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THE MAPUCHE PEOPLE IN POST-DICTATORSHIP CHILE¹

Guillaume Boccara

IF I WERE TO SUM UP the general idea of this paper in fashionable terms, I would say that in the last decade the Mapuche people of Chile have been trying to recover control over their cultural and natural resources, and that in the process they have developed an “alternative modernity” or perhaps an “alternative to modernity,” producing local knowledge that undermines the dominant euro-american global design. In spite of the pervasiveness of the “coloniality of power,” their discursive and non-discursive practices show that it is possible to think differently “from the border” and to construct an alternative to the world viewed from the perspective of “colonial difference.” (Escobar 2002; Mignolo 2000, 2001) In this paper, I address the broad topic of the socio-cultural and political dynamics of the Mapuche people in post-dictatorship Chile. The central argument is that the Mapuche social movement that has developed since the 1990s has both challenged the very basis of the dominant political and ideological order, and contributed to the process of rethinking the way of doing politics and building democracy and citizenship.

Let me start by noting that by introducing this paper with postmodern and postcolonial vocabulary, I do not mean to make fun of the scholars who created it and are using it. Instead, I think this vocabulary is a symptom of the profound malaise we feel when we grapple with social, political, cultural or economic realities whose diversity, complexity, hybridity and dynamism go far beyond the poverty of our own categories of understanding or classificatory practices. I am aware that by trying to escape from the order of euro-american discourse and avoid perpetuating of the relationships of domination embedded in the very words we use to talk about the world, some scholars may feel the

1. I would like to extend my gratitude to the people who read and commented this paper: Vupenyu Dzingarai (University of Zimbabwe), Michael Goldman (University of Illinois, USA), and Asunción Merino (CSIC/Yale University). I also owe a debt of gratitude to the people at the Program in Agrarian Studies at Yale University, especially to its director James Scott and its coordinator Kay Mansfield. I would also like to thank Gilbert Joseph and Stuart Schwartz for giving me the opportunity to present a preliminary version of this paper at the Council on Latin American and Iberian Studies Interdisciplinary Lecture Series at Yale University in March 2002. Finally, I owe more than I can express to the Makewe Hospital's staff, to Jaime Ibacache, technical director of this first indigenous hospital in Chile, and to the members of the Asociación Indígena para la Salud Makewe-Pelale: Francisco Chureo, Rosalino Moreno, Francisco Ancavil, and Juan Epuleo. Thank you for allowing me to witness and participate in this encouraging and creative experience that aims at constructing a new complementary health model. The ideas developed in this paper draw upon data I gathered during two years of fieldwork in Chile between January 1998 and March 2000. This paper is part of a broader project that seeks to account for the process of reterritorialization and cultural renaissance among the Mapuche People of Chile and Argentina since the 1980s.

necessity to invent a new vocabulary or new combination of old terms. However, I think that we should leave more room for the lexicon that indigenous social agents themselves use to account for the multiplicity of their experiences, what in other terms we could call “local knowledge,” “border thinking” or simply indigenous politics, for the “automatic assumption that theory emanates from the West and has as its object the untheorized practices of the subaltern, the native, and the non-West, can no longer be sustained.” (Lowe and Lloyd eds. 1997: 3)

I do not mean that the whole social science project is useless or obsolete and that we should definitively abandon the idea of creating interpretive frameworks or move away from the ambition of fostering theoretical reflection around well-defined concepts. I am convinced that this is the only way to break free from the *doxa* and the “hypnotic power of domination.” (Bourdieu 2001a: 2) But I think we should rethink our categories of understanding in light of indigenous social theories and practices, and that we should be prepared to give our typologies more flexibility, especially if we consider that we have embodied the historical structures of colonial and nation-state order in the form of unconscious schemes of perception and appreciation (*ibid.*: 5). One practical strategy of objectification would be to treat ethnographic analysis not only as cultural critique that will bring to the fore the arbitrary and contingent character of our sociopolitical forms, imaginaries and categories of understanding, but also as a way of thinking beyond them.

One might say that this is asking too much of indigenous people and that we, citizens of the North, “see native peoples as providing a compelling alternative to spiritual and ecological

malaise at home,” as north-american anthropologist Michael Brown put it with some irony in a paper about the new politics of identity in Amazonia (1993: 308). However we can say without any kind of romanticism that the emergence of indigenous social movement represents one of the defining traits of the current South American historical situation and that thanks to their new activism from within their specific historical experience and sociological location in the interstices and cracks of Latin American societies, indigenous peoples are effectively inventing new forms of doing politics and showing remarkable sociopolitical imagination.

Let us turn to the specific case of the Mapuche people of Chile in order to make this abstract argument more concrete. I shall start by giving some basic and general data regarding the Mapuche historical trajectory and their current sociological characteristics. Then I shall examine various cases of Mapuche mobilization and claims that we can group around three main themes:

- How organizations use the treaties Mapuche people signed with the Spanish Crown during the colonial period in their current contestation of the territoriality imposed by the Chilean state in the wake of the Mapuche military defeat at the end of the 19th century. I might characterize this as a double process of resemantization and reterritorialization.
- The “interculturalization” of the Chilean institutional apparatus by the indigenous leaders and people of the Makewe-Pelale Health Indigenous Association.
- The recent process of ethnogenesis of the Mapuche-Warriache of the cities or urban Mapuche people.

As we shall see, these projects and social movements call into question the very mechanisms of colonization of Mapuche memory, territory and society that have been implemented since the Chilean state undertook the so-called pacification of the Araucanía and put indigenous people into reservations at the end of the 19th century. What is even more striking, however, is that this indigenous social movement, by creating new political forms and unveiling the hidden mechanisms of domination, seems to offer an alternative to the political and social national project implemented during the so-called transition to democracy period of the 1990s. The indigenous peoples' re-emergence goes well beyond the claim to their own political and cultural rights. It constitutes a new way of imagining the organization of politics, beyond the colonality of the nation-state paradigm. We can say that the Mapuche social movement, through its contribution to the reconstruction of social networks in post-dictatorship Chile, its rethinking of the past and reconstruction of the memory of subaltern groups and its creation of spaces of autonomy, is opening new *alamedas*, as Salvador Allende put it in his final broadcasted speech the day of the coup, on another September 11th...

