuailaf 1999: 123) and the development of Mapuche industries. Members of Mapuche resistance movements, however, are interested not in accounting for the diverse ideals, values, and realities of the predominantly migrant, urban Mapuche, but in creating a homogeneous image based on tradition and a utopian homeland for the purpose of political mobilization. This preoccupation with territorial enclaves and unifying identities can become a form of "nested nationalism" in which the autonomy and diversity of indigenous people is carefully organized and simplified by the national categories that created the indigenous problem in the first place (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2002; James Scott 1999: 4). Mapuche cultural revitalization through essentialist discourses should be read as a strategic process of political articulation and cultural hybridization, not as a nostalgic escape to the past (Clifford 1988; Warren 1998: 171).
29. Anthropologists have argued that in places where a rural land base has come to stand for indigenous society, native communities have been forced to recover the territorial base usurped from them by colonizers (Keesing 1989: 29; Rappaport and Dover 1996: 30).
30. Entregan fundo a comunidad Mapuche Antonio Ñirripil, *Diario Austral*. 7 April 2001; Convocan a ngillatun para reestablecer confianzas, *Diario Austral*. 19 April 2001.
31. A man from a Mapuche organization in Santiago argued, "Development is a form of assimilation. Neoliberal policies associated with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been detrimental to us. We propose a subsistence economy. Capitalist development is lineal and infinite; we have to limit that." Other Mapuche argue that their future depends on having control over their resources and participating in Mapuche development projects, not those that benefit the Chilean state. Most Mapuche oppose the neoliberal economic models applied by the Chilean state. Over thirty Mapuche organizations drafted a letter to the members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) ministers who met in Pucón on 4 and 5 June 2002, asking them not to impose liberal trade relations in Chile as they are detrimental to indigenous people (*Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization* 6 June 2004.)
32. José Marimán points out that many Mapuche speak about the importance of maintaining "uncontaminated tradition" but incorporate many aspects of modern technology and the urban world into their everyday lives. He points out that Mapuche society and culture were always permeable to cultural borrowings and that most Mapuche leaders have links with urban and outside cultural influences (Marimán 2004).

33. *Diario Austral*. 21 December 2000; *Diario Austral*. 19 January 2001; *Diario Austral*. 1 June 2001; *Diario Austral*. 15 March 2001; *Diario Austral*. 21 March 2001; *Diario Austral*. 17 January 2001.
34. This image recalls the Gary Larson cartoon of “natives” stowing the TV and VCR as figures in pith helmets come up the path, over the caption, “Anthropologists! Anthropologists!”
35. In Venezuela, ironically, the celebration of the Day of the Monkey is constructed as local and indigenous, while its most important validation is derived from national media and the state (Guss 2000: 81).
36. At the same time, the high market value of machi practice has led some Mapuche to steal and resell sacred objects on the black market. Machi José said, “In Santiago there were eight old rewes that had been stolen from some communities in the south and they brought them to sell them for eight hundred dollars each. I stood the rewes up and prayed to them so that they would not punish the people involved and we left them at the Centro de Investigaciones until they found out which communities the rewes belonged to” (interview 17 December 2001).
37. This strategy has also been used by some Mapuche feminist movements. Isolde Reuque (2002: 216–217) avoided becoming involved with political parties for many years, because political parties divide Mapuche social organizations and movements. Mapuche organizations, however, often run by men, prefer to engage with Mapuche who have the backing of specific political parties. Isolde finally joined the Christian Democratic party in order to have weight and influence in Mapuche social organizations and political systems.
38. The Ecuadorian Otavalo practice a translocal relational autonomy linked to the geographic mobility of peasant careers (Colloredo-Mansfeld 2002).
39. Isolde Reuque (2002: 227, 232–235) argues that male Mapuche leaders draw on an outdated machismo in order to marginalize women in the realm of politics. They do not recognize Mapuche women’s roles and do not like for Mapuche women to speak in public or hold formal political positions of power.
40. Machi Sergio stated, “When Chile almost went to war with Argentina and there were trenches and tunnels here down south, I was ready to volunteer to fight for my General Pinochet and our country Chile.” Sergio believed Pinochet upheld Mapuche tradition, whereas the return to democracy under a civilian government has seen the birth of numerous native rights groups that, he says, are not very representative: “We, the Mapuche, have progressed a little because of this, but we still will never be in agreement about the land which was taken away from us. We will never approve completely of any government, but of the Chilean presidents, Pinochet was the best. Some Mapuche are not so bright and allow themselves to be manipulated by the socialists.”
41. See, for example, the video *Ngillatun, Rogativa Mapuche*, made by ICTUS–Grupo Pasos in 1992.

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The Mapuche man who became a woman shaman:

Selfhood, gender transgression, and competing cultural norms

ABSTRACT

Through the life experiences of Marta, a Mapuche male transgendered shaman in Chile, I analyze how selfhood is gendered dynamically by individual desire and competing cultural and religious norms. Marta's unique identity as a divine heterosexual woman is based on a spiritual transformation, her manner of dressing, and her gender performances. It challenges conventional notions of transvestism, transgenderism, and homosexuality linked to sexed bodies. At the same time, Marta's self is shaped and constrained by the normative gender ideologies of the Virgin Mary, shamanic lore, the Mapuche, and dominant Chilean society. [*shaman, transgendered, selfhood, gender, sexuality, Mapuche, Chile*]

M*achi* Marta covered her face and sobbed as she left the men's jail in the town of Navidad, southern Chile, on November 24, 1995. She had been detained for 24 hours on a charge of homicide by poisoning, the shocking result of a healing ritual she had performed for a 17-year-old boy from a neighboring Mapuche reservation. Most *machi*—Mapuche shamans—give their patients herbal remedies to drink as part of the healing process, but the boy's mother thought Marta's herbal medicine had been deadly. Police released Marta when an autopsy showed the boy had died of a heart lesion and lung infection. She left the jail dressed as a man for the first time since her shamanic initiation as a Mapuche *machi* 20 years earlier. "In the men's jail they put men's pants on me. This was not my destiny," she cried.

Reporters waiting outside the prison assailed Marta with questions. "Aren't you a man?" "Why do you dress like a woman?" "Did you perform witchcraft?" To which Marta retorted, "God made me like this and gave me my name Marta when I became a *machi*. Now you have destroyed the *machi*. God will punish you." The media publicly discussed the penis that Marta hid under her skirt, thereby destroying her public image as a woman and reconstructing her as a homosexual, transvestite man. Marta's community then reevaluated her gender identity, personhood, and spiritual powers according to *machi* norms and Chilean national gender ideologies. The community regendered Marta as a man, criminalized her—despite her demonstrated innocence—as an assassin, a deviant homosexual, and a witch, and expelled her.

Marta was born Bernardo, a sickly boy who was teased by his male playmates for drumming on an old tin can by the river instead of playing football. Bernardo's fevers, dizzy spells, and bodily sores, along with his shamanic visions, were typical of *machi* callings. His interest in wearing women's skirts and makeup, his falsetto voice, and his overt, erotic interest in other men set him apart from other male neophytes. But it was Bernardo's dream about the Virgin Mary and his possession by the *machi* spirit of his great-grandmother Flora that transformed him, at the age of 21,

into a woman shaman named Marta. Marta's identity as a woman machi was legitimated because it was not her choice but, rather, a divine gender transformation effected by Flora's spirit and the Virgin Mary. Marta's womanhood, however, was controversial in the eyes of many Mapuche, because it was unique among machi.

In this article I engage with those anthropologists exploring different cultural representations of selfhood (Appadurai 1990; Desjarlais 2000; Ewing 1990; Geertz 1973; Langness 1987), especially with those addressing the embodiment of persons and the personification of bodies (Lamb 2000; Lambek and Strathern 1998; Scheper-Hughes 1992). Some authors have explored cultural understandings of sexual and gender deviance through studies of transgendered persons who modify and display their bodies to fit gendered cultural norms (Kulick 1998; Prieur 1998) or who perform spiritual roles in societies where gender variance is culturally sanctioned (Blackwood 1984, 1997; Callender and Kochems 1983, 1986; Jacobs et al. 1997; Lang 1998; Nanda 1985, 2000; Ramet 1996; Roscoe 1991, 1998).

An analysis of Marta's gender identity forces reconsideration of the assumption that individual choice lies at the heart of transgendered identities and that these identities are forged with the purpose of transgressing traditional cultural norms. Her gender struggles draw attention to how selfhood is gendered and sexualized dynamically in relation to competing cultural norms. Diverse religious and gendered scripts shape and constrain the personhoods of transgendered shamans in societies where gender variance is unacceptable on a permanent basis. Marta's main purpose is not to resist dominant discourses but to pragmatically and creatively negotiate her gendered self in relation to local and dominant imageries advanced by others.

Marta's unique gender identity also forces rethinking of the terminology applied to transgressive gender identities and sexualities and the role that the body plays in these constructions. Her gender struggles demonstrate that contestation and conflict are endemic to the gender transformation process, distinct from notions of transvestism, transgenderism, and transsexualism in the prevailing literature. Marta challenges the notion that transgendered people construct their identities by modifying and displaying their bodies, demonstrating how transgendered people may also construct their personhood by hiding and clothing their bodies.

Elsewhere, I have examined how machi complicate notions of personhood and sexuality. They shift among traditional Mapuche notions of gender during rituals but assume the gender identities of the dominant culture in their everyday lives (Bacigalupo n.d.). Now, through the life experiences of machi Marta, I look at the relationship between deviant gender identities, individual desire, and

the normative gender ideologies of Catholicism, machi lore, the Mapuche, and dominant Chilean society. Marta possesses a unique identity as a divine heterosexual Mapuche woman that is based on her spiritual transformation, her manner of dressing, and her gender performance. Her identity challenges conventional notions of transvestism, transgenderism, and homosexuality linked to a sexed body and offers new perspectives on the relationship between personhood, gender, and sexuality. Her case demonstrates that even nonnormative gender identities are multiple and discontinuous and that transvestite gender performances are not always parodic. Sometimes they reflect an individual's sense of self. Marta's identity, however, does not depend solely on individual desire but is also shaped by normative gender ideologies. I examine the circumstances in which Marta's conformity to Mapuche, Chilean, and Catholic gendered norms allows her to be a heterosexual woman and a machi by keeping her gender deviance a "public secret."

I also explore the limits of gender deviance, which became evident when Marta's male body was made public through her imprisonment. When her identity shattered and both machi and dominant Chilean norms were imposed, Marta was re-created as a homosexual transvestite man, a criminal, and a witch. There was a limit to how much of Marta's gender deviance and transgression the Mapuche could encompass before their fundamental notions were compromised and social control was enforced. Ideologies of power and knowledge were implicated in the discourses of sex, gender, and sexuality that read Marta's identity as legitimate or deviant.

Mapuche cultural complexity

Marta's diverse gendered narratives must be read in the context of the complex cultural realities that over a million Mapuche in Chile face today. Mapuche history is punctuated by Spanish colonialism, missionization by Catholic priests, resistance to Chilean national projects of assimilation and development, and the incorporation and resignification of Chilean majority discourses. Once accomplished guerilla warriors who resisted the Inca and the Spaniards, the Mapuche were finally defeated by Chilean armies in 1884 after Chile's independence from Spain. The Chilean armies seized their territories and massacred their people. The remaining Mapuche were placed on reservations in the Mapuche heartland between the Bio-Bio and Calle-Calle rivers, and their land was sold to settlers. The landless Mapuche had to work as wage laborers for farmers and forestry companies or migrate to the cities to become impoverished secondary citizens (Bacigalupo in press b). As land fertility associated with femininity became a major concern and warfare associated with masculinity ceased to be important,

women predominated over men as machi. Mapuche incorporation of Chilean homophobic ideals that rejected male machi, who were partially transvestite in ritual contexts, also contributed to the predominance of women machi (Bacigalupo 1996, 2004b). Women machi are not transvestite, but they are more powerful and independent than other Mapuche women.

The Mapuche suffered further assimilation under military dictatorship (1973–89), but the return to democracy in Chile in 1989 saw the passage of Indigenous laws recognizing Mapuche culture and language (*Mapudungu*). The Chilean majority still discriminate against the Mapuche, however, and Mapuche must speak Spanish fluently to be hired for wage labor. The Mapuche continue to see their territories and forests as central to their cosmology, their shamanic practices, and identity politics, even though 80 percent of Mapuche inhabit urban areas. Mapuche rural communities are threatened by the building of highways and hydroelectric dams and by the rapid exploitation of forests by the logging industry. Several Mapuche movements are struggling to gain recognition of a Mapuche nation within the Chilean state. As Mapuche warfare discourses against the Chilean state have reemerged, male machi have become more numerous. Other Mapuche have tried to hide their indigenous ethnicity and abide by majority discourses and consumer culture.

Mapuche view machi as custodians of tradition, yet shamanic practices are dynamic, flexible, and hybrid. Most machi are baptized Catholic and have incorporated and resignified elements from Catholicism, folk medicine, biomedicine, and national symbols into their healing epistemologies. Catholic priests have the reputation of being tolerant of machi and are often invited to participate in collective fertility ceremonies, called "*ngillatun*," and in funerary rituals and, sometimes, to pray during these occasions. Male machi feed the correlation between machi, priests, and doctors to assert their masculinity and to aspire to positions of power and national prestige. As "celibate priests," "spiritual doctors," and "spiritual warriors," male machi are relatively protected from the labels "homosexual" and "witch." Female machi often label themselves "machi moon priestesses," "nuns," and "angels" and often use images of the Virgin, Saint Francis, or Jesus in their practices. The Bahai have gained followers among the Mapuche by recording Mapuche music, including prayers performed by machi, and playing it on the radio. Evangelical pastors challenge machi practice by labeling it the "art of the devil" (Bacigalupo in press b). Pentecostalism, however, has become popular in some Mapuche communities because it reproduces the central elements of Mapuche ritual and machi practice, such as ancestor propitiation and healing with the help of spirits (Foerster 1993:156–157). Machi rarely live in Pentecostal

communities. Marta, like most practicing machi, lives in a community that self-identifies as Catholic.

Becoming a divine woman

Bernardo was born in the rural community of Chanten amid loud claps of thunder, which his mother interpreted as a machi calling. All machi experience an involuntary mystical call to their vocation, but Marta is unique in that her initiation also created her identity as a woman. Her community argues that she was born a boy named Bernardo, but Marta denies that Bernardo ever existed and reinvents herself as a girl and a woman:

Four machi came to get me and told me it was time for me to be a machi, that God was looking for me. I was dressed in white. They presented me with a beautiful brown horse. "With this you will go everywhere," they said. Then two handsome men pulled me up into heaven with two big chains, and in the middle of heaven there was a lake, which had fire. Before entering the house of God, two virgin women dressed in white examined me all over: my nails, my tongue, and my feet. Then they said, "You have not committed any sins. You go up to God's house." It was a small world. God was sitting at this long, varnished table surrounded by good and bad machi. . . . He was a thin old man with a beard, dressed in black. . . . He was half crippled. I went into a little room and there they taught me everything, just like a schoolgirl. There they advised me what to do and showed me my *kultrun* [shamanic drum] with stars and suns on it and a beautiful brown horse. . . . The mother of God, the Virgin Mary, was also there. She had a baby on her head and a brown dress. She had a paper like a will in her hand . . . and on top of her purse she had a huge Bible and a silver cross. . . . She screamed everything from above because she was deaf. "Don't leave," she said. "I am praying for this child that I have abandoned," she said. She gave me my gifts.

Marta's dream blends Catholic, medical, and Mapuche shamanic images in a deeply personal way. The gift of her shamanic drum, the *kultrun*, speaks of her readiness to heal others, and her shamanic horse allows her to engage in spiritual travel. Her dream images blend purity and sensuality. She is both the prepubescent schoolgirl who gains healing knowledge and the Virgin Mary who proves her miraculous fertility by giving birth to a baby from her head. Handsome men pull her up into heaven, where her body and soul are touched by virgin nurses dressed in white. Marta, too, is dressed in white, "like a nurse," and she assumes Marian imagery: She is found to be "pure and without sin," like Mary of the Immaculate Conception, and she ascends directly into heaven to be in God's presence, like the Virgin of the Assumption.

Marta is the Virgin's child, but she also becomes the Virgin and "inherits" her feminine symbolic power and "miraculous fertility."

The ritual work of machi is based on well-defined notions of male and female, which machi manipulate to achieve healing. Machi usually embody a machi spirit and, through it, four identities established in the Mapuche creation story: Old Man, Old Woman, Young Man, and Young Woman, who together constitute the deity Ngünechen (Bacigalupo 2004a, in press a). Marta is exceptional among machi in that she privileges her gender and sexual identity as a heterosexual woman over the healing knowledge obtained through the ritual embodiment of different genders, regardless of the consequences to her machi practice. Whereas other machi enter and exit male, female, and "cogendered" identities (those that move between masculine and feminine gender polarities or combine them) in the context of ritual, Marta embodies only the feminine aspects of the deity Ngünechen.¹ The masculine elements remain external to her. She creates the fiction of her divine heterosexual womanhood by combining several local and national feminine personas: those of a celibate divine woman who embodies the Virgin Mary, the female spirit of her great-grandmother Flora, a spiritual schoolgirl, a virgin nurse, a sensual woman lover, a traditional woman machi, an urban Chilean woman, and a dutiful wife and mother.²

Two nights after his dream, on December 7, the eve of the feast of the Immaculate Conception, Bernardo swelled up and foamed at the mouth. His sores burst, leaving blood on the sheets, which he interpreted as his first menstruation. At midnight Bernardo embraced a foye tree (*Drymis winteri*). He was possessed by Flora's spirit and by the Virgin and was initiated as machi Marta: "I embraced a foye tree and prayed. I was squirming. They [Flora's spirit and the Virgin] gave me a Nescafé tin and I played it like a kultrun. I was gone. My head was drunk. They talked to me but I didn't answer. I didn't talk. Maybe I was with the spirit. . . . I knew what remedies I had to give myself. I knew I was machi Marta."

Every neophyte undergoes a change of identity when he or she becomes a machi, but in Marta's case the transformation was especially dramatic because it involved a change in gender identity and name as well as the incorporation of the identities of Flora's spirit and the Virgin Mary. Such gender transformations are rare and controversial among the Mapuche but are common in other shamanic cultures such as the Chukchi and the Amur, in which some men must transform their gender to become shamans (Balzer 1996:168; Bogoras 1904:449–451).³

Marta's divine gender transformation calls into question the notion that at the heart of gender identity lies personal choice, a notion debated in feminist scholarly

circles in the United States and Western Europe, especially, in gay, lesbian, and queer studies circles. It also defies Chilean popular gender notions, according to which becoming a woman, *volverse mujer*, is a passive process of hormonal development. Men are ordinarily perceived as "being made," *hacerse hombre*, through tests of bravery, sexual initiation, drinking, or work, or by taking responsibility as head of household. The expression *hacerse mujer*, "being made a woman," refers mainly to women's sexual initiation. Machi, however, are both born and made. *Nacer* (to be born) machi refers to the passive process by which individuals are born with the power of divination and are harassed by spirits and illnesses until they are initiated. *Hacerse* machi refers to the process by which a machi is made through training and initiation. Marta reinforces the idea that she was made a machi and a woman by the spirits and the Virgin, who transformed an ordinary girl into a divine woman through initiation and a divinely induced menarche.

In dominant Chilean discourses and in many Mapuche contexts, becoming a woman in a male body implies a loss of status, and Marta is criticized on this basis behind her back. Most male machi are willing to masculinize themselves in everyday life to comply with national gender norms and to dispel homophobic national images of male machi as effeminate homosexuals, so long as their ritual gender performances are not compromised. Male machi reinvent themselves in the prestigious male public roles of celibate priests and heterosexual spiritual doctors. Contrarily, Marta does not negotiate national masculinities. She believes she is the Virgin, who suffers because of men, and she celebrates her birthday on the day of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, December 8. Her mimesis of the Virgin, the most powerful Chilean symbol of the divinely feminine, the pure, and the maternal, is what allows her to confront the community's mistrust of her gender identity. The Virgin legitimates her in the community's eyes beyond all other local and national gendered discourses.⁴

Skirts, shawls, and makeup

Marta performs gender and her identity as a woman by wearing women's clothes and enacting feminine gender conventions. She divorces gender from genitalia; her clothes represent her womanhood in a way that her anatomy cannot.⁵ In performing herself permanently as various types of women, she combines Chilean national stereotypes of femininity, centered on manners, appearance, sensuality, and domesticity, and Mapuche ideals of womanhood, which include modesty and discretion.⁶

On November 5, 1991, I visited Marta with three Mapuche men—a student and two schoolteachers. Marta wore a blue skirt, a flowered apron, and a pair of heavy

silver earrings. A tight gray sweater exposed her broad shoulders and flat chest. Her knee-high stockings; her short, dyed, reddish blond hair; and her heavily powdered face spoke of her appreciation for urban models of femininity. But her headscarf and black shawl were typical both of traditional Mapuche women and of machi. Marta smiled and covered her mouth to hide her missing teeth. Although Marta considers herself ugly, she loves posing for photographs when she is clean shaven and wearing makeup, jewelry, and her best clothes. She glanced coyly at the male visitors and invited us into the small wooden hut where she lived with her then-husband, Miguel. She walked daintily across the room, pulled the kettle out of her modern, white kitchen cabinet, and put water on to boil for mate, all the while talking to us in her falsetto voice.

Although Mapuche women often consider Marta to be excessively feminine and urban, she does not sexualize herself by wearing miniskirts, pumps, or tight clothing. Unlike Brazilian or Mexican male transgendered prostitutes (Fry 1995; Kulick 1998; Prieur 1998), she does not pump silicone into her body, wear false breasts, or take hormones. Unlike U.S. transsexuals (Hausman 1995), she does not dream of a sex-change operation. Marta was furious when a woman friend suggested she wear a bikini to swim in the river, because it would have drawn attention to her inadequate body.⁷ Although Marta's clothing is brighter than that of other Mapuche women and female machi, she wears long skirts and aprons that deemphasize her chest and buttocks. Marta hopes her permanent performance of this hybrid womanhood will gain her recognition as a woman in both Chilean and Mapuche gendered systems. But, in fact, her femininity still creates controversy.

The Mapuche men accompanying me that day were taken aback by the disjunction between Marta's self-presentation as a woman, her male anatomical sex, and her excessive performance of femininity. As we drove back to town, one of the men commented about Marta's manners and appearance, "Machi Jorge uses a shawl, and machi Jacinto dresses in women's clothes in rituals; many men machi do that. But I've never seen a machi like this, always like such a woman."

Marta is considered an anomaly by contemporary Mapuche, who have no category for permanent gender variance akin to that of the Native American *berdache*—"people who partially or completely take on the culturally defined role of the other sex and who are classified neither as men nor women, but as genders of their own in their respective cultures" (Lang 1998:xi).⁸ Neither do the Mapuche recognize male transgendered roles like those of Brazilian *bichas* or Indian *hijras*—males who are considered like women but not women, because their exaggerated dress and manners contrast with those of ordinary

women and because they sometimes maintain the status and privileges of men (Kulick 1998; Nanda 2000:30). In the past, the Mapuche recognized gender variance associated with spiritual roles. Until the end of the 17th century, shamans—then known as *machi weye*—were males with special powers because of their permanent cogendered identities and relationships with spirits, which allowed them to perform as mediators between human and spiritual worlds. Machi weye oscillated between masculine and feminine poles and combined women's and men's behavior, dress, and styles in varying degrees. This cogendered condition could be associated with passive or active sexual acts with women or men or with celibacy, the meanings of which varied according to context.⁹ Elsewhere I discuss the role of machi weye and their contributions to the literature on berdache and third-gender people (Bacigalupo 2004b).

