BIBLIOGRAPHIES

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INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexandra Ashton and Joe Bryan
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INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND THE ENVIRONMENT:
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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INTRODUCTION

Indigenous peoples’ relationship to the environment encompasses terrain where multiple perspectives on race, nature, culture and development converge. Historically, colonial and state societies have focused a great deal of attention on the topic, rationalizing colonial claims to empty lands on their interpretations of the relationship between people and nature. The view summarized in the writings of John Locke, namely that property in land should only be recognized where a person’s labor had demonstrably altered nature for productive purposes, profoundly colored European perceptions of the peoples they encountered. Rousseau’s famous tracts on the “noble savage” furthered European perceptions of indigenous peoples as having an Edenic relationship with nature. Colonization and conquest relied on European perceptions of empty land unaltered by human labor, creating powerful narratives about wilderness and wild people that persist to this day.

The idea that indigenous peoples “live close to nature” is one of the more widely-held of these stereotypes. The myth of the noble savage has been hotly contested in debates over conservation and development policy, perpetuated as much by state governments, activists, journalists and academics as by indigenous peoples themselves. Notions of “pre-modern” and “tribal” societies continue perceptions of indigenous societies as the anti-thesis, if not the antidote, to modern societies’ impacts on the environment. If, to cite a phrase from Thoreau oft cited by environmentalists, “in wildness is the preservation of the world,” images of wild people have been effectively used as antidotes for the excesses of modern societies in the Americas and Europe in particular. Such notions mobilize notions of difference that reflect Western perceptions of the relationship between people and nature “Orientalizing” indigenous peoples as others. Indigenous peoples have used these assumptions to marshal support for their claims to resources, emphasizing their role as stewards of the environment. In other cases, stereotypes of indigenous peoples as “living in harmony with nature” have been used to create policy that narrowly confine indigenous peoples to particular places and lifestyles deemed to be environmentally sound. Following this logic, Alcida Ramos (1998, 71) notes that the further indigenous peoples fall from their relationship with nature, the less importance is placed on recognition of indigenous peoples as being any different from other societies.

Evidence abounds that indigenous peoples have in fact had tremendous impacts on the environments in which they live. These arguments have tended on the one hand to further dispel notions of the “ecological Indian” (see Krech 1999). Analytical approaches taken by human ecologists attempt to quantify this relationship in ecological terms, developing scientific measures of indigenous peoples as elements of the ecosystems in which they live. A similar line of argument has been used to describe that areas perceived as wilderness and “virgin” land are frequently landscapes that have been highly
modified by indigenous use and management of resources (see Denevan 1992). Cultural ecologists have further articulated indigenous peoples’ knowledge of the environment in which they live as alternative conservation strategies. While the practices documented by cultural ecologists are profoundly linked to the political, economic and cultural contexts in which they operate, indigenous peoples, academics and activists have used this approach to argue for the historic sustainability of indigenous cultures.

In other contexts, particularly in India and Africa, the perceived closeness between indigenous peoples and nature serves as the basis for discrimination. Consumption of game meat, the absence of fixed permanent settlements, and other subsistence lifestyles are equated with “backwardness” and poverty, justifying the “modernization” of indigenous societies. Forcing indigenous peoples into sedentary villages and the introduction private property rights are primary tools of assimilating indigenous peoples into state societies. These practices have the collective impact of removing indigenous peoples from nature and including them in state societies and market economies, frequently at the lowest rung. The invisibility of indigenous peoples in urban areas, absent from much of the academic literature and state policy debates, illustrates the pervasiveness of the natural environment in the construction of indigenous identities.

There is, of course, a certain implied inevitability about the displacement of indigenous peoples from the environment embedded in state property regimes and development projects. State governments continue to apply notions of indigenous lands as being empty through natural resource development and conservation policies, frequently excluding indigenous peoples from participation in planning conservation and development strategies. States continue to grant concessions for mining and logging, and to support road and dam construction in areas where indigenous peoples on the basis that those lands are not privately owned and therefore are property of the state. Regardless of whether state’s formally recognize indigenous peoples’ use and occupancy of land and resources, development projects and privatization of land ownership introduce dramatic changes in by indigenous peoples’ societies. Environmental historians, policy analysts and activists have paid particular attention to these issues in their work, interrelating environmental change with impacts on indigenous peoples.

Since the 1970s, indigenous peoples have countered state policies by arguing for recognition of their human rights to occupy, govern and otherwise participate in decisions on resource use and management in their homelands. These claims equate the maintenance of indigenous cultures with claims to resources, arguing for recognition of indigenous peoples’ human rights to maintain their cultures. Indigenous peoples have participated directly in the edification of a system of international law and declarations, much of it non-binding soft law, that articulates how human rights standards should be modified and applied with particular regard to indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples and their supporters maintain that such modification of international human rights law does not constitute the recognition of “special” rights, rather they state that such modifications constitute guidelines for the application of human rights law in cases involving indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples’ participation in the development of international human rights standards is remarkable to the extent that it has emerged as a model for civil society participation in the development of rights and policies previously developed exclusively by states. The United Nations’ draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the International Labour Organization’s Convention No. 169 are
two of the more significant results of this process. Many of the standards set forth in these docu-
ments are echoed in resolutions by the European Parliament, the draft declaration currently being
Indigenous rights are addressed in a number of key documents pertaining to sustainable develop-
ment and conservation, including Agenda 21 and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Collect-
ively, this body of international policy statements and law infuses Western legal definitions of the
environment with indigenous interpretations, expanding the category in new ways. To be sure, this
process raises a new set of questions and problems in addressing the relationship between indigenous
peoples and the environment.

All of the sources in this bibliography are available in English, though there are many other
useful sources in a variety of other languages, particularly Spanish. We have also tried to gather
sources that cover a broad range of experiences, compiling cases from most parts of the world. We
have deliberately chosen sources that are readily available through libraries and the internet to ensure
access to the range of perspectives. In order to organize the large number of perspectives and ap-
proaches annotated in this bibliography, we have broken the literature down into five categories, each
introduced with a short bibliographic essay.
The very concept of who is indigenous and how that term is defined is a key debate in much the literature described herein. The concept of indigenous peoples, first conceived of in terms of “natives,” “Indians,” “aboriginals,” and “savages,” is of course a invention of European colonialism (Ramos 1998, Varese 1996). Any genealogy of the term speaks more about the ways that colonial societies and state societies have constructed their national identity than it conveys the views and perspectives of people who are Blackfeet, Dayak, San or Nenet. Only recently in fact, have indigenous peoples themselves offered up terms to refer to themselves that are of the own choosing. Thus have names like “Auca” been replaced with “Huaorani,” “Eskimo” with “Inuit,” “Inupiaq,” and “Yu’pik.” Peoples living in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand have been the archetypes for those peoples who have actively promoted themselves as indigenous to an international audience. Internationalization of the concept of indigenous peoples has encouraged peoples in northern Scandinavia, Asia, Oceania and Africa to adopt the term to describe themselves. Similarly, the internationalization of the concept has led social scientists and activists to identify any number of other peoples as being indigenous.

As an international concept, the definition of “indigenous peoples” is a matter of considerable debate, particularly in regard to the development of international law, human rights standards, and policy that specifically engage the term. Though many alternatives have been proposed, including the outright elimination of the concept, international use of the term is best characterized by its open-endedness. Indigenous peoples themselves have tended towards converting the term from a racial and ethnic concept to a legal term, in keeping with the development of human rights standards. Defining themselves as distinct “peoples” with a right to self-identification, indigenous groups have campaigned for recognition of rights enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights. Under that definition, all peoples have the right to “self-determination,” a concept initially tailored to describe states emerging from the dissolution of European empires after World War I. States have opposed this definition on the grounds that it implies certain rights to sovereignty, including the right to secession. International human rights advocates and UN personnel have led efforts to define indigenous peoples in terms of a set of positivist criteria with the hope of finding a definition that balances the open-endedness called for by indigenous peoples with the degree of specificity and recognition of territorial integrity called for by states (see Burger 1987). In keeping with the implications of this debate for international law, several legal scholars have addressed the difficulties of normative definitions of indigenous peoples. Kingsbury (1998) in particular stands out for his articulation of a “constructivist” position that allows for a certain level of generality with out sacrificing contextual analyses of the specific instances where the term is applied.

Many states have nonetheless continued to argue for the use of the term “populations,” “societies,” or “ethnic minorities” in place of indigenous peoples. Other states, particularly in Asia, have argued that there are no indigenous peoples living within their boundaries, claiming that all citizens are equally indigenous. China, India, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Indonesia, as well as in a number of African states, have each articulated variations of this argument (see Barnes, et al. 1995, Kingsbury 1998, Li 2000).

With particular regard to the environment, a growing number of social scientists assess claims of indigeneity as, among other things, claims to resources. Li (2000) offers up an instance in Indone-
sia where one group has asserted an indigenous identity at the expense of a second, in many respects no less indigenous, group. Ramos (1998) analyzes deployment of the concept in Brazilian society, indicating that the debates over who is indigenous and what rights the term confers offers more insight into the construction of national identity than it offers about the specific claims and experiences of indigenous peoples themselves.

Environmentalists and human rights activists, operating mainly from Western Europe and the United States, have extended the term “indigenous” to any number of peoples and cultures living in the more isolated, remote regions of the world. This is particularly the case for indigenous peoples in Asian countries such as China and Russia, though it is increasingly the case in Africa as well (see Barnes et al. 1995 and Veber, et al. 1993). In reference to Africa, Veber, et al. (1993) comment that identifying a people as indigenous is often much more difficult for policy makers and human rights activists than for the people in question for whom it is real element of their daily lives. Nonetheless, working definitions of “indigenous” as an internationalized demographic category is often lacking in these groups, who more readily understand their experience in terms of being San or Barabaig to use two African examples.

Finally, there are notable cases where a people that might otherwise assert themselves as being indigenous have declined to do so. Barnes et al. (1996) describes why Tibetans have chosen not to self-identify as an indigenous people in order to avoid classification as an “ethnic minority” subordinate to the Chinese state, which could compromise their goal of independence as a nation.

Sources

International


Asia


**Latin America**


**Africa**


Indigenous groups’ interactions with state governments have historically tended to yield unfavorable outcomes for both indigenous people and their environments. Indigenous peoples have been subjected to conquest, ravaged by diseases, made subservient to state laws and customs, forcibly removed from their homelands, and been pushed to the political and economic margins of society while outsiders degrade their territories in the name of profit. It has not simply been the obvious imbalance of power, in terms of brute force and ability to mobilize international resources, that has allowed states to prosper on the backs of indigenous peoples. Of equal strategic importance has been the employment of a particular set of ideologies in which indigenous peoples are portrayed as subhuman, inferior or as needing to be “civilized” and assimilated into more “highly-evolved” societies.

Much of European colonization was founded on the belief that the lands under conquest were somehow empty of human habitation and therefore belonged to no one, rendering them free for the taking. Under the “doctrine of discovery,” British colonizers proclaimed many indigenous lands to be _terra nullius_, literally meaning “empty land”— devoid of human inhabitants. The Crown, like many other European colonial powers, used claims of _terra nullius_, to legitimate its ownership and conquest of these lands by virtue of its alleged “discovery” of them. The fact that the area being seized was quite clearly occupied—to cite the case aborigines in Australia as one example—was of little consequence to the invaders, as the indigenous residents were not understood to be people. Instead, colonizers thought of and treated the previous inhabitants of these “empty places” as something to be cleared from the landscape, in ways similar to their treatment of the forests and animals found in them. In a different, but related, line of argument indigenous peoples were depicted as being “not fully human,” possessing neither souls nor a belief in Christianity, and therefore lacking the essential qualities of humanity. As less-than-human beings, indigenous peoples were not entitled to land ownership rights, nor were their lives accorded the same respect as other human beings.

Another ideology governing state interaction with indigenous groups has been the belief that they are “savages”—human, perhaps, but clearly uncivilized, primitive or “backwards.” This perspective developed under a number of influences, one being Aristotle’s notion of “natural slavery,” which states that there are some people who are born naturally inferior to others and are therefore destined to occupy a subordinate position. (Maybury-Lewis 1997) This idea later fit perfectly in line with the 19th century theory of Social Darwinism, the application of Darwin’s scientific theory of evolution to the study of human societies. In terms of social evolution, indigenous peoples were perceived as completely undeveloped—literally at the low end of the evolutionary spectrum. Following the principle of “survival of the fittest,” the more highly evolved civilizations would naturally be stronger and more powerful, and it would simply be the natural order of things if they were to conquer and dominate the weaker, more primitive groups. As Teddy Roosevelt understood this notion with respect to United States policy, the advanced, civilized societies were “morally justified in taking lands from savage groups,” (Maybury-Lewis 1997).

The belief that indigenous people could be assimilated into state society was manifest in many Latin American countries through the adoption of policies of _indigenismo_, a set of ideas and strategies designed to guide the incorporation of indigenous peoples into national societies. In post-revolution Mexico, the government established educational and economic programs designed to alleviate the social “backwardness” of its indigenous citizens and to assimilate them into the mainstream culture:
in short, to produce “modern,” nationalized citizens. In Brazil, the goal was one of emancipation: the “emancipation” from being uncivilized Indians. Civilized citizens “freed” from their Indian status would no longer require those special services or protections guaranteed them under Brazilian law. (Maybury-Lewis 1997) In other parts of the world, indigenous peoples have been assigned a political status resembling that of children; incapable of acting in their own best interests, they are essentially wards of the state, having very few rights accorded them.

More recently, states have countered growing international recognition of indigenous peoples having a human right to territory and participation in decisions regarding resource use and development by stating that any recognition of such rights threatens the integrity of the state. By challenging state sovereignty to natural resources, indigenous peoples have been charged with obstructing the state’s efforts at modernization and development, thus undermining the state’s economic well-being. The notion that indigenous groups pose a threat to the security of the state is primarily founded on two beliefs: first, the idea that the legitimization of indigenous peoples will destabilize the social order in ways untenable to the powerful elites; second, the assertion that indigenous groups wish to secede from the state (even when these groups are actually demanding recognition of their right to self-determination within the state). (Maybury-Lewis 1997) Finally, there are those states which feel threatened by the concept of indigeneity itself. China, Indonesia, and many African states, among others, do not recognize the claims of indigenous peoples (Kingsbury 1998, Veber 1993). Generally these states claim that all citizens are equally indigenous and therefore no one group (or groups) can be guaranteed any special rights or protections. This may be understood as a political move on the part of the state to either promote a sense of nationalism amongst a diverse and disparate population or to preempt a flood of demands that could dangerously unsettle the status quo.

States have long employed various strategies of controlling land as a means of controlling indigenous peoples. One approach has been to depict indigenous peoples as squatters living illegally on state lands. In many former British colonies, all land within the bounds of the state for which there is no transferal of title to an individual is considered to be Crown land held by the state. Maya living in Belize (Anaya 1998, TMCC 1997) in addition to numerous cases in Africa (Veber et al. 1993) are examples of indigenous peoples who are portrayed as illegal occupants of state lands. Still in other cases, the question of indigenous land rights has been dealt with by the state through the formation of closed, corporate communities bounded and politically organized according to state interpretations of “tradition.” Ejido communities in Mexico and adat communities in Indonesia and Malaysia are two such examples. The practice of creating specific kinds of indigenous communal land holding exists in tension with efforts to dissolve group ownership rights into individual private property holdings, saleable as real estate. “Allotment” in the United States and neoliberal agrarian counter-reforms in Mexico and Chile exemplify this trend. In yet other cases, states have recognized limited indigenous land rights while retaining control over subsurface rights, as has been the case in Ecuador and Guyana, where oil and mineral exploration continues in areas the government ostensibly recognizes as being indigenous-owned (Colchester 1997). Some states have used legislation to exchange monetary payments to indigenous peoples for the extinguishment of their land claims. Legislation in the United States extinguished indigenous land claims in Alaska as part of efforts to secure right-of-way for the Trans-Alaska oil pipeline in 1971 in exchange for a lump sum payment to a system of regional and village Native corporations (Berger 1985). Still other laws and policies are implemented to control indigenous use of land. Many of these are designed to restrict or outlaw
indigenous agricultural techniques of shifting cultivation. For example, states may stipulate that land must be in “productive use” for it to be retained under “native customary rights’ titles—effectively outlawing the fallow cycle necessary to maintaining the fertility of the land. Such policies force landowners to degrade their land if they wish to maintain claims to it. Alternatively, states may ban indigenous agriculture altogether, citing its ecologically damaging impacts, while far more environmentally destructive enterprises, such as mining and logging, are permitted to continue unabated.

Even those states that make legal provisions for indigenous land rights may not adhere to or uphold them in practice. Governments interested in developing their natural resources have issued development permits within indigenous territories with little or no regard for indigenous concerns. (Anaya 1998, Colchester 1997, Utting 1993, Vitug 1993) Population expansion may induce states to encourage settlement of frontier lands that border or infringe upon indigenous homelands. The Amazonian region has long been thought of as a “safety valve” that can absorb at least a portion of the millions of landless peasants, thereby decreasing the pressure on government officials and elites to engage in land redistribution/ reforms. (de O. Santos & de Andrade 1990, Hecht & Cockburn 1990) Reservations (USA), reserves (Canada), and reducciones (Latin America) are yet another strategy employed by states to both reduce the size of natives’ territories (possibly relocating tribes in the process) and to concentrate indigenous groups in easily controlled, racialized enclaves. (Castile & Bee 1992, Jaimes 1992) In other scenarios, states may decide to remove indigenous peoples from their traditional homelands altogether for the purpose of privatizing, developing, or conserving their natural resources. Forced resettlement is mandated in large-scale development projects such as dams and hydroelectric facilities but may also be used by the state to remove indigenous peoples from newly-created protected areas, national parks, land designated for “agricultural use” and smaller-scale resource extraction projects. (de O. Santos & de Andrade 1990, Gezon 1997, Ghimire & Pimbert 1997, Gooch 1999, Jaimes 1992, Morrison 1997, Neumann 1995, Osherenko 1995, Vitug 1993, West & Brechin 1991, Wily 1994)

Sources

International


**Asia**


**North America**


**Politics and Impacts of National Parks and Protected Areas.** London: Earthscan Publications Limited.

**Latin America**


**Africa**


The international emergence of the category “indigenous peoples”—and indeed the term itself—is due in large part to the rise of a pan-indigenous movement that began in the early 1970s. The first United Nations forum on indigenous peoples, held in Geneva, Switzerland in 1977, is widely recognized as a key moment in the development of an international indigenous peoples’ movement. At the meeting, representatives of indigenous peoples, primarily from the Americas, discussed common issues of colonialism, environmental degradation, economic development, and maintenance of their cultures. In 1983, the now annual meetings were formally sanctioned by the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights through the creation of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Bringing together states and indigenous peoples, the Working Group has overseen the development of a draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in addition to carrying out studies on specific issues (Daes 2000). Building on this model of participation, indigenous peoples have advanced the development of human rights standards in the International Labour Organization, the Organization of American States, the World Bank, and the European Parliament. The Convention on Biological Diversity and Agenda 21 also make explicit reference to the rights of indigenous peoples. Though international law and human rights are decidedly Western in origin, indigenous peoples have made considerable advances in expanding those concepts through the development of policy (Inuit Circumpolar Conference 1992), innovative legal strategies (e.g. Anaya 1998, Macklem and Morgan 2000), development alternatives (Anaya and Crider 1996, Howitt et al. 1996), and alliances with non-governmental organizations (Büchi, et al. 1997, Treakle 1998, Veber 1993).