Historical and Sociological Background

Let us start by giving some general data about the Mapuche people's historical trajectory and main social characteristics. The Mapuche people, better known as Araucanians, are famous for their military resistance of the Spanish conquest. Upon the arrival of the Europeans, the Reche (which is their real name or ethnonym, and which means authentic human being)

inhabited the central and south-central part of Chile, between the Aconcagua River to the north and the Chiloé Archipelago to the south. The northern Reche, better known as Pikunche (people from the North) were rather quickly defeated by the Spanish in the 16th century. They lost their territorial autonomy and were incorporated into colonial society. The southern Reche, or so-called Huilliche (people from the South) used to live on lands located between the Valdivia river and the Chiloé Archipelago. They were not totally subordinated to the colonial machine since the Spanish presence in those confines was weak, but they never constituted a threat to the functioning of colonial society. Unlike their northern and southern neighbours, the central Reche, inhabitants of the lands between the Maule River and the Tolten River, fiercely resisted the Spanish conquest and colonization. Their society experienced a whole process of restructuring through the adoption of the horse, the concentration of political structures, the re-organization of the economic sphere around trade in the frontiers post, raids in the Chilean and Argentinean *estancias*, cattle breeding, and the expansion towards the Argentinean Pampas. In short, a process of transformation or ethnogenesis that took place between the second half of the 16th century and the end of the 18th century led to the emergence of a new sociopolitical entity and identity: the Mapuche, properly speaking (Boccarda 1999a).

Thus, given the impossibility of conquering the Reche by force, the colonial authority implemented two fundamental devices that contributed to the formation of the frontier zone around the Bío Bío River – the mission and the *parlamento* or political meeting – which meant

that after approximately a century of rough war, the Spanish-Creoles and the Reche set up the basis for a colonial agreement (Boccara 1999b). This *pacto colonial* was to last until independence in the early 19th century. However, once the Chilean State obtained its independence, the relationship between the still independent Mapuche of the Araucanía and the Creoles authority radically changed. After a period of so-called spontaneous colonization by foreign migrants between 1840 and 1860, after slow but efficient encroachment on the northern part of the frontier through the purchase of indigenous lands and through deception, and after having decreed through multiples laws that the Mapuche lands were from then on part and parcel of the national territory, the Chilean State eventually undertook the “pacification” of the Araucanía. This meant that after human and legal colonization, the Chilean state finished off the work through military conquest (Boccara and Seguel-Boccara 1999). The military defeat of the Mapuche people at the end of the 19th century opened a new era in their history and relationship with the *Wingka*, or the Chilean people. From the Mapuche point of view, this defeat constituted a turning point in their history, marking a before and an after. Mapuche people speak with nostalgia of this pre-reservation era of freedom, abundance, wealth and pride (Alonqueo 1975). From the Chilean vantage point, “pacification” represents another step towards the territorialization of the nation.

In the wake of the Mapuche defeat, the indigenous territory was dismantled and their lands greatly reduced. Between 1884 and 1927, around 3000 reservations were created in southern Chile. From that date on, one of the goals of

the successive Chilean governments would be to divide the reservations in order to fully integrate the Mapuche into Chilean society. It was the military government that eventually put an end to the reservation system and the existence of indigenous people in Chile by promulgating the 1979 decree that states that “the divided lands will no longer be considered indigenous lands, and the people living on those lands will no longer be considered indigenous.”² (Decreto Ley N° 2.568, Cap. 1, Art. 1° b) However, in spite of this termination policy, the Mapuche people seem to be still there, and the *homo indigenous* has not been replaced by the *homo æconomicus* the neo-liberal dictatorship had dreamed of. Finally, in 1993, after several years of tough negotiations among Chilean institutions and Mapuche associations, a new indigenous law that recognizes the existence of cultural pluralism in the national territory sets up the basis for the participation of “Chilean ethnic groups,” and creates a new state institution responsible for the Indian Affairs: the National Indigenous Development Corporation (CONADI) in which there are elected indigenous representatives but whose director is appointed (and in many cases dismissed) by the President of the Chilean Republic.³ At the very core of this new law is the concept of *interculturalism* and the desire to set up a new deal with

2. “... las hijuelas resultantes de la división de las reservas dejarán de considerarse tierras indígenas, e indígenas a sus dueños o adjudicatarios.”

3. The first two directors (M. Huenchulaf and D. Namuncura) were fired because of disagreements regarding the construction of several dams in the Pehuenche territories of the High Bío Bío River.

the indigenous people of Chile, and particularly the more than one million Mapuche. Since then, the Chilean governments of the *Concertación*⁴ have tried to give some content to this vague notion of interculturalism. But, there are several obstacles on the road to implementation this so-called interculturalism:

- the recent evolution of the indigenous movement whose claims go well beyond this seemingly neutral notion of interculturalism and whose new political forms tend to contest the very technology of voting and the misleading idea that the vote amounts to democratic political suffrage;⁵
- the inertia of eurocentered-dominant ideology;⁶
- the economic constraints of a neo-liberal model.

Beyond Multiculturalism, Development and Interculturalism: Mapuche Politics

Since the early 1990s, much has been written about the Mapuche movement. While some stress the so-called nativist qualities of indigenous mobilizations (Bengoa 1999, 2001),⁷ others insist in very general terms on the innovative character of ethnic-national demands and their progressive move towards the definition of a proper autochthonous territoriality (Foerster 1999; Foerster and Vergara 2000; Marimán 2000). Diverse approximations of the “indigenous question” have stressed the importance acquired by so-called “Mapuche intellectuals,” and during the last years, the participation of Mapuche scholars has increased considerably, challenging the dominant and legitimate vision and division of the social world as much as the rules of the academic game.

Nevertheless, it is my belief that the large number of mistakes and hasty generalizations concerning Mapuche sociopolitical and cultural dynamics found in this literature is due to a large extent to the fact that very few researchers undertake meticulous ethnographic work or fine-grained ethnography combined with historical research, often limiting themselves to reports proffered precisely by the new indigenous

4. The *Concertación* or Coalition of Parties for Democracy, represents an umbrella that encompasses many political parties, from the Christian Democrats to the Socialist Party. It served to unite most civilians outside the hard right in opposition to Pinochet. That arrangement led to the election of Patricio Aylwin Azocar in 1989, an election that opened the “transition to democracy period.”

5. On this point see Curín and Valdés (2000) who, although they tend sometimes to essentialize the Mapuche identity and culture (*op. cit.*: 171-173), provide an interesting reflection on how to create a real “*control territorial*.”