Contemporary Mapuche have not revived the role of machi weye, unlike their Native North American counterparts, who have created the terms *two spirit* (Jacobs et al. 1997), *third gender* and *fourth gender* (Roscoe 1998), and *man-woman* and *woman-man* (Lang 1998) to replace the term *berdache*. The concept of "third-gender persons" was created by Euro-American scholars to describe people around the globe with gender identities distinct from those of women and men. Such persons are labeled "cross-gendered" or "transgendered" because their gender and sex do not match up with the Euro-American woman-man binary system. Some writers argue that the terms *third gender*, *alternate gender*, and *two-spirit* allow one to go beyond the woman-man binary and explicate multi-gendered societies (Garber 1992; Herdt 1984; Jacobs and Thomas 1994; Nanda 1985; Roscoe 1991; Wikan 1991). Yet, in its attempt to universalize what is culturally variable and context specific, the "third-gender" concept itself draws on Western woman-man gender binarism. In this context, the "third-gender" notion reinforces the Euro-American idea that sex is naturally associated with gender and fixes the gender subjectivities of women, men, and third-gender persons as static and permanent (Epple 1998; Kulick 1998; Prieur 1998).

Carolyn Epple (1998) criticizes the categories of "alternate gender" and "berdache" for their failure to define what constitutes gender, for their universalistic assumption that gender and sex are relevant criteria in cultural classifications of persons, and for reproducing the binary gender system. She criticizes the term *two-spirit* because it presupposes that what is masculine and feminine is known and stable across cultures and because it does not address local, native cultural meanings. Mapuche today privilege dominant Chilean notions of gender and sexuality over historical Mapuche categories. They read gender deviance as homosexuality and define the term *weye* as "homosexual" (homosexual man), "cola" (passive homosexual), and "maricón" (faggot; Febres

1882:106; Montecino 1999:52)—the last a heavily stigmatized word that also serves as a synonym for “coward” and “betrayed.” Some Mapuche use the terms *malleo* (single men who do not get married and who like men), *domowentru* (woman–man), and *hermafrodita* (hermaphrodite) to refer to either historical cogender identities, effeminate men, or men who are passive homosexuals.

Marta’s male body, clothed as a woman’s, and her excessive everyday urban femininity are unique among contemporary machi, despite an increasing association of machi practice in Chile with femininity, fertility, and abundance. Most contemporary male machi use Mapuche women’s shawls, head scarves, and jewelry during rituals for the purpose of seducing spirits—a central component of machi ceremonies—but they do not use them in everyday life. Male machi become feminine enough to gain access to spiritual power through ritual dress, gesture, and voice, as the spirits require them to do, but at the same time they self-identify as heterosexual or celibate men. Marta’s feminine performances, in contrast, not only seduce the spirits but also are meant to seduce men and to reaffirm her identity as a woman.

Marta’s excessive femininity is also at odds with the independent, forthright, and opinionated attitudes of other women machi. The irony is that although female machi stand as images of the feminine in their daily lives (an image that Marta emulates), they are, because of their spiritual powers, considered masculine transgressors who never conform completely to the role of women. Many Mapuche consider Marta to be “too feminine” to be a woman machi or to perform exorcisms. Yet Marta’s male anatomical sex limits her performance of femininity. Because of her symbolic womanhood and miraculous fertility, Marta officiates in collective rituals in which communities appeal to the spirits for fertility, animals, and harvests. She can grant fertility to other women in healing rituals and can be a mother to her adoptive children, but her community argues that she should not practice midwifery because she cannot give birth herself. By modeling herself on Chilean and Mapuche popular notions of femininity but not on those for machi, Marta renounces both the independence and masculine qualities accorded to female machi and the legitimacy accorded to male “machi priests,” “biblical machi,” and “spiritual doctors.”

Marta’s women’s clothes are reinterpreted as transvestitic outside their ritual use, but her permanent performance of selfhood as a hybrid Mapuche–Chilean woman is different from the temporary roles played by urban Chilean male transvestites in glamorous, staged performances in Santiago clubs.¹⁰ These transvestites have a “male subjectivity in drag, a man-made femininity” (Garber 1992:96–97), whereas Marta seeks to become a woman on an everyday basis and does so by looking more like a

daring Mapuche woman or a coquettish urban Chilean woman than like a glamour queen, a prostitute, or a stripper. She differs from male transvestites in that the goal of her everyday gendered performance is to legitimate herself as a woman and not just to parody or celebrate femininity or to make her body a site for male desire.

The exact meaning of Marta’s gender performances, however, remains elusive. Usually she wants to become a woman in earnest, but sometimes she parodies a frivolous, urban femininity for public effect. On one occasion Marta saw a mouse, shrieked, and leaped onto a chair while looking at two male visitors out of the corner of her eye to see whether her performance was a success. The men laughed at her stereotypical rendering of femininity, and the pantomime continued until one of the men, Miguel, and I found the mouse and killed it. Male transvestites and Marta, too, become women and parody women to different degrees, depending on audience and context. As Roger Lancaster (1997) argues, transvestism is a profound equivocation. Transvestites can transgress gender norms or intensify them, deviate from or normalize them, resist homosexual flirtation or enable it, be playful, serious, or both. Transvestites trade against some representational convention or image—a standard gender, a normal body, a scripted role—but multiple intentions and many possible selves are always in play.

Chilean transvestites, transsexuals, and transgendered males are recognized within certain prescribed urban social contexts, whereas Marta’s identity is recognized in no contemporary, culturally sanctioned Mapuche role. Marta self-identifies as a woman sanctioned by the Virgin Mary because this is the only feminine gendered role deemed acceptable by both Mapuche and Chilean dominant society.

For well over a decade, scholars like Marilyn Strathern (1988) and Sherry Ortner (1990, 1995) have argued that gender and sexuality are heterogeneous, culturally bound notions that are constructed, performed, negotiated, and contested in practice. And scholars like Teresa de Lauretis (1987) and Faye Ginsburg and Anna Tsing (1990) have pointed to the intense contestation of gender meanings found on the margins or borders of socioeconomic classes, cultures, and national groupings. What Marta’s case brings to light is the need to further explore the cultural and individual constructions of bodies, like Marta’s, that are Othered by some of the same notions used to argue for contestation and heterogeneity, namely, the very notions of “transvestite,” “transsexual,” and “transgendered.”

Feminine wife, masculine desires

Not only does Marta enact her femininity through her clothing and behavioral style, but she also believes in the heterosexual fantasy that marriage, a house, and children

bring happiness. She finds fulfillment in the role of a married, childbearing woman. Other machi often have family members perform most domestic chores so that they are free to find herbal remedies, heal patients, and attend rituals. Some machi even become ill if they perform household tasks. Even though Marta's spirit, Flora, demanded that Marta concentrate on her healing instead of performing domestic chores, Marta constructs her social self within the domestic realm.¹¹ She cooks, cleans, washes, and sews—tasks typically gendered as female in traditional Chilean society—to legitimate herself as a dutiful wife. She proved her wifeliness and motherhood by taking a husband and adopting a child. My own dress and behavior served as a negative model against which Marta constructed her own femininity. In scolding me for wearing muddy boots and jeans and for my lack of interest in having children, Marta highlighted her own feminine clothes, her wifeliness, and her motherhood.

As of 2002, Marta had experienced three consecutive long-term relationships with men whom she viewed as her husbands and who were recognized as such by her community. These men participated in her gender fiction, read her gender as that of a heterosexual woman, and legitimated her as wife and mother. Marta's love life, however, was filled with suspicion, suffering, and betrayal. Following the traditional Mapuche patrilocal system, she lived in the communities of her husbands, but in each case her in-laws opposed the marriage. Chilean law forbids same-sex marriages, and few people recognized Marta and her successive husbands as married couples. Marta considers the difficulty of her married life to be divine punishment from the Virgin and her machi spirit, Flora, for being a wife.

During her machi initiation, Marta met her first husband, Adolfo, a woodcutter with whom she lived for ten years. Adolfo was initially supportive of Marta's profession, but by 1988 he had become jealous and violent. Marta left Adolfo and in 1991 met her second husband, Miguel, while she was curing his sister. She describes Miguel as a gentle, quiet man who was in love with her. She claims that this was "real love," because she did not win Miguel with love magic. Miguel helped Marta with her machi activities, and to a large extent they lived on Marta's earnings as a machi, reversing the usual Mapuche gender roles. Marta wished Miguel would get his own job and bring in extra money, but he refused because he thought Marta might take another lover while he was away. Miguel left Marta in 1995 when she was imprisoned, and in 1996 Marta met her third husband, Juan Carlos.

Marta became a mother by adopting Clemencio, a ten-year-old boy, in 1992. Clemencio's mother—Marta's patient and friend—"gave" Marta one of her ten children to raise as her own, a fairly common practice between Mapuche women who have many children and those who

have none. Marta claimed that her son had been born through her miraculous fertility. She mythologized herself, Miguel, and Clemencio as Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Her symbolic womanhood and miraculous fertility legitimated her role as machi moon priestess and her ability to grant fertility during her performance in ngillatun rituals. She wanted Clemencio to learn about machi lore and accompany her to rituals, but he was much more interested in listening to Mexican *ranchero* music and visiting his friends in Navidad. Still, Marta and Clemencio had a good mother-son relationship. Marta motivated him to do well in school and believed that "someday Clemencio will bring us money with his intelligence."

Yet countering Marta's desire to be, and to be perceived as, a good wife and mother were her overt erotic desire for men, her bawdy humor, and her drinking. These traits masculinized her, placing her in the same category as men, *locas* (effeminate homosexual transvestites), and "licentious" women, although her erotic identity was that of a woman who wanted to be penetrated by men.¹² Marta's sexual experiences with men conflicted with the Virgin Mary's and Flora's demands that she remain a celibate divine woman. How could Marta be a divine woman who embodied the Virgin Mary yet also be an erotic seductress who had an active sexual life with men? Marta tried to legitimate her erotic femininity by veiling her penis and verbalizing her desire to be penetrated by men. But many people interpreted these actions as those of a *loca*, not those of a woman. Marta's masculine desires threatened her womanhood. She experienced the pleasures the Virgin would not have, and she eventually paid for it with public humiliation and loss of power.

During her bouts of drinking—often after curing or divining—Marta loses her falsetto voice and becomes more aggressive. A Mapuche man explained, "Marta's spirit gets angry when she drinks, so it leaves. Then she becomes more devilish, like a man. Like me," he laughed. Once, while drunk, Marta gave Miguel a black eye and injured his head with a metal saucepan. Another time, she shouted insults at me for refusing to pile more patients into my Suzuki jeep as I drove her, Miguel, and three patients to her house. This sort of behavior differs substantially from the Mapuche ideal that women should drink only occasionally, in private, with family and close friends. Marta's public drinking more closely resembles the behavior of men, and, tellingly, she was not criticized by others for drinking with men in public. The only person who disapproved of Marta's drunkenness because it transgressed womanly behavior was Clemencio, her adoptive son. To him, Marta was always a woman, and he did not want her to behave like a licentious one.

Marta loves to talk about sex. "If you sleep with me, then you'll get better," Marta joked with one of her male patients. She told one of her women patients that she

would give her remedies to make her husband “hot as a schoolboy.” She teased her women clients about “having lots of sex but pretending to be saints” and asked me about the size of my boyfriend’s penis and about his sexual preferences. Her sexual joking is considered masculine behavior, inappropriate for “good” Mapuche or Chilean women, who are expected to be discreet about sex. Most Mapuche males who have sex with other males keep their sexual acts a secret to maintain their public, masculine, heterosexual personas. Marta keeps her sex a secret and publicly talks about her womanly desire for men, emulating the urban seductress. Some of Marta’s men patients teased Marta back, calling her *gozadora* (pleasure-seeking woman) and *hambrienta* (woman hungry for sex). Most of her women clients ignored these jokes, just as they would advances from men. A few laughed. Not one of them teased Marta back.

Marta’s erotic subjectivity is both similar to and different from that of male transvestites and transgendered persons. The penis remains a fetishized object of male transvestite identity (Garber 1992:95, 98; Stoller 1968:188). For transgendered prostitutes in Brazil and Mexico (Kulick 1998; Prieur 1998), the penetrating penis is the insignia of male identity and sexuality, and the penis itself can define men or males who, like such prostitutes, are non-men but not women either. They desire men and fashion their bodies to be objects of desire for men, but they identify as men and do not wish to be women or female (Kulick 1998).¹³ Marta is like transsexuals in that she deconstructs the naturalness of womanhood and reproduces binary male-dominant models in her gender performance rather than producing any boundary-breaking behavior (Hausman 1995; Kulick 1998). She is unlike transgendered males (and other machi) in that she does not self-consciously create an alternative place for gender possibility, although others who see her male physical features sometimes perceive her in this way. Marta draws on her alleged receptive sexuality with men to construct her erotic desire as feminine and her sexuality as heterosexual.

Marta’s idealized statements about her receptive female sexuality and the masculine penetrative roles of her partners may have little to do with what she and her partners actually do in bed.¹⁴ Nevertheless, it is a fiction she maintains so that she and her partner can play a heterosexual couple. She refers to her sexual relations with her husband Miguel as *wentrutun*, meaning “to have sex with a man.” Although it was generally assumed that Miguel was the “active” partner, anatomical sex also had a bearing on Miguel’s perception of his sexual acts with Marta. Miguel did not refer to his sexual relations with Marta with the Mapuche term *domotun*, meaning “to have sex with a woman,” but with the term *kuretan*, meaning “to fuck.” Most other Mapuche followed the popular Chilean penetration paradigm and considered

Marta to be more homosexual than her husband Miguel, because she was effeminate. They assumed she performed a receptive sexual role, whereas Miguel was thought to be the penetrating partner and often retained his identity as a macho.

According to Marta, sexual acts between humans, as well as those between humans and spirits, are caused by erotic desire and involve power and control. Marta collapses witchcraft, homicide, and perverse seduction in her shamanic imagery. She views evil beings as possessing phallic power over her, and she associates male seduction with evil, witchcraft, homicide, and devouring. Malignant *choñchoñ* birds have long wooden penises coming out from under their mouths, which they use to seduce victims, suck their blood, and kill them. Witches (*kalku*) and evil spirits (*wekufe*) kill and eat their victims after seducing or raping them. Marta says that one of her women patients “has a lover by night, and by day she has nobody. She really has *witranalwe* [a male evil spirit].”

Marta interprets her own sexuality in terms of good and evil powers. She feels guilty when she has sex, and like some female machi, she prays to her spirit for forgiveness. She also claims her identity as a divine woman and the Virgin Mary, denies that she has sex, and mythologizes her husband as Joseph, Mary’s companion, not as her lover. But Marta also claims that she will lose her powers and become sick and die if she does not have sex with men. “Once I went to the doctor; I was trembling and felt ill. The doctor told me I was of a ‘high nature.’ . . . ‘What is my illness?’ I asked the doctor. The doctor told me I was not ill, that I needed a man.” Marta resolved this predicament by equating lack of conception with celibacy. “If I don’t get pregnant, it is because I am a virgin,” Marta reasoned. “If I am a virgin, I am pure.” In this context Marta’s erotic desire and sexual acts became irrelevant to her status as a virgin.

Gendering machi Marta

Marta, sadly for her, does not have the luxury of determining her gender or sexual identity single-handedly. In significant ways, it is imposed on her by other people. Many Mapuche see her as a homosexual—a man who is feminine or who is sexually receptive. Subscribing to Chilean majority standards, people often consider her transgendered because she identifies as a woman but has a male body. She is also considered transgendered because she identifies herself on an everyday basis not as a man, a celibate priest, or a spiritual doctor, like other male machi, but as a sexually active woman.

Other machi are critical of Marta’s transgressions of both heterosexual gender notions and machi’s shifting gender practices. They define her as “homosexual” and “abnormal.” They see her as threatening the legitimacy of

machi practice, already fragile in contemporary Chile. Machi Sergio argued, "God decides if we are going to be a man or a woman. This thing of being half and half is not normal among the Mapuche. I despise it." Machi Pamela added, "A man with silver necklaces, with a skirt, is that a pretty man? He dresses like a woman but he's not a woman. He's a faggot, and it is bad what he is doing." Machi Rocío claimed that male machi who became women were punished by God and had bad luck and that the same would happen to Marta.

Years ago there was this machi called Lorenzo, but when he became a machi he became Lorenza. He had a long braid. His voice was that of a man, and he was married to a man. A woman came to get the machi to cure, and he left his old man [husband] at home. The man sold the oxen, he took all the machi's silver and money, he took everything, locked the house and left for Santiago. The machi then got married again to a young man and soon the machi died. . . . Now there are no more male machi like that.

Marta's gender identity was often considered dangerous and possibly contagious. In December 2001, the wife of a male machi was afraid that, if her husband's words printed in my book (Bacigalupo 2001) touched Marta's photograph, her husband might become "infected."

Marta's gender and sexuality are hotly debated among her patients and acquaintances. Before her arrest, she was reluctantly accepted and treated as a woman in her husband's community. Because she assumed the identity and behavior of a woman, performed women's work, and had a husband, most Mapuche used female-gendered pronouns when speaking to her in Spanish. Some people tried to circumvent the gender issue by speaking about Marta using the term *machi*, which, in Mapudungun, has no gendered pronouns. Some Mapuche argued that Flora's machi spirit had changed Marta's gender identity, and they avoided talking about her sex. Some drew on a biological model, claiming that Marta had fallen against a rock and severed her penis shortly before she was initiated and that she was therefore a woman, much like transsexuals who undergo a surgical sex change. The symbolic relationship between Marta's gender, genitals, and spiritual experience reverses that of the northern Indian *hijra* (Nanda 1985). Whereas hijras engage in real or symbolic gender mutilation to assume institutionalized, intermediary gender and spiritual roles, the Virgin symbolically castrates Marta so that she becomes a virginal divine woman.

The encounter with Marta's transgressive gender identity found expression in localized struggles over cultural meanings. A Chilean farmer claimed Marta possessed both female and male genitals and that this explained why she was a *domo-wentru*, a woman-man or hermaphrodite. A

Mapuche man defined Marta as "a man who is like a woman and wears a dress. She likes men to sleep with her as a woman."¹⁵ They often drew on Marta's alleged "receptive" sexuality and transvestism to construct her as transgendered. Transgendered prostitutes in Brazil argue that although the male body may be embellished, their male sex is given by God and cannot be changed (Kulick 1998:84). Some of Marta's friends claim that the Virgin did change Marta's sex. According to this view, Marta was engineered by divine intervention, which differentiates her from transsexuals in North America and Europe, who choose to engineer themselves. The subject position of transsexuals depends largely on the homophobic discourses and categories of the medical establishment, in which bodies are sexed in accordance with social categories of gender performance (Hausman 1995:7). By choosing to abide by national gender categories and Marian ideologies, Marta hopes to reduce her gender and ethnic marginality to the nation-state, but her hope is often in vain.

Most Mapuche men who talked to me about Marta behind her back mocked her femininity and desire to be penetrated by men. They scorned her for being a male who was overtly and permanently transgendered as a woman, a transvestite, or a "passive" homosexual. Although her community valued Marta's powerful performances in collective fertility rituals, they also feared her because she was different from other machi. Marta's womanhood is a reiterative performance of national gender stereotypes, but the dissonance between her gender identity and her genitals excludes her from all normative gendered paradigms available to the Mapuche and makes her different from other machi. Marta's womanhood is always inadequate—too little to convince those who ascribe to majority discourses that she is a woman, but excessive for Flora's spirit and for machi lore.

Revelation of the public secret

When Marta was arrested, dominant discourses redefined her gender, demonstrating the flexibility and fragility of selfhood and the limits beyond which individuals cannot go without being subjected to social control. Until Marta's arrest, her body and sexuality were what Roger Lancaster (2001) has called a "public secret"—something known and discussed by everyone behind her back but never to her face or in public settings where such comments would delegitimize her.¹⁶ The invocation of the public secret reveals the dynamics of tolerance and intolerance, concealment and revelation, in a variegated terrain of gender and sexuality in Latin America (Lancaster 2001). The taboo was not against knowing about Marta's body or sexuality but against speaking about it in public. Keeping her sex a public secret allowed her to be a heterosexual woman. Speaking about it undermined

her identity, allowing Chilean dominant discourses to redefine her as a homosexual man.

Once Marta's penis, the national masculine signifier par excellence, was unveiled, the authorities insisted on publicly "unmasking" her identity as a man. Institutional norms and procedures dictated that she be registered by her birth name, Bernardo, and be placed in the men's prison. The prison guards took it on themselves to abuse and humiliate her while she remained there. In mocking Marta and dressing her as a man, the prison guards intended to "rehabilitate" her as a heterosexual man and "normalize" her gender performance. Both prison authorities and the media played important roles in trying publicly to purge Marta's body of its effeminacy, "homosexuality," and indigenous ethnicity. They forced her to acknowledge the masculine heterosexual identity of her male body to make her a "good" Chilean citizen.¹⁷

Marta's arrest and imprisonment received wide media coverage. "It makes a great story," one reporter told me, "a strange death, Mapuche witchcraft, and a scandalous homosexual." The day Marta was arrested, I was teaching in Santiago and saw the event on Chilean national television. I arrived at her sister Lisa's house a few days later. Marta had been released from prison and expelled from her community. I reconstructed her arrest, release from jail, and encounter with the community from her own account and those of her sister, journalists, and four men in her community as well as from newspaper reports and television images.

Marta left the men's prison in Navidad on November 24, 1995, wearing purple pants and clutching her skirt and apron under one arm. She no longer wore the clothes that had made her a woman. Her identity had splintered; it no longer reflected her self as a heterosexual woman.¹⁸ Reporters referred to Marta as "Bernardo" and questioned her womanhood. Marta realized she could not—at least for the moment—legitimate herself by drawing on feminine symbols and that she would have to conform to national notions of gender and sexuality. She reconstructed herself as a heterosexual masculine man, shattering the illusion of divine womanhood even in her own discourse: "I am not homosexual," Marta argued. "I don't always wear a skirt. . . . This was a coincidence." Marta claimed that she had dressed in women's clothes the day she was arrested to heal and call the spirits, as other male machi do. She was forced to characterize her gender performance as a typical machi performance to minimize homophobic articulations of her gender identity. Like drag queens who perform in straight clubs, Marta was made to explain her womanhood as contextual performance.

Marta's improper gender, her Mapuche ethnicity, her lower-class status, and her profession as a machi condense various moral and sexual threats to the nation and to cultural perceptions of selfhood. A tabloid newspaper

ridiculed Marta in a headline as the "Machi Macho-Menos," or the "less than macho machi" (*La Cuarta* 1995a: 1), conflating transvestism and effeminate homosexuality with machi deviance and fraudulence:

A young boy is in a critical state after drinking some strange potions prepared by the most reputed machi in the area, who now turns out to be a man, a macho . . . who performed all sorts of bamboozling to try and impress the gullible family of the patient. . . . And as nothing escapes the eagle eye, in the police station they discovered she was not a machi but a vigorous macho. . . . The supposed machi is a man whose real name is Bernardo, who acknowledged that he has deviant tendencies and this is why he acts like a woman, taking advantage of some healing knowledge that had given him fame and fortune. [*La Cuarta* 1995b: 3]

The official regional newspaper, *El Diario Austral* (1995b: A9), tried to reconcile the cultural practices of Mapuche machi with the homophobic, heterosexual paradigms of the local authorities. It described Marta as a highly respected machi and constructed her cross-dressing as a typical machi practice accepted by the majority of the Mapuche population. The newspaper "corrected" Marta's "deviant" gender identity by referring to her as a masculine machi named Bernardo:

Machi Bernardo is accused of having given the victim a mortal potion that killed the boy in less than 24 hours. At 6.30 P.M. last Monday Mrs. Rodriguez took her son, Pedro, to machi Bernardo's home . . . because he suffered from a severe stomachache. . . . The machi examined him and said he suffered from "evil" and gave the victim a potion made from herbal remedies. [*El Diario Austral* 1995b: A9]

Mrs. Rodriguez and a very ill Pedro arrived at Marta's house at midnight on November 22, but Marta refused to treat him: "The boy was brought to me too late. Nothing could be done to save him. . . . I told Mrs. Rodriguez to take him to the hospital and gave him some herbal remedies for the trip. But she wouldn't listen to me. 'No, I don't trust doctors, you heal him,' she said. I said, 'No, no.' She was very annoyed when she left."

