

Between conflict and recognition : the construction of chilean indigenous policy in the Araucanía region

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Abstract:

Since 1990, differentiated policies have been formulated to address the needs of the indigenous population in Chile. These policies pay particular attention to the Araucanía Region, a portion of the Mapuche indigenous people's historical territory. The various programmes created as a part of indigenous policy have generated spaces for recognition at the local level. They favour a 'culturalist' vision of Mapuche society and consider any aspect of 'being Mapuche' a value in itself, as well as a source of regional identity and development. Simultaneously, the media has described the Araucanía Region as the 'Mapuche conflict' zone because of tensions generated by demands for land, as well as the presence of mega-projects that affect Mapuche communities. This article discusses and analyses the two apparently contradictory factors that constitute a type of complementary policy that has become more entrenched during President Piñera's administration. This policy sets the tone and pace for intercultural relations in the Araucanía Region

Keywords: Chile | Indigenous policy | Recognition | Ethnic conflict | Mapuche

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