Scott Crago


The SOLAS Brown Bag Speaker series presents Scott Crago, PhD student in the Department of History and recipient of a 2012 LAII/Tinker Field Research Grant.

Through a focus on a pilot project for indigenous Mapuche integration known as Plan Perquenco, this presentation examines the intersections between ethnicity, gender, state building and Mapuche collective memory under Chilean authoritarianism in the 1970s and ‘80s. His study of Plan Perquenco demonstrates that while neoliberal reforms under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet required a fundamental transformation of Mapuche familial, cultural, and political organization, administrative decentralization permitted Mapuche a means to manipulate these rural reform programs to the benefit of their communities.

Under Plan Perquenco, Mapuche used mandatory monthly meetings overseen by young agricultural technicians less than sympathetic to the military regime to come together and share collective memories of loss and devastation suffered under the dictatorship. In these meetings, Mapuche utilized both their oral tradition and Chilean folk music to reconstruct a history that reinforced their sense of collective community belonging and cultural identity that challenged the ideals of masculinity and femininity espoused by the military regime.

Mapuche, therefore, remember Plan Perquenco as a time when they began to recover historical memory and community organization through new modes of cultural production like Chilean folk music.

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Photo provided by S. Crago