

Mapuche Historians Write and Talk Back: Background and Role of ¡...Escucha, winka...! Cuatro ensayos sobre Historia Nacional Mapuche y un epílogo sobre el futuro (2006)

Luis Cárcamo Huechante | University of Texas, Austin

In 2006, Mapuche historians Pablo Marimán, Sergio Caniuqueo, Jose Millalén, and sociologist Rodrigo Levil published ¡...Escucha, winka...! Cuatro ensayos sobre Historia Nacional Mapuche y un epílogo sobre el futuro, which focuses on the history of the Mapuche People in Chile. The work came out through the publishing house LOM Ediciones, founded in 1990 in Santiago as an independent press and which gained visibility during the early years of post-Pinochet Chile. A distinctive feature of LOM Ediciones was its focus on humanities and social sciences scholarship that was critical of the neoliberal regime that prevailed during the democratic transition. LOM Ediciones also opened its doors to poets and writers whose books did not have space in the catalogues of corporate publishing houses.¹ According to its authors, ¡...Escucha, winka...! took shape in the mid-2000s thanks to an invitation from LOM Ediciones, which was the result of the editorial committee's interest in learning "how Mapuche historians conceive their history" (Marimán et. al. 2006, 7).² The collaboratively written book that appeared in 2006 was the first to offer a historical narrative from a Mapuche perspective of the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the Mapuche People, as well as an account of their relationship to the Chilean State. ¡...Escucha, winka...! soon became an important reading for young activists, especially urban activists involved in the Mapuche movement supporting land recovery actions in rural communities and in collective advocacy for Mapuche demands in both urban and rural settings in Santiago and southern Chile.³ For them as for many other readers, the book became a tool for memory making, engaging them in a longer Mapuche history, and enriching their political vision in the present. With this background in mind, in this preface, I offer a historical and conceptual contextualization of the "Epilogue" to ¡...Escucha, winka...!, which the editorial team of the journal *e-misférica* has decided to publish in English translation.⁴

Historical Background

After 1973, during years of underground pro-democracy activism and a period of intense political repression in Chile, the Mapuche movement began its own process of historical reconstruction through several community-based organizational endeavors. Around 1978, Pinochet's military government undertook legal reforms to justify the sub-division of indigenous communal lands and their conversion into "individual parcels" through the promulgation of a new Decree Law.⁵ In response to these neoliberal policies, Mapuche communities began to define the specific interests of the Mapuche People in the context of Chile under dictatorship. On September 12, 1978, 155 Mapuche leaders and representatives from 90 communities gathered at a retreat center of the Diocese of Temuco. They endorsed a common platform of action that included the promotion of organized ways to defend community rights and, toward that end, the formation of Mapuche Cultural Centers. In 1980, Ad Mapu was founded, intensifying Mapuche activism in the local and national scene.⁶ For Mapuches, these initiatives implied joining the democratic opposition against the authoritarian regime and also challenging the power of Chilean society as a colonial society. During the 1980s, a series of organizational endeavors expressed the will to establish and position an autonomous indigenous politics based on a Mapuche metanarrative of territory and peoplehood. This political vision was embodied by several autonomist organizations that emerged during this period, including the Consejo de Todas las Tierras/Awkiñ Wallmapu Ngülam [Council of All the Lands], founded in the city of Temuco in 1989, and that, in the very name Wallmapu, embraced a Mapuche concept of nationhood.

Wallmapu, in Mapudungun (the Mapuche language), originally means "in the earth's surround," that is, the universe. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, Mapuche political organizations such as the Consejo began to use the term to vindicate the historical territory of the Mapuche People, thus making it equivalent to the concepts of Mapuche Nation (Nación Mapuche) or Mapuche country (País Mapuche). With this geopolitical dimension, Wallmapu began to be used by Mapuche leaders and communities in Chile and Argentina to strengthen a politics of self-determination and Mapuche nationalism.⁷ The idea of a Mapuche country had been historically displaced by the cartographic national terms "Argentina" and "Chile." The use of Wallmapu allowed for a