6. Regarding the lacune in what he calls the Chilean post-indigenist policy, Chilean anthropologist José Bengoa aptly notes: “*La ausencia de reconocimiento a unidades territoriales y colectivas superiores a las comunidades tiene como consecuencia una limitación en el concepto de participación.*” (2001: 122)

7. Bengoa recently wrote: “*Los indígenas habían permanecido silenciosos y olvidados durante décadas o siglos. Ahora irrumpen con sus antiguas identidades cuando pareciera que se aproxima la modernidad al continente*” (2001: 85), and further on: “*Junto con el llamado ingreso de América Latina a la modernidad y a los procesos globales, han estallado las más antiguas identidades que se remontan al tiempo precolombino.*” (2001: 87) Elsewhere, he maintains that: “*El discurso más profundo de la cultura mapuche es antimoderno, va contra el desarrollo...*” (1999: 127)

urban elite or reducing their involvement to a very brief field visit. While I will not undertake a critical revision of recent socio-ethnological productions, I will, when necessary, point to the pathologies present in the construction of the object of study.

Let us now give some concrete examples of the new Mapuche movement that emerged during the 1990s. Given the limitation of space, I will briefly mention the indigenous political agenda linked to the issue of territoriality and sovereignty and then reflect on the broader, yet locally rooted, project developed by the indigenous Association of the Indigenous Rural Hospital of Makewe since 1999.

FROM LAND TO TERRITORY

The clearest manifestation of the transformation of the Mapuche agenda in the last decade can be summarized in the following terms: from land to territory. Indigenous associations no longer defined Mapuche people as poor peasants lacking land, but as a people whose territorial sovereignty had been alienated and whose socioterritorial organization had been superseded by Chilean administrative divisions. Some new initiatives have helped re-politicize and re-historicize the issue of lands that the nationalistic project (combined with the development paradigm) had contributed to de-politicizing and de-historicizing. I will eventually deal briefly with new Mapuche identities in the city of Santiago.

The first indigenous association that raised the problem of Mapuche territoriality as such is the Council of All Lands (Aukiñ WallMapu Ngülam, hereafter AWNg). Opting for a global, legal and political strategy the AWNg attempted

to constitute the Mapuche as legal subjects through the use of socioterritorial claims. It made innovative use of the treaties (*parlamentos*) signed by the Mapuche and by colonial authorities during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. In this case, the “weapons” employed by “western civilization” of that time (literacy and legal-political normalization) appear today to have turned against their modern heirs, since some members of societies with oral traditions are using written documents to stake their claims to international legal and political recognition. Further, while the colonial authorities had created the *parlamentos* as a state apparatus for normalization and control, today the Mapuche are increasingly subverting the political-administrative order imposed by the Chilean nation-state through a resignification of these *wingka-cojautun* (*wingka*: no-Mapuche, *cojautun*: political meeting).⁸ In the case of the Council’s claim, the recognition of Mapuche political rights expresses itself in very general terms since what is at stake is the recognition of Mapuche nation sovereignty over a huge and ill-defined territory whose northern border would be the historical Bío Bío River. In the case of the Council of All Lands, the affirmation of Mapuche sovereignty over their historical territories was accompanied by restoration of the so-called traditional authorities, namely the *lonko* (chieftain), the *machi* (shaman) and the *werken* (messenger) who were supposed to define the foreign policy of Mapuche society. It was also accompanied by direct actions that aimed at the recuperation of

8. On a similar use of literacy by Huilliche people, see Foerster (1998).

stolen lands, recuperation (*recuperación*) and not *tomas* (collective land occupation) since the AWNg also opened the path for a contestation of the dominant symbolic order. Thus this social movement challenged the state's exercise of taxinomic control over difference by insisting on calling the indigenous people by their name, Mapuche and not by the heteronym Araucanian; by using their language in the public sphere defying the mockery of the dominant society and overcoming their own dominated subjects shame; by wearing their own clothes in an expression of "bodytherapy;" by defining an indigenous agenda that goes beyond the western divisions between left and right wings, and finally by organizing their own political meetings (*trawun*) and emphasizing their own political forms and institutions.

Nevertheless, in spite of their tremendous impact on Chilean and indigenous peoples' consciousness and even though they started what we could call a "discursive rebellion" (Mudimbe 1988), it is worth noting that the AWNg's proposals and political imagination were still overdetermined by dominant ideology and entangled with the nation-state paradigm. Its search for a kind of Mapuche purity, which led its representatives to develop a fundamentalist discourse that excluded the inauthentic urban Mapuche, and its tendency to speak for the Mapuche nation as a whole as if they were its legitimate representatives definitely marked the limits of this movement as a real alternative to the dominant political, social and cultural model. Nonetheless, the AWNg opened a space into which other associations would rush.

Indeed, in the wake of the AWNg's proposal

in the early 1990s, many indigenous associations started to articulate territorial demands and, even more interesting, to claim the validity of ancient socioterritorial units that had been dismantled through Mapuche incorporation into the Chilean state and that were thought to have disappeared forever, not only from the vocabulary but also from indigenous rural communities' consciousness and social practices.

The indigenous territorialist re-emergence is first present in the claim of the people of Truf-Truf, a Mapuche reservation area close to Temuco. The Truf-Truf Mapuche Association, first formed to organize opposition to the construction of a highway on their lands, led to the renewal and reinvention of what was once the Mapuche territorial organization. The *lof* (endogamous social unit), the *rewe* (political and ceremonial unit) and *ayllarewe* (macro-regional political and military unit made up of several *rewe*), institutions and socioterritorial organizations that were in place before military defeat, started to regain their political function and reappeared precisely when it was almost taken for granted that state territorial forms (reservations, municipalities, provinces, regions, etc.) had become the norm.⁹

At almost the same time, in the years 1998 and 1999, the first articulated territorial proposal emerged from the so-called Identity of the People of the Coast, or *Identidad Lafkenche* that included a huge territory from Tirúa to the north to the Budi Lack to the south. For the first time since the Mapuche defeat, a great number of

9. The way these pre-reservation socioterritorial divisions are being reinvented and adapted to new realities is an issue that remains to be studied.

reservations located on the coast of the eighth and ninth regions claimed the existence and validity of their former macroregional political institution (*ayllarewe*, and *futamapu*: big land) using the new term of territorial entity (*entidad territorial*). By reclaiming the existence of macro-regional units that had disappeared from the historical records since the second half of the 19th century, the Mapuche polity of the coast claimed to encompass a total of 76 communities that represented around 110 000 people.¹⁰ While the Association of Truf-Truf claims a traditional territoriality that challenges the Chilean state segmentation of indigenous land into thousands of reservations, the Identity of the Coast's project tends to undermine the Chilean state divisions of the Chilean territory itself, for it tends to show that the indigenous territoriality, namely the *futamapu*, transcends the national division into regions.