With specific regard to the environment, indigenous peoples have argued for recognition of their human right to control, occupy and participate in decisions regarding the environment and development of their ancestral territories. The language used for such claims is crucial, most notably in the substitution of the term “territory” for “land” to include reference to indigenous peoples’ rights to clean air, water, marine resources, pack ice, flora and fauna that make up their traditional homelands (see UN draft Declaration, Article 26). Indigenous peoples’ efforts to apply international human rights standards to reform state laws often frames their engagement of environmental issues in terms of recognition of their “territorial rights,” particularly the right to participate in decisions affecting resources and land (Anaya 1998, Anaya and Crider 1996, Macklem and Morgan 2000). The United Nations continues to monitor these developments (Daes 2000), a growing number of which involve human rights complaints brought before international human rights fora by indigenous peoples against states.

At the state level, rights-based claims often act as the impetus for organizing indigenous peoples. Many of the resulting organizations form alliances with international environmental NGOs, bolstering claims by those organizations to conservation as a key element of social justice and a human right to a “clean and safe” environment. Many NGOs now see protection of indigenous rights as a key strategy for protection of the environment (Durning 1992, Treakle 1998). This agenda has not been without its problems, however “natural” the alliances may seem (Conklin and Graham 1995, Tsing 1999, Wiggins 1993).

Reconciliation of customary law with state law is another way in which indigenous peoples challenge development and conservation strategies through the articulation of traditional uses of land
and resources. This has particularly been the case in countries like Indonesia and Malaysia (Dentan 1997, Li 2000, Tsing 1999), where the concept of adat combines elements of colonial law with selective interpretations of indigenous customs. Incorporation of customary law into state legal systems is often incomplete, conferring a level of rigidity on what have otherwise been dynamic systems with internal mechanisms for resolution of disputes and representation. By “freezing” patterns of resource use and granting official recognition to leaders, divisions within indigenous communities can be exacerbated. Though such divisions are often linked to state policy that has previously contributed to loss of land and environmental degradation, they can also lead to greater environmental degradation and emigration by indigenous peoples themselves.

Finally, indigenous resistance to state-supported conservation and development projects have turned violent in several cases. The cases of the Miskito in Nicaragua (see Stevens 1997) and the Ogoni in Nigeria (Watts 1997) are among the better known examples, though there are many other instances that are no less violent in spite of the lack of international visibility (Burger 1989, Peluso 1992, Veber 1993).

Sources

International


Asia


North America


Latin America


Africa


INDUSTRY AND DEVELOPMENT

One of the greatest sources of transformation for indigenous societies and their environments is the incursion of extractive industries and large-scale development projects on indigenous homelands. States often grant concession rights or directly collaborate with national and transnational corporations in the development of natural resources within the ecologically-rich territories of indigenous people. The fact that these lands are usually occupied and serve as the resource base for traditional subsistence lifestyles does not seem to pose much of an obstacle to the development process. In fact, the interests and concerns of indigenous populations are rarely addressed seriously, if they are even considered at all. More often, raw materials and profits are exported from the local community without real compensation to community members.

The costs and benefits of development schemes such as mining, oil and gas extraction, logging, the building of dams are unequally distributed; indigenous groups endure a disproportionate share of the costs while receiving few tangible benefits (Osherenko 1995). Sometimes reparations or royalties may be paid to local residents; however, there is no guarantee that these will take a form that is desirable or even useful to community members. Perceptions of indigenous peoples’ impoverishment and underdevelopment are given as justification for the imposition of development projects that often do little more than exacerbate the very symptoms of poverty that “development” was intended to treat. Even the current trend to invest in “community development programs” does not necessarily mean that the community is given the chance to participate in the decision-making process. More often one finds the funding of development projects that may be unsuited to a given community, or which are designed less to satisfy community needs than to serve the interests of the state and private corporations (i.e. the building of roads and infrastructure). (Gezon 1997, Utting 2000)

Projects which are externally imposed on a community may not integrate well with the local social structure; the benefits received may not be equally distributed among different sectors of a community, creating gender, class and age disparities that had not previously characterized community social relations. Development schemes often entail what Filer calls a “process of delineation,” or the privatization of communal lands. In reference to the process of granting mining concessions in Papua New Guinea, Filer describes how the state establishes outer boundaries for areas of customary lands and then somewhat arbitrarily subdivides these into blocks or titles held by individuals (usually male) on behalf of particular family groups (Filer 1990). These individual landholdings can then be leased to the government for the purpose of resource development. Royalties, occupation fees and compensation payments received by titleholders may have no “customary” norms governing their redistribution among family and community members. Still in other cases, like that of Alaska as described by Berger (1985), the extinguishment of indigenous land claims can precede development projects, legally erasing indigenous forms of land tenure. All of this can give rise to a process of social stratification, in which inequalities of wealth and power form both within the titleholding class and between it and other community members.

The lack of indigenous participation in planning and implementing development projects within their territories has had a number of serious, even grave consequences for human communities and ecological systems. States and especially private corporations tend to fixate on maximizing short-term profits rather than considering long-term sustainability. Projects characterized by this type
of mentality can leave the environment seriously degraded, traditional resources diminished or polluted, and cause extensive health problems for local inhabitants (Kimerling 1990, Vitug 1993). Large-scale development projects such as dams can result in the dislocation and dissolution of entire communities (de O. Santos & de Andrade 1990, Fisher 1999). Roads associated with timber and mining industries can facilitate an in-migration of other settlers looking for employment and/or land, further siphoning off indigenous land and resources (Colchester 1997). In addition, the integration of indigenous people into a wage labor market for extractive industries, combined with decreased access to other means of meeting subsistence needs, can leave indigenous populations increasingly dependent on the market economy yet unable to maintain their former standards of living.

Finally, it is the case that indigenous peoples do not always view extractive industry and development in a negative light. There are many examples of groups around the world who have either been interested in forming a partnership with industry or who have sought to develop the natural resources on their own lands (Anaya & Crider 1996, Turner 1995). The key to a successful outcome in such cases is establishing a much greater level of community involvement/input in setting project goals and in its design. In addition, there must be clear standards for corporate accountability on both environmental and social levels.

Sources

Logging


Mining


Oil/ Gas


Hydropower/Dams


Fisheries


Development Policy


In keeping with early European notions of “noble savages” living in Edenic settings, the majority of literature on indigenous peoples and the environment addresses the issue of conservation. Indigenous peoples do in fact live in many of those areas of greatest importance to environmentalists (Chapin 1992), though their participation in the development of conservation strategies has been a matter of considerable debate. Beginning with the establishment of the first national parks in the United States (Hecht and Cockburn 1990), conservation has frequently led to the removal of indigenous peoples from protected areas (Chernela 1990, Huntsinger 1995, Ghimrie and Pimbert 1997, West and Brechin 1991, Gooch 1999, Neumann 1995). To the extent that conservation projects disrupt indigenous peoples’ use of resources and occupation of ancestral lands, the implications of conservation are similar to those of development. Though indigenous peoples often are in favor of protection of resources, their reasons and strategies for doing so are often very different than those advocated by conservationists (Stevens 1997, Gezon 1997, Karlsson 2000, Conklin and Graham 1995). Nonetheless there are instances in which conservationists and indigenous peoples have formed alliances with successful results (Tsing 1999, Treakle 1998), particularly in those cases where indigenous peoples’ rights to control their territory and resources are recognized (Wiggins 1993).

Further assessment of the importance of indigenous knowledge and practices in maintaining biological diversity has been the subject of many articles and studies. The Convention on Biological Diversity signed at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, specifically recognizes the importance of indigenous peoples’ knowledge of and strategies for conservation of biological resources. Considerable attention has been given to in situ conservation strategies that seek to reinforce indigenous practices and values that promote conservation. Several studies demonstrate the importance of understanding the interactions between cultural processes that promote conservation of biological resources and broader political and economic changes (e.g. Zimmerer 1996). Indigenous peoples have raised growing concerns about the commercialization of their knowledge of the properties of plants in particular, addressing the question of “intellectual property rights” and the potential for distribution of benefits (Brush and Stabinsky 1996; Posey and Dutfield 1996).

Demarcation and mapping of indigenous territories is one key strategy used by indigenous peoples to communicate their uses and knowledge of their homelands in addressing issues of conservation and development (Brody 1981, Poole 1995, Tsing 1999). The Maya Atlas (Toledo Maya Cultural Council and Toledo Alcalde Association 1997) is a powerful example of the use of maps developed by indigenous peoples to communicate their goals and visions for conservation and development.

Sources

International


Asia


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Latin America


Africa


Anaya reviews in this article the legal basis for Maya claims of aboriginal title and hence a right to participate in natural resource management in light of the Government of Belize's decision to grant logging rights to nearly 480,000 acres of tropical forest in Southern Belize. The article outlines the legal arguments made by attorneys representing two Maya organizations, the Toledo Maya Cultural Council and the Toledo Alcaldes Association, in their case filed against the Government of Belize. In summarizing the legal basis for the Maya's claim of aboriginal title, Anaya provides a concise review of how similar claims have been made to lands that share Belize's colonial history as a member of the English Commonwealth, particularly with Canada and Australia. Defined by historic patterns of use and occupancy of lands, Anaya argues that aboriginal title has legal standing under common law systems, such as those used by Canada, Australia, and the United States. The continued presence of the Maya on those same lands further confirms their rights to those lands, refuting in practice arguments that their title to the land was extinguished by the state. Though Anaya concedes that it may be too much to ask that Belizean courts recognize Maya aboriginal title due to the political importance of natural resource led development, he concludes that the Maya are entitled to greater participation in decisions regarding conservation and development of resources and lands they depend for the basis of their livelihood.


In this article, legal scholars S. James Anaya and S. Todd Crider provide an overview of a case brought by the Mayagna (Sumo) indigenous community of Awas Tingni against the government of Nicaragua over timber rights on community lands. Overlapping with the Nicaraguan government's granting of logging concessions to a Korean company, the government was also a signatory to a tripartite agreement with Awas Tingni and a Canadian logging company to log other community lands. In the former case, Awas Tingni had no participation in the decision-making process, while in the latter, the community had extensive control over the agreement. Through a comparison of the two cases, the authors argue that community participation is paramount to making equitable decisions about resource use and development on indigenous lands. In drafting the tripartite agreement, Awas Tingni received financial and legal assistance from the World Wildlife Fund and the University of Iowa College of Law. International assistance, the authors argue, provided crucial resources for ensuring that logging posed a minimal risk to the other forest resources that the community depends on for its livelihood. As the authors point out, the agreement in which the government did not include community participation has been litigated on up through the Nicaraguan courts, and is currently before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights maintained by the Organization of American States. The article includes a number of policy recommendations for improving resource
management from a social perspective in tropical forests.


…it must be appreciated that, while the category of ‘indigenous peoples’ may be appealing and important for political and other purposes, as a matter of law many claims by indigenous peoples (or members of such groups) do not depend for their legal validity upon the group being indigenous. Many issues may be addressed under general human-rights law, under prohibitions of discrimination, slavery, genocide, and other abusive practices, under the existing law concerning self-determination or minority rights, or under applicable treaties, without formal regard as a legal matter of whether or not the group is indigenous.

Benedict Kingsbury, “‘Indigenous Peoples’ as an International Legal Concept,” p. 34

The increased profile of claims of indigeneity in Asia challenge many of the established notions of who indigenous peoples have historically been and where they are found, as this ambitious edited volume addresses rather thoroughly. All chapters are written by activists and scholars working in Asia, with the exception of the Chapter 18, written by the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines, I Chiang, Lava Kau. Accordingly many of the chapters contemplate the extension of internationally recognized human rights precepts and advocacy agendas to Asia, often times discussing groups who have yet to self-identify as “indigenous.” This is most notably evident in the chapters on indigenous peoples in China and Russia. Chapters on the indigeneity by Kingsbury, Gray, and Colchester introduce the volume with a broad overview of indigenous peoples in Asia from the perspective of their legal standing, participation in social movements and roles in conservation respectively. Further complicating the concept of indigenousness in Asia is the fact that several states have asserted claims that everyone part of national society is indigenous, and therefore the category does not exist. Such is the case in India, Myanmar (Burma), and Bangladesh, addressed in chapters by Crispin Bates, Willem Van Schendel, and Martin Smith, respectively. This has not stopped states from selectively applying norms and standards that recognize indigenous peoples, as has been the case of India in the controversial Narmada Valley dam project. In other cases, there are groups that have consciously decided not to portray themselves as indigenous in order to avoid being categorized as a minority ethnic groups of a larger state entity in ways that undercut their assertions for independence. This has particularly been the case in Tibet (p. 2 and Chapter 10). Still other groups have only selectively elected to self-identify as indigenous in certain contexts and situations, as the chapter by John Taylor on East Timor suggests. Finally, there are groups like the Ainu in Japan who have only recently regained recognition of their existence, long after having been thought to be extinct. The comprehensiveness of this volume intellectually challenges what it means to be indigenous outside of the particular colonial experience of the Americas, Australia and New Zealand, adapting the term to the divergent contexts of Asia.


Cultural constructions of the environment, whether those of American Indians or of peoples elsewhere in the world, will remain largely inaccessible unless we are prepared to sit down and
listen to our native consultants talk—not only about landscapes, which of course we must do, but about talking about landscapes as well [p. 68].

“Wisdom sits in places. It’s like water that never dries up. You need to drink water to stay alive, don’t you? Well you also need to drink from places. You must remember everything about them. You must learn their names. You must remember what happened at them long ago. You must think about it and keep thinking about it. Then your mind will be smoother and smoother. Then you will see danger before it happens. You will walk a long way and live a long time. You will be wise. People will respect you.”—Dudley Patterson [p. 127].

“Even if we go far away from here to some big city, places around here will keep stalking us. If you live wrong, you will hear the names and see the places in your mind. They will keep stalking you even if you go across oceans. The names of places are good. They make you remember how to live right, so you will want to replace yourself again.”—Nick Thompson [p. 59].

Anthropologist Keith Basso provides one of the more in-depth, complex depictions of the importance of place to an indigenous people. The text weaves together ethnography with linguistic analysis of place names and stories to demonstrate the importance of place to residents of Cibecue, a Western Apache community in eastern Arizona. The result is a strikingly complex of how place is a fundamentally cultural construction, imparting a moral and cultural value on the surrounding environment that bears enormous influence on how peoples’ lives are organized and how knowledge and identity are transmitted and changed without losing sight of the “traditional.” Basso’s work emphasizes the “complex array of symbolic relationships with their physical surroundings and that these relationships, which may have little to do with the business of making a living, play a fundamental role in shaping other forms of social activity” (p. 66), a point missed by many cultural ecology studies that emphasize the material importance of the environment. The environment, in other words, represents more than just the physical organization of resources. Environment is in fact something much broader, termed by Basso a sense of place, in which cultural meanings are infused, with stories told about particular places conveying not only a sense of how resources should be used but also how the dynamics of maintaining a community should be balanced. This expanded sense of the importance of the physical environment emphasizes perspective in determining what constitutes an “environment,” reiterating the point that the very concepts of environment and nature are explicitly cultural. No less important than the physical qualities of a particular place, the relationship of a people to an environment is about more than just surviving. It is about the maintenance of social life, and therefore fundamental to cultural identity.

Throughout his work, Basso places central importance on analyzing how Western Apache talk about their environment, noting the importance of place names in particular in prompting moral lessons conveyed through the stories associated with a particular place. Consequently, discussions about place and landscape allow people to say a great deal about how they perceive themselves, how social interactions are governed, and the importance of the environment. Understanding the importance of Apache conceptions of the landscape is as important for what it says about the culture, as it is important to what, through saying, it instructs people to do. This “sense of place,” as Basso terms it, is at once both personal and collective to the group, and it is through the “communal occasions—when places are sensed together—that native views of the physical world become accessible to outsiders” (p. 109). Finally, this sense of place is neither immobile or specific to a certain time or even language, as Basso describes in his epilogue, depicting how new place names are created to impart
lessons that correspond to changing social conditions which are increasingly influenced by non-Apache values. Nonetheless, the particularities of place are no less important, in spite of changes in the community and ecology. Throughout the text, Basso suggests a number of ways that mapping projects, ethnography, and cultural ecology might be re-thought and employed to communicate the a given peoples’ relationship to their physical place.


ABSTRACT

Recent discussions of resource management suggest that one of the most important factors in sustaining use systems on fragile lands is the strength of local representative institutions: rural resource management and the consolidation of rural civil society must both therefore be central concerns in any viable land use strategy in these areas. Pursuing this relationship between local organizations and resource management, the paper discusses the experiences of several Indian federations in Ecuador that occupy fragile environments under increasing pressure from processes of national and local development. These federations have sought to identify resource management strategies to resist these destabilizing forces and so allow continued Indian occupancy of these lands. These strategies have represented a constant search to protect local land rights, to assert a specifically Indian cultural identity, and to identify an ecologically and economically viable resource management strategy for Indian families. The most successful strategies to date have been those that combine traditional and modern practices in a way that responds to Indians’ increasing consumption requirements and to grassroots management capacities. In doing so they have also helped strengthen the federations themselves. This empirical analysis is related to a discussion of points of contact between the debates on rural democratization and on traditional resource management, and specifically between the geographic traditions of cultural and political ecology, and the literature on agrarian movements. A dialogue between these perspectives could lead to analyses that are at once more reflective of local realities and more able to contribute to the development of viable local resource use strategies.

SUMMARY

This article offers a critical review of the links between resource management strategies and political mobilization amongst indigenous peoples in Ecuador. By comparing cases from the Andes and Amazonia, Bebbington offers an assessment of strategies used by indigenous peoples’ organizations to develop development strategies for their communities integrated with various types of land claims. Implementation of these strategies, as Bebbington argues, is inevitably shaped by tensions and struggles within organizations over access to resources and political representation as well as external changes such as currency devaluations and trade policies. Accordingly, resource management strategies must address a broad variety of internal and external pressures. Management practices may not always involve a direct application of indigenous technologies, but rather embrace a combination of technologies and ideas. Bebbington, et al. suggest that identity may come less from the continua-
tion of “traditional” practices than the forms of life that access to those resources sustains. The politics of sustainability therefore involves more than just assessment of the ecological impacts of production; it also requires an understanding of the economic viability and organizational capacity that of the context in which development alternatives and land rights claims are made. The particular environmental context of each case also is significant in defining what international and national pressures may be brought to bear on a given context. Ultimately, as the article concludes, “inappropriate resource use, environmental fragility and organizational fragility are intricately intertwined.”


“When you look through the corporate eye, our relationship to the land is altered. We draw our identity as a people from our relationship to the land and to the sea and to the resources. This is a spiritual relationship, a sacred relationship. It is in danger because, from a corporate standpoint, if we are to pursue profit and growth, and this is why corporations exist, we would have to assume a position of control over the land and the resources and exploit these resources to achieve economic gain. This is in conflict with our traditional relationship to the land, we were stewards, we were caretakers and where we had respect for the resources that sustained us.”—Mary Miller, Nome [p. 39].

“I don’t know where the name subsistence came from. It’s been Greek to me for a long time. But it is always understood that everybody makes a living off the land if you lived in this Yukon River valley, in this area. And you used as much land as was necessary and you respected the other guy’s trapline … And everybody made a living that way. Fished during the summer, and you’d get your own fish out of it. Sell what you didn’t need. Get wood in the fall. And the cycle kept on with the seasons.”—Max Huhndorf, Galena [p. 52].