recovery and vindication of an alternate Mapuche cartography. For Mapuches, Wallmapu encompasses what today is known as Chile, between Santiago and the southern island of Chiloé (Ngulumapu in Mapuche cartography), and the Argentine provinces of Neuquén, Río Negro, Chubut, as well as the central-southern end of the province of Buenos Aires (on the Mapuche map named Puelmapu). For many indigenous activists Wallmapu is, then, the Mapuche territory that was occupied by Spanish colonial agents from the sixteenth century until early nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century, this geopolitical territory was practically dismantled by the expansion of the Argentine and Chilean nation-states establishing the colonial situation that prevails to this day. The alternative indigenous mapping and naming of the region as Wallmapu forms part of a Mapuche cartographic vision that is rooted in a historical memory of self-governance that preceded colonial domination. Thus, by the end of the twentieth century, Mapuches once again began to produce and circulate their own geopolitical concepts. The intellectual agency of Mapuches in the realm of written culture has played a central role in this process. From political manifestos and written poetry to historiographical writings and digital newspapers, Mapuche agency has found voice in multiple media, and through them it has created a multifaceted public discourse. In this context, the publication of the book *¡...Escucha, winka...!* constitutes a performance of indigenous intellectual agency committed to a political project of Mapuche nationhood.

The Story of a Mapuche Book

The idea to translate the “Epilogue” of this book into English honors the political and historical relevance of this text. *¡...Escucha, winka...!* was the result of a collaborative work undertaken in the mid-2000s by the four Mapuche authors. At the time, Marimán, Caniuqueo, Millalén and Levil had studied history at the Universidad de la Frontera in Temuco, and Levil had specialized in the field of sociology at the same university. Like many young indigenous researchers, they were struggling to survive economically and find ways to combine their community engagements with the challenge of continuing or discontinuing graduate school. In spite of this, they managed to keep their Mapuche research agendas active by working outside the circuits of the academia in Chile, an institutional setting in which the “expertise” on indigenous subjects

has historically been, and it is still today, almost completely monopolized by non-indigenous Chilean scholars.⁸

The political and intellectual lives of these authors took shape in this challenging context. Pablo Marimán Quemenedo was born in Santiago in 1967, and moved to Temuco in 1989 to pursue his university studies and to be in the epicenter of Mapuche political activity in southern Chile. The other three authors were originally from the region: José Millalén Pillal was born in 1969 in the Mañiuko community, in Galvarino, close to Temuco; Rodrigo Levil Chichual was born in Temuco in 1974; and, Sergio Caniuqueo Huircapán was also born in Temuco, in 1976. In the late 1980s and during the 1990s, all of them participated in activist networks and spaces in Temuco, such as We Kintun, an organization of Mapuche students. In 2002, when state repression against Mapuche autonomist communities intensified under the post-Pinochet governments of the center-left Concertación, they coincided again at the local activities of the Coordinación de Organizaciones e Identidades Territoriales Mapuche [Coordination of Mapuche Organizations and Territorial Identities], which became an influential indigenous referent in the 2000s. By the time the four authors started writing ¡...Escucha, winka...!, what they shared, besides their political involvement in the Mapuche movement, was a common research interest in Mapuche-Chilean historical relations as well as academic training in historical and social sciences either at the college level or at a beginning graduate stage. With this mix of political and historiographical interests, in 2004 they undertook the task of conceiving and writing this multi-authored book on Mapuche history.

As a whole, ¡...Escucha, winka...! Cuatro ensayos sobre Historia Nacional Mapuche y un epílogo sobre el futuro is comprised of an introduction, four chapters, and an epilogue. In the “Introduction,” the four authors lay out the historical foundations for undertaking a Mapuche view on the history of colonialism and the invasive role of the Chilean nation-state in Mapuche lands. Then, José Millalén Paillal writes about Pre-Hispanic Mapuche society, discussing archeological and ethnohistorical narratives about the origins and ancestral history of Mapuches and their forms of knowledge and social organization. In the second chapter, Pablo Marimán Quemenedo retells the process of military, ecclesiastical, and economic invasion of Mapuche territory during thenineteenth century by the agents of the Argentine and Chilean state. In the third chapter, Sergio Caniuqueo provides a historical account of Mapuche