In both cases, the contestation of Chilean territoriality comes with the recuperation and reelaboration of historical memory and a rewriting of official Chilean national history. Leaders of the *Lafkenmapu* or Big Land of the Coast talk about the historical debt the Chilean state has towards Mapuche people. Representatives of the Truf-Truf Ayllarewe declare that territorial reconstruction has just started and that the Chilean State will have to respond for having burned their harvests and houses, stolen their lands and raped their women during the so-called pacification (Organización Mapuche Wenteche Ayjarewegetuayin 1999).

Over all, these associations struggle to achieve internal autonomy through socioterritorial reconstruction, avoiding the traps of traditional state paternalism and above all trying to

remain as local as possible by reestablishing their own authorities at the very center of the political arena and processes of decision making.

Finally, although I will not develop this point in the present paper, it is important to note that, the redefinition of Mapuche land as territory is made as much in political as in sociocultural terms. In political terms because indigenous people claim autonomy on their land and try to reorganize space according to their own social principles of organization. In sociocultural terms because the conceptualization of the *mapu* or territory Mapuche people have goes far beyond the mere management of political differences. The territory is made out of several different spaces and places, and divided both horizontally and vertically. The Mapuche people divide the *wall mapu* or whole land or cosmos into three horizontal layers: the upper land or *wenumapu*, the land where we are seated or *anünmapu*, and the lower land or *minchemapu*. The upperland and the land where we are seated are inhabited by societies of humans and spirits. That is why the ethnocentric distinction between natural and supernatural just as that between nature and culture is not valid (Descola 1999). What is fundamental is the division of the *anünmapu* into domesticated and non-domesticated places. The non-domesticated space and places (called *mawida* or *monte*: *mawidantu*, *pitrantu*, *menoco*, river shores, swamps) cannot be inhabited or exploited. They are places where uncontrolled energies live and where shamans find plants that will be later on transformed into

10. See Identidad Mapuche Lafkenche de la Provincia de Arauco (1999).

drugs (*lawen*). Each place is watched by a master (*ngen*) and no one can use these places without first asking the master and then giving something in exchange. Because of the non-respect of these basic rules of reciprocity and vigilance, the masters are leaving the lands, and therefore plants are disappearing and along with remedies, rivers are drying up and people are getting sick.¹¹

Mapuche conceptualization of the environment is entirely connected to the political project of reterritorialization.¹² That is why the participation of shamans is so overwhelming in the current Mapuche social movement. *Machi* are not only playing a role as emblems of the Mapuche struggle for recognition of their cultural and political rights, they are also playing an internal sociopolitical role insofar as they are the ones who are believed to know which spaces are to be respected. Although I cannot enter into further details, it is important to remember that the process of Mapuche reterritorialization is far more complex than a simple recuperation of lands. It has to do with the political and sociocultural conceptions which the people of the *mapu* have about the *mapu*. Actually, *mapu*, usually translated as land, would better be translated as *territory*. In fact, in the 18th century, each *futamapu* conceived of the others as *camapu*, or other-polity and the inhabitants of the others *futamapu* were called ca-Mapuche (Boccaro 1998). Finally, the Reche (people authentic) of the 16th century used to define their political membership and social identity in relation to the specific relationship they maintain with a *rewe* (authentic place or site where they belong) and a mount called Tren-Tren, after the name of the

mythical snake that saved originary human kind. In sum, the Mapuche conception of territory has always referred to much more than a simple, even though crucial, question of land [McFall 2001; Quidel and Jines 1999].

THE MAKEWE HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE (1999-2002)

In the wake of the Chilean state's new approach of the indigenous question as expressed in the indigenous law of 1993, several original health, development and educational projects started to be implemented. Those projects were thought to be new since they were defined as

11. On this issue see María Ester Grebe, Ana Mariella Bacigalupo and Armando Marileo's works. In relation to the disastrous effects produced by forestry expansion, a Mapuche leader says the following: "*Dentro de las plantaciones, hay lugares sagrados como los cementerios antiguos, gijatuwe y las machi dicen que las fuerzas y seres como los dueños del monte, del agua y los cerros ya no están. En mi comunidad había lugares que hacían llover, pero ese newen, esa fuerza que antes existía, ya no está.*" (Reiman 2001: 39) Similarly, Juan Epuleo, *longko-nguillatufe* (ceremonial chief) in Makewe told us that the masters or genies (*ngen* or *dueño*) were leaving the land, thus connecting environmental deterioration with cultural loss.

12. Alfonso Reiman, Mapuche leader of the Asociación Comunal de Comunidades Mapuche Ñancucho (Lumako) expressed this idea when he recently wrote: "... nos proponemos como desafío volver a recuperar esa forma de como nos relacionamos con nuestra naturaleza, para ello es necesaria la restitución, la recuperación de nuestro derecho, pero a la vez la recuperación de nuestra cultura, además de la reconstitución y recuperación de nuestras tierras, la reconstrucción de la organización territorial y recuperar lo que es nuestra antigua organización que es de *nagche*." (2000: 153) *Nagche*, means literally lower mapuche or *abajinos* (*nag*: down) after the name of a 19th century Mapuche socioterritorial subdivision.

intercultural. Development projects were labeled ethnodevelopment, education became bilingual intercultural education, and health became intercultural health. Interculturalism was defined in very broad terms as a perspective that would take into account distinct indigenous reality and idiosyncrasy and that would respect indigenous culture. For example, ethnodevelopment was defined as development with identity,¹³ education as a transmission of knowledge that would consider the Mapuche cultural background and language and be aimed at correcting the tremendous inequality between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. In the original well-demarcated subfield of health, a specific Mapuche program was created that promoted the creation of health facilitators in urban hospitals and health promoters in rural communities. The goal was to better integrate the Mapuche into the dominant health system, since it had been proved that compared with to non-indigenous populations, rural indigenous people were at a great disadvantage regarding health condition and access to quality health services. The goal was also to optimize the biomedical system by integrating within it the Mapuche social and cultural difference.