Mrs. Rodriguez and Pedro left for the hospital the next morning. Pedro died on the way to the hospital, "pop-eyed and with coagulated blood in his eyes," which is often considered a sign of sorcery. Mrs. Rodriguez went to the police and accused Marta of homicide by poisoning. Marta was furious. "Why would I do that? What was I to gain if the kid died? The police arrived at my house. They took me by the arms and put me into the police car. I was behind bars." Marta was released the following day, after the

autopsy confirmed that the boy had died of natural causes (*El Diario Austral* 1995c: A9). Nevertheless, the community held Marta accountable for Pedro's death and questioned her legitimacy as a mother and a woman. Clemencio was no longer considered Marta's son and was sent back to his birth family. How could Marta be a true mother if she had killed a boy? the community asked. What kind of woman was she? Or was she a woman at all?

El Diario Austral interviewed Marta, who constructed herself in generic machi terms to legitimate herself. She begged reporters to "respect our culture and our beliefs" and to acknowledge the important roles that machi perform in the communities (*El Diario Austral* 1995c: A9). Some Chilean academics used psychological discourses to refer to Marta as an *hombre invertido*, a male invert, or a transsexual, "a disturbed, abnormal person who needs medical help." In an effort to understand Marta's quandary, *El Diario Austral* interviewed the anthropologist Aldo Vidal, who described Marta in terms of machi ritual gender performances: "Machi are neither men nor women but embody feminine and masculine attributes. . . . They can dress in women's or men's clothing and synthesize the union of dualities" (*El Diario Austral* 1995a: A9). Marta, however, was being humiliated not because she had abided by machi norms and performed their ritual cogendered roles but because she had challenged them, as well as the gender norms of dominant society, with her femininity.

Criminalizing Marta

When Marta was released from jail, her community debated the relationship between her vexed gender identity and her role as a spiritual intermediary—or as a witch. Conflicting notions arose about the relationship between gender and sex, the gendered and sexual identities of machi in social and ritual contexts, and how Marta's case conformed to or deviated from the norm.

With the arrest and the accusations of homicide and homosexuality, people now considered Marta's divine gender transformation a farce and no longer acknowledged her spiritual identity as a woman machi. The community chief said that the spirit and the Virgin would never have allowed a public regendering of Marta as Bernardo if they had in fact chosen her to be a machi and a woman. Marta's husband, Miguel, claimed he had been a "victim of Marta's love magic" and left, taking her belongings with him. The community followed the penetration paradigm and did not consider Miguel to be a homosexual; they expected that he would find a "real woman" and marry. People reevaluated Marta's unusual gender identity according to Chilean heterosexual gender models and machi lore, not as having been determined by the Virgin or a spirit. Her community publicly accused her of being "an ambiguous person between genders who works with

both good and evil powers" and an "assassin," a "faggot," and a "witch." Her neighbors burned her house and drum because they felt Marta had tricked them, and they expelled her from the community. One man fumed, "Just as he pretended to be a woman to perform in collective fertility rituals, he pretended to be a machi when he was really a witch."

After Marta's public regendering, the community criminalized her exceptional gender and sexuality as deviant, evil, and foreign because she threatened the Mapuche social order. Mapuche often perceive witches as perverse machi who, under the pretense of healing, use their powers and knowledge in reverse order to bring illness and death to the community. Likewise, effeminate homosexuals are considered abject beings who pretend to be women but whose uncertain sex, gender performances, and sexualities lead them to seduce and destroy the identities of men.¹⁹ Because the human proceeds from and produces proper forms of gender and sexuality, those who do not appear properly gendered have their sociality and humanity questioned (Butler 1993). The community wanted to purge itself of so-called deviant gendered and sexual subjects, expelling Marta so that it could regain its humanity.

Marta's male body, clothed as that of a woman, had been an object through which other subjects asserted or validated their own identities. By constructing Marta as a heterosexual woman and wife, Miguel had been able to erase his same-sex desires and maintain a masculine identity. By constructing Marta's gender performance as excessively feminine, other machi sanctioned their shifting ritual gender roles, and male machi reinforced their masculinities. The media used Marta's transvestite body to enforce national notions of criminality and deviance associated with alternative genders and sexualities and to uphold national notions of normality and morality. By dressing Marta as a man and calling her Bernardo, the prison system asserted its correctional authority as gatekeeper of homophobic masculine norms and civility. After Marta's arrest, her community made her a scapegoat to dissociate itself from her alleged witchcraft and homosexuality, erase its marginality to the state, and legitimate its members as human, law-abiding citizens. Marta, in turn, portrayed the community itself as the locus of witchcraft to erase her deviance and legitimate herself as a woman machi once again:

When they heard about the dead kid, the community turned on me. They didn't remember . . . that I prayed for them. . . . "Assassin, witch, faggot," they screamed. . . . The same people whom I had blessed were now on horseback with lances. They said that they were going to kill me. "Get out, get out," they screamed. We found a few of my clothes and got into the taxi. The rest they burned. . . . Later I sold my altar to the people

from the museum. . . . Miguel said he loved me, but when the television people came, when the journalists came, he ran away with everything and said he didn't know me. They all became witches.

When I visited Marta in September 1996, she was living in a small shack in the garden of her sister's house. She was drinking heavily. Lisa told me that Marta had rented a room alone in Navidad for a time but that the men from the area pressured her for sexual favors, and men from Miguel's community had threatened her with rape and even death. She had few friends left and no patients, and she was emotionally traumatized by Miguel's betrayal. "Miguel turned out bad. He tricked me, he robbed me. I'm sick. I have no strength. I'm thin. My stomach hurts. I don't even want to walk outside. I'm afraid of shadows. . . . People don't come for remedies anymore."

Self, personhood, and agency

Marta demonstrates how religious motifs, personal struggles for identity, and contestable ideas about gender and sexuality are strategically drawn together in a process of self-making that one can understand as authentic self-expression.

Marta, like Simone de Beauvoir (1984), views woman as constructed and performed, not born. She challenges the biological basis of womanhood. But it is precisely because of her biological difference that Marta feels the need continually to legitimate herself by drawing on stereotypical discourses (sexuality, motherhood, and the domestic) and spiritual discourses (Virgin Mary and spirit Flora) of the feminine. Feminist ethnographers have demonstrated that relations of power are often experienced, implemented, and negotiated through alternative ways of speaking about and representing the body (Lamb 2000; Scheper-Hughes 1992). Marta's predicament demonstrates that relations of power can also be contested and negotiated through alternative ways of silencing, clothing, and hiding the body. Marta's self as a woman is recognized when her body remains a public secret. Her penis becomes an issue for her community only when it is discussed in public and the authorities criminalize her.

Marta's criminalization and expulsion from the community illustrate the limits to which Mapuche norms can be modified or transgressed before the structure begins to fail and fundamental institutions of social order are compromised. Small, rural Mapuche communities can deal with deviance so long as it is kept within certain bounds, a process that is protected by a degree of conscious inattention—the public secret. But when the unsayable becomes public in a certain way, as it did through Marta's detention, the secret collapses and social

control is imposed. Marta's criminalization and the accusations of homosexuality to which she was subjected are reminders that dominant gender ideologies are never isolated elements but are constituted by other hierarchical domains such as the body, the family, civil society, and the nation.²⁰

Marta's gender performance adds another dimension to Judith Butler's theory of identity as performance. Whereas Butler (1993:235) views identity as performative and transvestism as parodic, Marta demonstrates that transvestism may also be a sincere expression of self. Marta wears women's clothes not to transgress gender norms or to celebrate femininity but to become a woman. Her self is expressed by her clothing, not essentialized by her genitals. She has no need to transform her body or undergo a sex change to become a woman. Marta's gender identity highlights the arbitrariness of categories of gender and sexual affiliation, such as "transvestite," "transsexual," and "transgendered," that are based on binary sex and gender assumptions.²¹ She illustrates how the contestation of gender meanings can rework the linkages between behaviors, bodies, and discursive practices. Gender is the most fundamental difference internalized in all societies. Marta's performance of different womanhoods challenges Chilean ideologies of social order based on the natural connection of gender and sex. She raises doubts about the conceptual bases and legitimacy of ethnic and class hierarchies and the state structures and nationalist discourses that help sustain them.²²

Marta complicates the relationship between the concepts of "self" and "person." "Self" is often used to describe an individual sense of identity, experience, and consciousness, whereas "person" refers to collective social roles and humans as agents in society. Marta's case demonstrates that these two concepts are inextricably linked. Her primary sense of self is that of a divine woman machi, but she also enacts a patchwork of other feminine identities that do not always cohere. The credibility of Marta's various feminine selves depends largely on the extent to which she can convincingly insert herself into feminine social roles created by others and prove herself as a machi and a divine woman. When the media and prison system re-create Marta in the role of a homosexual, a transvestite man, a criminal, and a witch, she can no longer be a woman, a wife, a mother, a machi, or the Virgin Mary.

To what degree and in what way is Marta a subject or an object of her own gendered and sexualized history? What forms of power and agency does she have in dealing with competing gender and sexual norms? Marta appropriates, transforms, and transgresses local and national gender and sexual ideologies and representations to sustain and legitimate her identity as a divine woman. Yet she does not act entirely of her own accord. The meaning of her identity, words, and actions is not restricted to her

intention but lives within the context of machi lore, a community, and the Chilean state.²³ The gendered flexibility accorded to machi by local discourses allowed Marta to be a woman machi. But dominant gender ideologies exert force on Marta, shaping her life, her identity, and even her forms of resistance.²⁴ Ironically, Marta's method of resistance to dominant notions of body and gender—her subversive transvestism—publicly performs her powerlessness. Her womanhood is a narrative accepted only in prescribed contexts, and her exaggerated femininity demonstrates her marginalization vis-à-vis the very gender ideologies to which she tries to conform.

Marta's agency lies in her intensely pragmatic and political approach to the use of various gendered identities, sexualities, and symbolism and in her deciding which of these are contextually acceptable or more appropriate. Individuals in different cultures draw on a range of cultural representations of selfhood when talking to themselves or others (Desjarlais 1997; Ewing 1990). But people such as Marta, who are marginalized from the dominant system as well as from local systems because of their class, ethnicity, and gender, must rely on different discourses of authority to legitimate themselves. Marta draws on the personhoods of the Virgin Mary, a female machi spirit, a feminine heterosexual woman, and, when all else fails, a masculine heterosexual man. It is these creative and interpretive strategies, employed strategically by Marta and other machi, which offer new understandings of the process by which gendered and sexual actions are signified and gendered identities are created in complex multicultural worlds. Marta's contested gender identity offers new insights on the "nature of cultural production and contestations in centers and peripheries" (Ong and Peletz 1995:4). By examining how Marta's gender identities are produced, contested, and transformed, one also gains further understanding of the complex relationship between domination and resistance in cross-cultural contexts.

The return of machi Marta

Marta retains a pragmatic agency in defining herself. When I last visited her in December 2001, she was again a woman machi practicing in the community of her new husband, Juan Carlos, where she now lives. Juan Carlos is five years older than she, and Marta is concerned about his health; he has lumbago pain, which she attributes to witchcraft by her in-laws, who oppose the marriage. Otherwise, she claims, her relationship with Juan Carlos is going well.

This time Marta was magnifying the urban, non-Mapuche aspects of her model of femininity. By focusing on her alleged ethnic and cultural differences from rural Mapuche women, she deflected attention from her biological differences. Marta painted a face representing her machi spirit, Flora, and the Virgin Mary on her

step-notched altar to sanction her divine gender transformation (Figure 1). The pale face, green eyes, and red lips that Marta designed speak of her desire to look like an urban non-Mapuche woman and to fashion Flora and the Virgin in her likeness. Marta had also adopted her 27-year-old sister-in-law, Sara, who now calls her "mother." Marta wanted to raise Sara's daughter as her own granddaughter because the girl had green eyes, a sign of non-Mapuche status associated with upward mobility. Marta had told Sara and her neighbors that in her previous home she had been a wealthy, well-respected woman with two maids to serve her. Marta's sister Lisa visits her periodically, bringing her razors, talcum powder, knee-high stockings, and shampoo so that Marta can produce herself as a woman. Marta links her production as a non-Mapuche, urban, middle-class woman with the use of consumer goods. As a consumer, Marta is produced by



Figure 1. The pale face, green eyes, and red lips that Marta designed on the *rewe* (step-notched altar and axis mundi) she fashioned in 2001 speak of her desire to look like an urban non-Mapuche woman and to fashion her machi spirit, Flora, and the Virgin in her likeness.

late-capitalism and socioreproduction practices. Her body is linked with “the impersonation of other genders, classes and roles that become the key to distinction” (Appadurai 1996:84). Her gender and sexuality become performance acts precisely because they are “effects within the hegemonic terrain of late capitalist exchange practices” (Lowe 1995:121). Chilean consumer culture and the Virgin are preoccupied not with Marta’s gender identity or sex but with her ability, respectively, to expend goods and to perform divine womanhood.

Marta has not told her husband, Juan Carlos, or his family about the accusations made against her or about her public regendering, but because her new home is only a two-hour drive from her previous one, her new community undoubtedly has heard about the events on the radio or through local gossip. Marta’s sex and sexuality have once again become a public secret. Members of her new community have chosen to privilege her identity as a woman machi over her male sex because they need a machi to heal them and to perform in collective fertility rituals. Yet gossip about Marta’s sex and sexuality persists behind her back. Marta’s in-laws and neighbors are suspicious of her because she comes from outside the community. They believe she seduced Juan Carlos with love magic, claim she is a witch, and want to expel her from the community. Marta thinks it is they who are performing witchcraft on her. She blames them for “a bewitched arrow” that went through her head while she was in the outhouse and for her husband’s lumbago pain. Although Marta likes living near the river, she also thinks that evil water spirits “cover the house with shadows and sorcery.” She believes that someday the noxious *cuero* river spirit will make the men in the community want to gang rape and beat her.

Marta belongs nowhere. She is excluded from all gendered paradigms available to Mapuche and lacks a culturally recognized gender category. But it was precisely Marta’s indeterminacy, her lack of place, and the ambiguity surrounding her gender identity that allowed her to become a woman machi again by moving to a new place and finding another husband. “If they send me away, I will find another place. There will always be people who recognize my powers. There will always be a man to love me. I carry the word of the Virgin, and nobody can take that away from me.”

Notes

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1. Barbara Tedlock (2003:301) introduced the term *cogendered* to refer to a partly feminine and partly masculine personality.

2. Judith Halberstam (1998:210–211) argues that sexualities and genders are fictions, rather than facts of life, styles, rather than lifestyles, and potentialities, rather than fixed identities. Edward Li Puma (1998:57) argues that persons emerge precisely from the tension between individual and “dividual” aspects of identity and that the terms and conditions of this tension, and, thus, the range of persons produced, vary historically.

3. The trope of the female soul in a man’s body has focused on the relationship between gender inversion (femininity) and sexual receptivity (Foucault 1980:43; Greenberg 1988; Halperin 1990:25). Far less attention has been paid to how spiritual experiences have transformed some males who adopt feminine identities and roles.

4. Transgendered Bakala men in the Philippines also imitate the Virgin Mary and claim that, like her, they were meant to suffer for men (Nanda 2000:82). Although cross-dressed female saints exist in the Catholic tradition, there are no cross-dressed male saints (Garber 1992). Male cross-dressers identify with female religious figures.

5. Halberstam argues that in cross-dressing, “sexuality is worn outside the body like another skin, and it replaces anatomy in the chain of signifiers that eventually stabilizes into something like sexual identity” (1998:222).

6. Marta engages in what Kaja Silverman (1992) and Kath Weston (1998) have called “double mimesis.” She does not “imitate, make models, explore difference, yield, into and become the Other” (Taussig 1993:xiii) but incorporates various femininities that she exaggerates, perfects, and doubles, thus making herself more a woman than other female machi and publicly rewriting her subjectivity in the process. Yet people who are engaged in double mimesis, like Marta, are subject to competing ethnic or gendered discourses within their own cultures and are diversely stigmatized or privileged as a result.

7. Pierre Bourdieu (1984) and Annick Prieur (1998) argue that members of the upper and middle classes appreciate more reserved expressions of sexual desire and dress and have a more distanced attitude toward their bodies than do members of the lower classes. Although this is often the case for the Chilean urban popular classes, it does not hold for the rural Mapuche, who value modesty highly. Marta’s position also contrasts with that of the gay *bantut* in the southern Philippines, who wear cocktail dresses, evening gowns, and swimsuits to show off their beautiful faces and sculpted bodies (Johnson 1997).

8. Gender transformations among American Indian gender variants were viewed as partial transformations, and the gender variant was not thought of as having become a person of the opposite sex or gender (Nanda 2000:19). Similarly, hijras in India are culturally defined as persons who are born male but who adopt the clothing, behavior, and occupations of women. They are neither male nor female, man nor woman.

9. The cogendered identities of machi weye, like those of male berdaches (Callender and Kochems 1983; Katz 1976; Lang 1998; Whitehead 1981:111), were determined by their social behavior, occupations, and sexual acts and by the spirits, rather than merely by their choice of sexual object. Same-sex acts were interpreted through the lens of gender categories. Some Native American examples of berdaches include the Lakota *winkete*, who had auspicious powers in relation to childbirth and child rearing (Powers 1977); the Cheyenne *he'eman'e'o*, who embodied the principles of balance and synthesis (Coleman in Roscoe 1998:14); the Inuit third-gender shamans (Saladin D'Anglure 1992:146); the Ingalik berdache shamans; the Bella Coola supernatural berdache portrayed in masked dances (McIlwraith 1948:45–46); and the Flathead and Klamath berdache shamans (Spier 1930:51–53; Teit 1927–28:384). Third- and fourth-gender persons in California often had ceremonial roles associated with death and burial (Roscoe 1998:16). Man-woman kachinas were portrayed in Pueblo Indian masked dances, and the Zuni *ihamana we'wha* was a man-woman religious specialist who regularly participated in ceremonies (Roscoe 1991).

10. Chile is conservative and homophobic. Male transvestites, transsexuals, and transgendered persons are discriminated against by the Chilean majority but work and live in social contexts in which their gender identities and performances are recognized. The first male-to-female sex change in Chile was performed in 1973, and many postoperative transsexuals returned to Chile with the installment of democracy in 1990. Transvestism and transgenderism flourished under the socialist government of Allende in the 1970s and continued throughout Pinochet's military dictatorship (1973–90) and subsequent democratic governments (1991–2001). Drag shows bring money, and free market ideology allows the proliferation of transvestite performances (Robles 2001), producing conflicting reactions from Chilean men and the government. In their performances between 1985 and 1997, the artistic duo Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis (Mares of the Apocalypse) criticized the military government and Chileans' apathy toward change in a way others could not. The death of 16 drag queens during the "accidental" burning of the discotheque Divine in 1993 and the arrest of another 40 in 1996 for "offending morals and good customs," however, attest to the violence with which many Chileans react to male transvestism.

11. Machi Marta can be compared to the biblical Martha, who serves Jesus food but does not listen to his words as her sister, Mary, does. Jesus reprimands Martha, telling her to listen to the word of God instead of performing domestic chores.

12. In rural southern Chile, female prostitutes, exotic dancers, and "loose women" are considered masculine because of their alleged voracious sexual appetites, their drinking, and their presence in otherwise all-male bars and clubs.

13. Transgendered males steer a middle course, living with the physical, social, and psychological traits of both genders (Bolin 1996:38). They are characterized as possessing a privileged vantage point from which to perceive how gender and sex are conceived, performed, and produced in a particular culture (Garber 1992; Hausman 1995; Shapiro 1991).

14. The masculine active macho and the feminine receptive stereotypes do not always function in practice. Prieur (1998) and Don Kulick (1998) have demonstrated that female transgendered prostitutes sometimes exhibit behaviors that are more masculine than feminine and that they penetrate their masculine partners, but the latter rarely acknowledge this because it challenges their masculinity. The masculine macho and feminine transvestite stereotypes are also challenged. Pedro Lemebel (1996) describes sexual relations between Chilean males that transgress gendered cultural scripts: an upper-class gay man who desires a lower-class male transvestite and a male transvestite who penetrates a macho.

15. A Mapuche story narrates the conversion of a male fox into a domo-wentru when he allows a nutria to penetrate him and his anus becomes loose (Montecino 1999:10). In this case, being penetrated is what turns the fox into a domo-wentru.

16. Public secrets are tied to values and systems of the dominant society (Guattari 1984). They hide transvestites and homosexuals who fear being shamed or repressed by heterosexual norms that construct them as deviant. The Latin American public secret is more complex than the dialectic of the concealed and the revealed in the North American concept of "the closet."

17. The impositions of the prison system illustrate what Michel Foucault (1990) and Antonio Gramsci (1971) have called "technologies of power" that shape social realities, relationships, and forms of knowledge.

18. Halberstam (1998:222–223) notes that a similar process occurs to Bauer, a female who identifies as a heterosexual man, in Sergio Toledo's film *Vera* (1986). When Bauer removes his clothes, he can no longer be a heterosexual man.

19. Like Buffalo Bill in the horror movie *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), Marta is at odds with the normative gender and sexual identities associated with sex and creates a new gender beyond the body. Bill is constructed as a monster who fashions a female bodysuit for himself by sewing together the skins of his female victims (Halberstam 1995). Marta is criminalized as a deviant homosexual, assassin, and witch who hides her penis under women's clothes to trick and seduce men.

20. Ahiwa Ong (1999) and Chandra Mohanty and colleagues (1991) explore the different ways in which gender domination intersects with other hierarchized domains.

21. As Halberstam notes (1998:212), we are all transsexuals, and there are no transsexuals. The referent of the *trans* becomes less and less clear. There is no other side, no opposite sex, no natural divide to be spanned by passing. We all pass and we do not. We all wear drag. And we all derive different degrees of pleasure from our costumes.

22. Michael Peletz (1995:113) argues that gender needs to be understood in relation to other forms of difference and inequality as well as everyday social processes and the broader realities of political economy and historical change.

23. Arjun Appadurai (1990:93–94) and Alessandro Duranti (1997:325) argue that meaning is located not solely in the agency of individual subjects but also in the way the subjects' words and actions are constrained by local and dominant gendered imageries and by the interpretations of others.

24. I argue that the Chilean state controls the way shamans are perceived and represented in national discourses of tradition and modernity but not how shamans use these discourses for their own ends. Numerous anthropologists have pointed out that resistance theory has been overused (Abu-Lughod 1990; Brown 1996; Ortner 1995).

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RITUAL GENDERED RELATIONSHIPS: KINSHIP, MARRIAGE, MASTERY, AND MACHI MODES OF PERSONHOOD¹

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I show how spiritual kinships ties, spiritual marriages, and relationships of mastery between Mapuche shamans (machi), animals, and spirits in initiation and healing rituals reflect historical ethnic and national relationships, social and gender dynamics, and complex understandings of personhood. Machi's spiritual relationships are shaped by the gendered power dynamics of colonial mastery and domination, marriage and seduction, possession and ecstasy, and hierarchical kinship systems. These spiritual relationships reflect a complex understanding of personal consciousness in which machi are agents of their actions but at the same time share self with the spirits and are dominated by them. Machi gain varied forms of knowledge and power through the exchange of bodily substances as well as through spiritual means. In doing so, they offer a new perspective on current discussions among anthropologists about embodiment, ensoulment, and personhood.

At this moment I beg you to remain by my side, father of the sky, mother of the sky, old people from above, old grandmother, old grandfather. You who are the owner of all remedies that live in the blue sky, don't allow me to remain truncated. . . . I humble myself before you. Mount me on your horse and don't allow me to weaken. . . . You have remedies at the tip of your rewe. I ask you to give them to me for my work, to help people. I also ask you not to punish me as my only job is to use the remedies that you make me see. Isn't it you that made me be in this job to serve others? That is what I am saying, father God, mother God.