social, political, and economic life in Chile from the late 1880s to the 1970s. In the fourth chapter, Rodrigo Levil documents how Mapuches reacted to the military dictatorship that was violently established in 1973 by General Augusto Pinochet and his allies. Levil explores the resurgence of Mapuche social and political organizations during the Pinochet and post-Pinochet years.⁹ The imposition of neoliberalism under the dictatorship and its continuity in post-dictatorship Chile frames his account of the period. As a way to perform collective authorship, in the “Epilogue” of *¡...Escucha, winka...!*, the four scholars envision the guiding concepts for the Mapuche movement in the present and the future. The authors bring to the fore the challenges of historical reconstruction of a Mapuche nation, the role of autonomy and self-determination in this process, and the question of territorial identities and the new urban and rural realities of a heterogeneous Mapuche country.

¡...Escucha, winka...! is a book that was written at a specific intellectual and political juncture. In their “Introduction,” Marimán, Millalén, Caniuqueo, and Levil recount how they decided to write this book as a response to statements made by the well known Chilean historian José Bengoa in a seminar in Santiago on January 3, 2003. At this event, Bengoa claimed that “the lands for which the State could assume indebtedness with the Mapuche are only those that were part of the proceso de radicación [process of legal settlement] through the granting of títulos de merced [land grant titles]” (11, my italics).¹⁰ It is relevant to point out here that the legal and economic arrangements of the proceso de radicación that put Mapuches in reducciones [reservations] was the outcome of a Chilean military invasion of the Mapuche country between the early 1860s and 1880s. This process resulted in the forced removal of Mapuches from their historical lands, which happened in Chile under the euphemistic name “Campaign for the Pacification of the Araucania” and had its parallel in Mapuche lands in Argentina under the so called “Campaign of the Desert.”¹¹ For Marimán, Caniuqueo, Millalén, and Levil, assumptions like Bengoa’s imply that only those indigenous lands assigned to Mapuche communities by the law of the Chilean state should be acknowledged, thereby serving the state’s own historical and political interests. The authors of *¡...Escucha, winka...!* declare that, according to this “logic,” “the spaces corresponding to mountains, prairies, plains, coastal areas, or other places that did not have permanent population nor periodical use, did not have sovereign subjects, or, to put it another way, they did not belong to us” (Marimán et. al. 2006,12). According to the Mapuche

scholars, this argument validated a whole state policy by which major areas of Mapuche territory were simply “state lands” or “public lands” available for business affairs between Chilean governments and private national and transnational capital. Given the Chilean state interest-oriented arguments of Bengoa and other Chilean historians (who claim an indisputable “expertise” on the history of the Mapuche People), Marimán, Caniuqueo, Millalén, and Levil decided to accept the invitation of LOM Ediciones and undertake the writing of *Escucha winka!* during 2004 and 2005.

The title ¡...Escucha, winka...! performs a mode of Mapuche empowerment. On the one hand, it calls up a specific non-indigenous audience: the winka, which, in Mapudungun, means “foreigner,” “invader,” or “colonizer.” The interjectional aspect of the title and its appeal to readers as listeners (“escucha”) also suggests an engagement with the expressiveness of oral discourse, and the performative power of speech in Mapuche culture. Appealing to the winka as a “listener” is a way to challenge them to hear as well as to think about a history, and the use of the ellipses in the title signals an invitation to pause and meditate. To address the winka implies an acknowledgement of the main audience of the book, that is, readers from the non-indigenous “lettered culture” of which LOM Ediciones, as a Chilean publishing house, forms part. The authors’ assumption was that a significant number of readers would be people identified with the colonizing society and with a Chilean way of telling the history of the region. The Mapuche scholars affirm that they wrote the book “thinking of the people who ignore our present and have no idea about our influence in the history of Chile and Argentina” (Marimán et. al. 2006, 16). Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, they also thought of their audience as “the new generations of Mapuche who, once disenchanted with the mental colonization that the State has carried out through education, find what we did not have, an organized and systematic record that reminds them to whom they belong [as Mapuches]” (Marimán et. al. 2006, 16). In these terms, the authors envisioned the book as a cross-cultural medium that engaged this double track of audiences.