Therefore, the dominant biomedical paradigm was not challenged at all and indigenous medical systems, health practices and representations were not taken into account; for the government the problem was a one of bad communication and information and could be solved by hiring more physicians, translators and facilitators, and by giving more medicines.¹⁴ This was supposed to bridge the gap between poor-underdeveloped-lost-rural-Mapuche and the bureaucratic functioning and

sometimes discriminatory practices existing in the urban hospitals. This project also involved the naming of new kind of “*fiscales de indios*” who were the indigenous health promoters responsible for informing other community members when the *wingka* physicians were about to come.

To some extent we can see this so-called new intercultural system as a return to the old frontier missionary strategy aimed at creating the conditions for continued surveillance and at optimizing the effects of power by increasing knowledge concerning the indigenous subject, placing indigenous agents of acculturation at the very center of the indigenous social and individual body. As part of a broader development model one might say, following Arturo Escobar’s statement on development in “the making of the Third World,” that the biomedical

13. José Quidel, *longko* of the Truf-Truf Ayllarewe and a professor at the Catholic University of Temuco criticizes this ill-defined concept of “development with identity” in the following terms: “... *se habla de la ya recurrida apuesta ‘desarrollo con identidad.’ Frente a tales propuestas, se denota una trivialización del Ser mapuche. Se denota una suerte de que otra vez son los organismos del Estado quienes tienen que considerar la variable ‘étnica’ para proponer estilo de desarrollo. ¿No será más apropiado hablar de desarrollo desde la identidad?*” (2001: 146)

14. As part of a broader development paradigm, interculturalism can be considered as an “antipolitics machine” (Ferguson 1990) that reduces social inequalities and discrimination to failures of communicational and technological advancement. It represents an essentializing, naturalizing, and depoliticizing discourse insofar as it considers marginalized peoples as archaic groups, disregarding the ways sociocultural differences have been produced throughout history (Boccara 2003).

paradigm had achieved the status of a certainty in the social imaginary and that it seemed impossible to conceptualize disease and well-being in other terms. Since the 1950s, life, death and the vital cycle had been colonized by biomedical discourse that developed as a “compelling regime of representation” (Escobar 1995) and deployed as a regime of government over indigenous communities. Since then, biomedical discourse “has been producing dichotomies, functioning as a discontinuistic device that generates segments in the social reality, that creates differences, exclusion and eventually, social order.” (Escobar 2002)

It is in this context of seeming transformation of the dominant biomedical paradigm that the experience of Makewe occurred. Let me give a brief description of the locality and what has occurred there. Makewe is a vast zone situated near 12 kilometers south of Temuco, the capital of the ninth region of Araucanía. 95% of the around 10 000 people living in that zone are Mapuche. Historically a zone of harsh Mapuche resistance to conquest and colonization, by the end of the 19th century Makewe was subordinated to Anglican Church intervention. The rural hospital formed in 1927 by Anglican missionaries was handed over to the local association of Makewe-Pelale in March 1999. This Association claims to represent 35 indigenous communities. It grew out of the first indigenous mobilization experience that took place in the early 1990s when the Mapuche people gathered food and money in order to save from bankruptcy what they already considered their own hospital. Since then, people of the neighbouring communities have been assisting the hospital by giving flour, meat and vegetables.

What was the general philosophy of indigenous communities leaders when they took charge of the hospital and what are the changes and new initiatives that have taken place since 1999? First of all, indigenous leaders declared their will to set up a new health system adapted to their reality reflecting the diversity in the rural communities. The main objective was to improve the quality and quantity of health through the implementation of what they also defined, emulating state discourse, as an intercultural model. In order to set up this new model respectful of Mapuche people and practices and representations of health, they hired a *wingka* physician well known for his knowledge of Mapuche culture and respectful of the Mapuche health system. They asked the state for better infrastructure, better *wingka* medicine, and faster access to the Temuco regional hospital services. In this respect, the Makewe experience started as an intercultural experience in the most general and conventional sense of the term.

But while partly sharing the state agents' conception of interculturalism, some of the very first Mapuche leaders, through their initiatives, showed that the concept was being indigenized.

First of all, the leaders stated that they had to be answerable to the members of the communities and not to the state which gives the hospital a monthly 8.5 million pesos subsidy.

Second, they publicly recognized the crucial role of shamans (*machi*) in the health recovery process and within the sociopolitical dynamics of communities.

Third, they reacted very firmly and severely against any manifestation of racism and discrimination in the hospital. A Chilean dentist

who had racist and authoritarian behaviour was fired and an Anglican nurse was asked to stop equating shamans with witches since otherwise she would be ousted too.

Fourth, leaders hired new health care workers with knowledge in Mapuche conceptions of illness, body and environment and emphasized a new horizontal power distribution. They trained the staff in basic Mapuche medicine and history through videos, workshops and seminars. They slowly abandoned the term intercultural and started to talk about a complementary health system.

After a few months, the indigenous model started to become emancipated from the hegemonic system and came up with radically new initiatives outside both the hegemonic model and eurocentered critiques of eurocentrism (Escobar 2002: 11), and began to construct progressively a different logic, a complementary model of health that is creating the conditions for the emergence of an alternative ethnoterritoriality.

From the start, the Makewe community members conceived of health as a political and cultural problem. Health problems were political problems since there was no respect from the *wingka* people, lands were scarce because of the robbery Mapuche people had been submitted to, the Chilean state's paternalistic policies had maintained Mapuche people in a state of dependence, and the health projects were always conceived outside the communities.¹⁵ In sum, the health problems reflected a general situation of domination, the erasure of indigenous ways of doing politics and of indigenous control on the production and use of knowledge. Once Mapuche leaders started to formu-

late the problem in these terms, changes began to take place at an accelerated pace.

