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La Voz de Kultrun en la Modernidad: Tradición y Cambio en la Terapéutica de Siete Machi Mapuche (The Kultrun's Voice in Modernity: Tradition and Change in the Therapeutics of Seven Mapuche Machi)

Marcelo Fiorini  
*Hofstra University*

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communities of descendants of former black slaves; of believers in varieties of evangelical and millenarian cults; of free-thinking Jews, Arabs, Japanese and other minorities who for Ribeiro do not exist as minorities in the classic sense and are or should be otherwise assimilated to the Brazilian ethnic identity; and of linguistic differentiation of a dialect-level nature in Brazilian Portuguese, which Ribeiro claims does not exist, to name only a few trends one can detect in recent scholarship). Another reason for seeing this work in a retrospective way is that Ribeiro's bibliography contains few items more recent than the 1960s. His argumentation is nevertheless not stale. It is, perhaps not surprisingly for those who knew Ribeiro and who are familiar with his earlier works, visionary, even if it is not always based on the most recent empirical investigations that take Brazil as their principal object.

*La Voz de Kultrun en la Modernidad: Tradición y Cambio en la Terapéutica de Siete Machi Mapuche* (The Kultrun's Voice in Modernity: Tradition and Change in the Therapeutics of Seven Mapuche Machi). Ana Mariella Bacigalupo. Santiago, Chile: Ediciones Universidad Católica de Chile, 2001. 271 pp. \$18.00 (paper). ISBN 956-14-0623-2 [mriverv@puc.cl]

MARCELO FIORINI  
Hofstra University

Substitute the term "culture" for "kultrun" and one might well sum up Bacigalupo's dialogic ethnography about the lives, and the hearts and minds of seven Mapuche *machi* as "The Voice of Culture in Modernity." Indeed, the *kultrun* is more than merely a traditional ceremonial drum played by the *machi* (shamans) in their therapeutic sessions to aid them in ridding their patients from ills that include modern ailments such as stress, depression, lovesickness, alienation, economic problems, AIDS, and cancer. The *machi's* drum embodies the very rhythm through which culture is fashioned and refashioned as it is constantly reinvented by the Mapuche. In light of this, Bacigalupo achieves a new definition of the concept of culture, not as a form of collective corpus, but as an instrument whose tuning and timbre can be changed and whose ragas or tunes are not as much replayed, as they are played with, or can be (re)created on any new occasion. But the tuning obviously needs the tuner, and here the role of the individual (and the *Machi*, more specifically) in this conception of culture is emphasized. The same malleability is extended to concepts like identity and tradition, for the author states at the very beginning of her book: "identity, culture, and tradition are dynamic and arise in dialog, contradistinction, and identification with the other" (p. 9). Nevertheless, one should not mistakenly think that "dialog" here means some kind of rapport or colloquia between two ways of seeing the universe (one traditional, the other modern), for the author shows very clearly that her use of the term preserves

the original Greek meaning of multivocality and multireferentiality. Bacigalupo's book is one of the first truly Bakhtinian ethnographies to be published on ethnomedicine and shamanism.

The book begins by introducing a consensual view of Mapuche cosmogony, medical practices, initiation, and the ritual knowledge from which the *machi* derive their more personalized cultural vistas. The "voice" of the *kultrun* induces the *machi* into a trance, or state of heightened consciousness that allows them to travel to the spirit world. The rhythmic pulse of the *kultrun* implies a force that can be appropriated and redirected for curing the individual, reintegrating her or him to the social milieu, as well as for promoting good relations among the living, their ancestors, and the spirits of the natural world, thereby guaranteeing fruitful harvests and deliverance from disgrace. "Foreign" elements like the horse, the shotgun, the Chilean flag, the Christian cross, and images or invocations of Jesus and the Virgin become part of the *machi's* ritual paraphernalia. They are added to cultural items like the *rewe*, the ritual pole or personal altar that represents a *machi's* spirit; the *kaska-willa*, shakers that accompany the drumming; the *metawe*, vases associated with fertility; and the decorated *kultrun* itself, which contains personalized signs of stars, the moon, the sun, and a cross indicating the cardinal points.