On the other hand, ¡...Escucha, winka...! “voices” through writing a Mapuche subject of enunciation, and semantically reinforces in the subtitle a vision of Mapuche nationhood and history: *Cuatro ensayos de Historia Nacional Mapuche y un epílogo sobre el futuro* [Four Essays of Mapuche National History and An Epilogue about the Future]. In this vein, as a performance of indigenous scholarship, it resonates with initiatives undertaken by indigenous

collectives in other regions of the hemisphere, in both Abya Yala and Turtle Island.¹² These include the Aymara research group Taller de Historia Oral Andina established in 1983 in La Paz, Bolivia; the creation of indigenous and intercultural universities in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico; and, in the northern hemisphere, several collectively edited books by Native American scholars.¹³ These initiatives have made indigenous intellectual agency much more salient in the contemporary scene of knowledge production and circulation.

¡...Escucha, winka...! emerged from comparable endeavors that placed a native sense of “epistemological sovereignty” at the center.¹⁴ In this regard, an important antecedent was the Centro de Estudios y Documentación Mapuche Liwen [Liwen Center of Mapuche Studies and Documents], that was founded in Temuco in 1989 and brought together several Mapuche researchers who, like the authors of ¡...Escucha, winka...!, worked outside the institutional spaces of Chilean academia. One of their objectives was to write materials to be used in workshops on Mapuche history for community leaders. According to Pablo Marimán, a founding member of this collective, the work of the Centro Liwen researchers, especially between 1995 and 2005, included “the presentation of a metanarrative under the rubric of Mapuche national history,” which “aroused the attention of the participants” and strengthened an understanding of the Chilean state-Mapuche relations as part of a “colonial situation” (Marimán et. al. 2006,17). As Marimán, Millalén, Caniuqueo and Levil state, “Mapuche History means reengaging our past based on our own epistemology and constructing new knowledge based on our own culture” (Marimán et. al. 2006, 9).¹⁵

Within this framework, the translation of the “Epilogue” of ¡...Escucha, winka...! in this issue of e-misférica makes an important contribution to discussions of colonialism, autonomous indigenous politics, and indigenous nationalisms. This collectively authored text registers a sense of indigenous intellectual agency and envisions key concepts of contemporary Mapuche struggles. Its publication in English constitutes a meaningful contribution and also an invitation to broaden our hemispheric and global dialogues, in the terms of an indigenous conversation.

Luis E. Cárcamo-Huechante is an Associate Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at The University of Texas at Austin, and he has been a 2013-2014 Fellow at the National Humanities Center. As a member of the Comunidad de Historia Mapuche, a collective of Mapuche researchers, in 2012 he co-edited an inter-disciplinary collection of essays entitled *Ta iñ fijke xipa rakizuameluwün. Historia, colonialismo y resistencia desde el país Mapuche* (Ediciones Comunidad de Historia Mapuche). Previously, in 2007, he published his own book, *Tramas del mercado: imaginación económica, cultura pública y literatura en el Chile de fines del siglo veinte* (Editorial Cuarto Propio); and also in 2007, he co-edited, with Alvaro Fernández Bravo and Alejandra Laera, a volume of essays entitled *El valor de la cultura: arte, literatura y mercado en América Latina* (Beatriz Viterbo Editora).

