

CROW, JOANNA. *The Mapuche in Modern Chile: A Cultural History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013. 310 pp.

The relationship between Mapuche indigenous people and the Chilean state has been the focus of an increasing number of books within Chile and abroad, all of which probe how the Mapuche have responded to past and present government policies. These publications are written by Mapuche and non-Mapuche academics trained in the disciplines of anthropology, history, literature and sociology and, unlike previous historiography, they focus on Mapuche actors' political negotiations with the state. *The Mapuche in Modern Chile: A Cultural History* by Joanna Crow dialogues with these publications and adds a new dimension to them by focusing on identity debates and cultural politics.

The Mapuche in Modern Chile is a historical narrative that tells how, over the course of two centuries, Mapuche and non-Mapuche have mutually participated in imagining the role of Mapuche people in relation to the Chilean nation-state. The book is structured in chronological order, beginning with the military campaign that ended Mapuche territorial sovereignty, the "Ocupación de la Araucanía" (1862-1883), and extending to 2010 during the presidential term of Sebastián Piñera. Drawing on an impressive array of texts and images including newspaper articles, poetry, official historiography, cultural magazines, songs, parliamentary debates, minutes from Mapuche organization meetings, among others, Crow pieces together the relationship between these publications and the artistic works of public figures who have contributed to this imagining of culture. The public figures include: intellectuals who published essays or books, Mapuche community authorities, leaders of conventional political parties, and Chilean presidents. As Crow states, all of these protagonists lived, at one time or another, in urban centers, were politically active, and received some level of higher education (11). Within this polyphony, Crow has chosen socio-historical moments, policies, and texts to show how their authors have "contributed to and influenced identity debates" in modern Chile, specifically in regard to Mapuche participation and presence (13).

Crow begins her book with the aforementioned *Ocupación*, where she establishes her methodological approach to the subject, depicting Mapuche historical agency as involving many actors with different

motivations and attitudes toward the Chilean state. She describes the violence carried out by Chilean governments toward the Mapuche in the 19th century and its effects on Mapuche memory. She quotes the well-known Mapuche poet Elicura Chihuailaf who states, “The Chilean state was consolidated through blood and fire, [thereby] violently interrupting the dreams of our people” (35). Citing letters and newspaper articles, she then focuses on five Mapuche subjects who react to the military during this period: Quilapan, Venancio Coñuepan, Pascual Coña, Juan de Dios Neculmán, and Antonio Painemal. In doing so, she illustrates how the Mapuche confronted the militarization of their lands with resistance or consent, and sometimes with both. This theme also appears in her second chapter where she describes how Mapuche organization leader Manuel Aburto Panguilef resisted some aspects of the Chilean national project and accepted others. Aburto Panguilef founded the Federación Araucana in 1922, an organization that defended Mapuche rights after the annexation. He also created a theatrical group called Teatro Araucano, inviting in a newspaper article from southern Chile, “all those friends of the Araucanian race” (71). This invitation, according to Crow, indicates that he was interested in creating a dialogue between Chilean and Mapuche cultures (77). Panguilef became controversial because of his 1931 proposal to create an Indigenous Republic of Araucanía, which was quickly shunned by governing elites. By emphasizing that Panguilef sought sovereignty for the Mapuche as well as cultural empathy and understanding from Chileans, the author reveals with ease a complex reality in which actors constantly move between and outside of stagnant identity categories. Crow shows that binary representations (victim-oppressor) are only one of the many expressions of Mapuche-Chilean relations, and she creates a reading approach that reflects this complexity.

Chilean academics José Bengoa, André Menard, Jorge Pavez, Rolf Foerster, and Sonia Montecino have also researched different positions taken by the Mapuche during and following the *Ocupación*. Crow adds to their discussions through her original research, as seen in the example of Panguilef, and by highlighting the heterogeneity of responses to the Mapuche in representations created by Chileans. An example can be found in Chapter 4, where the author analyzes texts by Violeta Parra and Víctor Jara and their relationship to the Nueva Canción Chilena. Crow states that both singers maintained that the

Mapuche struggle was not only about landownership but that it also involved the need for the Mapuche to be recognized as practicing a different culture and that “their music acted as a space through which that culture could be reproduced” (119). Their main difference, according to Crow, is that while Parra represented the Mapuche as fighting a struggle in the past, Jara likely imagined an intercultural alliance between Mapuche and Chilean workers that could incite “collaborative support for Allende’s Popular Unity government in the present” (137).

In line with the work of Florencia Mallon, the author argues that studying violence on the part of the state against the Mapuche, beginning with the *Ocupación*, followed by reservations or *reducciones* and the disappeared during the dictatorship, is only a partial look at history; analyzing state representatives’ positions toward the Mapuche requires equal attention to detail as studies involving Mapuche positions toward the state. This objective is clearly accomplished in Crow’s detailed discussion of the inconsistency of Chilean governments’ political and discursive positions toward the Mapuche. For example, she notes the contradiction in socialist president Salvador Allende’s position: he supported the formation of the IDI (Institute for Indigenous Development), which helped develop bilingual education, but he also criticized Mapuche seeking to take back ancestral lands. Crow concludes that Allende “responded to and was inspired by the power of the Mapuche to organize, but he attempted to maintain control over this power as if the government had superior political knowledge” (148). Regarding the Pinochet dictatorship, Crow describes the little known details of the “Mapuche Educational Plan”. The document states that it was an attempt to “end the marginalization of the Mapuche, promoting the value of their culture,” (173) yet it only included primary school and it was probably never implemented. Crow concludes that the main contradiction during the dictatorship is that “even when performing and endorsing Chile’s indigenous identity, he (Pinochet) firmly opposed any ideas of autonomy” (178).

The author demonstrates history as a series of interlaced stories and shows that this interlacing is a process, not a finalized project. She invites readers to take part in this approach to history by revealing connections and spurring readers to discover others. While her book contributes to existing scholarship on Mapuche-state relations perhaps Crow’s greatest accomplishment is that her writing may inspire

both specialists and the general public in Chile (when translated to Spanish) to resist binary readings of the past and present by seeking and reflecting on cultural negotiations between Mapuche and non-Mapuche in Chile.

Allison Ramay
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios Culturales e Indígena

This review is part of a research project partially financed by the Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios Interculturales e Indígenas-ICIIS, Código de Proyecto: CONICYT/FONDAP/15110006