According to Bacigalupo, the Mapuche distinguish positive and negative influences in the world and it is the individual's relationship to such influences that constitutes one's health. Even though diseases are associated with the negative, they can have positive connotations if they are caused by beneficial spiritual entities as ways of coaxing people into acting morally, or if they act as signs of a spiritual calling for assuming the role of *machi* (as in a kind of illness called a *machi-kutran*). Since they deal with both these relatively positive and negative influences, the *machi* are ambiguous beings par excellence. The ways they practice their ritual knowledge and the success with which they perform their cures are closely scrutinized by the communities where they live. As figures of authority in local medicine, the *machi* are usually able to reinterpret the causes of an ineffective cure, or they can invoke a lack of faith on the part of their patients as capable of producing unwanted consequences.

As modern ailments have proliferated with the sense of disorientation caused by the abrupt arrival of development to the more outlying areas of Chile, and as the social segregation imposed by Chilean society upon the 80 percent of the Mapuche population who have come to reside in urban areas (p.96) has intensified their sense of alienation, the *machi* have occupied this new social landscape as savvy cultural mediators whose reputation as curers has increased both among the Mapuche and the foreign (Chilean) *wingka*. The *machi* have thus incorporated foreign elements of both popular medical practice and biomedical knowledge as additional sources of power.

Bacigalupo defines the traditional practices of the *machi* as comprising cures, divination, ritual vengeance, love magic, and magic performed for good

fortune. Nowadays, the roles of the *machi* have polarized them into two broad types. On one hand, there are those who occupy themselves exclusively with curing diseases, whether natural or spiritual, who legitimize themselves through experiencing a calling (a *machi-kutran* illness) and who submit to a long period of apprenticeship. These are the *machi* who inherit their spirits and become repositories of tradition. On the other hand, there are those who become *machi* through experiencing visions or after surviving a catastrophe, often do not undergo a *machi-kutran*, incorporate many elements of popular medicine, and eschew any formal apprenticeship. Bacigalupo shows that the first type of *machi* hold great popularity and are highly respected in their communities, a fact linked with their large number of supporters and the faith the latter have in their curers. The establishment of a tradition is therefore shown to be linked to a tightly knit support group, as is the case of *machi* Nora and her apprentices Ana and Pamela. Such is also the case in the Christian style of curing adopted by *machi* Sergio, who also initiated many other *machi*.

The present-day *machi* of the second type described by the author are more prone to accusations of witchcraft because their acceptance by their local communities or their own families is often a point of contention. Nevertheless, even though these *machi* are more open to using *wingka* therapeutic techniques, that does not make them less traditional. Such are the cases of *machi* Jorge and Marta, both of whom effect cures by resorting to a traditional Mapuche dualist conception in which the cure can only be reestablished through ritual vengeance, that is by diverting evil back to the culprit that caused it. Moreover, these *Machi* are also able to obtain supporters and preserve their relation with a faithful number of patients by personalizing their way of curing so as to better meet their patients' needs. The author shows how the seven *machi* introduced in the book are highly individualistic and model their shamanic practices after their own experiences. This is not only true for *machi* like Marta and Jorge, but also for *machi* like Fresia, who comes to abandon her practice because her own individuality prevents her from conforming to the customary roles assumed by *machi* among the Mapuche. Bacigalupo again makes an important point in arguing that these cases demonstrate how ethnographies centered on normative (ideal or typical) concepts of the person fail to take account of how individuals negotiate the terms of their own identities in respect to their specific social contexts and life histories.

*La Voz de Kultrun en la Modernidad* is written in accessible language and the stories of the *machi* are often compelling, or at least intriguing enough to hold their grip on both the scholarly and lay reader. The book should quickly appear in English translation, perhaps with a glossary to aid in the identification of the native Mapuche terms, and with a more generous size format for the wonderful and equally informative photographs the author has added to her comprehensive ethnographic endeavor.