This text documents the broad impacts of the Alaska Native Claim Settlement Act passed in 1971 by the U.S. Congress, extinguishing indigenous land titles throughout the state. In turn, ANCSA established a regime of thirteen regional corporations and well over 200 village corporations who assumed ownership of 44 million acres of land in Alaska. In addition to the replacement of indigenous forms of land tenure with a corporate model, Alaska Natives received a lump sum payment of nearly $1 billion. Hailed as the most liberal, progressive settlement of indigenous land claims by its advocates, Berger compiles testimony from sixty native villages that reveal broad, unresolved problems of resource access and land rights. In spite of the purported modernization of land tenure, many indigenous peoples in Alaska continue to rely on subsistence for much of their material and cultural sustenance. Berger, a former Canadian Supreme Court Justice, was appointed to carry out the study by Inuit Circumpolar Conference, an international indigenous peoples’ organization. Extensive quoting of testimony recorded during community hearings eloquently construe the importance of access to resources and land rights in the maintenance of indigenous forms of life.


… some urge the preservation of pure forms of tribal life in forest sanctuaries, where [white
ideas] of “tradition” is the formaldehyde in which to preserve what we [whites] like about them [Indians] [p. x-xi].

“Traditional,” for the purposes of [Native] consideration of the self, signifies the preference for country foods, ability to hunt and prepare meat or hides, capacity for finding one’s way in the bush, and willingness to share what one has. For many it also means knowledge of one or more Indian languages and, in the southern part of the region, considerable skill on horseback [p. 210].

There is a great difference between a poor household that has a reliable and large supply of [game] meat and a household that experiences the remorseless and debilitating effects of urban poverty [p. 212].

In this volume, anthropologist Hugh Brody recounts his experience working with Beaver Indians in northern British Columbia to map their lands. Motivated by proposals to construct a oil pipeline through Beaver lands, Brody provides detailed depictions of how Beaver Indians live in and with lands that as much dominated by extensive northern forests as they are influenced by the expansion of agriculture, oil and gas exploration and logging. Combining analysis of historical trends with his field experiences, Brody presents the conflict of indigenous uses of land and resources with those of white society as a conflict of economies and the perceptions of nature and the environment that accompany it. This contrast is especially revealed in notions of the region as a frontier, that transform the northern forests and muskeg (bogs) from a harsh wasteland into a garden of bountiful natural resources, pushing the “North” ever farther northward through the triumph of economic development and technology (p. 57). In contrast, Beaver Indians have not gone anywhere, instead modifying their subsistence practices, often withdrawing further into the bush. Yet the prospect of the construction of a pipeline and conversion of northern forests into wildernesses of importance to non-Indian sports hunters and recreationalists increasingly precludes the option of withdrawing. Instead, Brody argues for a number of ways of making Beaver Indian relationships to the land and resources visible to non-Indian society. Mapping is one such tool that he and his Beaver Indian colleagues advocate. Recognition of subsistence as an economy is another route, which Brody develops in Chapter 12, addressing the difficulties of understanding subsistence in terms of its cash value, while reinforcing the importance of subsistence as an important use of resources obfuscated by notions of empty land and free resources on the northern frontier. Brody advocates this position as a possible formulation that might render Indian land use visible as a practice and an issue to be addressed in development of the region.

Interspersing his analytical chapters are descriptions of the actual work of mapping Beaver Indian land use. The descriptions of moose and beaver hunting, running traplines, trips to the predominantly white town of Fort St. John and its bars, and of a local hearing on the impacts of pipeline construction on Beaver land use all vibrantly inform Brody’s account. Each of these odd numbered chapters illustrate the way in which resources and land are directly important to the lives of Beaver Indians and the maintenance of their community. Collectively, they demonstrate how Indian land use constitutes a “planner’s nightmare” as it is inherently flexible over time, though nonetheless specific to a particular place. This flexibility is precisely what has historically allowed Beaver Indian land use to coexist and overlap with logging, oil and gas exploration and agriculture, never disappearing as paradigms of development suggest. This resilience has its limits though, as Brody points out, and the challenge now is finding ways of making Indian use of resources and
relationship to the environment visible to facilitate their recognition and respect without sacrificing the flexibility necessary for Beaver Indian culture to maintain itself.


Cultural Knowledge leads to different land management practices that increase biological diversity—protection of sacred forests, building and maintaining hedgerows, planting a diversity of crops and varieties and protecting plants in the forest. [p. 2-3]

In this edited volume, Brush and Stabinsky compile articles describing the real and potential role of indigenous peoples in the conservation of biological diversity. From a wide variety of perspectives, the articles all address the growing trend to argue for conservation in terms of its economic value. All of the articles generally support the idea of *in situ* conservation of biological diversity, stressing the importance of maintaining biological diversity in its natural and cultural context. In this context, valuing indigenous knowledge for its potential economic and aesthetic contributions to conservation is stressed. Intellectual property rights act here as the predominant way of projecting property rights and thereby ascribing value to knowledge, with ambiguous results for indigenous communities. In the introductory chapter, Brush argues for a recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge as being “culture-specific” as opposed to the “de-cultured” character of formal (scientific) knowledge (p. 4), without losing sight of the importance of this knowledge to a “common heritage held in trust for the public good” (p. 3). Intellectual property rights, Brush concludes, attempt to transform this knowledge into part of profit-making approach to conservation that has only recently considered the need for sharing the financial benefits. Part I compiles six articles on the prospect of equitably sharing the benefits of profits generated from indigenous knowledge. Thomas Greaves addresses the limitations of intellectual property rights in according benefits to knowledge that is collectively held, proposing an alternative framework. Michael Dove argues that benefits are only rarely likely to reach indigenous peoples themselves and where they do, they may introduce economic inequalities that undercut the community’s capacity for conservation. In turn, Dove argues that economic rights will need to be linked to the changing political rights of indigenous peoples. Charles Zerner offers an insightful critique of the concept of biodiversity, exploring its assumptions about nature and indigenous peoples. Stephen Gudeman argues that benefit sharing needs to recognize that wealth in indigenous communities is not limited to material goods and that benefits should be tailored accordingly. Stefano Varese takes a pro-sovereignty approach to indigenous knowledge, stressing the rights of indigenous peoples to collectively control and manage their resources and knowledge. Finally, Stephen Brush builds on the notion that benefits and rights alike must recognize the role of the community, and not the individual, in maintaining such information.

Part II addresses a number of cases and strategies employed for community-based conservation in a market-based context. Stephen King et al. describe Shaman Pharmaceutical’s program of community-based research and benefits sharing. Gary Nabhan, et al., details the efforts of Native Seeds/SEARCH, a non-profit organization that promotes conservation of agricultural varieties and emphasizes their importance to public health and the maintenance of traditional diets. Paul Richards presents a case from West Africa demonstrating the role of small-scale farmers in conserving important varieties of rice, while Berard and Marchenay detail the commercialization of heirloom varieties.
of food crops like tomatoes as a conservation strategy in Western societies. Lastly, Brian Meilleur presents a case from Hawaii where native crops have been successfully marketed.

Part III concludes the volume with a summary of policy options and alternatives for *in situ* conservation. Mays, et al., describe the US National Cancer Institute’s policy for conducting research and sharing benefits with indigenous peoples. Grifo and Downes present guidelines drafted for ethnobotanical research in the Philippines, while Patel argues that all technological resources should be transferred from individual control to the public good.


Internationalization can be seen as both a context for and a strategy of Indian rights campaigns [p. 23].

Indians and their advocates accuse conservationist environmentalists of valuing trees more than they value people, with conservationist environmental groups see their mandate as the protection of all forms of human intervention and destruction. Strict environmentalists seek to *avoid* development of endangered areas, while Indians want to *manage* development for community welfare and resource sustainability [p. 229].

Brysk traces the contours of the broad international networks that work in “solidarity with” indigenous peoples. She demonstrates many of the pitfalls and strengths such relationships pose to everyone from the community to the international level. For Brysk, multi-level organization has become a standard feature of indigenous rights movements in Latin America, though its results have been uneven but not unpatterned. Environmental organizations have played a key role in boosting the capacity of indigenous rights organizations and helping them gain broader access to international audiences. In turn environmental organizations, like many other international organizations, have come to depend on indigenous peoples for the authenticity they lend to environmental campaigns. On the same note, environmentalists have also been targeted in a number of indigenous rights campaigns where they have threatened to weaken indigenous control over and access to resources in protected areas. These relationships have wield considerable political weight, as Brysk points out, often establishing patterns of relationships that bypass local non-indigenous environmental organizations as well as unevenly engaging particular indigenous movements. Her review of the different responses that international environmental groups (pp. 229-237) have towards indigenous peoples is particularly insightful, categorizing these attitudes as “*indigenist environmentalists*” who partner with indigenous peoples in advantageous, though often paternalistic ways characteristic of indigenist approaches to solidarity. These groups deriving a good deal of their organizational legitimacy from their alliances with indigenous peoples though they do not necessarily represent indigenous organizations. A second group is the “*conditional indigenists*” who do not necessarily support indigenous rights, instead maintaining a commitment to environmental conservation. Their alliances with indigenous peoples are developed on a case by case basis. The third group is the “*conservationist groups*” who have a much more tenuous relationship to indigenous peoples, more often clashing with indigenous peoples demands than allying themselves in solidarity with indigenous claims. Brysk recommends efforts to buffer globalization, in part through the development of niche markets that produce goods for export and consumption within the community, a strategy fundamental to many
sustainable development projects. She also advocates for greater recognition of indigenous peoples’ participation in state and international institutions.


Compiling the proceedings of a conference held in 1995, this volume presents commentary from a number of scholars, activists and representatives of indigenous peoples groups. Taking a rights-based approach to the subject, the authors synthesize indigenous peoples’ critical engagement of international environmental agendas, localized conservation programs, intellectual property rights, and the concept of “self-development” that draws on indigenous peoples’ knowledge and values of the environments they live in to the articulation of development alternatives. Consistent with the pan-indigenous activism of many of the contributors, the book covers a wide geographic variety of examples stitched together by the common thread of indigenous peoples’ human rights to control access to resources within the ancestral territories.


It is probably in respect to land that indigenous peoples are most clearly distinguishable from non-indigenous societies. The struggle of indigenous peoples in the last decade or two has thus centered on land. Land contains their history and sense of identity, and it ensures their economic viability as an independent people [p. 14].

Though the case studies in this volume are now somewhat outdated, the introductory chapter sets forth a number of criteria for identifying indigenous peoples that has been widely used. Focusing on the “frontier” regions of the world, Burger describes the ways in which the mythical notion of frontiers as wild and unpopulated is employed currently by states in marshalling moral arguments for the colonization, displacement and exploitation of indigenous peoples’ homelands. While acknowledging that the term indigenous peoples is “unsatisfactory” and that any definition will likely be unsatisfactory to some. “Nevertheless,” as Burger begins his review of alternatives, “alternatives to the term indigenous peoples have proven even less acceptable” (p. 6). The ensuing passage on the limitations of many regional terms—Indian, tribe, Aboriginal, national minorities, autochthonous peoples and Fourth World—is particularly concise and useful. Burger formulates a set of six criterion for identification, stating that indigenous peoples (p. 9):  

1) are the descendents of the original inhabitants of a territory which has been overcome by conquest;  

2) are nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples, such as shifting cultivators, herders, and hunters and gathers, and practice a labour-intensive form of agriculture which produces little surplus and has low energy needs;
3) do not have centralized political institutions and organize at the level of the community and make decisions on a consensus basis;

4) have all the characteristics of a national minority: they share a common language, religion, culture, and other identifying characteristics and a relationship to a particular territory, but are subjugated by a dominant culture and society;

5) have a different world-view consisting of a custodial and non-materialist attitude to the land and natural resources, and want to pursue a separate development to that proffered by the dominant society;

6) consist of individuals who subjectively consider themselves to be indigenous and are accepted by the group as such.

His criteria are not meant to be strictly adhered to, but rather used as indicators of any given group’s status. In concluding his introduction, Burger prioritizes indigenous peoples’ relationship to the land as perhaps the one common factor that binds indigenous peoples together and “makes their problems a world issue.”

Subsequent chapters present one of the more comprehensive analyses of indigenous peoples worldwide. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 review the socio-economic status of indigenous peoples as a legacy of colonialism, describing indigenous peoples’ movements as responses to any number of current issues whose roots are to be found in the very make-up of states and markets. Chapters 6 through 11 review indigenous peoples by region, and the remaining three chapters discuss the capacity and necessity of addressing indigenous peoples’ status as an international concern. There are many excellent maps throughout the book.


No other ethnic group’s political status has such considerable claims to self-determination and sovereignty; yet, ironically, the reservation peoples remain among the poorest and most powerless of the ethnic elements in the United States. [p. 1]

The sole purpose of these [reservation] treaties, according to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles E. Mix, was to extinguish Indian title to large tracts of land “which were needed for the extension of our settlements, and to provide homes for the Indians in other and more suitable locations, where they could be controlled and domesticated.” [p. 111-112]

The role of the United States in pressing for the development of capitalistic, entrepreneurial tribal governments cannot be ignored. Not only have the economic goals and interests of the dominant society overridden those of the tribes, but social and psychological propaganda have been used against Indian peoples when tribal interests have not been subordinated to national interests. [p. 216]

Castile and Bee’s edited collection theorizes the long-standing relationship between Native Americans and the US federal government as reflected through the lens of that peculiar institution,
the Indian reservation. Written by anthropologists, historians, and other scholars of Indian policy, self-determination and Native American studies, this volume presents an historical analysis of why the reservation system came into existence in the form that it did and why it still persists.

The authors explore how the concept of “the reservation” has had different meanings for the different parties involved; Indians, other local inhabitants, the federal and state governments each have different and often conflicting objectives and interests in reservations. In part I, Miller and Hoxie give an historical account of the initial policy leading to establishment of reservations: the need for “containment,” or to gain military control of displaced Native Americans. Reservations were also seen as tools for assimilation, “temporary instruments to instill conformity to Anglo ways rather than permanent homelands,” (p. 3). Some tribes accepted reservations as a form of protection for themselves, while many others resisted the institution, hoping to remain in their traditional homelands. In spite of all this, today’s reservations have come to serve as a stronghold of Indian nationalism and the base of their struggle for self-determination, although federal policy has given little beyond lip-service to assure the actual functioning of Indian self-determination.

In Part II, Knack, Porter and Moore consider the experience of “nonrecognized” or “landless” tribes—those without reservations. All too often, recognition of being “Indian” is bound up in the idea that Indians live on specially demarcated “Indian land,” or reservations. This fallacious way of thinking is as present within the federal government and public officials as it is in the minds of the general public. The authors in Part II explore the historic and contemporary struggles of those tribes without reservations over title to land and federal recognition of their ancestral treaty rights.

In Part III, Castile and Bee examine federal policy toward Indians from the 1930s up through recent years, providing an analysis of both the legal and political relationships of the US government and its indigenous citizens. Part IV addresses Indian rights to natural resources, including discussions of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and Indian water rights.


This map graphically depicts the coterminous relationship between indigenous peoples and forested areas in Central America, demonstrating that most indigenous peoples in the region live in areas of ecological significance to conservationists. Though issues such as what criteria are used to map the “natural environment” are not addressed, the map does portray roughly the location of areas occupied by indigenous peoples in the region. A number of inset maps depict the history of deforestation and environmental change since pre-Hispanic times, conveying a general sense of how indigenous use of resources has been altered by deforestation. Data for the map draws on work done by anthropologists and geographers in the region, in addition to government sources.

Yet, unless [Awa] participation and their rights to their own lands are ensured, even a reserve established in their name may endanger their existence [p. 71].

**ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the participation of indigenous organizations in the interplay of government and other decision-making institutions in planning a Colombian-Ecuadorian Biosphere Reserve, in which an Awa ethnic reserve is a central component. The paper contrasts two stages in project development: first, the early demarcation and institutionalization of an Awa ethnic and forest reserve in Ecuador, and second, the later formalization of bi-national participation in a meeting of government officials and Indian representatives of both Ecuador and Colombia. Although the national Ecuadorian Indian organization and the Awa maintained a high level of participation in the early phases of planning the reserve, these same organizations and their Colombian counterparts refused full participation in the governing apparatus of the bi-national meeting.

**SUMMARY**

This case study of the Awa Biosphere on the border between Colombia and Ecuador highlights the importance of recognizing indigenous land rights as a part of conservation strategies. In this case, Awa Indians participated in the initial planning and design of the reserve as a part of the UNESCO “Man and the Biosphere” network of protected areas. Throughout the negotiations, the Awa backed by the national indigenous organizations of Ecuador and Colombia, CONAIE and ONIC respectively, refused invitations to participate as members of government delegations, maintaining that their interests could not be represented adequately by states. This tension increased substantially when demarcation of an Awa zone within the reserve initiated, recognizing limited Awa occupancy rights while affirming Ecuadorian title to the land. At this point, the Awa withdrew from the planning process, stating that they could not compromise their demand that the land be titled to the Awa themselves. As designed by state delegations, the reserve limited Awa use and access to resources by establishing a number of use zones that restricted historic Awa relationships to the area. As Chernela puts it, only if “sustainable development is accompanied by “sustainable control” of their own resources” (p.70) would the Awa agree to the establishment of the reserve.


“We in the Upper Mazaruni solely live by way of fishing and hunting. We have experienced that there is no longer fishes in any great amount as before, as a result of miners destroying the river banks and creeks on which we tremendously depend and live on. We set fish traps to catch fish but in vain… There is a serious water pollution existing in the Upper Mazaruni. The
miners top-side destroy the rivers, causing the residents to suffer. The water we use for domestic purposes is no good right now.” —A member of the Akawaio community of Jawalla [p. 72]

“With respect… to the newly formed National Amerindian Council… I would like to know where these people originated from and what tribe? Were they appointed or elected and by whom? I would also like to know the names of all the different villages that were consulted before this committee was formed?… We feel that it is high time that our intelligence is respected and this should have been done by the process of consultation with Amerindian communities and their respective representative organizations. We do not want a clique of self-appointed and politically affiliated or appointed people to continue making recommendations and proposals to Government and donor agencies using Amerindian identities.” —Amerindian from the North West [p. 153]

This short text is the fourth in a series of reports by the author on the political ecology of tropical forest exploitation. It outlines the historical context in which the continued marginalization of the Amerindian population has taken place, as well as contextualizes the environmental destruction that continues to result from large-scale mining and commercial logging practices. In contrast to most books on tropical forest degradation, in this work Colchester explicitly attempts to represent what is occurring in contemporary Guyana from the point of view of Amerindian communities residing there.

Amerindians constitute the majority of the population living in the formerly remote interior of Guyana, a region which has become increasingly important to state and foreign investors for its reserves of timber and subsurface mineral resources. Under Guyanese law, although Amerindians are understood to be the owners of the forest lands they occupy, all subsurface resources are considered to be the property of the state. The government is not legally required to consult Amerindian groups about the establishment of mining projects to take place on their lands. Colchester argues that development strategies that were implemented after independence—structural adjustment programs, increased exports of natural resources, state encouragement of foreign investment in extractive industries—have had devastating social and environmental impacts on Amerindian peoples in the interior. The book also examines Amerindian political mobilization in response to these issues, including their use of indigenous rights discourse to discuss the terms of their land claims as well as their ambiguous relationships with environmental NGOs and foreign aid agencies.