—Excerpt from *pelontur*, or divination, by machi José, December 21, 2001
(translated from Mapudungun to Spanish by Armando Marileo)

KINSHIP, MARRIAGE, AND MASTERY—the closest and most durable gendered social relationships among Mapuche in southern Chile—are used by *machi* (Mapuche shamans) in ritual to create bonds with the spirit and animal world. Machi are individual women and men in their everyday lives, but in ritual contexts their sex and age become secondary as they engage in various relational personhoods that link machi, animals, and spirits. Elsewhere I have analyzed the role of gender in the ethnic identity, lives, and ritual practices of machi (Bacigalupo n.d.). I have shown

that machi are women or feminized, cross-dressed men who assume multiple masculine, feminine, and co-gender identities—people who embody and bring together the perspectives of both genders and combine the gendered occupations of both women and men—for the purpose of healing.² Machi “become” men, both young and old, to exorcize illness, bad thoughts, and suffering from their patients’ bodies. They “become” women, again both young and old, to heal and reintegrate their patients back into their communities. They also embody the four aspects of the deity Ngünechen (male, female, young, and old) in order to transcend gender, and they “become divine” to create new world orders and gain spiritual power (Bacigalupo 2005). Gender is one of the metaphors used by machi to mark polarizations, boundaries, and tensions between local and national identities as well, as a way to express integration and create broader understandings of humanity, health, and healing.

In this article I show how spiritual kinships ties, spiritual marriages, and relationships of mastery between machi, animals, and spirits in initiation and healing rituals reflect historical ethnic/national relationships and social and gender dynamics, as well as complex understandings of personhood. Machi spiritual relationships reflect the gendered power dynamics of colonial mastery and domination, marriage and seduction, possession and ecstasy, and hierarchical kinship systems. These gendered spiritual relational personhoods and their associated altered states of consciousness are shaped by the legacy of colonization: political and religious authorities, the loss of autonomy of Mapuche communities, the incorporation of horses and sheep, the imposition of agriculture and the reservation system, and missionization. Machi are kin to their spirit animals and other machi who initiate them; they are spirit brides who seduce their machi husbands into possessing them; and they are masters of spirit animals and masculine mounted warriors who travel in ecstatic flight to other worlds. These spiritual relationships reflect a complex understanding of personal consciousness in which machi are agents of their actions but at the same time share self with the spirits and are dominated by them. Machi’s gendered spiritual positionalities in ritual contexts are both embodied and ensouled. They gain varied forms of knowledge and power through the exchange of bodily substances, as well as through spiritual means, and experience the world as different people offering a new perspective to current discussions on embodiment, ensoulment, and personhood.

Machi relational personhoods vary according to the region, machi school of practice, and the individual machi. I have selected those machi initiation and healing rituals and narratives collected between 1991 and 2002 that best illustrate the gendered relationships machi hold with other spirit, human, and animal beings in communities near the towns of Temuco, Freire, Nueva Imperial, and Cholchol (Figures 1 and 2).

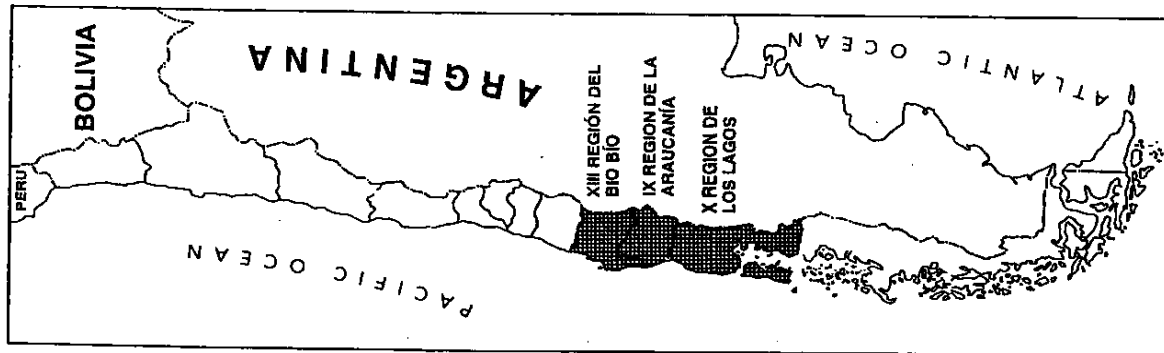


Figure 1. Research area in Chile

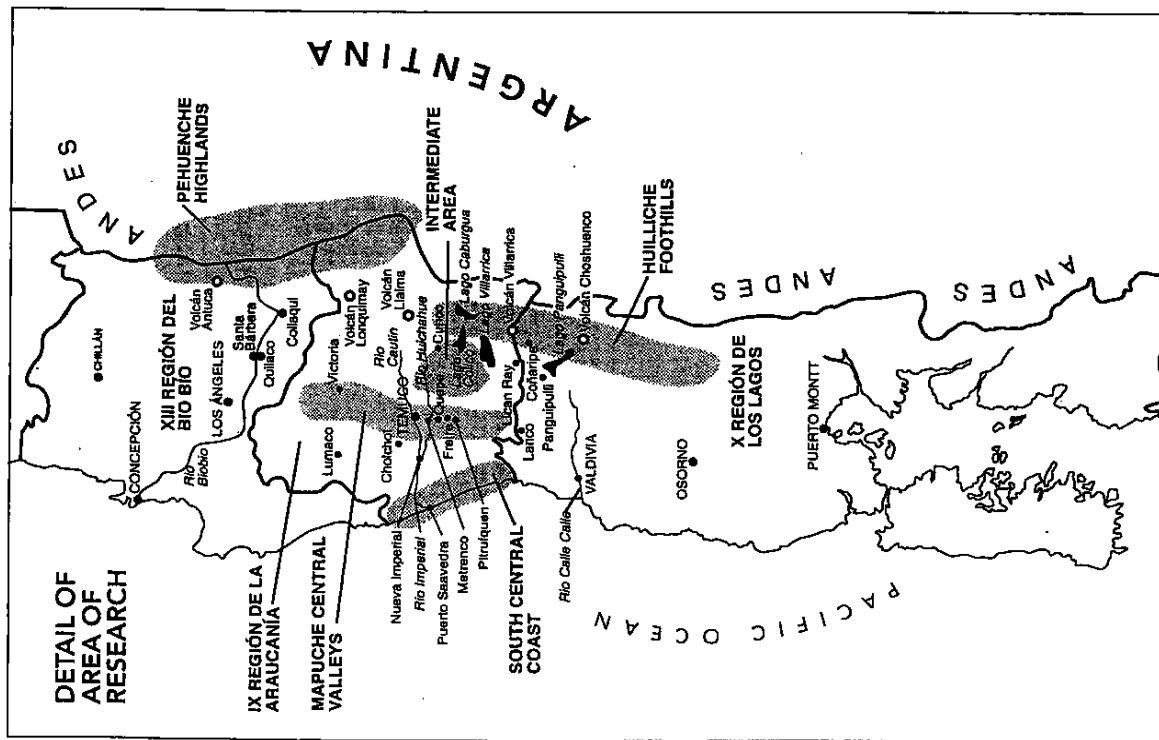


Figure 2. Detail of research area

MARÍA CECILIA'S INITIATION: THE FORGING OF SPIRITUAL KINSHIP WITH MACHI AND ANIMALS

Eighteen-year-old María Cecilia bowed her head as she sat beside her newly planted *rewe*, the step-notched trunk of a *pellin* tree that connects the human world with spiritual ones. María Cecilia wore a blue headscarf and an elegant black shawl with a pink stripe. Her necklaces of blood-red *kopiwe* flowers (*Lapageria rosea*) and *llantawen* leaves (*Lycopodium paniculatum*) and her heavy silver breastplate (*trapelakucha*) swayed as she turned from side to side, beating her new drum, the *kuirun* with four red suns painted on its face. María Cecilia's machi spirit—her *machi pillu*, or *fileu* (literally, the knowledgeable one)—lived simultaneously in the Wenu Mapu (the Mapuche sky), in María Cecilia's head, *kuirun*, and *rewe*, and in the spirit horse and sheep with whom she exchanged breath and blood. Possession, spiritual travel, dreams, and visions would give María Cecilia the knowledge to divine, heal, and grant blessings (Bacigalupo 1994a, 1994b, 2001).

During her initiation ritual, María Cecilia forged her spiritual kinship ties with animals and other machi by exchanging bodily substances with machi Javiera and machi Elena—her initiating machi—as well as with a cock, sheep, and horse that became her spirit animals.³ Machi and animals share essences and qualities of being—as do family members. They gain various types of power from each other and protect each other from illness and sorcery. By virtue of her initiation, María Cecilia became part of the machi school headed by Javiera, in which machi have similar symbols, spiritual concepts, and practices and heal each other. In addition, María Cecilia's initiation recognized her machi spiritual inheritance—which is ordinarily passed down through the mother's side of the family and stands in opposition to social kinship, inheritance, and succession, which are patrilineal. María Cecilia had inherited her machi spirit from her great-grandmother. She had experienced visions of drums and *foye* trees (*Drymis winteri*) and felt chronic pain in her bones and stomach. She finished secondary school despite her illness and then went to live for a year with machi Javiera, from whom she learned to control her altered states of consciousness, read dreams, perform rituals, and prepare herbal remedies.⁴

I became close to María Cecilia and her family during the eight months preceding her initiation ritual. I visited her natal home, where her father, Edmundo, lived with his eldest wife, Marcela, his younger wife, Carolina, and his and Carolina's two daughters and ten-year-old son. Eduardo and María Cecilia asked me to photograph the initiation so that they would have mementos of the event, despite Mapuche taboos on photographing rituals. Mapuche often believe that photographs steal their souls and can be used for sorcery or, as is often the case with tourists, to objectify them.⁵ On April 16, 1992, the day of María Cecilia's *machilawün* (machi initiation), machi Javiera and machi Elena visited María Cecilia in the community of Trarilonko. For two days, from dawn to dusk, they healed María Cecilia of the spiritual illness (*machi kuirran*) caused by a machi spirit to pressure the neophyte to become a machi. María Cecilia legitimated her status as

a machi by publicly demonstrating her ability to drum, sing, and enter and exit altered states of consciousness in order to speak to humans and spirits.

Edmundo, her father, tied the animals to stakes on the left-hand side of her *rewé*. He circled their eyes, noses, and mouths with blue paint, the color of the Wenu Mapu, or sky, so that their senses and skills would be put at the service of María Cecilia's spiritual gifts. He then slit the ears of the sheep and the cock's crest and collected the blood in a shallow wooden bowl. Some of the blood he rubbed on the underside of the horse's stomach, and the rest, María Cecilia drank. María Cecilia tried to strengthen the spiritual kinship among her animals by making the horse drink sheep blood with her. The horse resisted and bucked, so María Cecilia sprinkled blood over her *rewé* instead to reinforce the connection between her spirit horse and her own machi powers she had inherited from her great-grandmother. A young man rode María Cecilia's horse around the field, after which she inhaled the horse's breath (*reyen*)—a source of *newen* (strength, power)—and forced her own breath through its nostrils. The ritual exchange of blood (*moifur*) and breath unites machi, animals, and spirits in kin relationships. Blood, breath, and saliva are spiritual foods that can be magically acted upon to give a machi or an animal particular powers, but they are also profound indications of kinship and life force shared among machi and between machi and spirit animals. Their symbolic dimension is inseparable from the ontological aspect of the machi, spirits, and animals that they signify.⁶

Javiera and Elena moved slowly up the path toward María Cecilia's house, turning from side to side with each beat of the drum, each followed by an entourage of helpers: four *ñankari*, men to play flutes and dance with the machi while she was in *küyumi*, or altered state of consciousness (ASC); a *dungumachife*, who spoke to the machi while she was in ASC and interpreted the metaphoric language spoken by spirits into a language understood by all; two *yeguífe*, women helpers to heat the skin of the drum over the fire and play the machi's drum and hand her herbal remedies; and four *afarñife*, male helpers to crash *coligte* (*kolitu*) canes over the head of the patient, help the machi enter or exit ASC, and help her exorcize evil spirits.

María Cecilia mirrored the movements of her two machi professors. The three of them danced around the *rewé* in slow purposeful movements, playing sleigh bells and holding knives and *foye* branches to their ears in order to protect themselves from evil spirits. The three machi circled the *rewé* counterclockwise as they danced forward, side by side. Each machi faced a male partner who danced backward. Two young men led María Cecilia's sheep and cock around the *rewé* and made them "dance" to the *kutrun* rhythms played by the machi's helpers in order to endow these spirit animals with machi powers.

María Cecilia lay on the bed of herbal remedies while Javiera and Elena smoked and then rubbed her with the sacred leaves of the *foye*, *tríwe*, and *klor* trees, spraying her periodically with mouthfuls of water. They sang and drummed over María Cecilia to heal her from her machi *kutrun*. They begged her *fileu* to grant her power and healing knowledge and divined her future as a machi. Then, each machi prayed and played her *kutrun*. A cacophony of prayers, drumbeats, and flutes filled the air. The eight male helpers periodically clashed *coligte* canes above

María Cecilia's head to help her enter into ASC. Each *dungumachife*, in turn, conversed with his assigned machi, blocking out the words and sounds of the others. The *dungumachife* listened intently, memorizing the machi's words in order to repeat them to the participants after the ritual. Any omission could cost him his health or that of the machi.

While possessed by *fileu*, each of the machi, in turn, climbed María Cecilia's *rewé*, her tree of life that would allow her to communicate effectively with other worlds; they swayed between the *foye* and *tríwe* branches planted on either side. I danced counterclockwise around the *rewé*, too, holding hands with a group of Mapuche women. All of us wore blue headscarves and black shawls and carried *tríwe taf-taf* (bunches of laurel leaves). A group of men danced clockwise around the circle of women. Javiera and Elena exhaled over María Cecilia's head in order to grant her their powers and initiate her into their machi school as spiritual kin. Two men slashed the neck of a sheep and bled it into a bowl. The three machi drank the blood to consolidate their personal and spiritual kinship ties and to feed their respective *fileu*.⁷

The participants celebrated the consolidation of María Cecilia's spiritual kinship ties over a dinner of roasted sheep meat and potatoes. The *dungumachife* summarized and interpreted what each machi had said while in ASC. They discussed similarities and differences in interpretation and concluded that María Cecilia's ritual had been successful and that she now belonged to Javiera's machi school of practice. The *fileu* was satisfied with her performance and offerings but warned her that she must live a life of sacrifice or her *fileu* would leave her.

Kinship created by ritual sharing of breath and the blood of sacrifice supercedes the blood ties of biological kinship. Just as Mapuche sons and daughters are incorporated into the social patrilineage through blood ties with the father, so María Cecilia was incorporated into the spiritual matrilineage of machi by acknowledging the spirit of her machi great-grandmother and by sharing breath and sacrificial animal blood with machi and spirit animals. She often referred to machi Javiera as "mother" and to her cohorts within the school as "sisters." María Cecilia's spiritual kinship ties express a larger notion of an ordered social body comprised of various bodies and souls (human and animal) and their social relationships. Once spiritual kinship is established with spirit animals, machi bodies and those of their spirit animals become interchangeable. Machi animals can experience illnesses on the machi's behalf, and machi become ill if their spirit animal or machi cohorts are hurt or killed. As with the *Kulina* (Pollock 1996:320), bodies and souls are believed to share the qualities of social relationships. Mapuche spiritual kinship is an expression of the relational dimensions of a personhood that is acquired, shared, and transformed rather than constrained in a single human body.

SEDUCING A SPIRIT, BECOMING A BRIDE

"Machi make necklaces out of kopíwe flowers and llankalawen, like jewels," said machi Rocío. "The *fileu*, the machi of the sky, looks down, he sees these ancient jewel plants, and he likes it. He sees the silver shining in the sun. 'Eeeeh,

how pretty,' he says. It attracts him. He sees the machi's head, all blue in the headscarf like an offering calling him, and down he comes into the machi's head."

Machi passages from and between the spirit and human worlds are negotiated individually through intimate relationships with spirits involving seduction and marriage. Spirits and humans, like women and men, are people with different qualities of being and various (culturally defined) interests and roles, but they are united as couples through marriage and seduction. The machi bride is a human body dressed in women's clothes, open to the spirit world. Male and female machi become spiritual brides who seduce and call their *fileu*—at once husband and master—to possess their heads and to grant them knowledge by wearing symbols of femininity and wifeliness: blue or purple headscarves, necklaces of red *kopiwe* flowers and *lankalawen* leaves,⁸ women's black shawls, and silver jewelry. The *fileu* husband is interested in the performance of wifeliness, not in the sex under the machi's clothes. The ritual transvestism of male machi does not transcend the categories of woman and man but rather draws attention to the relational gender categories of spirit husband and machi wife as a couple (*kurewen*). María Cecilia, like most other machi, periodically renews her marriage ties with her spirit in a ritual called *ngeitakurrewen*. The action of *ngeitakun* refers to the machi swaying between the *foye* and *irriwe* branches tied to the *rewe*, and the term *kurrewen* (couple) refers to the coupling of machi bride and spirit husband (Bacigalupo 1996a:83; Métraux 1942:201; Titev 1951:120).

Perceptions of erotic relationships between machi and *fileu* and the symbolism of the head both mirror and transgress Mapuche gender relationships. Just as the community chief, or *lonko* (head), represents the community, so machi's heads are the loci of spiritual brideliness. Rural Mapuche women typically place great value on modesty, so they hide their hair by braiding, tying, or covering it with headscarves, straw hats, or cloth baseball caps. They perceive young urban Mapuche women who cut their hair or wear it loose as seductive and promiscuous. Machi use traditional Mapuche women's headscarves, shawls, and silver jewelry in novel ways to attract and seduce the spirits. Contrary to Mapuche women's seduction of men, however, machi's seduction of *fileu* enhances machi's reputations and is positively valued as a skill available only to those who have power. Machi spiritual seduction offers a unique perspective on erotic spirituality that privileges gender identity and performance over anatomical sex or sexual penetration. Studies of gender identities in Latin America have focused on the ways in which specific sexual acts—that is, acts of penetrating or being penetrated by others—create gender.⁹ These studies associate gender variance with sexual variance, whereas machi do not. Machi of either sex may, in their everyday lives, perform penetrating acts, receptive acts, or both with either men or women, or they may remain celibate; yet they still become spiritual brides in order to seduce the spirits. Male machi who do not construct themselves explicitly as brides of spirits or God in the same way that female machi do still view their commitment to machi practice as a marriage. Machi Sergio stated: "I cannot get married because I am a machi. All my time and dedication is to heal others. I am committed to my profession, and God does not allow me to have a family."

The power of spiritual seduction is so great that a machi can use it to delay initiation and alleviate spiritual punishment. On May 27, 1995, machi Pedro invited me to a healing ritual (*daahatun*) for a young girl who had a machi calling but who was being punished by her *fileu* because she had not yet been initiated. The girl's feet bled with open sores, and she went into ASC frequently and uncontrollably for hours on end. Pedro drank a concoction made from the juice of *foye* leaves and metal particles scraped off a knife. He covered the girl's body and the four stakes of *foye* and *irriwe* branches placed at each corner of her sheepskin bed on the dirt floor with silver jewelry and necklaces made from *kopiwe* flowers. He did this to seduce the spirit in order to decrease the severity of the girl's spiritual illnesses. After the four introductory prayers (*lleipun*), in which Pedro narrated his calling to be a machi and described his powers, and the *metremtun*, or calling of the spirits, Pedro rubbed the girl's body with *irriwe* leaves. He then threw a knife toward the door four times to expel evil spirits that made the girl ill and to divine the outcome of the ritual. If the knife pointed towards the doorway, the spirit had accepted the offering, but if it faced inwards, the spirit was unhappy. The spirit's response was ambiguous. Twice the knife fell pointing towards the doorway and twice facing the inside. Pedro asked us all to donate some silver jewelry to the girl to wear so she would "look prettier for the spirit," and he repeated the ritual again at five a.m. the next morning. He asked the spirit to be patient, arguing that the girl would be initiated as a machi as soon as she learned to speak. Mapudungun and her family saved enough money to pay for the initiation. This time the knife pointed towards the doorway three of the four times. Five years later, the girl had learned to speak Mapudungun and was initiated as a machi.

A certain homology can be seen between machi spiritual marriages and human marriages. Regardless of the sex of the machi and his or her sexual orientation, by marrying a machi *pillu*, a machi commits herself/himself to an exclusive lifelong relationship with a spirit which conflicts with machi sexual and romantic relationships with humans. Jealous spirits punish machi who have romantic and sexual encounters by causing illness and must be appeased with offerings, gifts, and prayers (Bacigalupo 1996b). Machi Pamela explained: "The machi pillu, God, does not like the smell of husband and wife together; he does not want it. One had to ask for forgiveness and give them prayers." The result is that machi are often widowed, single, or have exceptional partners who are willing to break away from the conventional gender roles and accept that machi must attend to their patients and ritual obligations over and above their families and partners. Scholars have often viewed the practices of female shamans as an extension of the reproductive processes of motherhood and fertility (Sered 1994; Glass-Coffin 1998). Mapuche shamans, on the contrary, believe that parenthood, fertility, sex, and family life conflict with machi's spiritual roles and weaken their powers. As spiritual brides, machi participate in the cosmic process of fertility and reproduction which holds priority over and conflicts with their own personal sexual and reproductive lives.

The relationship between a machi bride and the *fileu* husband who possesses her also reflects colonial hierarchical relationships in which male colonial authorities—saints, apostles, mounted generals, Spanish kings (Bacigalupo

2004)—held power and authority over indigenous people and women. Machi brides express the limited participation of women in the patrilineal social and political realm. At the same time, machi brides demonstrate that through ritual practice, wives actively negotiate relationships between male lineages and between male-dominated structures of social and political power. Spirits do not spontaneously possess machi brides; machi seek to seduce them. Furthermore, machi control their altered state of consciousness and wilfully embody the spirit and gendered hierarchies that order their worlds.

Machi's spiritual marriages are both similar to and different from the sexualized hierarchical power relationships between Voodoo and Oyo-Yoruba Shango priests and the spirits that possess them. These priests are viewed as horses that are ridden by the spirits. The mounting action of the spirit-rider suggests a form of control whereby horsemanship, spirit possession, and sexual penetration are homologous and the bride/horse is inferior to the master/husband and has no self-control (Bourguignon 1976; Matory 1994:7, 69). Machi brides are inferior to their spirit husbands, but their possession experiences are neither involuntary nor uncontrolled.¹⁰ Machi are not horses penetrated and subsumed by the will of their riders, but humans who control their interactions with their spirit husbands through seduction. Machi seduction of spirits and deities who are superior to them is a way for machi to gain control over the socio-spiritual hierarchies that run their lives. Furthermore, Mapuche spirit horses are not slaves or messengers for spirits but represent the power of the sky.

MASTER OF ANIMAL SOULS: THE MACHI MOUNTED WARRIOR

Father creator of the sky . . . take me over the earth, show me the earth above.
 "May he ride on his horses," you are saying, mother creator, father creator.
 May they protect me. The horse of the earth above has me with my head hanging. They lift my heart. They lift my head. I come from ancient grandparent machi. They gave me power. I want to ride on the horses from the upper worlds. Here I am, the child of the ancient people waiting for your horse to lift me. . . . I am a being that rides on horses, that knows herbal remedies. . . . My other self, my other power is riding on a horse.

—Excerpt from machi José's divination prayers

Machi gain knowledge, power, and control over the spirit world through horsemanship and mastery over spirit animals in the same way that Spanish horsemen and colonial institutions gained control over Mapuche people. While machi brideliness reflects subtle forms of agency whereby machi gain knowledge through feminine seduction, horsemanship is a spiritual relationship that involves explicit hierarchy and domination over spirits and is associated with masculinity and warfare. Horsemanship, mounting, and mastery over animals are symbols of masculinity, fortitude, agility, and prestige for machi, as they were for colonial Spanish and Mapuche warriors who battled each other between the sixteenth and late nineteenth centuries. Mounted Spanish conquistadores believed they were

defeating infidels and evil while gaining land and riches for Spain, and later Chilean mounted warriors defended the independence of the new Chilean nation (Bacigalupo 2004). Some machi mimic powerful conquistadores on horseback to bring out their spiritual power. As masculine mounted warriors and masters of animals, machi defeat evil spirits and foreignness and gallop to other worlds to gain knowledge of the universe. History is replayed and transformed in ritual. Machi gain sacred power from the performance of the Spanish colonial and Chilean national armies and can use that power for healing or destruction.