Notes

- 1 Another press of a similar profile during this period in Chile was Editorial Cuarto Propio.
- 2 All translations from the Spanish are mine.
- 3 An excellent account of the Mapuche movement in the 1990s is the chapter “Sociedad mapuche contemporánea,” by Rodrigo Levil in Marimán et. al. (2006). See specifically. 241–245.
- 4 I would like to acknowledge the proactive role played by my colleague Macarena Gómez-Barris in making the publication of this text in translation possible as well as the endorsement for it on the part of the four authors of ;...Escucha, winka...!
- 5 On March 28, 1978, the military regime promulgated the Law Decree 2,568 which parceled communally-owned Mapuche lands as individual, private properties. This amendment debunked the Indigenista 17,729 Law, a legal arrangement inherited from the pre-1973 governments that enabled Mapuche communities to keep at least some degree of communal ownership through land grant rights conceded by populist or reformist governments during the twentieth century.
- 6 On the formation of these Mapuche organizations in the late 1970s and early 1980s, see Levil in Marimán et. al (2006, 233–237.) On the significant role of Mapuche women in the Mapuche movement in this period, and more specifically in organizations such as the Mapuche Cultural Centers and Ad Mapu, see Calfio Montalva (2009, 100–106).

- 7 On the historical development of Mapuche nationhood and nationalism, see Millalén (2012).
- 8 When ¡... Escucha, winka...! was published, there were hardly any Mapuches with positions in history departments in Chilean academy. This is still the case today. By the mid-2000s, only three Mapuche scholars with permanent positions in a Chilean university come to mind: María Catrileo, with an MA degree in Linguistics, held a permanent position at the Universidad Austral de Chile; Rosamel Millamán, who did graduate studies in Anthropology, held a position at the Universidad Católica de Temuco; and Daniel Quilaqueo Rapimán, who had earned his doctorate at the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III, was also at the Universidad Católica de Temuco. By 2006, they had different positions regarding Mapuche politics: Millamán had a trajectory of active engagement in the Mapuche movement; Catrileo focused her work in the vindication and study of the Mapuche language and culture; and Quilaqueo Rapimán, detached from the Mapuche movement, was devoted to intercultural education as an exclusively academic, institutional path. Catrileo recently retired, and Millamán and Quilaqueo Rapimán still teach at the Universidad Católica in Temuco. As of 2014, the overwhelming dominance of Mapuche studies by non-indigenous scholars remains the case in the Chilean academy.
- 9 Levil presents a historical account of Mapuche initiatives and organizations invested in the democratic struggle as well as in indigenous rights, or what I would call the organized and engaged Mapuche movement. As with a significant segment of the Chilean population in general, there were Mapuche communities who remained detached from political engagements or who endorsed the Pinochet regime and right-wing agendas during this period. Nevertheless, it is problematic to reduce Mapuche political alignments to the Chilean left wing-right wing logic, since many Mapuches tend to perform an alternative political rationale as a People. For example, Mapuches who may circumstantially express sympathy for Chilean right-wing leaders, on the actual social ground may support demands for Mapuche land rights and self-governance.
- 10 Proceso de radicación was, as described by scholar Florencia Mallon, the “process of legal settlement onto land-grant communities that the Chilean state sponsored for the Mapuche people” (Mallon 2005, 255). This law was passed in 1866 and put in practice generally throughout Mapuche lands in the following decades. As characterized by historian Thomas Klubock, “in 1866, the state passed its most important legislation on settling the indigenous subjects of military conquest on the southern frontier. The law sought to impose state control of Mapuches by settling them on reducciones, literally