Makewe leaders networked with other Mapuche associations that were struggling for their territorial and cultural rights (Truf-Truf, Lumaco, Identity of the Coast). They developed a system for the production and dissemination of their own knowledge¹⁶ and signed agreements with universities in Chile and abroad. They emphasized direct contact and dialogue as equals with the ministries in order to influence state policies toward indigenous peoples; they also created research projects to produce their own socio-anthropological knowledge and epidemiological data (Hospital Makewe 2001; Ibacache *et al.* 2002; Ibacache, McFall and Quidel 2001). Through all those initiatives, one can detect the will to define the new rules of the game as regards to external agents (developers, social scientists, state

15. Francisco Chureo, President of the Makewe-Pelale Indigenous Health Association says: "*En los últimos años se ha producido un aumento de la depresión en nuestra gente. Esta enfermedad se ha agudizado cada vez más porque las familias ya no tienen tierras, lo que ha provocado la disgregación de la familia mapuche. Los hijos se ven obligado a emigrar a la ciudad para trabajar en oficios, que además de alejarlos de su territorio, de la familia y su cultura, sólo les sirven para sobre vivir. Cuando nuestro pueblo tenía tierras nunca sufrió de depresión porque llevábamos una vida digna y en equilibrio.*" (08/29/01, <http://www.mapuche.nl/mhtml/interview-chureo.htm>)

16. The Intercultural Dialogues organized by the Identity of the Coast represents another good example of this new production of knowledge, see *Actas de los Diálogos Interculturales entre cosmovisiones científicas y mapuche*, junio 2000, <http://www.soc.uu.se/mapuche/mapuint.DialogoIntercultural1.html>.

agents, universities, etc.) as a means to counteract the effects of the usual discriminatory practices and the dominant symbolic violence. Such developments reflect an increasing awareness of the need to create representations of their own reality geared towards the dominant society in order to counter cultural looting and the stereotypes at the root of domination. In launching research projects within communities, in teaching courses on Mapuche health and thought open to students from all disciplines and countries, in creating a council of elders (*nielukuifikekimün*), in signing academic agreements, in constructing the new Rakid-uam-Ruka (the Meeting House of Thought) to host diverse cultural and social events, in revalidating the ancient political institutions where collective opinion is to be made, such as the *trawün* (meeting) and *cojautun* (*parlamento*), in reasserting the value of traditional communication forms and speech such as the *nütramkan* (long and formal conversation), the *ngülam* (the advice conversation), the *epeu* (the tale) and the *pentukun* (formal way of greeting), and in trying to duplicate the experience of building community autonomy – in sum, in building its own political agenda in its own political and cultural terms, the Hospital Makewe is fast becoming a hub in the production of new indigenous or hybrid knowledge (Boccaro 2000). It is building a position of power from which indigenous people can discuss with the state and try to control the overwhelming tide of interventions that come from outside and suffocate local initiatives and thoughts. What is more, the Makewe staff has recently penetrated *wingka* institutions, since they are operating as advisors in the South Araucanía Health Service

and since a *wingka* physician is directing the Mapuche Program of the Southern Branch of the Ministry of Health. This represents a good example of what a Mapuche historian called the interculturalization of *wingka* institutionality.¹⁷

Finally, I would like to mention a point that is crucial to understanding the Makewe dynamic, namely, the great diversity of the staff and openness of Mapuche leaders, provided that the new initiatives do not lead to more heteronomy. In the case of the Mapuche hospital, the very diversity of the main actors, which comprise, among others, a Catholic ceremonial chief (*longko-nguillatufe*) who has lived for many years in Santiago before returning to the countryside, a Mapuche Evangelical pastor, several *machi*, the *wingka* physician who directs the Programa Mapuche del Servicio de Salud Araucanía Sur, a *champurria* (*mestizo*) peasant leader who studied at the Catholic University at Temuco, as well as many members of the surrounding communities, Mapuche scholars from outside the hospital area and several Chilean and “*gringos*” anthropologists, gives an idea of the complexity of the current phenomena of socio-cultural reconfiguration. In the case of Makewe, the simplistic dichotomies between urban and rural Mapuche, catholic and protestant Mapuche, modern and traditional Mapuche, and resistance to the system versus acculturation through collaboration with the dominant society, have no meaning. What should be particularly noted here is the mixed or hybrid character of indigenous sociocultural productions.

17. Term used by Pablo Marimán during his talk given at the first *Curso de Salud y Pensamiento Mapuche*, Makewe, 2000 (<http://www.soc.uu.se/mapuche/>).

In sum, what started as a modernist experience in intercultural health with indigenous facilitators, is turning into a discursive insurrection (Mudimbe 1988), and into the elaboration of an autonomous regime of representation (Escobar 2002). What began as a “humanitarian” project that consisted in naming rural indigenous promoters, is becoming a place for the reinvention of former local political forms and the creation of new global sociopolitical thought. What started as a harmless Ministry of Health project in the well-demarcated and depoliticized field of health, with its assigned experts (physicians, nurses, midwives, etc.), its well established biomedical paradigm apparently unchallengeable by “archaic” shamanistic thought, is becoming the center of a new project of decolonization through popular participation, through the reconnection of domains that had been compartmentalized (health, economics, land, etc.), and through the production of autonomous knowledge and representations that are in fact developing into alternative practices. Since in the field of health people’s survival is at stake, deconstruction of the dominant model and reconstruction of an alternative one have been carried out simultaneously (Escobar 1995: 16).

ETHNOGENESIS IN THE CITY

To wrap up this exploration of multiple Mapuche realities, let me address the theme of the construction of a new urban entity and identity. Long invisible and uprooted, the so-called “urban Mapuche” that represent over 70% of the total Mapuche population are increasingly demanding recognition of their indigenous identity and cultural difference. This creation of an urban Mapuche identity has been brought

about through the slow formation of an increasingly dense organizational web, in which the religious nexus (in the broadest sense of the term) has been fundamental. After the appropriation of urban wastelands (especially in the marginal areas of Santiago), urban Mapuche sanctified these spaces in order to carry out a ceremony called *nguillatun*. The difficult issue was how to define a Mapuche identity in this new context in which the “people of the land” (*mapu* = land and *che* = people) had lost their direct tie to the land. Generally speaking, I would say that this apparent contradiction has been overcome in three ways: first, through the permanent circulation of people between city and countryside; secondly, through the spiritual, and imaginary character of the link to the (home)land;¹⁸ and finally, through the recent creation of a new category of Mapuche, the urban Mapuche as such, the *warriache*, now openly distinct from the “rural” Mapuche, or *lelfünche* (*lelfün*: countryside). How this new Mapuche urban ethnicity was generated and what it implies in terms of collective and individual work on memory from the perspective of subaltern agents who were relegated to a status of social invisibility throughout much of the 20th century are questions that have just begun to be explored systematically (Aravena 2000, 2002). But from now on, the study of the cultural politics of identity among the Mapuche people will have to take into account those *warriache* who practice *palin* (the Mapuche “hockey”) when the Mapuche from