Identification with native cultures can be a political statement: it encapsulates a critique of Western cultural dominance and colonial regimes and locates those who identify with the native in an oppositional position, morally distanced from their own societies’ racism or colonial histories. [p. 702]

Support for indigenous causes, however, needs to be founded on realistic understandings of Indians that will outlast the ebb and flow of popular enthusiasms and media fads. [p. 697]

Conklin and Graham discuss the “internationalization” of local, indigenous struggles occurring as a result of the “eco-political” alliance forged between environmentalists and indigenous groups.
While the authors focus on the experience of Indians in the Brazilian Amazon, there are many indigenous groups who have formed similar partnerships with environmental groups in a strategic move to gain support and greater international visibility. Conklin and Graham describe the politics of the Indian/ environmentalist “middle ground” as being primarily symbolic—manifesting in ideas and images. Indigenous people figure as “key symbols, as well as key participants, in the development of an ideology and organizational networks that link Amazonian conflicts to international issues,” (p. 696). The notion of the “ecologically noble savage” has become “a potent symbolic resource in transnational politics”, featuring strongly in environmentalist campaigns that essentialize the struggle to save the environment as a battle between “innocent, uncorrupted primitives” and the “materialistic West.” (p. 696) The authors discuss how, for environmentalists, this eco-political collaboration with indigenous peoples is based on a presumption that indigenous views of nature, use and management of resources are comparable to principles of Western conservation. Conklin and Graham dispute this assumption, arguing that the touting of Indians as conservationists “misrepresents the nature of Amazonian communities and their priorities,” (p. 697). The discrepancy between the reality of Amazonian Indian societies and Western environmentalists’ ideas about Indians constitutes a structural weakness in the two groups’ alliance and leads the authors to question whether eco-politics can be a truly effective vehicle for pursuing indigenous goals of self-determination.


Sea territories are not just bounded sea space but areas named, known, used, claimed and sometimes defended. … Places used are places named. People conceptually produce the environment they use, delimit and defend.

Bernard Nietschmann in “Traditional Sea Territories, Resources and Rights in Torres Strait,” p. 60

Though marine resources are predominantly thought of as being held in common by all people, this edited volume describes a number of ways in which fishing cultures maintain marine tenure systems. Through the presentation of case studies from around the world, contributors to the book make the case for the ecological and cultural significance of recognizing sea tenure. The introduction by the editor offers an overview of the theoretical, legal, political, and ecological issues at stake, challenging notions of the sea as common property subject to state responses to “tragedies” in the resource, exemplified by the Law of the Sea. Cordell also explores the variety of social and ecological factors to which sea tenure systems were established to address and that frame their existence. The ensuing case studies demonstrate the broad variety of forms that sea tenure takes, frequently choosing cases that involve resource conflicts. Part One, “Customary Sea Territories in Western Oceania” demonstrates a number of indigenous sea tenure systems developed by Yolungu on the northern coast of Australia, Torres Strait Islanders, and Ponam people in Papua New Guinea. Each of these cases illustrates how indigenous territories are created and maintained through sea tenure systems that govern indigenous participation in subsistence and market economies. Indigenous peoples’ issues are also addressed in Part Four, “Managing Pacific Salmon” in two articles, one on the impact of the Boldt Decision on salmon management in the Northwestern United States and a second on the problems of allocating catches between indigenous and non-indigenous fishermen in Alaska. The Boldt decision recognized Indian treaty rights to fifty per cent of the salmon runs in Washington
state, upending state regulation of the fishery that prioritized commercial fishing access in recognition of the immense significance of salmon to indigenous peoples in the region. In the article on Alaska, institution of catch allotments instituted recognized the value of salmon in market terms in such a way that Tlingit and Haida forms of sea tenure were displaced, in spite of the regulation’s accordance of commercial and native fishing rights. As a result, Tlingit and Haida communities now have a more difficult time of accessing the places and the fish they need to sustain their communities, in spite of the new “limited-entry” regulations intended to protect the resource and balance commercial catch with subsistence needs.


“Is it not,” Thoreau asked, “a maimed and imperfect nature that I am conversant with?” [p. 4].

Environment may initially shape the range of choices available to a people at a given moment, but then culture reshapes environment in responding to those choices. The reshaped environment presents a new set of possibilities for cultural reproduction, thus setting up a new cycle of mutual determination. Changes in the way people create and re-create their livelihood must be analyzed in terms of changes not only in their social relations but in their ecological ones as well [p. 13].

This classic work of environmental history describes European perspectives of eastern North America in the 1600s as an earthly paradise of resources that were in short supply in many of the regions in Europe from which the colonists came. Their organization of those resources into European institutions of private property and market economies dramatically altered the ecology of the region, contributing to the military success of their subjugation of many eastern Indian tribes by 1800. This book is particularly useful for its insight into the relationship between colonial perspectives of resources, their use of those resources and their interaction with indigenous peoples in radically re-structuring the landscape of what would become the United States. Cronon offers little insight into the ways that different Indian groups used resources and the particularities of their relationships to colonists beyond his general descriptions of how one culture’s wilderness was another group of cultures’ home, suggesting the broad impact that indigenous forms of land use played in affecting the distributions of resources coveted by the colonists. His account of European visions of nature is highly informative in understanding how those interpretations of nature have disastrous impacts on indigenous societies without necessarily predating their extinction.


Special Rapporteur Erica Irene Daes prepared this working paper as part of her tenure as
chairperson of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The study gives a broad overview of indigenous peoples’ land rights world wide, providing analytical categories for assessing the nature of resource conflicts. In four main sections, the paper sets forth the general importance of land in indigenous cultures, the history of colonial and state dispossession of those lands, a framework for understanding contemporary problems, and an overview of dispute resolution procedures used by states and indigenous peoples. Finally the paper concludes with a set of general conclusions and policy recommendations for the United Nations and member states. The included annex compiles relevant sections of international law, both binding and non-binding, which address the land rights of indigenous peoples.

The working paper emphasizes the need for taking a rights-based approach to understanding and addressing indigenous peoples relationship to the environment. Accordingly, it provides a useful survey of the various ways in which states have legally justified their expropriation of indigenous lands and how indigenous peoples have steadily set about legally challenging such actions. The description of how states classify indigenous lands provides a useful analytical framework for understanding the legal context for conflicts, while the summary of major domestic and international rulings on the status of indigenous land rights provides ideas about how conflicts might be resolved.


… land is a substance endowed with sacred meanings, embedded in social relations and fundamental to the definition of a people’s existence and identity [p. x].

World Bank sociologist Shelton Davis addresses three main questions concerning indigenous peoples and their relationship to land in this discussion paper aimed at informing bilateral and multilateral lending policy. Specifically, the articles compiled in the document address indigenous peoples views on land and environment, how national laws and government policies have corresponded or conflicted with those views, and what changes in policy, programs and projects might be made to better take indigenous peoples views into account. Anthropologists contribute four cases studies that examine these questions, each of which “emphasize the well-documented fact that indigenous peoples throughout the world face serious problems in gaining official recognition of their customary land and territorial rights” (p. x). In their contribution, Ted Macdonald, Dominique Irvine and Esther Aranda document Quichua responses to development in Ecuador, stressing the importance of including indigenous participation in development planning. Kenny Matampash and Gabriel Lochgan, respectively, describe the cases of the Maasai and the closely related Samburu in Kenya. Lochgan’s article is particularly useful, including lengthy quotes from Samburu people describing their perception of environmental problems such as overgrazing and “poaching.” The article offers an excellent counter to the familiar “tragedy of the commons” metaphor used to explain the relationship between population and resources, describing Samburu assessment and management of resource impacts in the context of shrinking access to land and greater participation in market economies. Bennagen’s article on indigenous views of land and property in upland regions of the Philippines concludes the paper. A statement of guidelines for bilateral and multilateral funding in the Amazon drafted by the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin
(COICA) is attached as an annex. The study makes five conclusions: 1) land is fundamental to indigenous identity; 2) indigenous perspectives on land have the practical implication of allowing them to live in many environments considered fragile or harsh by Western societies; 3) indigenous peoples face an array of problems that impede recognition of their land rights; 4) there are a variety of demographic and socio-cultural factors, both internal and external to indigenous communities, that place “severe stress” on indigenous peoples’ maintenance of their territories and resources, and; 5) indigenous peoples want to participate in development and environmental planning on their lands.


The electric sector with its “environmental measures” sidesteps one of the most important questions posed by the environmentalist movement (together with other popular movements): the need to change the present structure of domination of Brazilian society and to rethink the country’s development model…What we have seen instead is that the proposals for initiating “debates with representative organizations” and for promoting “broad access to information” have remained on the level of vague discourse, while, in practice, the sector invests massive amounts in materials of dubious quality that seek to sell a ‘concerned image on social and environmental questions. [preface]

What we see, then, is the complete perversion of a legitimate and politically fundamental discourse—the struggle for respect for the environment—through its incorporation into the ideological arsenal of the authoritarian State. The notion of “environmental impact” thus easily lends itself to the masking of political domination. [p. 4]

This collection of essays presents a rather diverse discussion of the environmental, social, political and economic impacts of hydroelectric projects on indigenous peoples in the Brazilian Amazon, specifically with regards their effects on seven indigenous groups who reside in the Xingu River Basin. The book was put forth as part of a campaign by the Pro-Indian Commission of Sao Paulo to reevaluate the hydroelectrics sector of Brazil’s energy program and to search for alternatives. Essays include discussions of the extent of the proposed “Altamira Hydroelectric Complex,” its financial, social and ecological repercussions, an evaluation of the Brazilian energy policy, environmental impacts of the Xingu dams, and case-by-case studies of the situations facing individual indigenous groups residing in the area.

One major contribution of the volume is its critical examination of the ways “environmentalist discourse” has been incorporated into representations of the dam project in the media and by the State, both of whom give superficial attention to “ecological” questions but do little to actually address the social and environmental destruction that results from large-scale development projects. Included are several examples of advertisements put forth by the Ministry of Energy and state subsidiaries that serve to illustrate how projects are given an “environmentally-friendly” spin.

**ABSTRACT**

The myth persists that in 1492 the American were a sparsely populated wilderness, “a world of barely perceptible human disturbance.” There is substantial evidence, however, that the Native American landscape of the early sixteenth century was a humanized landscape almost everywhere. Populations were large. Forest composition had been modified, grasslands had been created, wildlife disrupted, and erosion was severe in places. Earthworks, roads, fields, and settlements were ubiquitous. With Indian depopulation in the wake of Old World disease, the environment recovered in many areas. A good argument can be made that the human presence was less visible in 1750 that it was in 1492.

**SUMMARY**

Denevan's article describes the extensive impact that indigenous peoples had on the environment throughout the Americas, dispelling historic and present notions of pristine areas in the Americas. Denevan methodically reviews the major bioregions of the Americas, referring to numerous studies that support his assertion that the 43-65 million indigenous peoples living in the Americas in 1492 had a tremendous, though geographically uneven, impact on the environment. Much of what is considered pristine, he argues, may have had more to do with the crash in Indian populations that occurred after 1492, depopulating vast areas well before Europeans visited them. The depopulated landscape that Europeans encountered is a key origin, claims Denevan, of perceptions of pristine nature wrongly assumed in many contemporary debates. The invention of a pre-contact wilderness is understandable, concludes Denevan, useful to though not entirely created for the ennobling colonization.


Much maligned as a cause of deforestation, Denevan and Padoch compile a number of articles in this volume on what is frequently referred to as “slash-and-burn” agriculture. The volume demonstrates how swidden-fallow agriculture is a long-used strategy developed by indigenous agriculturalists living in humid tropical forests. Under this strategy, forest is cleared to create “swiddens,” frequently employing fire to generate ash for fertilizer. The swiddens are then farmed for a number of years before being left fallow, allowing the forest to regenerate, thereby replenishing nutrients used by agriculture. The accounts in this volume suggest that even forest regeneration is shaped by human intervention, with people transplanting medicinal and fruit tree varieties into areas before they are left fallow. The system has been widely used in the area focused on in this book, the Peruvian Amazon, and has decidedly played an important role in shaping the forest, even in areas deemed pristine by Western observers. Articles in the volume present and analyze ecological data in support of the arguments presented.

Robert Dentan’s analysis of the political construction of Orang Asli in Malaysia describes indigeneity as a concept that “forms whenever a relatively powerful and predatory people comes into contact with a relatively powerless one” (p. 127). Such a designation builds on stereotypes further confounded by Orang Asli reluctance to protest their displacement and the destruction of their resources. Furthermore, many Orang Asli support state development initiatives, leading at least one source cited by Dentan to conclude that Orang Asli are already culturally extinct due to their abandonment of the forms of dress and environmental ethics central to Western perceptions of the “authenticity” of Orang Asli as indigenous peoples. In the meantime, the Malaysian government continues to forcibly assimilate the Orang Asli into Islamic state society in ways consonant with assimilation policies directed towards indigenous peoples in many other states.


To say that the Indians are “close to nature” is a kind of nonsense for, since they confer upon the beings that people it a dignity equal to their own, their behaviour towards them is not significantly different from their behaviour towards one another [p. 405].

This lengthy anthropological account of the Achuar, an indigenous people living in the Amazon Basin of southeastern Ecuador, presents, among other things, a detailed account of their perspective on nature. The text is very detailed, leaving much of the analysis for the conclusion. The passage on pages 405-406 regarding the Achuar sense of nature is of particular interest. For the Achuar, Descola argues, nature does not exist in the Western sense of being something separate from human beings. Instead, the Achuar confer many of the characteristics attributed to humans to plants and animals as well, “regarding these as subjects rather than objects, and who could therefore not possibly [be expelled] into an autonomous sphere upon which science and technology gradually come to impose their mathematical laws and control.” Descola directs his critique towards the Western stereotype that “Indians are close to nature,” arguing that for such a statement to be true, nature must first exist as a valid cultural concept—something that Descola concludes as absent from Achuar culture. “In order for anyone to be close to nature, nature must first exist; and it is only the moderns who have proved capable of conceiving its existence, a fact that probably renders our cosmology more enigmatic and less sympathetic than the cosmologies of all cultures that have preceded us” (p. 406).


Alan Thien Durning provides one of the more comprehensive and concise overviews on the relationships that exist between indigenous peoples and the environment in this Worldwatch Insti-
tute briefing paper. Drawing on primary and secondary sources that include a variety of academic case studies and policy statements, Durning argues that recognition of indigenous peoples’ knowledge of their ancestral lands and uses of resources should figure prominently in the future of environmental debates. Durning bases his argument on the basis that indigenous peoples inhabit most all of the areas identified by environmentalists as significant to global conservation agendas, including many “hotspots” of biological diversity. Secondly, given their relationship to these environments, indigenous peoples harbor extensive knowledge of these environments as important as modern science to understanding their ecology. Durning compiles a great deal of demographic information on indigenous peoples, using it to describe their current relationship to state governments in light of the overlapping histories of colonialism, the spread of capitalist markets, and environmental degradation. In doing so, he demonstrates how areas of tremendous biological diversity are also areas of high cultural diversity, further stating that indigenous resource management practices often increase the biological diversity of a given area (p. 17). Indigenous peoples’ dependence on the environment correlates to their disproportionate suffering from deteriorating environmental conditions that affect all people. To support this statement, Durning summarizes the harmful impacts of oil, logging, mining, and conservation strategies on indigenous peoples, all predicated on the notion of state sovereignty over natural resources. Demarcation of indigenous lands and recognition of their role in stewardship of resources are two key ways that these inequalities can be remedied, as demonstrated by their common importance to indigenous peoples’ political mobilizations around the world. Durning concludes with a list of “priority actions” that emphasize a rights-based approach to supporting indigenous peoples and advancing conservation agendas.


Development for some has been built upon the impoverishment of others. [p. 30]

The articles in this issue illustrate the far-reaching social and ecological consequences of large dam projects. In particular, the authors highlight many of the problems with past large-scale hydroelectric development schemes and discuss what alternative possibilities exist for the future. The controversy over dam construction is understood as striking at the heart of the debate about contemporary development. In general, state and corporate interests are valued above those of indigenous and other marginal communities, such that the costs of providing power and water for primarily urban residents fall on the rural poor. The forced relocation associated with the building of dams and the filling of reservoirs displaces and destabilizes communities—devastating them economically, culturally and emotionally. Communities are torn apart, reciprocal help networks are destabilized, and social ties dismantled by this forced dislocation and resettlement. (p. 31) However, as many of the articles discuss, resistance to large dams within indigenous and other minority communities has become better organized and increasingly effective; in many cases they have become integrated with international networks of dam opponents.

(Local people do not always support conservation efforts. Project personnel assume that conservation is in the best interests of the local people, yet the short-term interests of the people often seem to be at odds with project goals.

This article presents an analysis of overlapping and conflicting land claims of various socio-political actors with respect to a “protected area” of forest in northern Madagascar. Using political ecology as a theoretical framework, the author seeks to highlight the contextual nature of power and control of forest resources, and how such power relations are constantly in flux. The case examined in this study involves the intersection of three groups of actors vying for control of forest resources: a group of collaborating NGOs (the state-empowered managers of the area), the local indigenous royal leader (the Ampanjaka), and the local residents—the Antankarana people. Shifting alliances between NGO leaders and the Ampanjaka, the Ampanjaka and his people, and the local people and the NGO make for a complex network of political negotiations over rights to access the forest. In many circumstances, a lack of clarity as to the exact boundaries of the protected area, as well as about who has the authority to dictate what resources may be used has resulted in the cutting of trees for use as construction wood (seen by environmentalists as a threat to the integrity of the forest). This and other uses of the forest by the local people and their Ampanjaka have revealed the ambiguity of land rights, particularly since each group derives its authority to access the land from different sources. These conflicts illustrate the kinds of difficulties integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs) frequently face, challenges which the author suggests could be alleviated if conservation projects were “set up to recognize and address the complexity of local political relations and the socioeconomic diversity of a given region…genuinely including (the various local constituencies) in decision-making processes.”


Denying use of resources to local people severely reduces their incentive to conserve these resources. Moreover, the current style of protected area management usually results in high management costs for governments in the South, with the majority of benefits accruing to national and international external interests. [p. 13]

A more positive attitude in establishing and managing protected areas would open doors for many socially desirable opportunities and actions. For example, preoccupation would change from “how can people be removed from the parks and reserves in order to end encroachment and poaching?” to “how can people achieve improved levels of living so that their reliance on the park resources is reduced and they have a real interest in protecting them?… (W)hat are the resources that might be used by local communities for their subsistence and for generating income without seriously degrading the local ecosystem? How can the park administration together with other state institutions mobilize local and external resources and services in support of local efforts to increase food production and income generation?” [pp. 20-21]
The essays in this volume critically examine the implementation of “protected area” conservation programs within the context of ongoing rural social change. The authors collectively see protected area management as a decidedly political endeavor, one in which the costs and benefits are unequally distributed among very different sectors of society. The needs of resident people in protected areas are generally disregarded or neglected, even though many of these areas are highly populated. Communities are disrupted and often dislocated by imposed models of “conservation” and “development” that pay no heed to issues of rural social security and sustainable livelihoods. As part of their analyses, the authors subject the concept of conservation to close scrutiny, examining the underlying (Western) ideologies and assumptions and their applicability to the developing world. In short, the book “argues for a total overhaul in the current course of conservation thinking and practice,” (p. 3).