- reducing them to narrowly circumscribed sedentary communities” (Klubock 2014, 31). In *¡...Escucha, winka...!*, historian Pablo Marimán provides a Mapuche perspective on the effects of the Chilean military invasion of indigenous territory and subsequent land removal in late nineteenth century: “The Mapuche nation was forced to live on reservations, on lands of low quality for agriculture and cattle raising. The creation of these reservations, or proceso de radicación, took place between 1884 and 1930. According to official figures, of the nine and a half million acres—between Biobio and Llanquiwe—only 5.5% (a twentieth) remained Indigenous” (Marimán et. al. 2006, 121).
- 11 *¡...Escucha, winka...!* devotes a whole section to this historical process of violent land removal of Mapuche communities in Chile as well as in Argentina. See Marimán et. al. 2006, 53–127.
- 12 Abya Yala is the native term that Aymara leader Takir Mamani proposed in the 1980s to represent what was colonized as the “New World.” Abya Yala means “land in its full ripeness” or “land in its full maturity” in Kuna language (Panama) and the Kuna people have used it to name the whole continent. Turtle Island is the name that many American Indian communities and leaders use to represent what we know as “North America.”
- 13 In regard to collective endeavors by Native American scholars that were written in the mid-2000s, two important books in the fields of literary and cultural criticism come to mind: *American Indian Literary Nationalism* (2006), a collaborative work of Jace Weaver, Craig S. Womack, and Robert Warrior, and *Reasoning Together: The Native Critics Collective* (2008), which brings together twelve authors and was collaboratively edited by Craig S. Womack, Daniel Heath Justice, and Christopher B. Teuton.
- 14 I use the term “epistemological sovereignty” as elaborated in the introduction of our book *Ta ñ fijke xipa rakizuameluwün: historia, colonialismo y resistencia desde el país Mapuche*, a collection of essays that was published in 2012 as the result of the creation of the collective of Mapuche researchers *Comunidad de Historia Mapuche*—of which I am a member. The notion of “epistemological sovereignty” is a response to paternalistic indigenista scholarship in Chile. We affirm: “It is for this reason that, exercising our epistemological sovereignty and practice through our authorship as well as generating our own spaces of communication, remains relevant in the contemporary battle to recover the physical, economic, and spiritual agency of our people in the ‘global economics of knowledge’” (Nahuelpan et. al. 2012, 20). For a further scholarly reflection on the relation between academic research and Mapuche subjects/objects, see Nahuelpan (2013).

- 15 Given the specific political force of this statement, I would like to provide here the original in Spanish, which says: “Historia Mapuche significa retomar nuestro pasado bajo nuestra propia epistemología y construir nuevos conocimientos a partir de nuestra propia cultura” (Marimán et. al. 2006, 9).

Works Cited

- 1 Calfio Montalva, Margarita. 2009. “Mujeres mapuche, voces y acciones en momentos de la historia.” *Participación y políticas de mujeres indígenas en América Latina*. Andrea Pequeño (ed.). Quito: FLACSO Sede Ecuador: 91–109.
- 2 Klubock, Thomas Miller. 2014. *La Frontera: Forests and Ecological Conflict in Chile’s Frontier Territory*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- 3 Mallon, Florencia. 2005. *Courage Tastes of Blood: The Mapuche Community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean State, 1906-2001*. Durham: Duke UP.
- 4 Marimán, Pablo. 2012 “Pensar y hacer como Mapuche.” *LASA Forum*, Volume XLIII Issue I (Winter): 16–18.
- 5 Marimán, Pablo, Sergio Caniuqueo, José Millalén, and Rodrigo Levil. 2006. ¡... Escucha, winka...! *Cuatro ensayos sobre de Historia Nacional Mapuche y un epílogo sobre el futuro*. Santiago: LOM Ediciones.
- 6 Millalén Paillal, José. 2012. “Tañ mapuchegen. Nación y nacionalismo Mapuche: construcción y desafío del presente.” *Ta iñ fijke xipa rakizuameluwün: historia, colonialismo y resistencia desde el país Mapuche*. Temuco: Ediciones Comunidad de Historia Mapuche.
- 7 Nahuelpan, Héctor. 2013. “El lugar del ‘indio’ en la investigación social: reflexiones en torno a un debate político y epistémico aún pendiente.” *Revista Austral de Ciencias Sociales* #24:71–91.
- 8 Nahuelpan Moreno, Héctor, Pablo Mariman Quemenedo, Herson Huinca Puitrin, Luis Carcamo-Huechante, et.al. 2012. *Ta iñ fijke xipa rakizuameluwün: historia, colonialismo y resistencia desde el país Mapuche*. Temuco: Ediciones Comunidad de Historia Mapuche.
- 9 Weaver, Jace, Craig S. Womack, and Robert Warrior. 2006. *American Indian Literary Nationalism*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Womack, Craig S., Daniel Heath Justice, and Christopher B. Teuton. 2008. *Reasoning Together: The Native Critics Collective*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.