18. Following Appadurai’s statement, we observe that imagination is playing a critical role in the elaboration of identity among deterritorialized groupings (1996).

the countryside usually play soccer; celebrate the *wetripantu* (the so-called Mapuche “new year,” in fact the celebration of winter solstice or literally new sunrise; *we*: new, *tripan*: to come out, *antü*: sun) when the Mapuche from the Araucanía celebrate San Juan; revalidate the ancient customs of *lakutun* (transmission of paternal grandfather’s name: *laku*, to grandson) and *katanpilun* (feminine rite of passage, *katan*: to pierce, *pilun*: ear) when the southern Mapuche are much more concerned about godparenting; and finally attend the *nguillatun* (agrarian rites) wearing traditional Mapuche clothes (*makuñ*: poncho, and *trarilonko*: woven headband for the men; and *ükülla*: cape, *küepam*: dress, and *trapelakucha*: silver pendent for the women) when the Mapuche of the countryside either wear blue-jeans and caps or dress up like the traditional Chilean peasant (Ancan 1999; Aravena 2002; Boccara 2000). In the case of the urban Mapuche, it is possible to trace the existence of a double process of construction: a deterritorialized identity in which imagination played a great role, and subsequently a process of reterritorialization that ended up in the formation of a new category, the *warriache*.¹⁹

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The first conclusion we can draw is that Mapuche re-emergence as seen in Chile since the early 1990s is based on processes of socio-cultural creation and political strategies that do not fit neatly in the traditional categories of social anthropology (tradition/modernity, pristine/acculturated, rural/urban, catholic/evan-

gelical). The dichotomy of resistance and acculturation does not allow us to understand how the Mapuche exert agency within the interstices of dominant society. Showing what I would call a gift for “cultural ubiquity” and a maneuvering of multiple militancies, the new indigenous leaders mix the foreign with the familiar, the present with the past, in the production of *hybrid* works sometimes claimed as authentically “native.” Appropriating the institutions and “weapons” of dominant society, the indigenous associations inscribe their local struggles in a global space (as in the case of the resignification of colonial treaties by the AWNg in its struggle to achieve the status of subject of rights for the Mapuche); they produce their own knowledge and try to recover control over their natural and cultural resources (as in the case of the first indigenous hospital in Makewe). They also revalidate the old organizations and functions of their political sphere (as in the case of the “re-indianization” of the territory among the Mapuche of Truf-Truf and the Coast), and they create new categories (as in the case of the ethnogenesis of the urban Mapuche or *warriache*). In all of these cases, the central role of shamans can be noticed as well as the functioning of a sociological principle of “predation” in relation to Otherness, or what the Mapuche people called the outside, the

19. According to Mapuche scholar Ramón Curivil: “Hoy, la identidad mapuche ya no es territorial, lo que no quiere decir que en la actualidad no exista un territorio mapuche. Esto más bien significa que el habitar un determinado territorio ya no es decisivo en la construcción de la identidad de un pueblo.” (1997: 5)

wekufe. These observations should lead us to focus on the relations among shamanism, politics and culture, and to undertake an analysis of what we might call, following the title of a recent publication (Aigle *et al.* 2000), "Spirit Politics."

In connection to this, I should say that the examples examined in this paper lead me to problematize the very notion of the "Mapuche intellectual" or "Mapuche elite" as recently used, uncritically in my view, by numerous scholars. The uncritical deployment of such a notion suggests the existence of a socially homogeneous group as well as implying that such an elite is precisely the one that contributes to the creation and dynamization of the indigenous movement. This concept also tends to postulate the fundamentally urban character of this new class of Mapuche. However, the examination of concrete examples shows that a large number of Mapuche mobilizations are impelled from a double rural-urban localization and that it is precisely the ubiquitous character of these movements and leaders that grants efficiency to these new indigenous mobilizations.

The third conclusion we can draw from the analysis of recent Mapuche social movement is that behind state indigenous policies there are always active indigenous politics. What is more, we can say that the Mapuche social movement have had and keep on having a huge influence on the way Chilean society thinks about democracy, enlarging the very category of citizenship. This point is worth emphasizing since the way official history is written and dominant national memory is elaborated often tend to erase indigenous agency and the contribution native peoples make to regional and national social and political processes.

Last but not least, the fourth point I would like to emphasize has to do with the internal political dynamics of Mapuche society, the organization or re-organization of power, and the relationship between shamanism, politics and cultural renaissance. The new political leadership that has emerged in the 1990s is made up of relatively young spokesmen whose achieved authority depends nevertheless on support gained among those authorities whose power is ascribed. In all of these cases, one observes that the question of the legitimacy of these new leaders is a critical issue. How do the Mapuche people resolve this problem of representation? How do they elaborate a general and collective will from multiple individual wills? "If the community grants the leader the authority to speak in its name with authority and if it exists as community through the speech of the spokesman, how can the community protect itself from the usurper's appropriation of power that haunted every system of delegation of power," as Pierre Bourdieu (2001b) put it?

First of all, it seems to me that Mapuche people are finding a solution to this critical problem of political representativity by locating the shaman at the very center of the process of decision making and legitimization, and by multiplying the figures of authority and the authorized voices in the society.

Second of all, Mapuche peoples are revalidating former political institutions that had disappeared (the *cojautun*, the *trawün*, the council of elders) and reasserting the value of "traditional" devices of communication, socialization and memorializing (*pentukun*, *nütramkan*, *ngülam*, *epeu*). In the case of the Makewe political dynamic, we can note the

existence of a very particular way of fabricating opinion and making collective decision. Following Bourdieu's terms, I would say that by regarding individual opinions not as things that can be mechanically added up but rather as signs that can be changed and exchanged through conversation and confrontation, the Mapuche do not formulate the problem of political choice, but face in a renewed manner "the issue of the choice of the mode of construction of the collective choice." In other words, the people of Makewe are dealing with the fundamental problem of "how to produce a collective opinion regarding the way to produce a collective opinion," that is to say, the political spaces, places and communicational devices that have to be set up in order "to fabricate the collective opinion out from the multiplicity of individual opinions." (*Ibid.*) Following once again Bourdieu's terms, I would say that in order to avoid the mechanical addition of atomized opinions (the secret vote), the Mapuche people endeavor to create the social conditions that will allow the establishing of a new mode of fabrication of general will that would be really collective, that is, based on regular and dialectical confrontations. By reasserting the *cojautun*, *trawün* and *nütramkan*, by creating the council of elders, by listening to the dream and disease interpretations made by lay people, and by taking into account the way healers inscribe individual illness in the collective fate of their people (Menget and Molinié 1993), the Mapuche are creating a new way of doing politics, insofar as they are creating the "indispensable instruments of communication that aim at reaching an agreement or a disagreement and that en-

able people to transform both the content of what is transmitted and the individuals who communicate." (Bourdieu 2001b: 10)