Ghimire, Pimbert, et al, find the “protected area” paradigm problematic because when it does not cause the forced relocation of local populations, it nearly always results in severe restrictions on their use of traditional resources. Rarely are alternative means of meeting subsistence needs effectively provided for. Ghimire, Pimbert, et al argue that local social development, access to resources and economic security of park residents must become strategic goals in protected area management on a par with wildlife preservation and conservation of biological diversity. “Conservation programs are only valid and sustainable when they have the dual objective of protecting and improving local livelihoods and ecological conditions,” (p. 3, emphasis added). In certain cases, the exclusion of indigenous peoples and peasants can lead to an actual decline in biodiversity; the anthropogenic disturbance of certain ecosystems has been found to be an essential component in the generation and preservation of their biological diversity (p. 14).

Ghimire and Pimbert’s introductory chapter presents an overview of issues and concepts fundamental to understanding social change and conservation. In this article, the authors debunk the myth of “pristine” wilderness so popular with Western conservationists. They discuss how virtually all environments have been modified by humans: most stands of “mature” tropical forest [and] “untouched” wilderness are, in fact, mostly human cultural artifacts,” (p. 6). Nevertheless, these perceived “wild” landscapes are now seen as requiring protection from surrounding society and are voided of their human inhabitants. The unquestioned transfer of Western conservation approaches to developing countries can have many serious repercussions for local indigenous groups and peasant populations: adverse effects on food security and traditional livelihoods, expulsion from settlements without provision for alternative means of work and income, restrictions placed on resource use, and the further erosion of traditional, land-based knowledge (p. 13).

Blaikie and Jeanrenaud examine the differing perceptions and valuations of “biodiversity” among diverse social actors with competing interests. They highlight the inherently political nature of discussing biological diversity. The analytical framework they provide is useful for considering the different discourses involved in the project of conservation, as well as for understanding the various sets power relations that determine whose interests parks and reserves will serve.

Dey’s article on women, forest products and protected areas discusses the disproportionately negative impacts that conservation programs have had on tribal women in India, for whom the main source of livelihood is the collection of non-timber forest products, now off-limit to them.

Many say that indigenous groups are conservationists by nature. …. And in some ways it is true that indigenous communities are conservationists by nature. For thousands of years, we have managed our resources without destroying anything. On the other hand, who is the conservation for? For other people? No. In fact we see a danger that indigenous communities might begin to abuse their resources, and no one doubts that some groups actually destroy some of their resources. What we have to focus on is looking for alternatives—finding a solution to economic issues without destroying natural resources [p. 45].

In this sense, then, I don't believe that indigenous peoples are conservationists as defined by ecologists. We aren't nature lovers. At no time have indigenous groups included the concepts of conservation and ecology in their traditional vocabulary. We speak, rather, of Mother Nature. Other organizations need to be clear about this before jumping in to solve some problem with indigenous populations [p. 45].

In this interview, Nicanor González, a Kuna Indian from Panama, comments on the need for developing a pan-indigenous platform that recognizes the unique perspective indigenous peoples have on a variety of issues, including the environment. Much of the interview is a commentary on indigenous organizing efforts, with the final section devoted to a specific discussion of environmental issues. The interview provides a concise statement of the importance of the environment to indigenous peoples as a principle factor among many shaping indigenous political efforts.


In this piece, Gooch describes the conflict that has arisen as the pastoral nomadic Van- (forest-) Gujjars were barred from their traditional winter pastures in Rajaji National Park in Uttar Pradesh, northern India. Forest officials cite the basis for the group’s exclusion on conservationist grounds, asserting that tribals and local communities have placed increasing pressure on the fragile forest ecosystem. As a result, they have legislated the cessation of all human activity within the designated protected area. Van-Gujjars have lost all traditional rights to use of the forest, meaning that “not only can they no longer collect in the forest, they can no longer enter it,” (p. 6).

Unfortunately, the legal policies surrounding national parks in India have ignored both the “traditional symbiosis between local populations and forests” (p. 6), and the extensive environmental degradation that has resulted from modern development projects in the area. The removal of the Gujjars has been given a higher priority than other, more significantly destructive occupants of the park area, including an ammunition dump, an electricity plant with adjoining township, a chemical factory, and a railway. Gooch argues that the Gujjars have been selected out not because they abuse local resources but because their nomadic lifestyle is seen as “backwards” by the state, which has repeatedly—but unsuccessfully—attempted to “modernize” (read sedentarize) them. As nomads, they have been denied the basic civil rights (suffrage, education, ration cards) entitled to all Indian citizens. The state has alienated them by imposing a development strategy “which considers sedentarisation as the only possible way for nomadic communities to ‘progress,’” (p. 5). Gooch sees
their greatest hope as their struggle to build group solidarity through recognition of their “indigeneous” identity and to use this as a basis for mobilization against the continually repressive measures of the state.


In this volume, Grinde and Johansen compile a broad range of information on historic and contemporary cases in which North American Indians have been forced from their land by pollution and other problems resulting from resource extraction. Such cases, in which environmental destruction is so comprehensive so as to preclude use of a place by any people, in particular Indians, constitute cases of “ecocide” in the view of the authors. This approach is consonant with that of environmental justice arguments, stressing the disproportionate impacts of pollution and environmental degradation. The first chapter offers a re-working of arguments in support of the view that Native American cultural values are roughly analogous in purpose to arguments made by many contemporary environmentalists. Chapters Two and Three document historic struggles over resources in the 1680 Pueblo Revolt and Yamasee attempts to balance and later defend resource use from predation by Spanish and English colonists. The next two chapters deal with aspects of contemporary Navajo history, the first dealing with Navajo resistance to US government regulation of herd size and grazing rights on their reservation. Chapter Five addresses the persistent problems that Navajo face from coal mining in and around the reservation. Chapter Six examines controversies over fishing rights and catch allocations in the Washington State and Minnesota, with Chapter Seven describing the impacts of pollution on Mohawk fishing rights in New York State. Chapter Eight covers the prolonged impact of uranium mining on Indian communities in the U.S. Southwest and the Black Hills of South Dakota, discussing in particular the impact of Rio Puerco nuclear accident—the largest in U.S. history—on the Navajo. The final two chapters review several current struggles, including construction of the James Bay II hydropower project in Quebec and deforestation in Chiapas, concluding that ecocide is no less a threat now than it has been at any other time since the commencement of European colonization of North America. Throughout the book, the authors make mention of the numerous Indian social movements that have arisen to confront destruction of land and resources vital to Indian communities.


In their now classic volume on the political ecology of the Amazon Basin, Hecht and Cockburn outline many of the political economic trends that have historically shaped interactions between indigenous peoples and state governments in one of the world’s most celebrated environmental regions. Though now somewhat dated, the interviews with Ailton Krenak (Appendix A), Darrell Posey (Appendix B), and the “Note on Parks, the Origins of Yosemite and the Expulsions of Native Americans” (Appendix G) offer a particularly good overview of the nexus between indigenous rights, social scientists, development and environmentalists, suggestive several of the potential divergences and convergences between indigenous peoples and environmentalists.

This edited volume emphasizes a geopolitical approach to understanding indigenous peoples and resource conflicts, providing a critical overview of the ways that the fundamental components of geopolitics—territory, resources and identity—are challenged and borne out in the relationships between indigenous peoples and states. As the editors address in their introduction these issues operate at any number of geographic scales, often simultaneously, in ways that challenge many political and academic categories. Though tensions between indigenous peoples and states take many forms, the issue of “resource sovereignty” is perhaps the most contentious, acting as a focal point for the inter-disciplinary approaches taken in the articles compiled here. The editors point to four main points that serve as a backdrop to the case studies. The concept of indigeneity is by no means uncomplicated, and furthermore it is often in the context of the contested nature of the term that disputes arise. Third, disputes often arise over “competition, conflicts or contradictions” in resource claims made by states and indigenous peoples. Finally, status as an indigenous peoples is inherently a political issue as it implies certain claims to resources and the benefits derived from them.

The cases presented in the book focus on five interrelated themes: 1) the complex relationships between resources, identity, and sovereignty; 2) the role of culture and gender in resource development projects; 3) the ways that indigenous peoples are marginalized by resource development and the strategies they employ to challenge the results through negotiation and participation in planning; 4) how compensation and monitoring is carried out in projects where indigenous peoples are affected, and; 5) the role of state governments in mediating resource conflicts (p. 26). Each topic corresponds to series of articles compiled in each of the book’s five sections. The first section on “Resources, Identity and Territory” demonstrates the variety of ways that specific resources and their use define indigenous peoples cultural and political articulations of their rights. Raymond Bryant offers a particularly useful analysis of the role of teak in sustaining Karen resistance on the Thai-Burmese border, while Peter Poynton examines the implications of indigenous peoples’ international call for recognition of their rights to self-determination as a claim to resources. Also of note is Edward Hviding and Graham Baines’ study of marine tenure systems in the Solomon Islands which addresses the ways in which indigenous resource management practices respond to broad sets of changes operating at a variety of scales without losing their relevance as a source of cultural identity.

In the section on “Culture and Gender” Sue Jackson offers an uncommon analysis of how Aborigines continue to maintain a strong sense of their relationship to resources in urban areas, emphasizing the importance of understanding a “sense of place” in analyzing resource conflicts. Mary Edmunds assesses the role of land-based knowledge in defining power relationships within Aboriginal communities, qualifying who and when claims are made under the Native Title Act in Australia. This dynamic has resulted in different nature of claims made by Aboriginal women as opposed to those made by men, as both collectively attempt to rebuild a world for Aborigines in the public sphere.

Ciaran O’Faircheallaigh’s piece on negotiations between indigenous peoples and resource
extraction companies stands out in the section on “Marginalization and Negotiation,” arguing that “indigenous people can only achieve major gains through negotiation if they develop a systematic and clear understanding of the constraints and issues they face in dealing with resource companies, and of the ways in which constraints can be minimized and issues dealt with” (p. 184). This article adds critical depth to indigenous peoples’ participation in resource planning, compiling a useful set of suggestions for identifying goals and outcomes that draw on the author’s personal involvement in planning mining projects in Australia.

Philip Hirsch and Glenn Banks respectively offer important critiques of compensation programs instituted as mitigation for dam construction in southeast Asia and mining in Papua New Guinea. In both cases, the influx of cash and ultimate relocation of indigenous peoples has been ultimately highly disruptive to the communities involved. Independent of their status as indigenous peoples, Hirsch argues that disruption of local land tenure systems and resource use invariably causes negative impacts to communities regardless of compensation offered. Banks echoes this point.

Five essays on “Legislation and the Roles of Government” round out the volume, all which detail ways in which states may play a more productive role in resolving resource conflict. Ali Memon and Cullen review steps taken in New Zealand to revive Maori fishing rights recognized, though long ignored, under the Treaty of Waitangi. The article stresses the point that, in questions of allocating resources, states have a particular responsibility to uphold treaty rights while adjudicating allotment issues, rather than abandoning indigenous peoples to resolve allotment disputes on their own, a process which can often exacerbate social tensions. Tubtim, Phanvilay and Hirsch describe how in spite of the numerous difficulties of identifying indigenous peoples in Laos, what are often portrayed as ethnic conflicts are actually resource conflicts accentuated by state policies that prioritize central planning over recognition of more local forms of resource rights. Such conflicts, they argue, can only be mitigated through government-mediated processes that emphasize high levels of involvement by local people at all levels of planning.


Although it can be argued that protecting endangered or threatened species stems from an ethic that transcends cultural bounds, it can also be argued that it might prove to be a continued imposition of an alien normative landscape and government assertion of control over resources [p. 184].

Medical anthropologists have long recognized the cultural context of restoring the patient to health: The role of the doctor and the tools used are validated by the cultural context and definition. So, too, one cannot extricate the ecological restoration of the Klamath watershed and the objectives chosen and tools from its cultural context [p. 185].

Huntsinger and McCaffrey present an environmental history of the Yurok Indian Reservation in Northern California, contrasting Yurok use of resources and management strategies with “scientific forestry” practices implemented by the United States government. Scientific forestry, defined as forest management using biological analysis to maximize the economic productivity of forest lands, is
characterized by the authors as being as significant as government expropriation of Yurok lands in changing regimes of access to resources and land rights. Through contrasting Yurok resource management with scientific forestry, the authors describe the continued importance of understanding these differing approaches to resource use and management in contemporary contexts.


This book gives a political ecology-based analysis of the Ok Tedi gold and copper mining project in the mountains of western Papua New Guinea. Hyndman’s study conceptualizes the relationship between the Wopkaimin (the local indigenous forest dwellers) and mining as a struggle between a kin-ordered, subsistence mode of production and a capitalist (surplus-based) mode of production. The expansion of mining into Wopkaimin territory has meant that their lands and resources have become commodities to be appropriated and exploited in capitalist production. Unsurprisingly, the Wopkaimin have suffered cultural and ecological disruption in this process: “The large [capitalist] system is so immensely different in scale and technology from the small [kinship] system that the self-sufficient, internally regulated Wopkaimin subsistence system changed into a dependent, externally regulated economy with a degraded environment and culture,” (p. 15). This Hyndman understands to be characteristic of the clash between Fourth World nations and First, Second and Third World states. Hyndman’s analysis most successfully illustrates how both colonial administrations and independent state governments uncritically embrace capitalist relations of production as the “standard of modernity” and the goal to which “primitive” indigenous cultures must aspire.


Environmental instruments and policies need not necessarily have positive consequences for our lands and lives. They can easily be used to weaken our indigenous rights and limit our access to resources. We are treated as irrelevant or, when noticed, courted as exotic sources of knowledge for bolstering the profits of big business. We oppose these views strongly…. [pp. 9-10]

This short volume usefully brings together a number of important declarations, policy statements and interventions made by members of the International Alliance of Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests at various international environmental symposiums held between 1992 and 1996. It provides documentation of indigenous perspectives on a variety of environmental protection legislation and issues, which are easily accessed by convention or by topic/region. Issues covered in the volume include biodiversity, indigenous knowledge, human rights, and indigenous peoples and protected areas (including joint-management arrangements).

Some important highlights of the book may be found in chapter 1, which presents a brief history of contemporary mobilization efforts of indigenous peoples and their appeals for UN sup-
This chapter contains the charter statement of the Indigenous Alliance, the Kari-Oca Declaration of May, 1992 and the Indigenous Peoples Earth Charter. Chapter 6 contains a number of resolutions made by the International Alliance of Indigenous-Tribal Peoples on the status of particular groups suffering severe crisis: the Yanomami, the Ashaninkas, the Batwa of Rwanda, the Ogoni of Nigeria, the Dayak of Sarawak, and the Adivasi of India.

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Within the vast Inuit homeland, Inuit have the right and responsibility to ensure the integrity of the circumpolar environment and its resources, as a continuing source of life, livelihood and well-being for present and future generations. [Article 2 (Integrity of Circumpolar Environment), Section III.]

This policy statement was developed by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, an indigenous peoples organization representing Inuit people in Greenland (Denmark), Canada, the United States, and eastern Russia. Drawing heavily on international law, the policy statement sets forth a comprehensive agenda for addressing Inuit social, economic and cultural needs. Section III deals explicitly with environmental issues, with specific policy statements regarding renewable resource management, subsistence, non-renewable resources, fresh water use and management, arctic marine use and management, arctic marine transportation, and transboundary nuclear pollution. A section establishing guidelines for scientific research in Inuit areas is also included.

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This edited volume, consisting primarily of works written by Native American activist/scholars, is an attempt to establish a valid framework for understanding the “contemporary colonization of Native North America.” The authors discuss various aspects of Native Americans’ ongoing quest for self-determination and self-governance and the ways this has been historically received and undermined by the federal US government. The book includes articles contributed by Ward Churchill, Glenn T. Morris, Winona LaDuke, Vine Deloria, Jr. and John Mohawk, among others.

As a preface to the more topical articles, Churchill and Morris provide a useful, annotated list of key Indian statutes and cases that have been significant in shaping the lopsided federal-Indian relationship and to which references are made throughout the book. In chapter 5, Churchill recounts contemporary Indian struggles for land rights, including an evaluation of the implications the Indian Claims Commission has had for Native peoples attempting to gain title to land. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 provide different authors’ analyses of Indian water rights, fishing rights and subsurface mineral rights, respectively. Integral to these analyses is a discussion of how important pro-Indian judicial interpretations of treaty rights (the Winters doctrine, the Boldt decision) do or do not find their way into actual practice.

For the Rabhas forest protection committees differ little from any other scheme imposed on them by the Government. They have been completely left out in the planning of the scheme, and in the working out of suitable terms and arrangements that would make the FPC concept acceptable to them. In most forest villages, the Forest Department has forced the Rabha to take part in the scheme, to form a Committee, and to give up all illegal fellings. They have been told that unless they agree to set up a forest protection committee and cooperate in protecting the forest, they will be thrown out of their villages. Few Rabhas know what the Committees are really about. [p. 128]

[T]he Rabha have not formed any visible social movement to fight for their rights in the forest. Community mobilisation is at present restricted to another, less visible, domain: cultural resistance or identity formation. Construction of cultural identity is, however, not something separate or sealed off from people's down-to-earth struggles for survival. [p. 142]

This ethnography of the “Rabha” forest dwellers in the northeastern portion of West Bengal is an example of current cultural anthropological studies on cultural process and identity formation. Karlsson argues that the construction of a coherent group identity among somewhat disparate Rabha groups is foundational to their future mobilization around issues of ecological justice and indigeneity.

Parts 1 and 2 take an historical perspective on State involvement in forest management and traces out the shifting political relationships between indigenous forest peoples and the State. As has been the case in many parts of the world, state efforts to promote wildlife conservation through the establishment of “protected” forest areas has served to marginalize and very often “criminalize” the indigenous people who reside and draw their subsistence from forest resources. The Indian State’s refusal to recognize Scheduled Tribes (adivasis), or any other ethnic group, as “indigenous” has made it difficult for tribal groups to find an effective basis from which to sustain their claims to land and resources in areas of protected forest.

In Part III, Karlsson examines the evolving process of identity construction among the Rabha (Kocha), focusing particularly on the impacts of their conversion to Christianity as well as the issue of naming (externally imposed vs. self-given) and its relationship to the struggle for political rights and territory. For Karlsson, the Rabha’s current process of identity formation is fundamental to the emergence of the Rabha community as a political actor.

Part IV addresses the intersection of modernity, cultural identity and agency through a brief evaluation of the literatures on cultural process, social movements and identity construction, subjectivity and subaltern resistance. The final chapter relates this theoretical material to the empirical case of the Rabha in West Bengal and anticipates their future politicization through identification with the international indigenous peoples’ movement.

This short book provides an environmentalist analysis of the role transnational oil corporations play in ecological destruction in the Ecuadorian Amazon (*Oriente*). In addition to text, a series of graphic photographs, maps, graphs, and other visual devices depict the extent and disastrous consequences of drilling and pumping oil within this fragile ecosystem. The book effectively highlights the scope of environmental degradation and human-induced natural disaster as well as the impacts of oil contamination and its toxic effects on indigenous peoples living in the area. The Ecuadorian state is also held to account as Kimerling traces out the linkages between the state and TNCs, in particular detailing the state’s complicity in providing a favorable political-economic context for continued oil extraction. This book takes a strong anti-development stance in representing both forests and indigenous peoples as being ravaged by corporate greed.


All these considerations underpin the point that a functional concept of “indigenous peoples” applicable in all regions will be viable only if it is broad enough to permit of alternative justifications. A concept that depends wholly on arguments of priority in time and historical continuity from ancient times to the present may work well enough in some regions but is unlikely to be adequate and workable in all regions [p. 436].