In some contexts, Mapuche view horsemanship, dogs, horses, and bulls as foreign and associate them with colonization and sorcery. Usually, however, machi view horses, sheep, and cattle as indigenous, associate them with well-being and abundance, and value horsemanship and mastery over animals. Mapuche warriors quickly incorporated Spanish horses, sheep, and cattle into their livelihood. They created a cavalry to defend their land and liberty. Cattle raising became a main source of sustenance for the Mapuche until the imposition of reservations in 1883, when they turned to sedentary agriculture. Having many animals was a symbol of power, prestige, and wealth (Alvarado, de Ramón, and Peñaloza 1991:84, 87, 89). Horses and, to a lesser extent, sheep and cattle became important parts of Mapuche sociopolitical, ritual, mythical, and military ideologies. In one version of the Mapuche deluge myth, only humans who rode on horses were saved. Collective *nguilatun* rituals always include the *awun*—an event in which Mapuche mounted warriors (*weichafe pura kawellu*), carrying flags and lances and shouting war cries, gallop counterclockwise around the *nguilatunwe*, or altar. They do battle with the winds in order to control the weather (Alvarado, de Ramón, and Peñaloza 1991:145) and celebrate the power of horsemanship, the horse, and Mapuche identity.

Machi strengthen their bodily defenses and ability to heal by personifying male mounted warriors (*machi weichafe pura kawellu*), often referred to as "guardians," "nobles," and "kings," who shelter machi during ASC.¹¹ A machi must mount a spirit horse in order to become initiated: "I saw the saddled horse in my dream," said machi Rocío. "I knew that if I rode I would be a machi." After initiation, machi ride spirit horses during rituals in which they experience themselves as spirits that have knowledge and power (Juan Nanculef, personal communication, September 26, 2002). Machi Ana argues that machi ride spiritual horses to other worlds in order to gain power and knowledge—to "know the situation of the universe."

Machi are also described as warriors who ride their *zewe* like a horse as they ascend its steps in their travel to other worlds in magical flight. Weapons and war imagery give the machi knowledge and strength. Machi view themselves as masculine mounted warriors who defeat evil, illness, and suffering. They use guns, knives, and war cries to kill illness or drive it from the bodies of their patients or from their lands, households, or communities. *Awinkaminto*, or becoming like a non-Mapuche, is often cited as the root of illness, evil, and alienation, three enemies that threaten the Mapuche individually and collectively. To help them defeat evil, machi often call on the power of *chueca* sticks—sticks used in playing the ritual game of *chueca* during *nguilatun* rituals and on other festive occasions.

An all-male game, *chueca* is semantically equivalent to warfare, and in the past it helped strengthen Mapuche warriors before battle. Machi perform spiritual warfare as a way of aggressively advocating the opposition between self, Mapuche tradition, and life, on one hand, and otherness, non-Mapuche culture, and death, on the other (Bacigalupo 1998a). Traditional Mapuche norms dictate that ritual objects, deities, and ritual actions be referred to in sets of twos and fours, but the Catholic notion of the twelve apostles has also been incorporated into Mapuche sacred numerology. Machi Javiera prayed:

With all your teachings I will ride my horse for this ill son of mine. I will incense the horse with smoke; I will sweat knowledge. I will sweat petitions. . . . Come, become my tongue and come into my head. Come and live in my heart. . . . Take me, you twelve *chueca* sticks of war. My twelve arrows of war. My twelve knives of war that will allow me to travel through the universe and give me my knowledge. My twelve horse breaths. My twelve walking horses. My twelve spirit horses. . . . My superiors have given me my strength. They feed me with knowledge and advice. They take me to the sky. I shall go to the sky, I shall be doing war. . . . knowledge of war, teachings of struggle. . . . This is the end of my greeting, my petitions, old woman of discourse, old man of discourse, warrior chiefs, wise people.¹²

Machi are also masters of other animals: they gain power, strength, and life force from special sheep, horses, chickens, and sometimes cows or bulls. Machi drink the saliva of their spirit animals and blood from the ears. They receive the animals' breath on their faces, heads, and backs, to strengthen them while the ritual participants eat horse and sheep meat. During initiation and *nguilatun* rituals, Mapuche tie a sheep, a horse, and sometimes a bull or cow to a stake near the *nguilatwe* or *rewwe*, and horsemen take their horses to the machi so that he or she can feel the horses' breath on the face, head, and back. Sometimes the horse's breath is the "breath of life" (Alvarado, de Ramón, and Peñaloza 1991:91) that restores the machi's strength after he or she enters into ASC, embodies a spirit, and travels to the Wenu Mapu. Machi also receive breath from their spirit animals daily. Machi José sang the life-giving qualities of his spirit horse's breath: "My heart has strength again. My head has strength again. Your breath has lifted my being."

Most machi choose a sheep, a horse, a chicken, a cow, or any combination thereof, and these spirit animals are initiated along with the machi, just as María Cecilia's were. Machi do not ride these spirit animals, make them work, or slaughter them. Instead, the animals are expected to protect and help the machi. The human machi's well-being receives higher priority than that of her spirit animal. If a machi is ill or is cursed, ideally the spirit animal will get sick or die on her behalf. If a spirit animal dies, the machi must replace it with another, or she will become weak and ill. The term *machi-fleu* or *pilliu* refers to the machi spirit as such, but also to the physical embodiment of the spirit, usually human, but sometimes animal.¹³

Not all machi can afford a spirit horse at home; they keep other animals with different power attributes to protect them. Machi Rocio, for example, kept a sheep

and a cow. Instead of exchanging saliva with them or drinking their blood, she bathed them in herbal remedies. Machi Pamela had a machi-sheep with whom she exchanged breath. She prayed: "My heart is happy that my sheep has arrived again. By having my sheep I can scream louder. . . . Before, my tongue was stuck. My tongue was small. . . . Now this did not happen, I am revitalized. I have recovered my strength."

Bulls are strong and grant powers to machi, but horses are considered more powerful in the spiritual world because of their gracefulness and agility. Gloria, a Mapuche potter, said, "When bulls are castrated they lose their strength, but horses have much more power than any cattle. . . . The spirit asks the machi to have a horse. . . . Bulls are not as useful to machi." Other machi believe that the agility and spirituality of the horse can be combined with the strength of the bull. Machi María Cristina prayed, "I am looking for teachings. I implore for a horse-bull and for a ox-bull."¹⁴

Machi share spirit and life force with their spirit animals, and their lives are intertwined. If a machi's spirit animal is killed, part of the machi dies, too, and she suffers drastic physical and spiritual consequences. When seventy-eight-year-old machi Pamela's son died from heart failure in 1994, she ritually sacrificed her spirit horse to feed the mourners at the funeral and to ensure that her son would travel to the Wenu Mapu on the horse instead of lurking nearby and tormenting the living. Pamela became sad and weak after her son's death and felt pain in her chest, stomach, and head. She experienced fever, fainting, confusion, and amnesia, which she interpreted as soul loss. When Pamela fell into a cataleptic state, machi Ana came to heal her. After forty minutes of massage, drumming, and prayers, Pamela regained consciousness. Ana said that Pamela's spirit horse was angry because she had killed it and that in doing so she had killed herself in the same way the horse had been slaughtered—stabbed with a knife in the heart and lung. Pamela had been hospitalized a few weeks before and diagnosed with cardiac weakness; blood and fluid were accumulating in her lungs. Pamela interpreted the diagnosis as a reflection of the spiritual suicide and soul loss she had experienced when her spirit horse was killed.

Ana obtained the power to heal Pamela from the deity Nginechen in the guise of four mounted warriors. She asked them to revitalize machi Pamela: "Old Man mounted on your horse, Old Woman mounted on your horse, Young Man mounted on your horse, Young Woman mounted on your horse. . . . come together with your four saddled horses to see this sister and strengthen her spirit of service, strengthen her heart. . . . This sick machi with a clean heart will mount her horse. . . . She must mount her horse with good faith to regain her vitality and the activities of her being." Machi Pamela agreed: "I need a horse to make me feel happier, stronger. I will not get sick, because Chau Dios will be watching over me. I will be invincible."

Machi share self with horses, master them, and become spiritual mounted warriors who appropriate the power of Spanish conquistadores and Chilean generals to literally or symbolically ascend the *rewwe*, travel in ecstatic flight to other worlds, and kill evil spirits. At the same time, machi are neither horses nor riders but humans who propitiate the powers of the Wenu Mapu in the form of

horses. They draw on the power of Ngüñecheñ in the deity's guise of four mounted warriors. These multiple machi powers and positions, along with those of seduction and brideliness, are paired with different altered states of consciousness that grant machi a broad experience of the universe.

Machi's varied gendered relationships with spirit beings in ritual are both embodied and ensouled. The paradigm of embodiment alone—the lived experience of being in the body—is insufficient as a model for understanding machi ritual relationships. Rather, machi, like other non-Western people, experience a continuum of states of being that include body, mind, personalities, consciousness, and self/soul (Halliburton 2002), in which people possess not only bodies but also multiple spirits (Laderman 1992; Pollock 1996).¹⁵ Different states of individual and collective bodies (*trawca*), consciousness (*zuam*), and soul (*pillu*) are continuously interacting with each other in machi ritual relationships. Spiritual kinship and spiritual mastery are marked by exchange of bodily substances such as voice, breath, blood, and saliva, while spiritual marriage involves shamanic illness and the symbolism of the mounting of the head. At the same time, machi have many intangible modes of experience separate from the body during altered states of consciousness in which their own souls, or *pillu*, remain distinct or merge with those of other spirit beings such as the *ñilu* (the generic spirit of ancestral machi), *machi pillu* (the specific spirit that guides machi actions), and Ngüñecheñ (the Mapuche deity).

PERSONHOOD, POSSESSION, AND ECSTATIC TRAVEL

Machi's varied ritual gendered relationships with spirit beings offer new perspectives on shamanic altered states of consciousness. In this section I analyze the problems with some of the previous approaches to gender and shamanism and explore how three different machi perceptions of self and their ritual gendered relationships with spirits contribute to current discussions on shamanic altered states of consciousness and personhood. First, I explore how machi view themselves as independent persons with symbiotic relationships with spirits in their everyday lives. Second, I examine how machi share personhood with spirits during ecstatic flight. And third, I analyze how machi have a persona separate from that of the spirit during possession, although it is the persona of the spirit that predominates temporarily.

Many ethnographers continue to accept older Euro-American assumptions about personhood, gender, and sexuality as natural, precultural universals and to project these concepts onto shamanic altered states of consciousness. Many ethnographers throughout the world still subscribe to the classic male-dominant paradigms proposed by Eliade ([1964]1972:328–29, 346–47, 411, 453, 507) and Lewis (1966:321–22, 1969:89), in which men are shamans because they travel to other worlds and experience ecstatic, transcendent spiritual knowledge, which they control and remember, while women and “passive” homosexual men, who are like women in affect and dress (Matory 1994:228–29), are not defined as shamans, but as mediums, because they are physically and spiritually “mountable” by the

spirits who possess them.¹⁶ These embodied possession experiences are characterized as unwilling, involving impersonation and a change of identity (Rouget [1980]1985:3,325), and therefore as amnesic and uncontrolled (Bourguignon 1976:12).¹⁷

Researchers of Mapuche shamanism replicate these older gendered notions of possession and ecstasy. Some argue that spirits possess female and feminized male machi and that the machi's soul is displaced (Alonqueo 1979; Kuramochi 1990; Métraux 1973). San Martín (1976:192) argues that male machi do not experience possession but travel with their spirits in ecstatic flight to other worlds and gives no information on female machi. This perspective does not account for the fact that machi—male and female—experience both possession and ecstasy, engage with spirits of different genders, and incorporate both female and male symbols and roles in their practices. Anthropologists have viewed the distinction between ecstasy and possession as one of control or lack of control over ASC, but if the altered state is sought, however, “then the question of ‘control’ or ‘possession’ is a matter of ideology, techniques, theatrics, or audience perception” (Tedlock 2003:300). Machi entrance and exit from both possession and ecstasy is willed and controlled. When unwilling possession occurs among Mapuche, it is not considered shamanic. Those Mapuche who experience unwilling possession are characterized either as neophytes who have a spiritual calling but need training or as people who are possessed by evil spirits.¹⁸ Machi ecstasy is not superior to possession but involves greater risk and skill. The ecstatic machi may be captured by an evil spirit as it travels through different worlds and must be able to control her spirit horse. Machi do not cease to experience possession because they are shamans, but they engage in possession and/or ecstasy according to the specific ritual situation.¹⁹ Machi call their spirits and become possessed at the beginning of healing and initiation rituals and engage in ecstatic flight to gain more healing knowledge and to rescue lost souls in other worlds. These machi experiences are echoed by other scholars who argue that shamans engage in alternate states of consciousness (Frigerio 1988), and although the ability to undergo ecstatic magical flight may require greater skill than mastery of possession (Peters 1981:109), most shamans can experience ecstasy, possession, and visionary ASC (Hultkrantz 1973:29; Basilov 1976:149; Tedlock 2003:300).²⁰

Many authors have linked the alleged predominance of female mediums and the lack of female shamanism with women's social or sexual deprivation. In societies where possession cults are “peripheral to the morality system,” participants—namely, women and effeminate men—are said to be drawn from the periphery (Lewis 1966:321–22, 1969:89; Eliade [1964]1972:507). According to Lewis (1969), women only become shamans in areas where state bureaucracies and doctrinal religions have discredited the practice of shamanism. Scholars have followed Lewis's lead to argue that the power female shamans gain in their families and communities from their spiritual callings to heal others compensates for women's peripheral social status (Basilov 1990; Harvey 1979; Lewis 1969; Wolf 1973). Female mediums, too, are often constructed as women who seek to heal themselves by compensating for sexual deprivation (Spiro 1967; Obeyesekere

1981) and resisting the power of men (Boddy 1989; Lambek 1981). Yet, if women are, in fact, universally deprived as Lewis argues, why is it that more women do not become shamans (Kendall 1999:893)?

Contemporary authors have demonstrated that the deprivation hypothesis does not explain the predominance of female shamans around the globe (Balzer 1996; Basilov 1990; Humphrey and Onon 1996; Kendall 1985; Tedlock 2003) independent from the suppression and discrediting of shamanic practice by state authorities. Women are shown to become shamans because of specific historic conditions (Balzer 1996; Kendall 1999:894), to create "new forms of speech and new local and global histories" (Tsing 1993:254), and to work alongside male shamans (Tedlock 2003:298). This is particularly noticeable among the Mapuche, where women and men shamans coexist, with one or the other predominating according to specific economic, social, and political circumstances and the gendering of social and spiritual space (Bacigalupo 1996a, 2002).

Many scholars, however, continue to focus on the everyday gender identities of shamans as women or men, neglecting the different gender identities assumed by shamans during altered states of consciousness. I argue that possession and ecstasy are expressions of different gendered relationships between spirits and hosts, but that they are not direct comments on the everyday gender, sex, or sexuality of the machi practitioner. Rather, by rendering these everyday identities secondary, ritual personhoods use gender to express the hierarchical relationships between Mapuche authorities and Chilean authorities, masters and servants, parents and children, husbands and wives. I argue that machi's descriptions of their ecstatic flight as a masculine action or of possession as a feminine action are contingent on machi's personal consciousness in relationship to that of spirits and deities.

In everyday life and in ordinary states of consciousness, machi are generally viewed as persons who possess *zuaru* (consciousness) and who are authors and agents of their own thoughts, actions, and emotions. In order to be a person, a Mapuche must have a *piuke* (heart), the locus of *ninkün* (emotion), as well as *rakiduaru*—thoughts, knowledge, and wisdom. Seeing, knowing, and empathy are central to machi practice. Machi decide whether and whom to marry, make friends, vote, are involved in politics. Machi autonomously decide which patients to see and what rituals to perform, how much to charge, and how to bolster their popularity and compete with other machi.

But although machi are held accountable for their actions in everyday life, they are never true agents of their destiny. After initiation, a machi's personhood is shaped by his or her relationship with spirits and their demands. Machi usually inherit a machi *pillu*, an individual spirit of an ancestral machi, and also gain divinatory and healing knowledge from *fileu*, a generic powerful ancestral machi who guides them through their ecstatic travels to other worlds. Ngünechen, the Mapuche deity that fuses Mapuche ancestral spirits and colonial authorities with the Christian God, Jesus, and the Virgin, also provides advice and punishes machi who stray away from traditional norms.

These spirit beings expect machi to live up to impossible ideals. They ask machi to dedicate their lives exclusively to the spirits, not to marry, to avoid

modern technology, and to speak exclusively in the Mapuche language, Mapudungun, not in Spanish, the official language of Chile. Spirits place taboos on drinking, dancing, socializing, sex, and nontraditional clothing. Spirits are angered if machi have lovers or spouses, travel in cars, or use cellular phones and punish them with illness and suffering.

Machi negotiate their needs and desires with those of their spirits, appeasing them continually with prayers and offerings. Machi Rocio described one of her struggles with her machi *pillu* in a dream narrative:

In my dream there was a machi who didn't show her face. "Extinguish the fire," she said. "No," I said. And the spirit was mad. "You are not your own owner," the spirit said. "I command you. Extinguish the fire. . . . Play your kulrun [drum] and pray for that poor ill man." And that is what I did, because if one does not do what the spirit says in the dream, one becomes ill.

Some machi find the burden of spiritual marriage unbearable. Machi Fresia was unable to fulfill the demands of the spirit she inherited from her machi great-grandmother or to resolve the conflicts she had with her spirit. She finally decided to uproot her altar and abandon her machi practice (Bacigalupo 1995).

During ordinary states of consciousness, machi and their spirits are perceived as separate persons in symbiotic relationship. The *fileu* is the power, or *newen*, that makes the machi, and the machi is the human who makes the power tangible and effective through ritual practice. Thus, even human machi may be spoken of as *fileu*, just as *fileu* may be referred to as machi. Although machi are subject to the *fileu*'s demands and desires and the *fileu* influences the machi's personality, they remain separate persons. Ramiro, a Mapuche intellectual, elaborates on the relationship between machi personhood and that of spirits:

RAMIRO: There are two elements to the machi person: the physical, which is individual, and the *pillu*, which is inherited. . . . Machi Jacinto is physically Jacinto. But his *pillu* is that of his great-grandmother. So when the *pillu* comes into him, which is the character who acts? The character of the machi—a great-grandmother.

MARIELLA: When machi Jacinto dies, which is the spirit that is inherited by another machi? That of machi Jacinto? That of the great-grandmother machi? Or that of the great-grandmother machi transformed by machi Jacinto?

RAMIRO: That of the great-grandmother machi, because it is the machi identity that is inherited. But there is also the individual *pillu* of machi Jacinto, so the spirit says, I have also served this other *fileu* called So-and-So. (Interview, December 18, 2001)

During ecstatic states, machi share self with the *fileu*. The *fileu* is the intermediary or messenger between humans and the deity Ngünechen, who speaks its demands, knowledge of remedies, and advice through the machi. Mapuche

consider ecstatic flight (as a mounted Mapuche or Spanish warrior) a masculine action in which male and female machi travel to other worlds to obtain power objects, acquire knowledge about healing, and recover lost souls from the hands of evil spirits. Machi describe themselves as the *fileu* "flying to the sky," "riding the spirit horse," and "sitting beside Ngünechen to listen to his words." At the end of complex healing rituals, or *daahatun*, machi experience an ecstatic state labeled *kompapillu*. The term *kompapillu* has multiple meanings: "the spirit who enters and does here," derived from the terms *komiri* (to enter), *pa* (to do here), and *pillu* (living spirit); "the spirit who divines here," derived from the terms *koneu* (divination), *pa* (to do here), and *pillu* (living spirit); or simply "with the spirit." At this time the deity Ngünechen or the *fileu* merges with the machi to reveal the cause of the illness and gives advice and knowledge about healing remedies. Machi remember their experiences as spirit beings in detail and recount them often.

The way in which machi share personhood with spirit beings during ecstatic flight is complex. Machi draw on the discourse of possession to describe ecstatic flight as multiple, multilayered possessions in which the machi and the *fileu* go into *kitymi* (ASC), and the *fileu* "speaks the words of Ngünechen through the machi's mouth." Mapuche sometimes refer to machi in trance as *fileu* or as Ngünechen. Ramiro, the Mapuche intellectual quoted earlier, argued that "the machi *pillu*, the *fileu*, and Ngünechen can be the same or different according to context." Machi Rocio explained this process:

MARIELLA: When you are possessed, what spirit comes?

Rocio: The spirit that one has, the machi *pillu*. A machi without power is no good. One has to have power.

MARIELLA: When your head becomes drunk and you go into *kitymi* [ASC], who arrives?

Rocio: *Fileu*, Ngünechen, machi *pillu*. They are all the same.

MARIELLA: But if you inherit a machi spirit from your grandmother, that spirit is not Ngünechen.

Rocio: One has to inherit a spirit first to be a machi. That is the machi *pillu*. That is the spirit that comes to one. The words of Ngünechen, the *fileu*, come through the machi *pillu*. When the machi is in *kitymi*, the machi *pillu*, *fileu*, and Ngünechen are the same. (Interview, December 28, 2001)

These multiple multilayered possessions between the machi person, the machi *pillu* or *fileu*, and Ngünechen are comparable to the two sets of mimesis observed by Tausig (1993:120): one between the person and the copy represented by his or her soul and the second, the mimetic conjunction between the soul and the spiritual cosmos. Machi, like Panamanian Kuna chanters, have a decisively mimetic component built into their speech, where the speaker is always retelling, reviewing, or reinterpreting something said before (Tausig 1993:109). Machi hear the message of Ngünechen through the words of the *fileu* and the machi *pillu* who interpret them. The machi repeats and interprets the words of the *fileu* and the machi *pillu* in her ecstatic discourse and gains power. The machi's words, in turn, are repeated and

interpreted by the *dwungumachife*, or master of words, on behalf of the community.

During possession states, the machi becomes a feminine bride and her or his head is mounted by a spirit, a process labeled *lonkoluapan*. The machi's personhood remains distinct from that of his or her spirit, and the spirit speaks directly through the machi's mouth and body while he or she remains absent.²¹ While possession strengthens the interpersonal ties between spirits and their human spouses (Boddy 1994:421), it also keeps machi's personhood separate. Machi claim they do not remember the possession experience because they separate themselves from the spirit, who speaks. In practice, however, machi possession states are always under control, and machi are both aware and unaware in what Carol Laderman (1991:88) calls "a balance between remembering and forgetting." Machi distinguish between light and deep possession and consider the latter more prestigious and powerful.

During light possession, the spirit inhabits the body of the machi but does not replace his or her soul, a phenomenon that Rolf Foerster (1993:106) refers to as "revelation." Machi are aware of the spirit's presence and understand its advice and demands, but it is the spirit, not the machi, who speaks. The possessed machi serves as a spokesperson for spirits. Machi forget their own persona but remember the ritual, the performance, and sometimes the actions and words of the possessing spirit. Machi Pamela describes her personal soul, or *pillu*, as "sitting beside" her body while she is being possessed by the *fileu*. Machi Marta described the experience this way: "The *fileu* is up in the sky but also in the rewe guarding the *pillu*. When the *fileu* comes to me I feel a heat rising in my body and I am gone. I stay at the rewe, I am Marta. The *fileu* takes over. While God talks to the *fileu*, the machi talks to the people. The word of God is repeated."

