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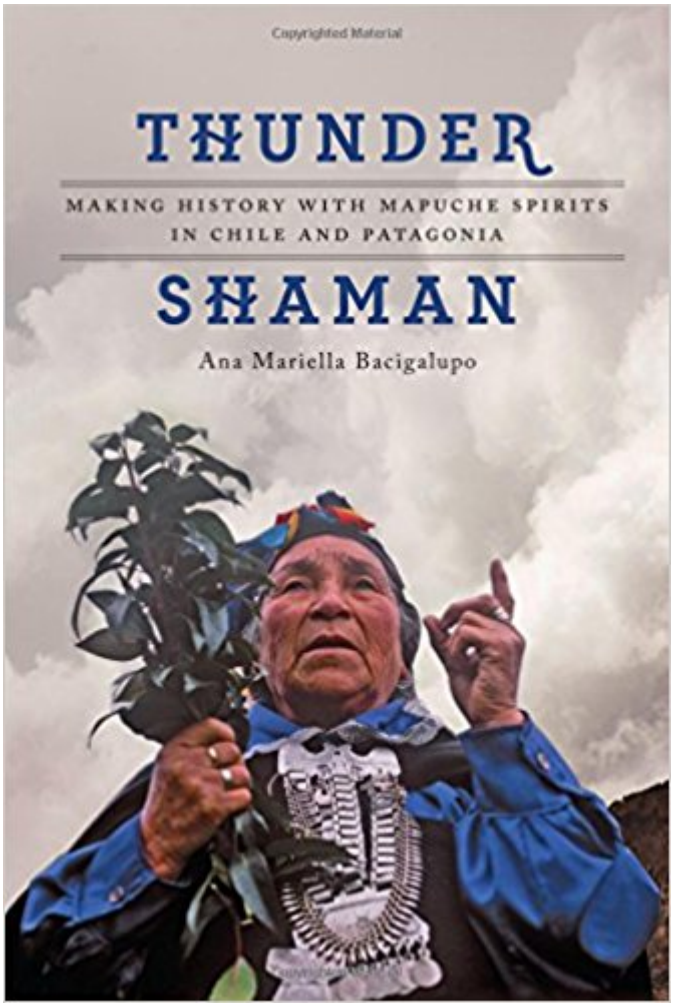
Thunder Shaman: Making History With Mapuche Spirits In Chile And Patagonia



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Synopsis

As a "wild," drumming thunder shaman, a warrior mounted on her spirit horse, Francisca Kolipi’s spirit traveled to other historical times and places, gaining the power and knowledge to conduct spiritual warfare against her community’s enemies, including forestry companies and settlers. As a "civilized" shaman, Francisca narrated the Mapuche people’s attachment to their local sacred landscapes, which are themselves imbued with shamanic power, and constructed nonlinear histories of intra- and interethnic relations that created a moral order in which Mapuche become history’s spiritual victors.Thunder Shaman represents an extraordinary collaboration between Francisca Kolipi and anthropologist Ana Mariella Bacigalupo, who became Kolipi’s "granddaughter," trusted helper, and agent in a mission of historical (re)construction and myth-making. The book describes Francisca’s life, death, and expected rebirth, and shows how she remade history through multitemporal dreams, visions, and spirit possession, drawing on ancestral beings and forest spirits as historical agents to obliterate state ideologies and the colonialist usurpation of indigenous lands. Both an academic text and a powerful ritual object intended to be an agent in shamanic history, Thunder Shaman functions simultaneously as a shamanic "bible," embodying Francisca’s power, will, and spirit long after her death in 1996, and an insightful study of shamanic historical consciousness, in which biography, spirituality, politics, ecology, and the past, present, and future are inextricably linked. It demonstrates how shamans are constituted by historical-political and ecological events, while they also actively create history itself through shamanic imaginaries and narrative forms.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A beautifully written book about the life and ritual practice of a thunder shaman and the complex ways in which she and her Mapuche community experience history and time. The author has a deep understanding of shamanism and shows the value of Mapuche understandings of history and shamanic experiences of multitemporality, where past, present and future coexist. The author combines personal stories, historical narratives, political and theoretical analysis into an extraordinary story. The book has much to teach us about the value of collaborating with indigenous people and furthering their historical and political projects both for the understanding of humanity and for academic scholarship.

Extraordinary book, one of those rare pieces of collaboration with a powerful shaman. Bacigalupo is an outstanding scholar who has fulfilled in this work a sacred obligation she had with the Mapuche thunder shaman Francisca Kolipi Kurin. This book is a 'bible' constructed a quatre mains, together with Francisca, a beautiful composition that is destined to change the lives of those who read it.

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