Legal scholar Benedict Kingsbury reviews ongoing controversies over the definition of indigenous peoples in international law, with particular attention to the nature of the debate in Asia. While positivist approaches to defining indigenous peoples have been enormously useful to recognizing many groups in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand and Scandinavia, Kingsbury follows the claim made by many states and amply demonstrated in practice that the coherence of the term is “unachievable” as the very people claiming to be indigenous become more diverse. This is particularly true in many of the Asian states, where European colonial legacies have by and large not left people of some European descent in power. Therefore, Kingsbury argues for a “constructivist” approach to identifying indigenous peoples, in recognition of the necessary fluidity of the term and identity in the “continuous process in which claims and practices in numerous specific cases are abstracted in wider institutions of international society, then made specific again at the moment of application in the political, legal and social processes of particular cases and societies” (p. 415). The bulk of the article is directed towards a review of the policies of Asian states towards indigenous peoples, juxtaposed against efforts made internationally by institutions and indigenous peoples themselves to establish a definition. Several Asian states—India, China, Bangladesh, Myanmar and arguably Indonesia—argue that there are no indigenous peoples living within their states, in spite of the proliferation of self-identified groups in the region. The People’s Republic of China has gone so far as to oppose use of the term in Asia on the grounds that it is the imperialist extension of a Western concept onto the peoples with a very different history. In addition to China, Kingsbury reviews state attitudes towards indigenous peoples in the Philippines, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, Bangladesh and India. Kingsbury concludes his argument with the identification of four main issues
of common concern to raised vis-à-vis indigenous peoples, namely the importance of land and territory to maintenance of a group identity, a tendency to assert self-determination and autonomy rather than independence, the development of norms for group participation in decisions affecting them, and increasing emphasis on self-identification as the basis for group definition. Collectively, these concepts implicate the justifications for recognition of “indigenous peoples” as a distinct legal category. Further reviewing a number of objections and alternatives to these categories, including designation of “local communities,” Kingsbury sets forth a number of requirements and indicia for recognizing “indigenous peoples.” Following those criteria, Kingsbury concludes that the ultimate meaning of the term must be left open to politics and negotiation in order to be applied to the nuances of any particular context. Failure to do so, he suggests, would dramatically inhibit the flexibility, dynamism and creativity that indigenous peoples have used to raise national and international awareness of the challenges they face.


Struggles in Jharkhand and the movements opposing the Narmada dams transcend the prevailing idea that development is inevitable and that conservation is the answer to ecological problems. Instead, these movements show that ecological problems are largely the product of uneven patterns of development both between and within more industrialized and less industrialized countries. [p. 237]

Ecology is about land and people where the practice of justice restructures the concept of nature. [p. 238]

Kothari and Parajuli’s article takes a Political Ecology perspective on scheduled tribes’ resistance to the mammoth Sardar Sarovar Dam Project on India’s Narmada River. The authors cite the “ecological” character of current tribal social movements in Jharkhand, which they see as “expanding the scope and political relevance of the 50-year-old movement demanding greater regional autonomy in the form of a separate state within the Indian union,” (p. 228). While local protests against declining access to control over and management of land, forest and water resources have been a common occurrence over the course of the past century, they are now being articulated quite specifically as a critique of “both the growing centralization and authoritarianism of the state and the extractive character of the dominant economic process,” (p. 233). The authors observe that inter-tribal alliances are now being formed through the recognition of a common “ecological identity,” forged through shared opposition to the dam project.


The Noble Indian/Ecological Indian distorts culture. It masks cultural diversity. It occludes its actual connection to the behavior it purports to explain. Moreover, because it has entered the realm of common sense and as received wisdom is perceived as fundamental truth, it serves to deflect any desire to fathom or confront the evidence of relationships between Indians and the environment [p. 27].
As one Choctaw (who reminded his non-Indian interviewer that he did not want “to be you”) remarked, “I like living in this community, and I like being Choctaw, but that’s all there is to it. Just because I don’t want to be a white man doesn’t mean I want to be some kind of mystical Indian either. Just be a real human being.” [p. 228]

Anthropologist Shepard Krech III sets out to empirically dispel stereotypes of indigenous peoples as the forerunners of modern conservation, an image that has recently been used by Indians and non-Indians alike in formulating environmental issues. Relying on archaeological and anthropological sources, Krech reconstructs several cases in which Indian practices in North America did not historically conform to modern definitions of ecology and conservation. Instead, Krech describes Indian uses of resources as being subject to the same self-interests, adaptation and knowledge common to human beings in general. He traces these contrasting uses from the Pleistocene extinctions on up through present debates on many reservations about the role that natural resources should play in the development of tribal industries. Throughout the book, Krech demonstrates that knowledge is inevitably cultural, and thereby such notions of ecology and conservation are specific to their time. Environmentalism, as such, is a product of the economic, political, cultural and ecological conditions of its time, namely the twentieth century, and cannot be used to describe the historical practices of indigenous peoples. To do so, Krech argues, would be to unfairly hold Indians to set of standards that may well be political advantageous, though impossible to uphold in contemporary Indian communities. Indian relationships to resources, Krech concludes, are therefore based more on control over how those resources are used. While in some cases this may lead to alliances with conservationists, there are as many cases where it may lead to a divergence of interests.


This book discusses the environmental and social impacts the nuclear industry and uranium mining have had on American Indian tribes living in the desert Southwest. Kuletz argues that Indians and their settlements have consistently been an “invisible” part of the nuclear landscape; this “invisibility” is part of a larger social narrative in which scientific and political discourse have construed this landscape as a “wasteland” to legitimize the environmentally destructive practices occurring there. The “nuclear landscape,” as military zone and scientific laboratory, thus “constitutes as much a social and political geography as it does an environmental region,” (pg. 9).

In Part 1, Kuletz discusses the grave impacts the mines, nuclear test sites and waste dumps have had on numerous Native peoples living in close proximity. Citing the extensive presence of the military (allied with scientists) in the project of nuclear experimentation and weapons development, Kuletz argues that the Indian landscape is essentially an occupied zone, submitted to the same constraints and risks as any number of other occupied populations across the globe. Part 2 explores the conflicting Western scientific/Indian cultural narratives about the Yucca Mountain landscape and traces out the material consequences of the different groups’ representations of nature. Land rights issues are analyzed carefully through the lens of the power relations organizing the region.

The US idea that “real nature” is not to be touched by human hands, applied in the South, reinforces the view that hundreds of thousands of people living in protected areas are either “encroachers” subject to eviction or, at best, merely part of the wildlife [p. 204].

... we can seek unity less by attempting to recruit others as subcontractors to build our own utopias, or by trying to find a monolithic “truth of nature” to impose on the world, and more through solidarity with subordinate groups pursuing, on different terrains, purposes that may be related to our own [p. 204].

Larry Lohmann critiques environmentalists’ perceptions of indigenous peoples in this editorial piece, tracing the intellectual continuities that exist between colonial definitions of the “other,” including indigenous peoples, and contemporary green politics. The historical result of these continuities, Lohmann argues, creates power imbalances that facilitate northern environmentalists’ claims to speak for all nature, while using the demands of local movements to color claims that may sharply diverge with demands for social justice made by indigenous peoples and other ethnic minorities. These assumptions, and many others like them, go unexplored in many cases, reproducing existing social and racial inequalities that many greens eschew within their own efforts to save nature. Lohmann concludes by arguing that environmentalists should pay greater attention to listening to claims made by indigenous peoples, subsistence farmers, ethnic minorities and the like, forging alliances built on solidarity rather than manipulation and appropriation.


**ABSTRACT**

The rise of the political idea of indigenism in Indonesia in spite of the official policy under Suharto that Indonesia had no indigenous people is discussed. Two small social groups of central Sulawesi with differing approaches to indigenism are described.

**SUMMARY**

In the context of former President Suharto’s (in)famous proclamation that Indonesia is a nation with no indigenous people as all Indonesians are equally indigenous, anthropologist Tania Li assesses the difficult politics of claims of indigeneity in Sulawesi. Li takes addresses current social science concerns over the invention of tradition by arguing that the claims made by people about there identity are constantly evolving with and responding to national and international political agendas. In her case study, she compares two neighboring groups in Sulawesi, the Lauje and the Lindu, both of whom would appear to be equally indigenous to the outside observer. Though both groups face state development projects and policies that threaten their access to land and resources, only the Lindu assert themselves as an indigenous people, garnering considerable national and international attention to their opposition of a dam project. In doing so, the Lindu emphasized their difference as a group on the grounds of ethnic boundaries drawn around them during the colonial era, playing
into the “savage slot” preordained for them by the Indonesian state and NGOs alike. This connection between the Lindu and outsiders highlights a number of stereotypes that NGOs have of indigenous peoples, with the Lindu here manipulating those perceptions to mobilize resources in their opposition to the hydro project. In doing so, they use their literacy and fluency in Indonesian—two skills that the more isolated Lauje lack have less proficiency with—in building powerful alliances with activists. Li argues that the Lindus’ fit in the “savage slot” facilitates their recognition as indigenous peoples, while the Laujes’ greater isolation may in fact limit recognition of them as indigenous peoples. Li suggests that the impact of such recognition stands to benefit the Lindu while further marginalizing the Lauje, pointing out the complex and uneven politics of designating who indigenous peoples are and the rights that accompany that category. This raises any number of difficult political issues which threaten to institute a new regime of social inequality if they are not adequately considered by the myriad of activists who place resource struggles and the aspirations of ethnic groups at the center of broad social movements in Indonesia.


In the context of an amicus brief filed with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of the Organization of American States in the case of Awas Tingni v. Republic of Nicaragua, Macklem and Morgan provide an overview of Canadian law regarding indigenous peoples land and resource rights. Working in a rights-based framework, the authors argue that Canadian law provides a number of analyses and remedies useful to resolution of resource conflicts between indigenous peoples and states. In particular, the authors deal with indigenous peoples and resource rights in forests. The discussion of the Supreme Court of Canada’s ruling the in the Delgamuukw case assesses the implications of one of the more important legal decisions concerning indigenous land rights, in which the Court established a number of criteria for establishing aboriginal title. This case notably recognized oral histories as admissible evidence in establishing Constitutionally recognized aboriginal title. The brief also covers the potential role of co-management as a conflict resolution strategy, again with reference to Canadian examples. Macklem and Morgan are law professors and counsel for the Assembly of First Nations, the umbrella organization of the indigenous peoples of Canada.


Maybury-Lewis examines the concept of indigeneity in light of the mass violence contributed to by ethnic nationalist movements in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. His decidedly political treatment of the subject acknowledges that distinctions between indigenous peoples and other ethnic minorities are not always easy, particular in cases where such groups are frequently referred to as nations without states. One example dealt with here is the status of the Kurds living in the states of Iraq, Iran, and Turkey. Maybury-Lewis emphasizes the fact that the multi-ethnic make-up of many states need not lead inevitably to conflict, and that such conflicts are often the product of state attempts at homogenizing their territory and citizenry often under the guise of nationalism. With
regard to resources, Maybury-Lewis offers insight into the ways that states frequently depict indigenous peoples as obstacles to development, destroying or otherwise constraining their access to resources that can lead to ethnocide.


In this special issue of Cultural Survival Quarterly, guest editors McKay and Fortmann compile a number of cases from Africa, Latin America, the Philippines, Canada and United States that look at how culturally specific property regimes are affected by natural resource management and development issues that ignore indigenous and non-indigenous peoples efforts alike to maintain stewardship over resources. Collectively, the articles assert that the “commons is an evolving form of property” that allows communities to articulate their claims and cultures in the face of globalization. Though the concept of the commons here is interpreted as a generic term for designating community forms of property rights, the articles address a number of ways in which those rights are ignored by state governments and contested by social movements. Dealing with indigenous peoples in particular, Suzana Sawyer’s article analyzes the role of indigenous peoples’ use of land claims and traditional resource management strategies to counter petroleum development in the Amazon Basin in Ecuador. David Hughes assesses the relevance of recognizing common property regimes to conservation agendas in Zimbabwe, while Susan Charnley describes how the breakdown of indigenous property regimes contributes to environmental degradation in Tanzania. Eufemia Pinto’s article on the legal concept of “ancestral domain” in the Philippines describes a number of challenges and opportunities that this category holds for indigenous participation in resource management. Finally, a brief piece on the last page of the issue describes Cultural Survival’s support of the Mayagna indigenous community of Awas Tingni’s efforts to use maps to demarcate and communicate their property rights to the Nicaraguan government.


Miller’s article is illustrative of how images and perceptions of indigenous people are manipulated and reshaped by the media in ways that help protect the interests of the dominant ethnic group. In particular, he explores the role local newspapers have played in setting the tone for Indian-white relations in the Skagit Valley of the Pacific Northwest. Miller asserts that the media does not merely reflect the status of inter-ethnic relations at a given moment in time, but must be thought of as an active participant in the Indian-white struggle over natural resources. Miller’s study of two local newspapers’ coverage of Indians over an approximately one-hundred year period indicates that “the nature and volume of reporting about Indians and Indian issues changed significantly during periods of intense interethnic competition over salmon resources,” (p. 75). During periods of conflict, Miller found not only that the number of articles concerning Indians dramatically increased, but that the majority of the reporting depicted Indians as antisocial, as threatening the welfare of the community, and as challenging the status quo. This was found to be especially the case in the years preceding and following the Boldt decision on treaty fishing rights. This is in contrast with those periods where
there was no conflict over resources, where articles about Indians were primarily civic/human-interest in nature, or were absent altogether.


[A]boriginal interests are not identical to those of the conservation community. The creation of parks and protected areas… is only one part of a larger political question—one “bound up with the thorny issues of treaty rights, aboriginal title and land claims.” The indigenous people of Canada are seeking both recognition of their inherent right to govern themselves, and a land and resource base adequate to support their communities. [p. 270]

Morrison deconstructs the assumption that conservationists and indigenous peoples share “common aims and objectives with regard to wilderness areas and wilderness use,” (p. 270). Using a series of Canadian cases in which natives have filed legal claims to national parklands, Morrison explores the differences between conservationists’ and indigenous societies’ conceptions of nature and how this informs each of these groups’ goals with respect to resource management and use. Most of the conservation-based, protected area management policy in Canada is reflective of the belief that human beings are intruders upon the wilderness landscape; humans are not regarded as part of the natural ecosystem. Yet, for indigenous people, the concept of “wilderness” spaces, untouched by man, does not exist. Rather, “indigenous societies both past and present place mankind at the axis of the natural world—subordinate to the whole, but essential,” (p. 273). While it may make sense within a conservationist framework for indigenous groups to be prohibited from parklands, this exclusion from their traditional homelands and resource base has been a source of native protest and litigation. Indigenous groups in Canada have generally been quite successful in using the courts to enforce treaty and prior rights (p. 276). Native peoples’ focus on issues of title and land rights as opposed to conservation, while a source of consternation to environmentalists, has been a pragmatic strategy to “ensure that their interests—including employment opportunities and cultural survival through continuing harvesting rights—are fully protected,” (p. 293).


This collection of essays concerned with ecology, identity and social relations is part of a book series on “ethnicity and identity.” The focus of this volume is to provide a “circumpolar survey” of indigenous peoples, including peoples of the Russian Arctic, the Saami of northern Finland, the Inuit of Greenland and North America, the Aleuts of Alaska, and the Orochons of Sakhalin Island. The outlooks included in the text are comprised of administrative as well as academic approaches. Generally, the authors seek to highlight the parallels among Arctic indigenous groups in terms of how “tensions which exist as local identities and aspirations within the immediate ecology conflict with integration into a national identity and economy,” (p. 3). Several of the essays examine the ways Arctic peoples’ personhood is linked to place, yet they attempt to move beyond the simplistic “ecological” model favored by many scholars of native peoples.

Historically, the creation of national parks and wildlife refuges has frequently involved the resettlement and disruption of indigenous peoples' use of resources for subsistence purposes. Neumann demonstrates a specific example of this history in his description of the national parks system in Tanzania and its impact on Maasai communities. The establishment of national parks in Tanzania, as Neumann shows, is intertwined with development practices and macro-economic change—two processes that have historically paid little regard to Maasai resource use and claims to land. As such parks have become central sites of political action, where “nature protection, privatization, economic justice, ethnic politics and cultural survival converge and are struggled over, often with contradictory outcomes” (p. 364). Privatization of the tourism industry as a part of structural adjustment policies and the proliferation of domestic NGOs representing Maasai interests have had significant impacts on conservation agendas. Though all of these groups make frequent reference to the need for sustainable development, Neumann demonstrates that definitions of sustainability are widely divergent, depending on particular groups' relationship to resources, political power, and economic development practices. In conclusion, Neumann argues that conservation agendas cannot be separated from issues of social justice and human rights, emphasizing the need for fundamental rethinking of conservation.


“If we don't have our own identity, the government will say we don't exist. That we are Gob [Malay] and our land will come under Malay Reserves. Before, the land belonged to all of us, not one particular person. But the government made laws that said that this department, that office, is in charge of land and we can't argue about it. Yet, we do want development. It is our right.”—Excerpt from a transcript of an Orang Asli village meeting, Tapah, Perak [p. 173]

Using a political economy approach, Nicholas provides an historical context for the political position of the Orang Asli within the contemporary Malaysian nation-state, thereby “address(ing) issues of social and distributive justice affecting the Orang Asli as a marginal community, in a polity generally opposed to granting it recognition as an indigenous people,” (p. xvii). The ethnic category “Orang Asli” (original people), a creation of the colonial government in the 1960s, actually refers to 18 heterogeneous ethnic subgroups living in the Malay Peninsula. Yet, even though Orang Asli homogeneity was an ideological imposition rather than something that was self-defined, Nicholas asserts that the social stress that these indigenous groups experienced from contact with the dominant population has since caused them to develop a common identity around the title “Orang Asli,” (p. 10). Nicholas finds that this emergence of Orang Asli claims to a group identity has been coincident with the development of their political awareness.

The book begins its analysis with an examination of land ownership and land tenure issues,
highlighting the Orang Asli’s precarious position vis-à-vis the state—which does not recognize Orang Asli customary land titles. The government’s approach to the Orang Asli remains rooted in development theories of the 1960s and 1970s, where they are seen as needing to be “modernized” and integrated into general society. Nicholas understands the political and economic status of the indigenous groups as being bound up in a network of power relations, within which the nation-state employs strategies designed to control those who live within its bounds—including their traditional territories and resources. Using “an admixture of administrative intervention, policy implementation, legislative fiat and individual action—(state) control over the Orang Asli and their resources was set in motion and persistently reinforced in subsequent policy programmes,” (p. 107).

In the latter part of the book, Nicholas looks at the social-historical context that profoundly impacted the creation of an Orang Asli identity. The increased threat of state encroachment on their territories and natural resources presented greater opportunity for Orang Asli to collaborate and to organize around the shared issue of ethnic identity. Nicholas traces this development of intergroup mobilization as “indigenous” people and discusses their ensuing political actions to attain autonomy and self-determination.


The net result of subsistence efforts is food and, secondarily, resource items that can be converted into money, food, or other goods [p. 226].

Though somewhat dated, Nietschmann’s study of the organization and ecology of the Miskito of eastern Nicaragua is a key early text that has informed many subsequent studies of the complex relationships between cultural ecology and political economy. Nietschmann’s study details the ability of Miskito subsistence practices to adapt to ecological change, refuting many of the earlier assumptions of indigenous peoples living in an equilibrated harmony with nature. Through analysis of subsistence as both a ecological and a cultural practice, Nietschmann assesses their relationship to a larger, open-ended political economy that invariably affects the distribution of and access to resources. This system is continually in flux at all levels, unevenly stressing resources and cultural practices.