During deep possession, complete separation occurs between the machi's person and that of the spirit who takes over and replaces the machi's soul. Machi rarely remember anything about what transpired except for the drumming rhythms. Machi Fresia explained: "When the spirit is here I disappear. So there is a change. When the spirit is not with me then I am here. When the spirit arrives then I am not here where the spirit is talking. Machi are double persons because sometimes she is here and sometimes she is not the person with whom people are talking" (interview, November 24, 1991). Like the Voodoo practitioners observed by Erika Bourguignon, machi view a continuity between the identity of the subject and the possessing spirit, but a discontinuity between the latter and the human vehicle who does not have memory or responsibility for the actions carried out by her or his body when it becomes the residence for a more powerful spirit. At the same time, some cases of possession show an obvious continuity with the conscious motivation of the possessed (Bourguignon 1965:47, 53, 57). In this case, the temporary substitution of the machi's self with that of a spirit does not challenge the integrity of the machi self but, rather, provides increased scope for fulfillment by providing the self with an alternate set of roles. Possession becomes an idiom of communication where spirits have a place not only during public ceremonies but in machi's everyday domestic life as well (Crapanzano and Garrison 1977:10-12; Lambek 1980:121-23).

During Mapuche rituals, machi or candidates to machihood (*machitil*) are the

only people who are possessed or engage in ecstatic travel. Knowledgeable elder Mapuche, *ngempin*, *dungumachife*, and some dancers and musicians understand the power and meaning of Mapuche ritual prayers, songs, and dances, but the machi alone is responsible for establishing the connection between the Wenu Mapu and the Earth. Machi criticize, for example, the collective possessions that typically take place in Cuban *santería*. When machi Abel participated in an international folk music festival in Germany, he was struck by the Afro-Cuban music and dance troop: "Not everyone can be a communicator, a spiritual messenger. How it is that one spirit possesses all those people at once? They must be possessed by the devil."

Machi stress the relational nature of humans, animals, and spirits, but in practice they operate in both relational and individual modes of personhood. They stress their relational selves in order to legitimate themselves as machi with strong spiritual powers, who gain power from colonial authorities, ancestral spirits, and spirit animals. But they emphasize their individual personhood when asserting their agency and volition in everyday life and in distancing themselves from possessing spirits who take over their bodies and speak through them.

CONCLUSION

I have demonstrated that machi operate in both relational and individual modes of personhood and that their ritual experiences are embodied and ensouled. The complex workings of machi personhood offer a new way to think about the relationship between body, mind, and spirit and the ways in which shamanic altered states of consciousness are gendered. Mapuche consider out-of-body ecstatic flight a masculine action associated with the image of mounted conquistadores and Mapuche warriors and embodied possession as a feminine action associated with brideliness to possessing spirits. Machi, however, experience both of these drum-induced ASC regardless of their sex, using one or another according to purpose and the specific ritual context. Contrary to classic theories of shamanism, Mapuche do not view ecstasy as superior, more controlled, or more transcendent than possession, nor does possession involve a loss of self. In fact, machi experiences of possession and ecstatic flight have much in common. Both altered states of consciousness are voluntarily induced and controlled. Possessed machi are double persons who have certain awareness of the ritual performance, while machi conceive of ecstatic flight as multiple, multilayered possessions where the shaman's self merges with that of his or her spirit, while this spirit, in turn, is possessed by other deities and spirits.

Shamanism, however, is not just a question of varying altered states of consciousness or of expressions of power and resistance (Boddy 1989; Comaroff 1985; Stoller 1995). Shamanism is not a "desiccated and insipid category" (Geertz 1966) but a widespread "historically situated and culturally mediated social practice" (Atkinson 1992) connected both to local circumstances and histories and to national and transnational contexts (Atkinson 1992; Balzer 1996; Joralemon 1990; Kendall 1998; Tausig 1987; Tsing 1993). The different relational

personhoods and positionalities of shamans, animals, and spirits are expressions of cultural meaning, of ethnic/national relationships in various social and political contexts. Machi ritual relationships through kinship, marriage, and mastery and their associated altered states of consciousness reflect the complex and contradictory relationships between Mapuche and Spaniards, women and men, humans, animals, and spirits. These relationships can be hierarchical or complementary and highlight the agency of the machi or merge his or her personhood with that of other spiritual beings. On the one hand, kinship merges human, animal, and spirit worlds. I have demonstrated that exchange of bodily substances among machi and between machi and spirit animals creates an ordered social body where machi and animal bodies and souls share the qualities of spiritual kinship. On the other hand, social kinship, inheritance, and succession remain independent from spiritual kinship. Machi inherit their spirits from a machi on the mother's side of their family and share personhood with her independently from the social patrilineages.

Machi spiritual marriages represent the contradictions over feminine control and power in a patriarchal social system. When machi brides are possessed by husband spirits, they illustrate the superiority of spirits and deities over humans and of Chilean authorities over Mapuche ones, as well as the limited participation of women in the patrilineal social and political realm. At the same time, spiritual brideliness illustrates how women are able to negotiate pragmatically with local male authorities in the same manner that Mapuche negotiate with Chilean authorities. Machi's positive valuation of spiritual seduction as the tool for entering the spirit world and the prioritization of spiritual marriage over social marriages set machi apart from other women and offer a new reading of feminine sexuality in a spiritual context.

As masters of animals and mounted warriors who travel in ecstatic flight, machi gain control over the hierarchical institutions that regulate Mapuche people and use their power for their own purposes. Multiple, multilayered possessions provide the context for the merging of machi personhood with that of mounted masculine Mapuche and Spanish warriors as well as with the Chilean religious and civil authorities that control their lives and futures. In this context, shamans are not the children or brides of hierarchical spirits and deities, but deities and authorities themselves. It is from this position of power that shamans know about the universe and are able to change situations. By becoming male authorities in order to define their own destinies and change the world, machi reverse the inferior position that Mapuche hold in relation to the Chilean state. At the same time, machi masters' powers, destinies, and lives are intertwined with the animals they dominate. Machi are part of a larger social body where Mapuche and non-Mapuche, masters, and animals share personhood and where foreign authorities and beings become part of and transform the Mapuche self.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank Lawrence Straus, Barbara Tedlock, Don Pollock, Erika Bourguignon, Lisa Lucero, Jane Kepp, Neil Whitehead, and three anonymous reviewers for

their comments on an earlier version of this manuscript.

2. Barbara Tedlock introduced the term *co-gendérez* to refer a partly feminine and partly masculine personality (Tedlock 2003:301).
3. Alfred Métraux (1942) and Robles Rodríguez (1911, 1912) described machi initiation and renewal rituals.
4. Machi such as María Cecilia, who belong to a machi school of practice, invite their cohorts to heal them and grant them blessings. Machi who do not belong to a school of practice hire other machi to perform these functions in their rituals. Machi initiation and renewal rituals are grouped together under the generic term *machi purran* or *baite de machi* (dance of the machi).
5. Photographing María Cecilia's ritual could be particularly dangerous. Her relationship with her spirit was new and tenuous, and I was uncertain which soul would be captured on film when she was in an altered state of consciousness and her personal soul might be traveling or displaced by a possessing spirit. I expressed my concerns to her, but she responded, "We know you. You are not a Mapuche and you have no power or bad intentions. . . . The photo captures the soul when the photo is taken close up and the eyes are open. Take photos when the machi's heads are covered with the headscarf, from behind, from far away, or when the eyes are closed. . . . If someone else tells you to stop taking photos, don't stop. If the machi tell you to stop, then stop." I followed her instructions and took photographs during the first day of the ritual.
6. Michael Taussig observes a similar process where semen and pubic hair are used to effect love magic through contagion, but they are also profound indices of sexual attachment, impregnation, and the making of children. "It becomes virtually impossible to separate their being sign from their being ontologically part of the sexually partnered" (Taussig 1993:55).
7. Some machi transfer power to their initiates by cutting crosses into the palms of their hands and rubbing them together in order to mix their blood. Javiera and Elena considered the ritual exchange of animal blood and breath to be sufficient.
8. The *kopiwe* flowers and *llankalawen* vines that machi wear during initiation rituals have explicit spiritual, sexual, and reproductive connotations. *Kopiwes* are viewed as female symbols of traditional lore and machi practice, which resist urbanity and modernization. Crushed *kopiwe* flowers are used to help machi with the symptoms of initial calling and sudden encounters with evil spirits. *Llankalawen*, a wild plant that grows intertwined with the *kopiwe* vine, is the male counterpart of the *kopiwe* and is often associated with the *fileu*. It serves as the masculine complement to the machi, who is perceived as feminine when seducing the *fileu* (Bacigalupo 1998b).
9. Studies that have explored the way in which gender identities are negotiated in various Latin American contexts have centered on male transgendered prostitutes (Kulick 1998; Preur 1998; Schifter 1998) or ordinary men (Lancaster 1992), but not on male and female shamans. The focus of these studies has been on the way specific sexual acts—penetrating or being penetrated by others—create gender. They associate "gender variance" with "sexual variance."
10. The involuntary and uncontrolled possession common to Voodoo and Oyo-Yoruba priests only occurs among Mapuche neophytes who experience a calling or among Mapuche who are possessed by evil spirits.
11. Carol Laderman (1992:191) describes a similar phenomenon among Malay shamans, who mobilize their inner resources, personified as the Four Sultans, the Four Heroes, the Four Guardians, and the Four Nobles.
12. Prayer collected by Juan Nanculef.

13. Pollock (1996:330) notes a similar process among the Kulina, where the term *dzupinatahe* refers to the physical embodiment of the spirit either by humans or animals.

14. Prayer collected by Juan Nanculef.

15. In the last two decades, anthropologists have focused on the phenomenology of the body and have used the paradigm of embodiment in an effort to compensate for previous mentalistic perspectives and to transcend the Cartesian mind-body dualism (Csordas 1999; Lock 1993; Roseman 1991; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987; Stewart and Strathern 2001; Stoller 1989). These perspectives often view non-Western people as grounding their experience in the body and as not distinguishing between mind and body (Low 1994; Pandolfi 1993; Scheper-Hughes 1992; Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987; Strathern 1996), while nonmarginal European and American groups are depicted as unaware of their bodies and as distinguishing between mind and body. Many anthropologists interested in the relationship between personhood and spirits have drawn on the paradigm of embodiment to focus on the relationship between bodies and persons (Lambek and Strathern 1998), the personification of bodies (Lamb 2000; Lambek and Strathern 1998; Scheper-Hughes 1992), and the relationship between bodies and spirits (Boddy 1998; Corin 1998:89; Rasmussen 1995:155).

16. Mastery of control is viewed as the central element of shamanism and is described as "voluntary" by Oesterreich (1966), "solicited" by Lewis (1969), and "desired" by Bourguignon (1968).

17. Erika Bourguignon recently stated that uncontrolled possession as characteristic of first possession occurs during "crisis situations" and is rare among Voodoo and Oyo-Yoruba priests (Bourguignon, e-mail message, January 26, 2004).

18. These two forms of possession are easily confused. Machi Marta, for example, began training a young woman who she thought would become a machi, but gradually Marta realized that the young woman was possessed by evil spirits because she danced like a *meuten* (a *wekufe*, whirlwind).

19. Most machi argue that they experience diverse levels of consciousness, including ecstasy and possession, but machi Sergio believes machi can be grouped according to their different altered states of consciousness:

Only select groups of machi are possessed by the fileu. The fileu is an ancient spirit, the biggest and wisest machi of the Wenu Mapu, the central head of all machi that takes machi to the magnetic field. The fileu looks for worthy machi heads in which to deposit its tradition. This takes many years. The fileu protects all machi who inherit this tradition. A machi who is possessed by the fileu remembers nothing afterward because the words come from God. It takes over the machi's mind and body completely. The fileu is a messenger for Nguinechen, who tells it what it has to do. The fileu transmits the machi's prayers, and it also speaks the messages and prayers from Nguinechen. Those that are possessed by machi pillu are different. They are earthly, pagan machi. They learn from the knowledges of other machi. They learn from perimontun [visions], and they remember what they said or did while possessed because the spirit is also from this earth, like them. The spirit wanders around the mountains and the forests, but it does not go up to the Wenu Mapu. They have less power. (Excerpt from telephone interview, May 18, 2002)

Mapuche intellectual Juan Nanculef, on the other hand, encountered machi who view the term *fileu* as something excessively mysterious and powerful to the point that it is sometimes associated with sorcery (telephone interview, September 26, 2002).

20. According to Larry Peters (1981), male Nepalese shamans are possessed in some instances and engage in spirit travel in others, but women never become shamans at all. He characterizes possession as an inferior form of involvement experienced by male neophytes, while advanced male shamans gain control of their spirits and have encounters with them in ecstatic flight.
21. I disagree with several researchers who have argued that machi share personhood with the spirit that possesses them (Alonqueo 1979; Kuramochi 1990; Métraux 1973).

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GENDERED RITUALS FOR COSMIC ORDER:
MAPUCHE SHAMANIC STRUGGLES FOR WHOLENESS (1)

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Abstract

The struggle for wholeness—the melding of all experience and knowledge of the world—is central to the practice of *machi*, or Mapuche shamans, in southern Chile. I explore how the gender and generational aspects of Mapuche persons are extended to the socio-cosmological order, to Mapuche ritual practice, and to the creation of a holistic machi personhood. I outline the application of holistic personhood in Mapuche cosmology and then analyze its performance in three kinds of Mapuche rituals. First, in divination rituals, gender difference is enacted by machi and *dungumachife* (“ritual interpreter for machi”), and wholeness is expressed through their ritual partnership. I demonstrate that ecstatic and formal discourses are gendered independently of the sex of the actors. Second, in community-wide *nguillatun* rituals, difference is impersonated by diverse actors, and wholeness is enacted collectively to integrate the ritual community. I demonstrate that both sex-based and performative dimensions of gender and generation are crucial for collective renditions of wholeness. Third, in individual healing rituals, difference is subsumed by the machi, who enacts wholeness as wellness, and the performative dimension of gender prevails over the notion of gender as linked to sex. Machi, both male and female, assume masculine, feminine, and co-gendered identities—moving between masculine and feminine gender polarities or combining them—for the purpose of healing. I conclude by analyzing the implications of ritual wholeness for theories of gender and embodiment and for Mapuche identity politics.

I ask you to support me, take pity on me, do me a favor. Old Woman of the morning, Old Man of the morning. I ask you to lift my heart. . . . Because my kin are not well, father of the sky, mother of the sky, I ask you to help me. Look at me, young father of the sky, young mother of the sky, old woman who lives in the sky, who lives in the transparent earth, help me. Send me the help I need from the young earth, the transparent earth, the old earth.

—Excerpt from *pelontun*, or divination, by Machi José, December 21, 2001

The struggle for wholeness—the melding of all experience and knowledge of the world—is central to the practice of *machi*, or Mapuche shamans, in southern Chile. Mapuche people—now socially, economically and politically marginalized by the Chilean state—link individual and social order with cosmological order. Both social and cosmological relations affect individual health and illness. A healthy person and body offer a model of social harmony and cosmic wholeness. Disruptions or transgressions of social or moral norms and failure to fulfill commitments to kin, ancestor spirits, and the Mapuche deity Ngünechen produce individual and social illness as well as cosmological chaos (2). To help prevent or repair such disruptions, machi use generational categories and gender—the assortment of attributes and predispositions considered either feminine or masculine—to link human worlds with spiritual realities (3). By mimicking and manipulating the gender and generational categories inherent in the fourfold deity Ngünechen, machi unleash cosmic powers in an effort to convert illness into health, disorder into order, and scarcity into abundance (Bacigalupo 2004).

Recent theorists of “embodiment” have explored the symbiosis of mind and body in the person, the cultural meanings and concepts inscribed onto bodies, and the interdependence of bodies and persons with social, cosmological, and political processes. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Margaret Lock (1987) distinguished between different dimensions of embodiment: the individual body as the lived experience of body as self; the social body, or the representational uses of the body as a symbol of nature, society, and culture; and the body politic as the regulation and control of bodies. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Thomas Csordas (1990) viewed embodiment as the existential condition of the possibility for culture and self, whereas Michel Foucault (1977, 1980) was concerned with the body as a readable text upon which social reality was inscribed. Some authors have viewed the body as a passive reflector of social and cultural values; others have focused on its active role in shaping personal agency. Pamela Stewart and Andrew Strathern (2001) explored the way in which the body-mind complex becomes a vehicle for the

expression of values and relationships in the social and cosmological realm. People are both individual and separate from other creatures and consubstantial with or linked to these others in the realm of sociality and the cosmos. Bodies, bodily humors, and souls share the substances and qualities of social processes (Pollock 1996:320), are important in the physical and moral constitution of persons, and are linked to the cosmos.

In this article I explore the ways in which the gender and generational aspects of Mapuche persons are extended to the socio-cosmological order, to Mapuche ritual practice, and to the creation of a holistic machi personhood. I outline the application of holistic personhood in Mapuche cosmology and then analyze its performance in three kinds of Mapuche rituals. First, in divination rituals, gender difference is enacted by machi and *dungumachife* ("ritual interpreter for machi"), and wholeness is expressed through their ritual partnership. A divination ritual performed by Machi José and his sister demonstrates how ecstatic and formal discourses are gendered independently of the sex of the actors. Second, in community-wide *ngillatun* rituals, difference is impersonated by diverse actors, and wholeness is enacted collectively to integrate the ritual community. A collective *ngillatun* ritual led by Machi José and Machi Norma demonstrates that both sex-based and performative dimensions of gender and generation are crucial for collective renditions of wholeness. Third, in individual healing rituals, difference is subsumed by the machi, who enacts wholeness as wellness, and the performative dimension of gender prevails over the notion of gender as linked to sex. A complex healing ritual performed by Machi Ana for Machi Pamela demonstrates how machi, both male and female, assume masculine, feminine, and co-gendered identities—moving between masculine and feminine gender polarities or combining them—for the purpose of healing (4).

Cosmic Ordering through Age and Gender: Myth, Spirits, and Deity

.The big spirit lived with a number of little spirits [children], who wanted power and rebelled, so the big spirit spat on them and their bodies turned to stone. They fell to the earth and became mountains. Some spirits stayed trapped inside the earth . . . and turned the mountains into smoking and erupting volcanoes. They were the big spirit's sons, who became the first male warrior spirits in the form of thunder, lightning, volcanoes, and stones. Our ancestors came from these spirits, called *pillüam*. Other spirits were loyal to the big spirit and cried copiously over the mountains and ashes. These were the big spirit's daughters, who were transformed into stars who mourned their brothers. Their tears formed lakes and rivers. The earth was created from the mixture of water [daughter's tears] and ash from the volcanoes [brother's anger] and was therefore both male and female. The big spirit then became Elchen or Chaw Elchefe, the creator of humankind, and divided itself into male sun and husband/father [*antü*] and female moon and wife/mother [*käyen*]. . . . The moon and the sun took turns looking over their children, thereby creating the balanced relationship between day and night.

—Edited excerpt from Armando Marileo's narration of the Mapuche creation myth, January 5, 1995 (5).

In the Mapuche creation myth (*epeu*), the initial ordering of the world is followed by a deluge in which most of humanity drowns or is transformed into sea creatures. Some humans survive on the mountains, but they resort to cannibalism, producing further cosmic disorder. When only one couple is left, a machi reveals that the two must pray and sacrifice their only child by throwing him into the waters to appease the divine anger. The couple perform the sacrifice, and order is restored in the world.

This myth explains the relationship among humans, animals, nature, and the divine and machi's role in restoring cosmic and social order through ritual. It also explains the need for the Mapuche to periodically offer animal sacrifices and prayers in collective *ngillatun* rituals in order to maintain balance among different cosmic forces and avoid catastrophes (Carrasco 1986; Mege 1997). The myth was enacted literally by a machi from Isla Huapi in 1960 during a massive earthquake and a series of tidal waves, which she thought would bring an end to the world. The machi had a young boy thrown to the waters to save the world.

The Mapuche creation and deluge myths are maps of reality that Mapuche use "to think about and act upon the world" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980), as well as models for the relationships between machi, the spirit world, and the world of humans. The interdependence of these cosmological realms is reinforced by attributing the creation of nature and culture to beings of both genders and by making both old age (wisdom) and youth (sexuality) crucial for Mapuche survival. The Mapuche organizing principle is a quadripartite one in which the masculine and the feminine, youth and old age are complementary and

are all equally needed to obtain wholeness (Bacigalupo 1998a). These four principles are often represented as a family in which Old Man and Old Woman play the role of parents and spouses who possess knowledge and wisdom. Young Man and Young Woman are their son and daughter; they possess life force and sexuality and relate to each other either as brother and sister or as husband and wife. This four-part gendered principle organizes the Mapuche cosmos and machi rituals, and it is the basis for the Mapuche deity Ngünechen. Mapuche historian Antonio Painecura described Ngünechen's dualities this way:

Ngünechen is dual, *epu*, woman and man. It never dies because even though we die he can continue birthing Mapuche. . . . Old Man and Old Woman concentrate wisdom and experience because they are still able to procreate through Young Man and Young Woman. Those four people create our world, and all Mapuche are created from these four people. For the Christians it is Adam and Eve. But we have four people instead of two.

Mapuche themselves debate the relationships among machi, the physical world, and the world of spirits. Some argue that natural and supernatural phenomena are one and the same, or have equal value. According to this perspective, the *mapu* (world) is populated by different *newen* (powers) that are ruled by *ngen*, or owners of the ecosystem, to whom the Mapuche pray. Humans live off the *püllü* (living soul) of the earth and have their own *püllü*, too, which is their *newen* (power), but they do not pray to gods (Quidel 1998:30–31). Machi embody and travel with one spirit, which is referred to as either *machi püllü* (the specific spirit that guides a machi's actions) or *filew* (the generic ancestral spirit of all machi), but they obtain their powers to heal, divine, and help others from a variety of different nature and astral spirits. Meli Küyen (the four moon spirits) and Meli Wangülen (the four spirits of the stars) grant machi the power of fertility. The *wünyelfe*, or morning star, helps them communicate with spirits through dreams and obtain information about herbal remedies and ritual treatments. *Tralkan* (lightning) and *kura* (rocks) give machi strength (Bacigalupo 2001b:19). Machi also draw on the power of the four elements: earth, water, air, and fire. They call on the power of waterfalls and lakes, which are associated with reproduction, fertility, and social relationships. Male sources of power are those that give a sudden burst of energy. Lightning, volcanoes, the sun, and rocks are considered male sources of power that are needed during exorcisms and in dealing with catastrophic situations such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tidal waves. Both female and male sources of power are thought to have young and old dimensions to them.

Other Mapuche acknowledge that colonial and Catholic structures of authority considered separate and superior to natural phenomena have impacted Mapuche notions of divinity. The relationship between machi and divine beings is reminiscent of coercive colonial relationships in which Spanish authorities and Catholic priests laid claim to Mapuche bodies, souls, and land. Mapuche spirits similarly lay claim to machi's bodies and souls. Contemporary Mapuche socio-spiritual hierarchies also reflect the Mapuche's defeat by the Chilean state and their subsequent inferior position due to loss of land and autonomy under the reservation system, imposed in 1884, and Christian missionization. The Mapuche deity Ngünechen, for example, first appeared in the nineteenth century as a response to the hierarchical political and religious structures imposed by Chilean society. The image of this deity combines various male colonial symbols of authority with Mapuche nature and ancestral spirits. The term *genche*, the root of the deity's name, first appeared in 1601 to refer to the Spanish *patron* and landowner, who held social, economic, and political power over his Mapuche workers. This hierarchical relationship was projected onto the spiritual realm, and Ngünechen became the patron, dominator, and governor of the earth and people, combining the power of all the Mapuche nature spirits (*ngen*) and ancestral spirits who live in the sky (*wenu püllüam*) (Bacigalupo 1997). Ngünechen became the donor of benefits, blessings, harvests, animal and human fertility, and health.

Ngünechen also came to be perceived as a sacred family that incorporated Catholic, military, and Mapuche ancestral authorities. Old Man is associated with the wisdom of God, Jesus, the apostles, the sun, and ancient chiefs; Old Woman, with the power of fertility, the wisdom of the Virgin Mary, the moon, and ancient machi; Young Man, with the military powers of Chilean officers and with unbound male sexuality; and Young Woman, with unbound female sexuality and childbirth.