In sum, like the Zapatista uprising, the Mapuche movement is bringing the Latin American nationalist project to crisis (Saldaña-Portillo 2001). Indeed, the challenge posed by indigenous people to internal colonialism (i.e. the coloniality of power embedded in nation-state building after decolonization (Mignolo 2000: 313) threatens the ideas of nationhood, peoplehood, and citizenship the state has used since independence. Thus, it is all but surprising that in this context of indigenous and national turmoil the Chilean state would have recently resorted to a multinational development institution (the Inter-American Development Bank) in order "to better integrate rural indigenous communities at home."²⁰ Whether the indigenous trend towards rebuilding the public sphere through the redefinition of nationhood, territoriality and citizenship is going to be stopped, slowed down or reoriented by the recent intervention

20. The mission of this Program that started in march 2001 is stated in the following terms: "*Contribuir a generar condiciones para el surgimiento de nuevas formas de relación y prácticas en la sociedad que contribuyen a elevar y mejorar la condiciones de vida de los pueblos originarios con respecto y fortalecimiento de su identidad cultural, con el fin de alcanzar un país más integrado.*" (Programa Orígenes, <http://www.origenes.cl/home.html>) It is worth observing that the committee that coordinates the project does not include any of the new indigenous leaders. Only indigenous and non-indigenous state agents are in charge of the coordination of this 133 million dollar project. Furthermore, this *Programa de Desarrollo Integral de Comunidades Indígenas* does not take into account the 79% of indigenous people living in the cities.

of the IDB²¹ through the financing of the latest Chilean state integration project called *Orígenes* is a question that remains open.²² But whatever happens, it is sure that a page has been turned in the history of the relationship between Chile and the Mapuche people, and therefore in the history of Chile, despite the fact that the elite continue to think that the transition to democracy is due to its own enlightenment.

Finally, the intriguing character of contemporary Latin American indigenous movements resides in the fact that the political alternative is not between an ill-defined or differentialist multiculturalism on the one hand and an outdated or rigid eurocentrism on the other, as in European countries. Nor is the alternative state in terms of “ethnic citizenship” versus “civic citizenship,” as seems to be the case in African countries (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2001). The politics of belonging in recent “native” movements does not imply the exclusion of strangers or “non-natives.” It is not characterized by the omnipresence in the imaginary and in the political agenda of the opposition between *autochtones* and *allogènes*. It is a question of enlarging the notion of citizenship through the redefinition of nationhood and fatherland. It is a question of rearticulating political and cultural national and transnational spaces in order not only to give voice to subaltern groups that have been shut out of the national public sphere (Lomnitz 2001, chap. 12) but also to define a new sociopolitical pact, to create alternative political cultures and public spheres. What is more, this other political tongue does not speak

the abstract and reifying idiom of multiculturalism versus ethnocentrism. This new indigenous-*mestizo* political thought, avoiding the opposition between State and community,²³ aims at hybridizing the nation-state and resignifying the until recently hegemonic discourse on *mestizaje* (Saldaña-Portillo *op. cit.*) while creating a new universal political project. Following Saldaña-Portillo’s terms, we could say that what indigenous movements are doing that is radically new to nationalist Latin American consciousness is “reconceptualizing the national constituency as a constituency that includes Indians as political agents in the nation-state.” (*Ibid.*: 410) And it seems to me that it is from the recuperation of *mestizaje* as a *social logic*, and not as a bio-cultural phenomenon or a dominant discourse, that a new sociopolitical pact is possible.

21. The Chilean state has been granted 80 million dollar loan. For more official details on this recent project see <http://www.origenes.cl/home.html>.

22. On the relationships between global, national and local realms in post-dictatorship neo-liberal Chile, see Schild (2000).

23. On the mutually constitutive character state and community and on the construction of the community by the state as a small-scale model of the nation in contemporary India, see Sinha (2002). In the case of Latin America, a well-grounded sociohistorical analysis of the relationships between state and community as well as of the way states created communities in order to build the Nation remains to be done.

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Abstract

Guillaume Boccara, *The Mapuche People in Post-Dictatorship Chile*

This paper deals with the Mapuche ethnic resurgence in post-dictatorship Chile. Drawing on several concrete examples, I show that the Mapuche social movement that has developed since the 1990s both challenges the very basis of the dominant political and ideological order and contributes to the process of rethinking the way of doing politics and building democracy, territory, and citizenship. By revalidating former political institutions and reasserting the value of “traditional” devices of communication, socialization and memorializing, indigenous leaders and organizations are contesting the territoriality imposed by the Chilean state in the wake of their military defeat at the end of the 19th century. Whereas in the 1960s and 1970s peasants used to claim for more lands, the ethnogenetic processes in which present indigenous peoples are involved lead to the building of new territories, social groupings and identities.

Résumé

Guillaume Boccara, *Les Mapuche du Chili post-dictatorial*

Cet article traite de l'émergence politique des Mapuche, dans le Chili démocratique postérieur à la dictature militaire. En s'appuyant sur des exemples concrets, l'auteur montre que les mouvements sociaux indigènes défient les fondements même de l'ordre dominant et contribuent à repenser la manière de construire sur d'autres bases la démocratie, le territoire et la citoyenneté. En redonnant vie à des institutions politiques anciennes et en réintroduisant des techniques « traditionnelles » de communication, de socialisation et de mémorisation, les chefs politiques et les organisations contestent la territorialité imposée par l'État chilien au lendemain de la défaite militaire subie par les Indiens à la fin du XIX^e siècle. Alors que dans les années soixante et soixante-dix les paysans réclamaient plus de terres, les processus d'ethnogenèse actuels visent à la constitution de nouvelles frontières territoriales ainsi qu'à la redéfinition des groupes sociaux et des identités.