ABSTRACT

Over the past few years the zoning of protected areas into management categories has become the new paradigm of so-called integrated conservation-development projects (ICDPs). A review of recently enacted environmental laws in the Philippines and of ongoing conservation measures in Palawan, such as the ban on shifting cultivation, indicates that a wide divergence of interests exists between the desires and needs of the native communities and the government and environmentalists’ objectives to conserve natural habitats. In Palawan, the zoning of protected areas based on
biodiversity criteria is curtailing local subsistence practices. On the other hand, even new legislation on ancestral land claims needs to be improved in order to reflect indigenous notions and perceptions of the environment.

SUMMARY

This article takes a critical look at assumptions made by environmentalists that “their struggle to save the natural environment shares common interests, values and aspirations with the indigenous communities with which they work” (p. 5). These assumptions better reflect Western environmentalists’ calls for the establishment of a sustainable society than the claims and aspirations of indigenous peoples. The result is a projection of human values deemed universal by environmentalists that portray “an idealized version of the relation between man and nature which has no equivalent in the “ideological orientations” of the indigenous peoples they claim to represent” (p. 6). In the Philippines and specifically on the island of Palawan, the author claims that the substitution of conservation models that evict native peoples from the homelands for more “people-oriented” approaches that allow indigenous peoples to remain where they are so long as they “live in harmony” with nature. The impact of this change has been to confine the range of resource use by indigenous peoples to those activities deemed compatible with conservation by environmentalists, effectively marginalizing indigenous peoples on their own lands. Novellino analyzes the way in which conservation strategies that establish use zones effectively limit indigenous peoples access to land and resources without their participation in planning decisions, let alone recognition of their resource rights. In delineating indigenous land rights, current Filipino legislation requires that indigenous peoples to interpret, document and otherwise explain their culture using Western concepts they are often unfamiliar with. Such efforts, Novellino points out, create the need for assistance from NGOs and government officials who may ultimately determine the scope and nature of indigenous rights without full consideration of indigenous concepts of land rights and resource use. The net impact of such efforts forces enormous cultural changes within indigenous communities by forcing them to replace shifting agricultural practices with more sedentary models that maximize acreage of undisturbed forest. As a result, resource use has been constrained to certain limited areas, often leading to over harvesting. In conclusion, Novellino argues that indigenous peoples must be allowed to define where they live and how their communities are organized, rights that must find a voice in conservation debates through participation by indigenous peoples themselves. Failure to do so will only result in the further subjugation of indigenous peoples to Western notions of resource use, sustainable or otherwise.


Although setting aside land for conservation purposes is wise, retaining land in public ownership does not serve the same purpose as guaranteeing the property rights of the indigenous population as a group and does not increase the bargaining power of stakeholders committed to protecting their life-support systems. [p. 235]

ABSTRACT

An American specialist on environmental law with extensive field experience in the Russian
Arctic outlines changes affecting land tenure relationships and traditional economies of northern peoples as a result of oil and gas development. Particular emphasis is placed on the Yamal Peninsula, where economic transition, natural gas extraction, and pipeline construction are disrupting reindeer-herding operations based on large-scale seasonal migration within extensive *sovkhozy*. The author presents several possible variants for the transfer of land rights from state farm ownership to private or cooperative entities and describes the implications of each (based on the experience in Alaska and Canada) for retention of indigenous culture and sustainable resource development.

**SUMMARY**

Osherenko focuses on a key issue facing indigenous peoples across the globe: how indigenous property rights are to be determined and codified in the face of encroaching state and industrial development. As is the case in many, if not most, parts of the world, the development of the extensive energy resources in northwestern Siberia has resulted in the dislocation of indigenous communities as well as serious environmental pollution, thereby disrupting traditional economies that are dependent on local natural resources. The dissolution of the Soviet Union has presented the need to restructure the land tenure and resource use rights of indigenous groups, whose needs had previously been provided for through now-defunct state-run farms. Osherenko argues that the most effective approach to protecting both the environment and indigenous livelihood is to seize this opportunity to "accord indigenous groups extensive political and property rights in the areas they have traditionally used and occupied," (p. 226). The goal is not necessarily to hinder extractive industrial development, but to force project planners to internalize the social and environmental costs of their schemes and to guarantee that local economies are substantially benefited. Osherenko identifies the US/Canadian approach to indigenous rights in the Arctic North as the model with the greatest potential applicability to the Siberian case.


The authors in this edited collection discuss the social and ecological transformations occurring in the tropical forests of Borneo. Taking an historical perspective on (long-standing) traditions of resource manipulation, mining, and commercial logging, the authors demonstrate that contemporary examples of resource extraction are nothing new; rather, they are an intensification of historical practices of landscape change. In support of this argument, the authors trace out the long-existing linkages between local peoples and regional and/or global economies, noting how this interface has always had (and continues to have) transformative effects on "traditional" systems of land tenure and resource use.

The text is divided into three parts, each of which deals quite extensively with issues pertaining to "indigenous" populations residing on the island. Part I examines key conservation and development issues in Borneo. The authors carefully outline the connections between global processes and localized impacts, specifically examining the effects of conservation and extractive strategies on both the forest and its resident peoples. Part II discusses the transformations as they have been occurring at the local level—in terms of human interaction with the forest landscape and resource use, intra-
group social relations, and the changing livelihoods and sedentarization of forest dwellers. This section analyzes the significance privatization strategies have had in impacting the degree of local control/access to resources, as well as in disrupting established systems of land tenure within communities. Part III considers the implications indigenous systems of resource management have for designing broader, more effective strategies of forest management, conservation and community development.


The potential for sustainable management of a given forest is partially a function of the manner in which these players have pursued their interests—and the degree of convergence or opposition between them. Where the interests of states and peasants clash, we often find environmental deterioration, poverty, and ambivalent power relations. The history between state forestry and actual forest use points to the tensions over access and control between the state and the peasantry. These struggles leave their mark by damaging valuable, vulnerable, land-based resources, even in areas where so-called scientific principles of forest management have been in place for more than a century. These are the environmental ramifications of conflict between rural people and foresters. [p. 4]

Although this book does not concern itself explicitly with the politics of indigeneity, its acutely insightful analysis of state power and local resistance as manifested in the forest landscape has important implications for many similar situations which do involve “indigenous” groups and their struggles over access to natural resources. Peluso gives an historical account of “state forestry policies designed to control forest land, tree species, labor and ideology in Java, Indonesia, and the response of forest villagers to those controls,” (p. 4-5). She also traces out the ways in which institutional policies quite specifically condition the shape that practices of local resistance will take. Peluso argues that the complex dance between state control and local resistance has been the primary force behind deforestation; thus, it has shaped the contemporary forest landscape, which in turn affects the form local/State interactions will take in the future.


Perry looks to draw out patterns of interaction between indigenous peoples and states through a comparison of experiences in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Australia. The text describes the ways that the various ways in which colonization of those areas took place contributed to the legal, political and social construction of “the native” in state discourse, justifying the appropriation of resources used by indigenous peoples that imply a number of general theories about state power. Using a political science approach, Perry expands his analytical framework to address similar examples from Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, southern and eastern Africa, and Siberia. In conclusion, Perry draws out the similarities from the cases reviewed, emphasizing recognition of the similarities of these disparate experiences in defining indigenous peoples political agendas and modes of organization. In each case, he argues, state appropriation of resources has frequently used violence to expand or consolidate state power at the expense of indigenous peoples. Responding to efforts at
genocide and assimilation alike, those indigenous peoples that have survived have demonstrating a remarkable capacity to maintain and reproduce their cultures through changing social, environmental, economic and political conditions that defy simple categorizations of indigenous peoples as bound to Western notions of “tradition.”


Geographic information system technology is a powerful instrument for planning and management, and land based communities are demonstrating how it can be used imaginatively to conserve traditional knowledge and engage all generations in that process. But it is a passive technology, for processing information rather than acquiring it. [p. 1]

In this special issue of Cultural Survival Quarterly, geographer Peter Poole compiles articles that describe in considerable detail the range of mapping projects developed by indigenous peoples to protect their land rights. Cases described in the issue detail projects in Canada, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, Nepal, and southeast Asia.

Accompanying Poole’s guide to the various technologies used in making maps, ranging from hand-drawn to computer cartography, are several articles that address the benefits and risks of using various forms of technology to document indigenous knowledge. Nietschmann’s article on mapping Miskito land and sea resources in Nicaragua addresses the related issue of accuracy, a key concept in scientific approaches to cartography historically dominated by states. In describing the Miskito project, Nietschmann argues that indigenous knowledge of resources is often far more accurate—both culturally and geographically—in many areas where states have historically had very little presence. This point is echoed by several other articles.

Richard Chase Smith’s article on mapping projects in Amazonia outlines the fundamental importance of mapping community knowledge of land use and ecology to developing long-range resource and economic planning by and for indigenous peoples. Two articles on mapping projects in Canada by David Scott, writing on Ditidaht forestry planning in British Columbia, and William Kemp and Lorraine Brooke, writing on Nunavik Inuit land use mapping, offer similar perspectives. A fourth article on planning and managing extractive reserves in Brazil offers yet another perspective on how maps can guide resource use. Articles on mapping projects by the Ye’kuana in Venezuela and the Yuqui in Bolivia describe the use of maps for demarcating indigenous land rights.

Poole’s concluding article presents a useful overview of the various projects and methods employed, emphasizing the role of maps in informing indigenous peoples and governments alike in their participation in land use planning and resource management.


Posey and Dutfield’s text is intended as a sourcebook for indigenous peoples’ organizations and
their allies in negotiating application intellectual property law in all its complexity. In doing so, the authors provide a summary of the origins of intellectual property law, arguing that its extension to indigenous peoples knowledge is inappropriate and short-sighted in its assessment of the importance of resources and knowledge to indigenous peoples. In its analysis, the book goes well beyond the topic of intellectual property, introducing a set of critical questions that should be answered before research in carried out in indigenous communities, before products are developed and profits distributed. A range of issues is addressed, bridging local strategies with international regulation, reviewing current law and cases where alternative arrangements have been developed. The text is structured around a series of questions that should be asked of any research or collaboration between an indigenous community and organization, state or private interest occurs. A glossary of terms related to biotechnology, intellectual property rights and international law is included, as well as a compilation of organizational mandates, declarations, and international agreements that address intellectual property rights.


[T]he people of Galacia have demonstrated the strength of their conviction and desire to be conservationists. However, through their leaders they have reiterated on several occasions in the past two decades that they don’t want a forest that merely stays unchanged. Galacia is convinced that forests are conserved…with the surrounding communities acting as owners of their natural resources. [p. 290]

[T]he communities must be actively involved in these (development) enterprises if they are to succeed. Key steps include the following: assure that communities and their leaders actively participate in programs and realize economic benefits; develop environmental education programs to reinforce the linkage between conservation and development; and integrate programs to complement one another and generate the greatest economic benefits while conserving natural resources. These integrated programs must be promoted by the most charismatic members of each community, who will continue to involve their communities in a resource-conserving overall development strategy. [p. 328]

This edited volume focuses on policies of forest conservation, the development of non-timber forest product industries and ecotourism projects within the Maya Forest of Central America. The authors seem to be primarily concerned with how these practices have impacted conservation in the region, with somewhat lesser attention given to the social and cultural impacts on indigenous groups and other forest dwellers.

Parts 1 and 2 discuss the effects that different national forest management policies have had on the forest landscape and introduce the reader to the strategies of resource management employed by the states of Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize, respectively.

Part 3 critically assesses the harvesting of non-timber forest products (NTFPs)—such as chicle latex, medicinal plants, spices and fruit—as a less environmentally destructive source of income for local people. This section examines the flaws in the assumption that NTFP extraction methods are an inherently “sustainable” form of development and do not result in ecological damage. Also con-
sidered are the ways in which NTFP harvest can become successful parts of conservation strategies, in addition to holding significant economic promise for local forest communities.

Part 5 examines a number of sustainable community development projects currently operating in the Maya Forest, including organic coffee production and ecotourism, among others. These projects are not taken to be a panacea, but are considered in terms of the empirical challenges they face—challenges that threaten their effectiveness and ultimate success. It is the chapters in this section that most directly address the concerns of indigenous peoples. Marroquin’s and Galletti’s articles present the voices of forest inhabitants and express their views on conservation and practices of forest management. The article by Plaza Sanchez describes the organic coffee collectives of indigenous peasant farmers and considers how production for the international coffee market has influenced conservation efforts in the region. Central to this discussion is Plaza Sanchez’s outline of points of conflict between family subsistence and conservation. Chapter 21, by Reginaldo Chayax Huex, et al., discusses the success of the Bio-Itza Reserve in conserving and defending the remaining primary forest of the Maya Itza people. Less clear has been the reserve’s effectiveness in conserving the language and culture of the Itza, understood as a correlate purpose of the reserve. Lastly, Norris, Wilber and Marin consider the potentials and pitfalls of community-based ecotourism. While frequently thought of as a strategy which can integrate the goals of both conservation and development, the authors highlight how varied the experience and results of ecotourism can be, depending on whether a project is designed to meet the priorities of community members or those of private conservation groups.


This short article documents the social and environmental changes that have taken place over a 21-year time span on a small reserve in the Peruvian Amazon. Three studies conducted in 1976, 1984 and 1997 chart the level of wild palm depletion (a key cultural resource) and the correlate disruption in Shipibo subsistence systems on the insufficiently large reserve. The time frame encompassed by the study series affords significant insight into the drastic consequences that can result from a serious reduction in community territory: a severe reduction (virtual elimination) in forest, the depletion of wild resources and a marked decline in productivity of the land (from more intensive land use). The Shipibo are unable to produce sufficient food for themselves and must rely on the purchase of foodstuffs from outsiders or other Shipibo communities to survive. Thus, there has been greater participation in wage labor and dependency on the market economy, leading to an emergence of intra-community disparities in wealth and social stratification on the reserve. Unsurprisingly, the Shipibo are experiencing great anxiety about what they perceive to be their uncertain future. Putsche highlights the great irony in this all-too-common scenario: poorly-planned reserves, which are ostensibly created to protect and sustain indigenous cultures, can ultimately threaten the groups’ way of life and ability to maintain themselves.
Assigned the absurd role of guardian of humanity’s reserves of both natural resources and moral purity, Indians become charged with the “white man’s burden” in reverse, whether they want it or not [p. 72].

Why Indians are now covered with clothes, often rags, why they no longer hunt with bow and arrow, or with anything else for that matter, on their badly shrunk and depleted patch of land, are questions that the invaders hardly ask, and when they do, they never link the conditions of the Indians to the effects of missionizing, land usurpation, and consequent economic dependence. Rather these questions are dismissed as the result of the Indian’s inability to learn how to be civilized. [p. 84]

In this text, Brazilian anthropologist Alcida Ramos deconstructs the political phenomenon of “indigenism,” defined here as the set of ideas and ideals concerning incorporation of indigenous peoples into nation-states. Ramos pays particular attention to the ways in which popular and learned images of the Indian are both a product of historical processes of constructing Indians as the “Other” of Brazilian national identity, and of the involvement of indigenous peoples themselves in deploying their own variations of these images in the formulation of claims for recognition of their rights. Ramos systematically dissects the languages with which anthropologists, states, missionaries and journalists have all created certain portrayals of indigenous peoples that tell a good deal about the underlying political and cultural agendas that inform Brazilian interest in its relatively tiny indigenous population (Ramos estimates there to be at most 300,000 indigenous peoples in Brazil). These constructions of the “hyperreal Indian” act as a mirror of what Brazilian society is not, communicating a sense of the scope of the national task of development at hand. Ramos explores the pivotal role that Amazonia as limitless frontier has played in shaping Brazilian indigenism. Indians, she argues, are largely understood in terms of their close relationship to nature and degree of civilization. The inherent value of protecting their cultures is therefore understood in terms very similar to the logic of environmental conservation: so long as they have not fallen from their place in Edenic nature, their cultures are worthy of protection. Ramos balances her critique with an examination of indigenous peoples’ own efforts to organize and articulate their place in Brazilian and international politics, critically examining the way such claims are formulated and how indigenous peoples organize themselves. She draws heavily on her own personal experience as an anthropologist working with various indigenous peoples in Brazil, giving particular attention to the way indigenous communities are articulated as nations. In sum, Ramos concludes that any study of indigenism tells us more about Brazil as a nation and a people than it does about the specific experiences of indigenous peoples themselves.


For the antimodernizers, the peasants of Garhwal are recent victims of modernization’s relent-
less onslaught, the mythical “noble savages” who fight a losing battle for their basic needs against rapacious urban capitalists. Obsessed with images of self-contained village communities living in harmonious ecological utopias, activists espousing this vision overlook the fact that most communities in Garhwal have been involved in a well-established economy based on commercial extraction of forest resources, agriculture, livestock rearing, and regional trade for more than two centuries. [p. 162]

This article explores the ways in which indigenous groups may become constrained by the international community’s “romanticization” of their struggles to gain control over local resources. In specific, it describes the case of the “Chipko” (“Tree-hugger”) movement in the Indian Himalaya, a movement which attained mythic status in the international environmentalist community as a “near perfect model of grassroots environmental action,” (p. 171). While the outcome of the struggle was deemed “successful” by environmentalist standards—it resulted in the implementation of important environmental protection legislation by the national government—it is perceived as less so by local community groups, who still have not achieved community control over the management and development of forest resources. Rangan argues that in reality, this movement to “save the environment” was in large part a cry for self-determination, community affirmation, and community prosperity (p. 171). Nevertheless, “By the time Chipko gained recognition as a popular environmental movement to influence state policies, the issues of sustaining viable livelihoods for local communities in Garhwal had been submerged under the polemic and rhetoric raised over deforestation and ecology...” (Few of its spokespeople seemed concerned about how localities were to survive and prosper under the bleak economic conditions prevailing in Garhwal,” (p. 158). Today, many communities in Garhwal experience anger and resentment at “being held hostage by the (environmental) movement and its ideologues” (p. 159).


This collection of essays reports the proceedings of a 1996 symposium on human-environmental interaction in the circumpolar north. Most of the papers included in the volume were presented at the symposium, and represent the diverse perspectives of historians, geographers, anthropologists and policy makers. The authors seek to provide accounts of the complex social, political and environmental interactions experienced by particular peoples in specific, located contexts. The essays are equally useful in “uncover(ing) an underlying parallelism in the growing sociopolitical and ecological problems faced by Arctic cultures,” (Introduction). Through the empirical analysis of what is particular in the experience of Arctic peoples, the authors successfully reveal the points of continuity among them. One common theme is the increase in instances of severe ecological damage as a result of extractive activities. Another is the struggle of native peoples to maintain access to their ancestral lands in the face of large-scale development projects.

Two of the articles (Johnson and Espiritu) report on the collaborative efforts made between indigenous peoples and environmentalists in the battle to sustain native peoples’ rights of access to their traditional resource base. In contrast, Peter Collings’s article takes a critical position on the notion of native people as “conservationists” (in the Western sense) through an empirical study of
resource management systems among the Cree people of the Canadian arctic. Rather than taking the oversimplified notion of indigenous peoples as “protectors of the environment” at face value, the author seeks to trace out the complex social and cultural arrangements that influence local management regimes and resource use patterns. Chapter 3, by Aileen Espiritu, is a comparative study of indigenous peoples in Russia and Canada, and consists of a comparative analysis of the effects of industrial development (oil, gas, and forestry) as well as examining similar patterns of political mobilization based on self-representation as indigenous “nations within” states.