The authority that Chilean religious and civil institutions hold over the Mapuche is replicated in the power that spirits and deities have over all Mapuche, and especially machi. Spirits and deities rank higher than humans and coerce them into certain behaviors. Spirits and deities punish humans with illness, drought, and bad luck if their demands are not heard and reward them with health, well-being, and abundance if they are. Mapuche incorporate and resignify these colonial hierarchical systems in order to reinforce Mapuche identities and norms. The spirit being that machi fear and revere the most is Ngünechen, who is often pictured as an old man with a white beard. Mapuche are like Kuna Indians in Panama in that the traditional features of social and cultural life transform the new into the old, incorporating and absorbing the outside, changing the world in order to stay the same (Taussig 1993). Mapuche, however, also incorporate colonial structures and systems of authority that transform traditional thought patterns, creating a new, hybrid sense of self.

Many Mapuche today view Ngünechen as a moral Mapuche deity equivalent to the Christian God. Machi José stated, “The God that appears in the Bible also means God in Mapuche. Ngünechen means God.” Machi Ana argued that “being Chilean, being foreign, whatever, it does not matter. We are all children of the same God.” Cacique Daniel explained the relationship between Ngünechen and the Christian God in machi practice:

Of course today that is mixed. This is so much so that in their prayers machi talk about Ngünechen, Chaw Ngünechen, and even Jesus Christ. They talk about God. Sometimes they talk about God instead of Ngünechen. They mix this religious thing, civilized ideas with what they understand by Ngünechen and do the same thing. They are different names, but it is the same person, which is the supreme being. They change their language to talk about Ngünechen in Spanish like God, but they know that it is no different. The difference is only in the image.

Mapuche intellectuals, however, stress the differences between Ngünechen and the Christian God. Manuel Lincovil said:

The elders say that Ngünechen is different from the God of the Bible. In their view it is their god. In order for them to be the same they would have to believe that Ngünechen sent his son Jesus Christ to look for and save those who were lost in sin. Only this way would Ngünechen be the true God. And, in the ngillatun ceremony, the machi prays to several gods, gods of the mountain, of the water, gods of the east, believing that is where God who will give them help is. (Interview in Nutram 1989:V (3):17.

Mapuche reinterpret the concept of trinity in terms of their traditional notion of a four-part spiritual being and incorporate colonial family and social hierarchies as well as the notion of punishment (*castigo*). The four social and divine personas of the deity Ngünechen—Kushe Domo (Old Woman), Fücha wentru (Old Man), Ülcha Domo (Young Woman), and Weche Wentru (Young Man)—not only constitute Mapuche wholeness but also are arranged hierarchically according to kin relations. Husbands and fathers (associated with hierarchy, authority, and warfare) rank higher than wives and mothers (associated with fertility, nurturance, and healing). Parents and grandparents (associated with wisdom) rank higher than children (associated with unbound sexuality and life energy). Spirits and deities (associated with wisdom and parenthood) rank higher than humans (associated with ignorance and childhood). And generation in general ranks higher than gender (an elderly mother ranks higher than a young son but lower than her husband or father; a brother ranks higher than his sister) (6). Machi are inferior to spirits and deities but superior to other humans who are not machi. They are simultaneously daughters or sons of the machi who initiated them, daughters or sons of the deity Ngünechen, from whom they obtain knowledge, brothers or sisters of their machi cohorts, and wise old parents and grandparents to ordinary humans and their ritual community. These different social and spiritual positionalities positions and relationships are what have allowed machi to experience the world as different people and to gain varied forms of knowledge and power.

Gendered Discourses of Divination: The Machi-Dungumachife Couple

At seven o'clock one summer morning, Machi José sat at a small wooden table in the doorway of his kitchen facing his *rewe*, a step-notched altar usually made from the trunk of a laurel or oak tree. José

welcomed his first patient, a nineteen-year-old man, as his sister Amelia heated his drum (*kultrun*) on the open fire. The patient had lost his job and heard noises on the roof of his house at night. He had been wandering aimlessly, and his family feared the presence of evil spirits. Machi José nodded as the man placed his used T-shirt and three one-thousand-peso bills on the table. José laid three *trive* (laurel) branches on top of the T-shirt and crossed two knives directly below it. “We will find the evil and treat it,” he said as he secured a green and black shawl around his shoulders with a woman’s pin made of heavy silver. He tied a purple scarf around his head and pulled it over his eyes. José drummed his *kultrun* and began a divination song:

I must be strong, my heart must be strong, eeeeeeeeee.
I have herbal remedies, I have remedies for you, eeeeeeeeee.
The machi shall know I am seeing his blood, his heart, his bones, eeeeeeeeee.
Chaw Díos, you who manage the earth above, Ñuke Díos,
Give me strength to talk loudly,
Give me good words, good knowledge, eeeeeeeeee.

Machi José held the drumstick in his right hand, his body rocking to the left with every beat of the drum. His head rolled loosely from side to side. Amelia stood behind him and spat water over his head to help him concentrate. José’s body contracted and trembled as the ancient machi spirit of his grandmother possessed him. Mapuche view both the action of being possessed and the language of the trancing machi as feminine. In divination contexts, machi self-identify as children and servants of the spirits and beg them for healing knowledge.

Machi José uses humoral medicine, in which bodily humors, organs, and body parts affect the behavior and character of the patient. Like most other machi, he analyzes the blood, heart, sweat, and bones of the patient to diagnose the illness of the individual person and his or her relationship to the social world (family, community, fellow workers), the spiritual world, and the cosmos. People perceived as having “weak bones, blood, and breath” are believed to be ill. Blood represents kinship, and bones are the most lasting repository of the person’s power and identity (7). Some machi argue that God created the Mapuche out of his/her breath and that human breath is life force. Blood and bones are strengthened with food, specific herbal remedies, moral behavior, and rituals to appease or exorcise spirits. Food, emotions, and spirits also affect the balance between hot and cold elements in the body and may cause illness. Excess of heat is often viewed as the presence of an alien substance—a virus, a bacterium, or an evil spirit.

Machi José drummed softly near his left ear and spoke the knowledge granted to him by the spirits: “His bones are not strong, he feels a lot of heat, sometimes he sweats too much, *alelalelalelalel*. You seem very calm but this calmness will not last . . . I see illness, pain, fights, tears, and a lot of suffering.”

Amelia, meanwhile, crouched close by and began conversing with the spirit using the masculine language of the *dungumachife*, who stimulates the machi’s discourse by repeating his or her words, agreeing with the machi, and interjecting specific questions about illness, evildoers, transgressions, relationships, remedies, sanctions, and actions:

Amelia: What is the problem?
José: There is envy in the family, conflict over a piece of land.
Amelia: Who produced this?
José: A distant family member works with evil spirits. The boy is sensitive, and the evil has taken root in his head and stomach.
Amelia: Will he live?
José: I have good remedies. . . . I have medicine and he will get better. The illness is not so serious.
Amelia: What are the remedies?
José: He should take *alwe lawen* [*Satureja multiflora*, for digestive problems] and *alfeñ lawen*. The boy needs to take my remedies with faith, and we need to perform a healing ritual soon, otherwise he can go crazy or die.

Scholars interested in healing teams have often focused on male shamans and their female spouses who have been trained and initiated together and who work interdependently to effect healing in ritual, or on women who work as ritual interpreters for their shaman husbands (Rasmussen 1929:38–39; Tedlock

2003:2–3). The machi-dungumachife couple offers a new dimension to such healing partnerships, based as it is on complementary gendered ritual discourses.

The intimate dialogue of machi and dungumachife during the machi's altered state of consciousness (*kiyimi*) reflects a relationship between ecstatic feminine discourses and formal, masculine, ritual-language discourses, similar to that between the discourses of medieval female ecstasies and male Catholic priests. The dungumachife converses with the machi while she is in trance to elicit information about the patient's illness and treatment. He or she then interprets the machi's ecstatic words on behalf of the other participants in the healing ritual.

The dungumachife's masculine discourse differs from that of other traditional male Mapuche authorities such as the *ngenpin* and *longko*. The *ngenpin* is an orator, chosen by the spirits, whose words carry power and make ritual effective in a way similar to that of liturgical Latin for a Catholic mass. The *ngenpin* invokes the ancestral spirits of a particular community in a contemporary context. The *longko*, or community head, engages in political issues and addresses community needs and conflicts. The masculine language of *longko* and *ngenpin* is related to history, genealogy, forms of social organization, and hierarchy, whereas that of the dungumachife mediates between the sacred discourse of the machi and the needs of the patient or community. Machi Marta explained:

When the spirit comes to me, it comes on very strongly and for a long time. There has to be someone who knows how to receive the word properly, remember it, and then tell me what I said when I no longer have the spirit with me. It is as if God sends me writing through the machi and the dungumachife tells it. My husband does not "talk" [act as dungumachife] at all. He says he gets dizzy with so many words. He has to find someone around to receive words for me.

The machi-dungumachife couple perform the words of the divine knowledgeable couple and determine the future of a patient or community. The machi performs the role of Old Woman Ngünechen, and the dungumachife the role of Old Man. Because the purpose of the dialogue is knowledge, not fertility, machi-dungumachife couples are not necessarily spouses or even people of the opposite sex. The gendered performative act and the close personal relationship between machi and dungumachife take precedence over the sex of either. Machi Pamela, for example, often had her daughter, Beatriz, perform as her dungumachife, and Machi José often had his sister Amelia or Jaime, the son of another machi, perform as his.

Collective Wholeness in Ngillatun Rituals: Body and Performance

At six in the morning on December 12, 1996, I stood beside Machi José, Machi Norma—two *longkos*, and a small gathering of other men and women at their community's collective altar, the *ngillatuwe*. Flanked by branches of *foye* (*canelo* or *Drymis winteri*), *triwe* (laurel or *Laurelia sempervirens*), and *klon* (*maqui* or *Aristotelia Chilensis*), the altar stood in the center of the ritual field in Dafenco, Chile. The two-day collective ngillatun ritual had begun (8). The participants had donned traditional clothing: blue headscarves or festive, multicolored head ribbons, skirts, and black shawls for the women; ponchos and hats for the men. We stood facing east, the cool air cutting into our faces, the dew soaking our shoes. One of the men painted our faces: a white cross on the left cheek and a blue cross on the right to remind us of the powers of the *wenu mapu*, or sky. As the sun rose, Machi José and Machi Norma sang praises to Ngünechen in increasingly louder voices. We dipped the *triwe*, *foye*, and *klon* branches in the water trough at the *ngillatuwe* and sprinkled the water toward the sun as we prayed to the different people in Ngünechen (Old Man, Old Woman, Young Man, and Young Woman).

As the donor of all life, Ngünechen grants fertility to humans, animals, and crops and bestows salvation, wealth, and health on the ritual community (Bacigalupo 1997; Foerster 1993:78–80). If the Mapuche do not reciprocate with offerings, animal sacrifices, and propitiations, Ngünechen will punish them with drought, scarcity, and poverty. The ngillatun is the ritual at which they make such offerings and ensure Ngünechen's continued blessings. The term *ngillan* means "to ask for," and *tun* refers to an action. Ngillatun can be any type of prayer or petition to the spirits, whether individual or collective. The term *ngillatun* is most commonly used, however, to refer to collective rituals involving several communities, or *lof*, that come together to form a ritual community. The purpose of ngillatun, like that of death rituals, is to integrate the ritual community through purification, sacrifice, and the community's relationship to

ancestral and regional spirits or deities. In rural Mapuche communities, ngillatun are often performed before and after the harvest to request abundance, fertility for the land and animals, and well-being for the entire ritual community (Bacigalupo 1995, 2001a). Most Mapuche believe Ngünechen will be angered if a ngillatun is filmed or recorded and will curse them instead of granting them blessings. I honored this belief by not recording the ngillatun prayers.

On this day, two Mapuche women laid offerings of maize, beans, and ceramic jugs filled with *muday*, a drink made from maize or wheat, at the foot of the ngillatuwe. A man cut the throat of a black sheep and poured the blood into a bowl beside the other offerings. He tied another black sheep to a stake on the east side of the ngillatuwe to request black clouds and rain. Machi José and Machi Norma drummed their kultrun. Machi go into altered states of consciousness during ngillatun rituals only if the community is in danger and important messages need to be relayed. Both Norma and José tranced during this ngillatun. Machi Norma spoke about the urgent need for the community to go back to traditional ways of life and perform periodic ngillatun. Machi José warned about the drought and scarcity that would ensue if the community did not resolve its conflicts and cooperate to produce collective well-being.

Norma, five other Mapuche women, and I played calabash rattles and sleigh bells while Raquel and Fabiana, the machi's helpers, followed the machi rhythms on their kultrun. None of the women wore silver jewelry. During ngillatun rituals the *fiwe*, or generic ancestral machi spirit is not seduced with jewelry and flowers, as it is during machi's initiation and renewal rituals, but comes as a willing messenger of Ngünechen. Mapuche believe that displays of wealth, status, and hierarchy in ngillatun rituals detract from the humble mood and the sense of ritual community. When I asked a Mapuche woman why she was not wearing her silver breastplate, she whispered, "If Ngünechen sees the silver he thinks we are being arrogant. He will punish us with frost and misfortune."

The next day, people arrived from three other communities that participate with Dafenco in ngillatun rituals. Groups of four communities form ritual congregations and take turns hosting ngillatun rituals so that each performs a ceremony once every four years. The visitors sat on benches under arbors (*ramadas*) arranged in a U around the edges of the ritual field, opening to the east, the place of beginnings. They exchanged visits, food, and drink with the other participants.

We danced back and forth and side to side in five rows facing the *rewe*. At the front, a row of machi, musicians, and *dungumachife* followed a row of Mapuche women from Dafenco dressed in traditional clothing. Behind them came a row of women guests and others wearing everyday skirts, and finally two rows of men. The side-to-side dancing in front of the *rewe* replicated the machi's swaying between *foye* and *triwe* branches at the *rewe* while traveling to other worlds; it also represented the ritual community's oscillation between dualities such as male-female, health-illness, abundance-scarcity, self-other, and exorcising-integrating. Two men with sticks, wearing masks representing Spanish conquistadores (*koyon*), kept the dancers in straight lines.

The machi began playing the *tampultun* beat, and four young *choyke* dancers, mimicking the mating dance of the male *choyke*, or Patagonian ostrich, circled the ngillatuwe sixteen times, in four sets of four (9). With *choyke* feathers in their headbands, they bowed their heads, lifted their knees and flapped their wings fashioned from white sheets. The *choyke* dancers teased and flirted with the unmarried young women, symbolizing seduction, unbound sexuality, and life energy. Twice during the ritual, the dancing changed and we moved around the *rewe* in two concentric circles defined by gender. These concentric circles represent the workings of the ritual community and the ideal complementary roles of the masculine and feminine in Mapuche communal life. Men represent the community to the outside world in the outer circle while women are constructed as custodians of traditional lore and the family in the inner circle. I danced in the inner circle with the women, moving counterclockwise as we played rattles and sleigh bells. The men danced clockwise in the outer circle, playing *pifilka* (wooden flutes), *trutruka* (long trumpets), and horns. An older woman dancing beside me explained, "We women have more traditional dress. We listen more to Ngünechen. We are close to the earth so we have to be right beside the *rewe*."

A group of Mapuche men on horseback, carrying blue and white flags, performed the *awün*. Beginning behind the ngillatuwe on the east side, they circled counterclockwise around the dancers, imitating the movement of the sun, covering us in dust. After four sets of four rounds, they brought their horses to the *rewe* and made them breathe heavily on the machi's heads and backs, to give them strength. The circle of *ramadas*, the circles made by the galloping horses, and those made by the *choyke* dancers

were spatial representations of the ritual community and wholeness. "Why do they repeat everything four times?" I asked the woman by my side. "It has to be four," she replied, "as in Ngünechen—four parts to be complete." A Mapuche intellectual overheard me and added, "The awün is the totality of the cosmos. When the choyke dancers come from the east, it is as if they were coming directly from the sky. We are making totality."

The ngillatun creates cosmic wholeness and community through the ritual exchange of food and drink, the circling of the ritual field by horses during the awün, and the dancing of the ritual community around the ngillatuwe. The most significant manifestation of wholeness, however, is the collective enactment of the microcosm represented by the co-gendered deity Ngünechen. Machi Norma and Machi José each separately performed the role of Old Woman, and their dungumachife, who converses with them while they are in altered states of consciousness, became Old Man. Two young men and two young women dancers (*llankar*) stood with lances behind the machi and the dungumachife, performing the roles of Young Man and Young Woman. The mating dance of the male choyke dancers was a manifestation of Young Man, deploying messages about crop yields, animal husbandry, and human sexuality.

The older and younger couple in Ngünechen reflect different aspects of generation and gender. The older couple represents the performative aspect, divorced from the actual age or sex of the performer. Machi and dungumachife of any age and sex become Old Woman and Old Man. Machi José enacted Kushe Domo, Old Woman, even though he is male. Machi María Cecilia was only eighteen when she first performed Kushe Domo. The young couple represents the physical dimension of generation and gender, associated with specific bodies and sexes. Young men must perform Young Man, and young women must perform Young Woman. When one of the choyke dancers fell sick during the afternoon dance and one of the girls asked Machi José if she could replace him, José replied, "The choykes must be all young men. We need another young man." He handed the girl a calabash rattle and told her to go and play at the ngillatuwe.

The divergence between the performative and bodily dimensions of generation and gender reflects the different relationships that the young and old couple have with the Mapuche universe. The young couple represents the unbound forces of sexuality (sperm and eggs, menstrual and birth blood, sexual fluids) and life energy that play an important role in the maintenance and change of the cosmos. Female and male sexual fluids and sexual forces are crucial for human survival, healing, and the fertility of land and animals, but they can also be dangerous and interfere with spirituality. In order to be productive and sustain the perpetuation of the Mapuche group, sexual fluids must remain balanced and controlled through social rules, gender roles, marriage, kinship, and divine mandates.

The old couple control knowledge about life and the universe. They divine the future, give advice, and dispense fertility, abundance, and well-being to the community. Elderly abstinent machi have symbolic control over the powers of fertility and sexuality because they do not produce the menstrual blood, sperm, and sexual fluids that interfere with spirituality. Elderly machi are less bound by the surrounding network of interaction, gender roles, and taboos and have the knowledge and maturity to direct rituals. Elderly female machi, like postmenopausal women in northern India, are perceived as cooler and more self-contained, and their social identities in some ways are more like those of men (Lamb 2000:13). Young, sexually active machi of childbearing age are perceived as having limited powers. They are symbolically transformed into old people by being called Papay (Old Woman) and Chachai (Old Man) in order to officiate in rituals.

The complex relationship between the symbolic meaning and the bodily experience of gender and generation supports the complementary paradigmatic world order presented in the Mapuche creation myth as well as politically asymmetrical social gender relations. Mapuche women and men are both responsible for ensuring fertility. Whereas Mapuche men are responsible for political activities and those between social groups, women as machi predominate in relationships between humans and the spirit world. Mapuche gender relations are therefore complementary, though as political intermediaries men hold higher prestige than women in mainstream Chilean society (10).

Ngillatun rituals were not always collective enactments of cosmological wholeness with machi as their officiators. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, ngillatun rituals in the south-central valleys of Chile were led by ngenpin (orators) who propitiated specific ancestors of a patrilineage and recounted genealogy and history through formal prayers. Ngenpin, or people who "know how to pray" and "carry

the words of others” (Augusta 1910), were elders and community chiefs—political, lineage, and spiritual leaders of their communities (Faron 1964:187). Unlike machi, ngenpin did not engage in altered states of consciousness, though when a ngenpin died, a male member of the patrilineage “inherited” the orator’s spirit and speaking abilities. Ngenpin still officiate in ngillatun in the cordillera area (Puente) and the southern Mapuche area (Williche), where ritual congregations are smaller and tied to specific ancestral spirits and where land is more abundant (Bacigalupo 1995, 2001a:217, 254). In areas between the south-central valleys and the Andean foothills, where ritual congregations have grown larger and land is less abundant, both ngenpin and machi perform in ngillatun rituals. Machi Sergio explained: “Before, ngillatun ceremonies were performed by caciques and all the members of the community. This [machi performing] is something that occurred recently. Before, they did not have to be machi to perform in the ngillatun” (11).

As land fertility in the south-central Mapuche valleys became a main concern in the early twentieth century, ngillatun rituals there began to be led by machi associated with the powers of the moon (12). Reservation land in these areas has become scarce and eroded while population has increased tremendously and people live in harsh socio-economic conditions. Many Mapuche argue that as their people have lost their traditions, ngillatun rituals have become less effective. Machi Nora said: “Fifty years ago, there were excellent ngillatun ceremonies; there was discipline. There was no wine, no fighting. People would pray with dedication. Not now. Before, God would grant us everything we asked for; nowadays we do not see the results of our prayers. Before, the results were almost instantaneous.”

The petitions of machi, who control the powers of fertility through their association with the moon, are believed to be more effective nowadays than the formal prayers of ngenpin. Jaime, the son of Machi Nora, finds that the prayers of machi are the only thing that can save the community from divine punishment through catastrophes. He said:

God sent the earthquake in 1960 because he wanted to end the lives of all of us. Chaw Dios, Chaw Ngünechen [the Mapuche God], he/she who commands the world, everything. But here my machi-mother who knows about prayers, and other machi prayed asking God to forgive all the Mapuche of this area. Thanks to that we were saved. Machi are the only ones who can help stop the rain, to bring rain, to stop earthquakes, misfortune. This is because of the prayers that they know.

Machi performances in ngillatun are a relatively new innovation in the south-central valleys, compensating for the loss of ritual knowledge and oratorical ability of young men who might have become ngenpin. A man from the Williche area explained the situation:

I think it is because youngsters are not interested in learning how to *ngillatucar* [pray, sing, speak in ritual language]. If the machi see that there is no one adequate to take on this role in the ngillatun, they can take it, because they have more power and knowledge. But their traditional role is healing. The fact that there are no ngenpin near Temuco demonstrates that young folk do not know how to ngillatucar anymore. The older generations are interested in maintaining tradition, so the machi has to replace the ngenpin in their functions.

Longko, or leaders of the communities, organize and direct the ngillatun and coordinate with machi to decide on the date. The preferred dates for ngillatun are weekend full-moon nights when the machi’s powers are at their highest and when members of the ritual congregation who belong to the wage labor force are free. Machi officiators either belong to the ritual congregation that holds the ngillatun or are paid professionals from other communities. Although some members of most families now do wage work for forestry companies, for landowners, or in cities, the land base, agricultural yields, herds, and progeny remain the communities’ ideals. In their prayers, machi associate land fertility and traditional lore with economic and cultural survival. Machi Marta commented on her performance at a preharvest ngillatun:

I said that I wanted the ngillatun to come out well. That God was angry at some people because of the *purrun* [dance]. Because some of them did not wear a *chamal* [traditional shawl], but just a dress. There are many people who are just dressed as Chileans. Because of this, God did not even recognize the spirit. They are very mixed now, these Mapuches. They have to put up with more. They have to do as the Mapuche did before, and not be so Chilean-like. The second day I said something different. I said that they should dance well. That they were going to have a plentiful harvest.

Today, machi who officiate in ngillatun rituals in the south-central Mapuche valleys maintain cohesion among growing ritual congregations that no longer have ancestral spirits in common. Machi invoke the pan-Mapuche deity Ngünechen and regional deities as general ancestors of the whole congregation, not of a specific patrilineage (Faron 1963:153) (13). Mapuche from this area believe that machi's spiritual powers and their ability to contact Ngünechen through altered states of consciousness are more effective than the formal prayers of the ngenpin. Cacique Daniel explained:

The ngillatun is something we all believe in. Ninety-nine percent of the community believe we are doing a prayer with good intentions. Young people sometimes do not believe in *machituqueo* [a machi's curing]; they think their friends are going to laugh at them. But most of them do believe in the ngillatun. The youngsters who went to the ngillatun the other day maybe criticized some things, but none of them laughed at the cross, at the machi. They know the machi prayers bring good things to the community. They have more faith in machi than in the ngenpin. Anyone with a good tongue and heart can be a ngenpin. But to be a machi, you have to have God's support.

The collective enactment of cosmic unity and holistic personhood in ngillatun rituals led by machi is an innovation crucial to the reaffirmation of Mapuche identities within a new social order beyond that of local patrilineages or community or ethnic identity. When Mapuche perform Ngünechen, they embody Mapuche cosmology and habitus, the "system of durable dispositions" that regulate practices and representations (Bourdieu 1977:72). At the same time, these performances are always dialogical (Bakhtin 1986). They include a variety of Catholic and military symbols, and the significance of ngillatun rituals is in constant transformation. Anthropologists have viewed ngillatun as ways to create ethnic solidarity and integration in the ritual congregation (Dillehay 1985; Faron 1964). Mapuche today view the collective enactment of the gender and generational dimensions of Ngünechen in its broader religious, economic, and political dimension. Through Ngünechen, machi obtain the good harvests, fertile animals, and well-being that allow the community to survive while at the same time creating the basis for a pan-Mapuche identity (14).

Machi Healing Rituals: The Individual Performance of Wholeness

It was midnight in the community of Ralli on January 23, 1995. Machi Pamela lay on the floor while Machi Ana played her drum loudly over her, imploring Ngünechen to forgive Pamela and let her live. I had arrived at Pamela's house early that morning to find two of her daughters sobbing and Pamela lying on a mattress in the living room, dressed in her best black woolen wrap and the heavy silver pin she used to protect herself from evil spirits. Her eyes were closed, her face was white and clammy, her hands were cold. I could feel no pulse. Her daughters said she had been dead for over two hours and that they had washed her and changed her clothes in preparation for the funeral.

Pamela's daughters had sent me and her brother-in-law, Tomás, to fetch Machi Ana, who belonged to the same school of machi practice. Ana arrived at Pamela's house that night and discussed Pamela's illness with her daughter Beatriz:

Beatriz: We have faith in you. Some hours ago my mother lost consciousness for many minutes; we didn't know what to do. . . . We didn't think she would recover. . . . When she began to react again, then we thought we should do something because she is not an ordinary person. Ordinary people have ordinary illnesses but with machi the situation is different. . . . She isn't well; she was saying good-bye. . . .

Machi Ana: She has her illness in her stomach. In the middle of her body. . . . When the illness goes up, then her head becomes dizzy.

Machi Pamela: I'm dizzy.

Beatriz: The *wingkas* say it is problems with blood pressure. . . . Yesterday I asked the doctor if it was the gall bladder. "No, it's not that," he said. "It is *nervios* [nerves]," he said. Only *nervios*. When she gets mad it manifests itself. She shouldn't get mad anymore. . . . "You have to be calm," he was telling her.

Machi Ana: But what is a person to do if they have a stubborn heart? . . .

Tomás: Will you need triwe, foye?

Machi Ana: Triwe, foye for the *iaf-iaf* branches. . . . For spiritual force we use *kuwi* and the *kärako* vine [*Pseudopanax valdiviensis*].

Nervios (nerves) is an illness with physical, emotional, and often spiritual components common to Mapuche and to many people in other Latin American countries. Like Pamela, many who experience nervios feel out of control and alien to their own bodies. They experience disorientation, dizziness, and fainting, fits of crying or anger, insomnia and headaches, sensations of hot and cold, and body aches. Some of the conditions giving rise to nervios include the breakdown of family networks, loss of loved ones, and concern for the well-being of friends and family members. "Nervios is constructed by local discourses and institutions, then expressed and acted upon as a metaphor of social, psychological, political or economic distress. The relationships between nervios and embodied distress, therefore is culturally mediated, both in terms of what forms of distress cause suffering and in terms of its metaphorical expression" (Low 1994:141–142). Machi Pamela's experience of nervios had been aggravated by the recent death of her son and the soul loss she had subsequently suffered because she ritually sacrificed her spirit horse to feed the mourners at the funeral and to ensure that her son would travel to the *wenu mapu*.

Machi Ana performed an emergency *ulutun* (healing with prayers, music, massage, and herbs) and a *ngillatun* (rogation) for Pamela. Pamela's grandson Carlos slit the throat of a sheep, and Pamela and Ana drank the warm blood mixed with chili to gain strength. Because Ana was not going to be possessed by spirits and would not travel to other worlds during the healing ritual, she did not need her ritual entourage of *dungumachife* and male and female helpers.

Ana's drumming, praying, and herbal remedies brought Machi Pamela back to consciousness, but she still needed a *datun*, a complex healing ritual, to treat her serious *wenu kutran* (spiritual illness). Ana would be back on Friday to perform the ceremony. In the meantime, she instructed Pamela to drink manzanilla tea, to avoid getting angry, to start saving money to buy another spirit horse, and not to watch television.

Pamela asked me come to her *datun* to shake triwe and foye branches to scare off evil spirits and to play sleigh bells. I had often helped Pamela in the healing rituals she performed for other people and sometimes recorded them. Pamela decided I should record the first half of her *datun*—before midnight—when her illness would be diagnosed, but not the second part, when her future would be decided, lest it offend Ngünechen.

On Friday evening I went with Tomás to pick up Machi Ana, her brother, who was also her *dungumachife*, and her niece, who served as her ritual helper (*yegülfe*, in the case of a female helper). Ana prayed to her *rewé*, asking her spirit for permission to go and heal Pamela, and spat water on the *rewé* as an offering. Ana arrived at Pamela's house and inquired about her health. Ana and Pamela competed with each other, bragging about their shamanic powers and the patients they had healed. Meanwhile, Tomás, Carlos, and I prepared the remedies for the ritual. Tomás planted two *coligüe*, or bamboo canes, with triwe and foye branches tied to them, outside the kitchen door, on the east (15). I placed the soothing herbal remedies (*triwe*, *nulawen*, *limpia plata*) in one wooden bowl and the remedies meant to exorcise evil (*llanten*, *fulcon*, *foye*) in another. Pamela's daughter Alba heated the skin of Machi Ana's *kultrun* to make the sound deeper.

Pamela lay face up on a sheepskin on the floor, bare-breasted and in a petticoat, with her head toward the kitchen door. Carlos placed pots with foye, triwe and klon branches at her feet and head. Machi Ana sat on a low stool beside Pamela, smoking a cigarette in order to concentrate and help her divine. She donned her silver breastplate and her headdress to protect her against evil spirits and placed two crossed kitchen knives behind Pamela's head. She played the sleigh bells and *kultrun* softly in a drumbeat called *metrumtun* as she called the spirits and narrated the history of her calling, powers, and initiation in four phases; her *kultrun* was heated after each phase. Then Ana named a variety of nature spirits and ancestors and spoke of the places where they lived. She called the names of Ngünechen as well as those of a variety of nature spirits, Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and God in order to gain power to heal, and she announced the arrival of her spirit. By naming the spirits, machi bring them into being and into the ritual space. The spirits are pleased when machi demonstrate that they know who they are, and they show willing to give healing knowledge to the machi.

Ana wiped the sweat from her brow, and her niece pulled her headscarf over her face as she proceeded with a faster beat used to enter into *küymi*, an altered state of consciousness. Pamela referred to this beat, the *tayilün*, as *trekan kawellu kultruntun*, or the drumbeat of the traveling horse on which machi

gallop to other worlds and gain knowledge. The six young men from the community clashed *koliu* canes above her head and screamed, "Ya ya ya ya!" Ana's head shook and she entered *küymi*.

Ana played a forceful beat often referred to as *trompümkultrum* (Ñanculef and Gumucio 1991:5) as she began the *pewuntun* (divination), communicating with nature spirits, twelve warring spirits, and Ngünechen (16). Machi Ana described her divination as "seeing like an X-ray" and "unraveling like a thread."

Then Ana exorcised the evil spirits from Pamela's body. She sucked what she saw as snakes and stones from Pamela's stomach, spat them out, and rubbed Pamela's body with a mixture of bitter foye leaves and firewater. In doing so, she embodied Young Man and knowledgeable Old Man. She played the drum loudly over her head and screamed war cries, to which the other participant responded. "Four powerful sergeants, old kings, old and new generals," she prayed. "Don't let it stay here. Make it leave to its territory. . . . Push it to a side, unravel it. Don't let them beat us. We came to win. Kill those enemy *wekufe* spirits, revive her heart, revive her blood. . . . The rifle, the machine gun—let it destroy their hearts with bullets. . . . Disintegrate its heart with bullets. . . . May they leave defeated."

Pamela described the pounding sound made by Ana's drum as male, warring, and exorcising. Ana walked through every room of the house and then circled the house, beating the walls with a stick. Carlos, Tomás, and the other men followed her, thumping pitchforks, hatchets, and knives on the ground to kill evil in the same way knives and guns kill living beings. Pamela's daughter Alba carried a pan with a smoke exorcism of burning foye leaves, sulfur, and chilies while her daughter Beatriz sprinkled ammonia and chlorine in our footsteps with a foye branch.

Ana returned to Pamela's side. As she sang, she massaged Pamela with herbal remedies while her niece-helper played the kultrum. Then, the helper and I rubbed Pamela's body with "soft" herbal remedies while Ana embodied Old Woman and Young Woman. Ana played her kultrum again, this time face down over Pamela for maximum therapeutic effect. She asked Ngünechen to forgive Pamela for her transgressions and to integrate her back into her machi practice, family, and community. Ana prayed:

Old Woman visionary, Virgin Mother, daughter stars of the morning, help your daughter machi. She was chosen in the womb of her mother to be an orator, a sacred singer. Awaken her spirit of service. Bring her back to life, unravel her like a thread. . . . Your machi is paying money. You chose her to be a machi; allow her to finish her designation, father God. . . . Give her heart, blood, and tongue for service; . . . untie her tongue; . . . give her bones for service so that she can have her prayer, her discourse, her song. . . . It is you who give her that tongue, that breath, father God, help her. . . . May the machi rise and walk. . . . Old Woman of the sunrise, Old Man of the sunrise, you are in the middle of the crops and money, in the knees of light, at the feet of illumination.

Then Pamela tranced unexpectedly. She swayed, holding onto her breasts and playing sleigh bells as she faced east. Her body trembled uncontrollably, and she screamed that she saw visions of huge black dogs—a form of evil—at her feet. She ordered Carlos to shoot at the visions with her revolver. Carlos complied (17). Carlos brought in Pamela's chosen sheep and made it dance to the music. Pamela spat into her hand and the sheep licked the saliva, a sign that it had accepted her spirit.

Anthropologists have distinguished between patients' trances, which do not make them conduits for the spirits but rather put them in touch with their inner being, and the trances of shamans, who control the alteration of their own consciousness; the patient's consciousness is controlled by the shaman (Laderman 1994:192). Machi Pamela was exceptional in being both patient and shaman. As patient, she was put in touch with her inner being, but her consciousness was not controlled by Machi Ana. Pamela, too, became a conduit for the spirits, who demanded that she renew her kinship ties to spirit animals and the filew.

During the course of this *datun*, Machi Ana simultaneously embodied all four parts of the deity Ngünechen. In doing so, she became a co-gendered and co-generational being. She expressed this embodiment in her prayer: "Old Man, creator of machi, Old Woman, creator of machi, Young man, creator of machi, Young Woman, creator of machi: You have given me herbal remedies. You chose me. I am your *piuke* [heart]. I am your *rakiduum* [thought]. I am you. Now, with my heart of service with four big and powerful people in it, I will revive her heart."

Then Ana entered into a state of *konpapüllü*. This is the final part of the trance, in which the filew reveals the cause of the illness. Ana asked me not to record this section, because it was the most delicate part of the ritual. Her helper played the kultrum while Ana held branches of triwe and foye in her hand and

shook the temporary rewe made from coligüe (canes) planted outside the kitchen door. She buried her head in the branches tied to the canes, swaying between them. Beatriz spat water over Ana's head. Carlos, dressed as a choyke, danced with Ana, bringing her back to ordinary social gender roles and an ordinary state of consciousness (*chetu*). The dungumachife placed two knives on Machi Ana's chest and slid them along her arms to help the spirit leave. As Ana and Pamela regained normal consciousness, Pamela's daughters and I set the table for the midnight feast, during which the dungumachife summarized the spirit's explanation of Pamela's illness:

This daughter was sent evil. . . . Evil spirits came to see her. The *witranalwe* [evil spirit in the form of a thin Spaniard with a mustache, spurs and a hat mounted on a horse] became a man and was transformed into a dog. He came to see her; that is why she became ill. They were competing with filew. . . . Also she hasn't performed the activities typical of her being. Before, she had a chosen sheep and saddled horse. Now she doesn't say the celestial mother, the celestial father that chose her . . . there is where she is failing. They almost took her language away. But there were people who interceded on her behalf, saying, "She will have her saddled horse again. We already have it for her."

During Machi Pamela's datun, as in all datun rituals, the machi became the Mapuche microcosm. Because the spirits and the deity Ngünechen duplicate the physical world of humans—family relationships as well as social and spiritual hierarchies—to call them forth by song and to embody them is to mimetically gain control of the world they represent. By assuming different positionalities during the healing ritual—servant and daughter of Ngünechen; mother and superior to Machi Pamela; father warrior who scares away evil spirits; and Ngünechen itself—Machi Ana linked worldly and spiritual realities. Like Kuna shamans (Taussig 1993:106), machi are not just subjects but also the mimeticised other about whom they chant. Machi chant themselves into the healing scene and exist not only as chanters but as the spirits and deities chanted about. Embodying the different parts of Ngünechen, machi see the world through different "modalities of personhood" (Bem 1993) and points of view.

The genders of spirits remain permanent, whereas machi move between gender identities or combine them. Machi Ana assumed masculine, feminine, and co-gendered identities for the purposes of healing and divining. She became masculine to exorcise illness, bad thoughts, and suffering from Pamela's body through spiritual warfare, with the help of ancestral warriors and Jesus. She became feminine to forgive and integrate Pamela back into her ordinary self, life, and profession by embodying Old Woman, the morning star, and the Virgin Mary. She became old to gain knowledge about the causes and cures for illnesses and afflictions. She became young to gain the stamina to defeat evil forces. It is this ability to cross genders and generations that allows machi to embody Ngünechen—male, female, young, and old—and in doing so to transcend gender and the boundaries of the ordinary world, embody wholeness, and become divine (18).

Conclusion

The gender and generational aspects of the Mapuche mind-body complex are a paradigm for understanding the Mapuche's hierarchical family and social relationships as well as their ordering of the cosmos. While the gender and generational characteristics of spirits and deities map the world (social, environmental, and spiritual) by remaining constant, those of machi shift and change in different ritual contexts, expressing different Mapuche social and spiritual positionalities in order to gain power. In Mapuche rituals, these gender and age dimensions are tied to specific young male and female bodies when sexuality and fertility are to be emphasized, and to older, desexualized bodies when knowledge and wisdom are to be expressed.

Mapuche ritual practice, however, also shows that gender and age are not just characteristics of the sexed physical body but indications of certain qualities of personhood, types of social and political relationships, and modes of cosmological ordering. Cosmic wholeness is expressed through the co-gendered and dual generational qualities of Ngünechen; it is performed by machi at the individual, relational, and collective levels. Divination rituals stress wholeness through the complementary relationship between feminine ecstatic discourse and the masculine discourse of translation and interpretation. Ngillatun rituals, in which different participants enact the various gender and generational aspects of the deity Ngünechen, achieve wholeness collectively as fertility and well-being. Healing rituals

subsume difference, and machi become whole persons by moving between gender and generational notions or combining them. By becoming whole and replicating the power of Ngünechen—individually, relationally, or collectively—machi are transformed and transform Ngünechen itself, creating a power that can be used to create a new world, to transform the essence of beings, for healing, or for evil. Machi share in and take character and power from Ngünechen and are responsible for the changes they bring about in social and cosmic ordering (19).

These diverse expressions of ritual wholeness have implications for theories of gender and embodiment in the context of shamanic practice. Machi's relationships to the spirit world indicate no simple correspondence between a machi's sex and sexuality, on one hand, and masculine or feminine perspectives, on the other. In ritual contexts, machi—regardless of their sex or sexuality—transcend the everyday gender and generational categories ascribed to sexed bodies by moving among the masculine, feminine, young, old, co-gender, and co-generational characteristics attributed to spirits. Machi's ritual performances of fluid gender identities illustrates Judith Butler's notion (1990) that gender is not a fixed condition but a state of mind and body that is maintained through reiterative performance. It also highlights the artificial relation of gender to bodies and sexualities.

But the performance of fluid concepts of gender during ritual does not preclude the construction of stable, gendered social roles for machi as women and men in daily life (20). Indeed, machi's performances of gender fluidity and co-genderism in ritual contexts are possible precisely because the Mapuche maintain highly polarized notions of masculinity and femininity expressed in the gendering of discourses, and the permanent gender identities of spirits. Machi's individual creativity lies precisely in the ways they privilege particular aspects of the feminine and masculine qualities of spirits over others to varying degrees, according to context. Messages about gender in machi rituals thus range from enforcement of gender difference to encouragement of gender fluidity (21).

Machi diverse manifestations of ritual wholeness—and their gender and generational dimensions—also have implications for Mapuche identity politics. Ngenpin no longer propitiate ancestral spirits of the patrilineage to benefit the ritual congregation, rather machi and ritual participants collectively perform the hybrid Mapuche deity Ngünechen who combines colonial hierarchies with Mapuche cosmic ordering to effect well being for all Mapuche. Machi collective performance of wholeness thus creates a pan-Mapuche identity. This new hybrid identity in turn has economic, religious and political implications, shaping the way in which Mapuche engage with the non-Mapuche world and are replicated at the individual or household level during divination and healing rituals.

Ritual expressions of wholeness and self move beyond the machi individual mind-body complex into other domains of knowledge and experience. By being both human and spirit or deity, chanter and the subject of chanting, machi embody the different dimensions of Mapuche identity and their various possibilities in the world. The Mapuche mind-body complex is central to the maintenance and change of this cosmos and at the same time is dependent on human agency and choice, cultural practice and social process. The mind-body is a paradigm not only for individuality but for sociality, politics and cosmology. Cultural concepts affect the way in which Mapuche view the qualities of Old Man, Old Woman, Young Man, and Young Woman as well as the meanings of bodily and spiritual characteristics and experiences. In turn, the machi experiences of embodiment and ensoulment affect cultural concepts, social and political practices. Machi ritual expressions of wholeness are comments on Mapuche personal, ethnic, political and moral identity.

Endnotes

1. I would like to thank Barbara Tedlock, Pamela Stewart, Andrew Strathern and Erika Bourguignon for their insightful comments on an earlier version of this manuscript and Jane Kepp for copyediting.
2. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Margaret Lock (1987:15) argue that in societies lacking in highly individualized notions of body and self, sickness is attributed to malevolent social relations.
3. A number of scholars argue that the distinction between gender as culturally constructed and sex as natural and intractable is unsustainable, because sex, too, is culturally constructed (Butler 1990; Foucault 1990:7). I have chosen to use the distinction between sex and gender because the Mapuche distinguish between what it means to be born with a penis or a vagina and what it takes to become a woman or a man.
4. Barbara Tedlock introduced the term *co-gendered* to refer a partly feminine and partly masculine personality (Tedlock 2003:6).

5. The Mapuche creation myth tells of a powerful spirit who controlled everything and possessed all possibilities and meanings within it. This spirit appeared under different names: Fūta Newen (big spirit; Bacigalupo 1998a), Elmapun (creator of the earth; Marileo 1995), and Ngenmapun (sustainer of the world; Carrasco 1996).
6. Mapuche have different terms for the daughter (*ñawe*), son (*fotim*), and children (*yall*) of the father, whereas all children of the mother are referred to as *pūñeñ*. The term *peñi* is used to refer to the brother of a man; the brothers and sisters of a woman are grouped under the term *lamngen*; and the generic term for brothers, sisters, and male and female cousins from the mother's side of the family is *lamngenwen* (Catrileo 1995).
7. Stewart and Strathern (2001:16) also describe bones in this way.
8. *Ngillatun* can refer to any type of prayer, whether individual or collective, but at present it is most commonly used when referring to collective agricultural fertility rituals.
9. Guevara (1908) and Manquilef (1914) associated this choyke dance with a totemic cult.
10. Similarly, the Zar cult in Northern Sudan includes complementary and politically asymmetrical gender relations although women alone ensue fertility. In the Zar cult, women are possessed by spirits and make provocative comments on village issues and metaphorically reformulate everyday discourse to portray consciousness of their own subordination. Women are responsible for ceremonies and practices ensuring the continuity of social life while men are responsible for those that extend beyond the village to other groups and places (Boddy 1994:417).
11. Machi Sergio, who is from this area, said, "The ngenpin tells the people about the ngillatun. He gets them together. Then when all the people are there, he organizes them, tells them what to do. Then he has to pray. They are first in everything. After them come the machi. But the ngenpin only prays and is not like a machi, who receives a spirit and says what she is seeing, what is happening in the community, what will happen, or what is lacking in the ngillatun. . . . This is what the machi is for. So that she talks to the spirits. . . . I received a ngenpin spirit who does only prayers, instead of singing like the machi. I have that spirit as well as that of my machi grandmother, who sings. I have both at the same time. Ngenpin spirits can be inherited if they are the traditional ngenpin. These are the real ngenpin. Not those who say they are ngenpin and who only know how to 'speak' a little, start praying, and then when the moment comes they do not know what to do. This happens to the majority of the ngenpin of today. In the case of my ngenpin grandfather, he was just a little less than a machi. The only thing he was missing was to be possessed by a spirit, to be in an altered state of consciousness just like a machi. The spirit he had was strong and they had to 'speak' to him properly in order for him to give an answer."
12. Some authors indicate that machi did not officiate in ngillatun ceremonies at the beginning of the twentieth century but that ngenpin performed as ritual priests on these occasions (Augusta 1910; Housse 1938:145; Latcham 1922:677; Moesbach 1929). Contrarily, others wrote that machi played a fundamental role in the ngillatun (Housse 1938, Titiev 1951), and that they held the status of ritual priests and mystic ambassadors in these rituals (Métraux 1942). Guevara (1925) argued the middle road by stating that machi sometimes performed in ngillatun rituals. These contradictory observations illustrate regional variations in who officiates at collective ngillatun rituals.
13. Machi and other practitioners also propitiate mythical ancestors (*antipainko*) and ancestors proper (*kufiche*) in funerals and healing rituals (Dillehay 1990:81); more generalized regional deities and Ngünechen are invoked in ngillatun rituals (Faron 1964:63). Military chiefs and machi who played important roles in the struggle between the Mapuche and the Spanish or Chileans are also invoked in ngillatun rituals (Bacigalupo 1998b).
14. In September 2002, groups of machi, longko, and elders from Argentina and Chile visited each other to put forth a petition to UNESCO requesting that ngillatun rituals be declared the cultural patrimony of humanity in order to protect the ngillatun and "recover some of its original meaning" (telephone interview with Juan Nanculef, September 10, 2002).
15. When a machi performs a datun, or healing ritual, at a patient's home, her or his helpers make a temporary rewe by planting two dried canes (coligüe) from the *ringi* plant fifty centimeters apart outside the door. When the canes are treated for a specific purpose they are referred to as *koliu*.
16. Juan Nanculef (1991) finds references to the twelve apostles, twelve warriors, and twelve chiefs to be frequent in machi healing rituals.
17. In shamanic ceremonies in which the main purpose is to exorcise demonic beings or materials, the patient's altered state of consciousness is the peak moment at which the demonic enters into direct communion with the subject (Kapferer 1983:195) or subjects commune with their inner nature (Laderman 1992:195).
18. The ritual performance of sacred co-genderism is not erotically charged among machi as it sometimes is among the Siberian Chukchi (Balzer 1996) and American channelers (Brown 1997), but Mapuche helping spirits who are enticed with music and gifts are often jealous of machi's sexual partners. Ngünechen has taken the place of the historical warring spirit Epunamun in resisting and resignifying gendered majority discourses in terms of co-genderism and ritual gender fluidity.
19. Michael Taussig argues that the image affects the thing it is an image of; the representation shares in or takes power from the represented. The ability to mime is the capacity to "other" (Taussig 1993:2, 19).
20. Roscoe notes that among Native American people, gender fluidity leads to the diversification of identities, not their elimination (Roscoe 1998: 209).
21. This phenomenon is also common among American channelers (Brown 1997:114) and Siberian shamans (Balzer 1996:172).

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Biographical Sketch

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