In the next article, Gail Fondahl considers the state of indigenous land claims in the Russian north. Legislation around indigenous land rights has focused on the environmental requirements of traditional subsistence activities, such that extractive industries are seen as antithetical to the survival of traditional cultural and subsistence activities. Nevertheless, as the author points out, such a perspective has limited indigenous groups’ ability to incorporate non-traditional activities into their repertoire of strategies for achieving economic viability. Craig ZumBrunnen’s article describes the environmental pollution problems associated with resource extraction industries in Russia, and how ecological degradation has become an even more severe following the dissolution of the USSR. The final chapter, by Hugh Beach, discusses the ecological and economic questions surrounding Saami reindeer management practices in the Swedish Lapland. The notion of “sustainable development” is called into question as the author considers the political implications of the term as it is employed in this particular conflict.


[T]he defense of indigenous rights and the conservation of the environment and its resources are inseparably tied. [Foreword, p. ix].

This edited book provides a human ecology approach to land change and development issues in the Amazon rainforest. The authors seek to “understand the relationship between cultural and environmental variation through time and space, especially with reference to the survival and well-being of contemporary indigenous societies,” (p. 3). Their intention is to move beyond traditional research in ecological anthropology by recognizing the role of applied anthropological research in finding practical solutions to cultural and environmental crises in the Amazon and elsewhere.

Part III, “Change, Conservation, and Rights,” is of particular interest with respect to the topics addressed in this bibliography. The chapters in this section are concerned with changes in resource use, quality of life, and the sustainability of self-governance as a result of colonization, development, and the creation of forest reserves and other environmental protection measures.


Building on the notion that the most ecologically significant areas for conservation are also home to indigenous peoples, this text discusses why that relationship exists and what benefit it may hold for merging conservation strategies with indigenous peoples’ cultural survival. In his introduc-
tion, Stevens argues that the co-existence of biodiversity hotspots and indigenous peoples is a historical product of indigenous peoples’ ability to integrate their livelihood with the functioning of the ecosystems in which they live, as well as in some cases their resistance to extractive industries and colonization of their homelands. Cogniscent of the limitations of indigenous peoples’ resource use, the text analyzes a number of ways in which indigenous peoples and environmental groups might work together in advocating for conservation. The book is oriented around four points of analysis, including indigenous peoples and protected areas, co-management or community-based management, indigenous peoples’ own conservation efforts, and potential linkages between indigenous peoples’ human rights and conservation. Each issue is described through a series of case studies from the Americas, Himalaya, Papua New Guinea, and Australia.


The Maya Atlas presents the relationship between an indigenous people and their environment in the voice, cartography and artwork developed by the Maya themselves. Forty-two Mopan and Ke’kchi Maya villages participated in the project, supplementing the maps with descriptions of land use, ceremonies, art, and outside threats. With the Atlas the Maya make the case for recognition of their homeland, supporting a variety of claims they currently have pending before the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights of the Organization of American States. Made with assistance GeoMap, a research team from Department of Geography at the University of California, Berkeley, and the Indian Law Resource Center, the book concludes with an essay by Dr. Bernard Nietschmann describing the methods and techniques used in making the maps.


In her article on alliances between indigenous and environmental organizations, Kay Treakle reviews the impact that such alliances in Ecuador have had on domestic and multi-lateral development bank policy. Based on a shared concern for the environmental impacts of agriculture policy and oil development, the alliances between indigenous organizations and environmental NGOs emphasized recognition of indigenous land rights. In doing so, NGOs and indigenous organizations were able to mobilize domestic and international resources in calling attention to the destructive environmental impacts of neo-liberal economic reforms advocated by multi-lateral development banks, including the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. The alliances that emerged were able to merge the demands of indigenous peoples for recognition of their land rights with international campaigns to reform development and lending policy. Treakle concludes that while indigenous organizations and environmental NGO efforts did little to change World Bank policy, they did influence the Ecuadorian government’s perception of what was politically possible. Nonetheless, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank were forced to recognize the negative environmental and social impacts of macro-economic policy and specific loans, resulting in new efforts to include civil society more directly in decision-making processes. Though the philo-

The alliances Mangkiling villagers have built with environmental activists and their appeal to ecotourists are two clear examples of opportunities that would not have been available to South Kalimantan villagers not been marked by the classification “primitive.” With this support, based largely on their ability to identify as “indigenous people,” Mangkiling villagers can at least try to create legitimate claims over their forests [p. 180].

… Mangkiling leaders make themselves available to work with agencies interested in community development, ecotourism, rainforest conservation, and tribal rights. It is not enough to live in the forest. One must have a stable village that can be identified and funded. One must have a distinctive culture worth studying and saving. And one must have a strong, visible leadership to articulate community concerns in ways that these agencies can understand [p. 184.]

Tsing’s article assesses how the concept of “indigenous peoples’ as a “globally circulating social category” comes to mean something to a variety of people working and living in the Dayak community of Mangkiling, in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. Tsing argues for recognition of the synergistic categories that emerge somewhere between the overly simplistic representations of the tribal people and wild forest and scholarly deconstructions of such categories that dismiss the potential of indigenous and environmental politics. This synergism—described here as a “green fantasy”—transforms environmental and village politics alike to produce new categories that hold great potential for social change. By drawing attention to collaboration, Tsing examines the terrain of social interaction between international activists and Mangkiling. These collaborations are blind to any number of seemingly contradictory details as many other critical analyses of alliances between indigenous peoples and environmental groups point out. Nonetheless these alliances mobilize substantial resources that allow indigenous communities to articulate and sustain claims to resources and land that their marginality within state society might not otherwise allow. Similarly, environmental organizations have come to depend heavily on their international constituencies’ fascination with tribal people and the level of significance that their presence in environmentally sensitive areas can lend to campaigns. As Tsing points out, sustainability has added resonance with tourists and activists alike when it is informed and practiced by tribal elders. In sum, environmentalists derive significant legitimacy in this case from their privileged understanding of tribal elders, while Dayak villagers gain international recognition for their resource claims based on their ability to engage notions of sustainability. Both sides stand to gain a great deal from these relationships, as Tsing points out.

Tsing makes second important point in her article by pointing out how the location of international values in a specific village can contribute to the making of place. Her review of three maps—one drawn by villagers, one developed by an environmental organization, and one that synthesizes both sets of information—graphically demonstrates how collaborations between environmental
groups and indigenous peoples can project a certain image of a place that is both specific to a locality and ambiguous in terms of its claims. The particular ability of maps to convey information in the language conventionally used by state planners for allocation of resources is complicated here by the very openness of territorial classifications depicted by overlapping village and governmental claims to the same places and forest resources. Coupled with the openness of identity, maps graphically depict another aspect of the room to maneuver created by alliances between indigenous peoples and environmental groups can create.


This article describes the factionalization of indigenous groups that can occur as a result of participating in resource development projects within their territories. In the case of the Kayapo of the Brazilian Amazon, the facility the younger generation had with the Brazilian language and customs enabled them to gain the authority to mediate contracts with logging and mining companies, providing for extraction of resources on Kayapo lands. However, the younger leaders’ misappropriation of profits from the concessions, as well as their apparent disregard for the benefit of the larger Kayapo community resulted in an inter-generational alliance (forged between youth and elders) to remove them from their positions of power and to cease all extractive activities. This case is useful in demonstrating how cleavages within an indigenous community may arise, as well as how fluctuating power relations within a group have important implications for how the group perceives and makes decisions about both traditional development and alternative strategies.


[T]he dynamic phenomenon of the 1980s and 1990s affecting the region’s natural resource base was not simply deforestation but conservation policies, programs and projects intended to protect forests and promote tree planting. From the perspective of human well-being or “sustainable development,” many of these initiatives were having contradictory effects. [Introduction, p. x]

This book details the results of a study which was part of a UN research program (UNRISD) on the social dynamics of deforestation in Central America, a region with one of the highest rates of deforestation on earth. The purpose of the study was to consider the broader social issues at play in deforestation—including markets, modernization and development strategies, and the resultant marginalization of certain populations. Structural conditions underlying the practice of deforestation are also examined; amongst those looked at are agrarian structure and land tenure, government policy and legislation around commercial logging and conversion to pastureland, economic restructuring and policies of structural adjustment, and civil war.

The research of Utting and his colleagues is organized around two categories of questions:
1) How do social forces and government policies underpin deforestation?

2) How are people in different socio-economic and ecological settings affected by deforestation? How does it change their livelihoods? How do they respond to environmental change?

To address these questions, the book is divided into three parts. Part 1 considers the multiple and complex causes of deforestation, including modernization schemes and “survival strategies,” and institutional and policy determinants. Part 2 looks at the breakdown of traditional resource management systems and its resulting effects on the social relations and livelihoods of local communities. Part 3 critically examines the social and ecological impacts of forest protection and reforestation policies, both conventional and “alternative.” The resultant analysis is a carefully crafted and complex work of political ecology.


This diverse collection of articles is effective in highlighting the points of tension, pitfalls, and challenges facing programs of participatory conservation in the Philippines. Produced for an UNRISD-sponsored international research program on the “Social and Political Dimensions of Environmental Protection Programs and Projects in Developing Countries,” the essays are written by scholars, an indigenous rights attorney, government officials and environmental journalists. Together, they provide a nuanced analysis of the experience of participatory conservation in the Philippines. Addressed in the articles is the question of how real has the shift to a “participatory conservation” approach been in terms of substantive environmental, developmental and political changes at both the national and local levels. Has it simply been rhetorical, remaining at the level of policy guidelines?

To provide an historical context for evaluating these changes, Marites Vitug’s article discusses the history of forest policy under the Marcos dictatorship and describes the various policy reforms initiated under the ensuing democratically elected administrations through 1998. Malayang’s and Leonen’s following two chapters look at the increasing role environmental NGOs have played in influencing state environmental policy and strategies of forest management. These two chapters also consider the limitations of NGO influence when it comes to the actual implementation and enforcement of such policies. In his article, Severino examines local stakeholders’ negative reactions to forest protection policies, and how these are linked to instances of project failure. In contrast, Bagadion’s chapter analyzes the complex social and political variables that account for a successful forest conservation initiative, extrapolating from this situation to outline a model for project success. Finally, Antonio Contreras’s paper presents a critical analysis of “sustainable development” and examines how the discourse of “sustainable development” has been appropriated by dominant elites as a means of legitimizing their own interests.

This edited volume is a collection of essays which seek to critically evaluate the assumption that the formalization and standardization of property rights through state legislation necessarily results in increased economic development. Approached through a series of case studies taken from Papua New Guinea, Irian Jaya, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and Thailand, the authors all “examine the empirical relationship between property rights and economic development as it unfolds in the historical and contemporary practices of a wide range of Southeast Asian and Oceanic societies,” (p.7), interrogating the impacts of Western notions of private ownership rights within particular, historical contexts.

Chapter 1, a functional analysis of property rights, by Franz and Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, sets forth a highly useful evaluation of the multiple, context-dependent layers of property relations encountered in different societies. The authors seek to establish an analytical framework “for giving due attention to the variation of empirical property relationships at the different layers of social organization and to their multifunctional characteristics,” (p. 22). Their analysis is a helpful alternative to institutionalist approaches that fail to distinguish between the different, yet interconnected, layers of property relations: for example, rules, social relationships and social practices. In contrast to economistic discussions of property, the authors wish to highlight the ways in which property may be attributed “social” and “political” functions: for example, serving to provide social security, guarantee the social continuity of a group, or function as a vital element in the exercise of power. The von Beckman's analysis offers an alternative to the unidimensional view of homo economicus favored by economists and policy-makers, and provides more a more comprehensive basis upon which to base predictions about property relations.

Also of particular interest is chapter 10, by Toon von Meijl, which discusses some of the impacts of the 1980 legislation in New Zealand which has allowed Maori people to re-acquire ownership of lost lands and other resources. The tribal struggle for return of the land is seen as important in both reaffirming Maori identity as indigenous “people of the land” and providing an economic basis for sustaining tribal organizations in rural New Zealand. Von Meijl’s analysis challenges the optimistic view held by many in New Zealand and other “fourth world” nations that “the settlement with Maori tribal organizations of long-standing grievances will provide a vehicle for the social and economic advancement of the Maori people,” (p. 286). In fact, the settlements enacted to date have been fraught with controversy and have created divisions both within and between tribes, as well as having produced negligible benefits for the large, urban Maori population. Clearly, there are many difficulties in re-instituting a tribal system of land tenure in the context of a 150-year regime of Western private property rights.


In this article, Varese identifies two main emphases of indigenous peoples’ movements that have
consistently recurred since the time of conquest. The first concept, that of a “moral ecology,” emphasizes the continuous importance of territorial rights inclusive of resources and land to indigenous mobilizations, referencing a series of examples from a Maya rebellion in 1543 on up through pan-indigenous organizing in the Amazon Basin in the early 1990s. The second concept Varese stresses is that of a “moral economy” in which resource use is prioritized for subsistence and ceremonial uses, with the remainder suitable for any number of exchange purposes, including in markets. Varese argues that both points stress the fundamental importance of reciprocity as a key value guiding indigenous perceptions of resource use and economic production. This concept forms the basis of a generic indigenous “moral system” in Latin America that “privileges the principles and norms of reciprocity as opposed to those of individual accumulation and an ecological conception of the universe as opposed to one that is utilitarian and exploitative” (p. 69). Collectively, Varese argues, this moral system places a priority on individual and collective rights to subsistence as a fundamental component of indigenous cultures that is non-negotiable.


Taking its title from the practice in Rwanda shared by Hutus and Tutsis alike of never drinking from the same source as Batwa people, the papers in this volume present an overview of the nature and scope of issues pertaining to indigenous groups in Africa. Like many other documents of similar nature published by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), the papers presented cover a broad spectrum of perspectives, including statements by indigenous peoples, academics, lawyers, government officials and NGO activists. Accordingly, the volume presents a number of perspectives on who indigenous peoples are in Africa and how they might be identified amongst post-colonial states in which everyone is arguably indigenous.

The introductory essay by editors Veber and Dahl provides a critical analysis of the concept of indigeneity in Africa, stating that all participants in the conference agreed on the definition of the term as implying “peoples with strong ties to their lands, who have been in the region since before colonization, were now dominated by other peoples from whom their cultures were markedly different and who identify themselves as indigenous (cf. Colchester 1993: pp. 38)” (p. 10). Several of the authors take issue with aspects of this definition in subsequent articles, and Veber and Dahl themselves offer a useful critique of the several of the individual concepts contained within the definition. In particular, they address four positions on defining indigeneity. The first is a structuralist approach that designates subordination to a dominant society as the defining characteristic. Secondly, they critique the “substantial approach” which emphasizes the particular content of the culture in defining indigeneity, emphasizing hunter-gatherers, agriculturalists, pastoralists, etc. in designating cultures that conform to narrow definitions of “traditional.” A third approach prioritizes the historical continuity of a group to a territory occupied by their ancestors, ignoring the fact that many potentially indigenous peoples of Africa are historically mobile. Finally, the authors address the limits of self-determination emphasized by many indigenous peoples on other continents. Such a definition implies that people make a rational choice to be indigenous, ignoring the fact that they may often be
structurally and culturally marginalized in ways beyond their control. In sum, the authors argue that indigeneity is best understood as an identity produced by a number of factors that cut across the approaches they critique. They note that the process of identifying indigenous peoples in Africa is more complicated for decision makers and international human rights activists than it is for the people who self-identify as indigenous, alluding to the highly political nature of claiming indigeneity in Africa.

The remainder of the book offers critical insight on the positions set forth in the introduction, categorizing papers into four geographic regions. Part One covers the pastoralists of eastern Africa, emphasizing the importance of land rights to the Barabaig people of Tanzania and the Maasai in Kenya. Part Two compiles articles on and statements made by people collectively referred to as “bushmen” living in southern Africa. Part Three addresses the status of Pygmies in central Africa, including several pieces on the Batwa or Twa people of Rwanda. Part Four describes the status of Tuareg people of northern Africa, taking a markedly different approach to indigeneity that characteristic of a structuralist approach.

The volume concludes with a section on “Indigenous Peoples and the Colonial State” which looks at the role of the colonial legacy in shaping ethnic difference in Africa. M. A. Mohamed Salih criticizes post-colonial African states for their attempts to fit political power to colonial boundaries, often at the hands of a particular ethnic group. The emphasis on land rights that these states place in their claims to power, Salih argues, poses a considerable risk for genocide.


Vitug, a Filipina investigative journalist, gives an account of the politics underlying the crisis of deforestation in the Philippines. Based on years of her own research on environmental issues, *Power from the Forest* depicts the massive plundering of old-growth forests by politicians, military officers and other high-ranking officials. Vitug traces out the historical context from which practices of large-scale deforestation have emerged: the impacts of colonial forestry, contemporary government land-use policies (particularly the conversion of forest to logging and agriculture), commercial logging, and the role of a large, landless peasantry displaced by the plantation system. Chapter 8 is specifically concerned with the situation of indigenous groups who have been displaced from forest lands by timber concessions. Vitug describes the opposition they have faced in engaging legislation supposedly designed to secure their rights to ancestral lands. The book also includes several useful appendices—of greatest interest is Appendix I, which details the recipients of Timber License Agreements by region (including the size and duration of the concession, names of board of directors, officers and major stockholders).


Indeed, the paradox of Ogoniland is that an accident of geological history—the location of
more than ten major oilfields within its historic territory—conferred upon the Ogonis little
more than massive ecological destruction and profound economic backwardness.

Though the Ogoni have not addressed themselves formally to the international concept of
indigenous peoples, their political position with regard to the Nigerian state and many of their
demands to greater control over development in their historic territory resonate with any number of
indigenous peoples' demands elsewhere in the world. Watts's article provides a historical overview of
the formation of the Nigerian state from colonial times forward, describing the role of ethnicity in
colonial rule and the consolidation of post-colonial political and economic power. At each step in
this history, the Ogoni have remained a marginalized ethnic group, in spite of the fact that resources
from their historic territory have fueled the wealth and development of Ibo-dominated Nigeria. The
article provides critical insight into the ways that resources—in this case oil—come to be emblematic
of struggles over political and economic power, accentuating the ethnic inequalities and regional
unevenness of development along lines similar to those established under colonial rule. This concep-
tual framework provides historical depth and political insight that can inform understandings of
similar struggles elsewhere that involving indigenous peoples. It also suggests the unevenness of
power in decolonized Africa that has concentrated power in the hands of various ethnic groups with
marginalizing any number of “ethnic minorities.”

West, Patrick C. & Steven R. Brechin, eds. 1991. Resident Peoples and National Parks:
Social Dilemmas and Strategies in International Conservation. Tucson: University of Ari-
izona Press.

This multidisciplinary volume consciously attempts to represent a range of views on the subject
of resident peoples in protected areas; no one particular ideological perspective or disciplinary ap-
proach is favored in the book. The case studies are taken from both First- and Third-world nations
and all focus on the situations of “traditional tribal societies” or “modernizing peasant populations”
as local populations of designated national parks. The authors strive both to present the negative
impacts of conservation policies and management strategies and to provide concrete examples of
“creative attempts to deal with ways of accommodating the cultures and rural development needs of
local peoples in the developing world,” (Intro., p. xx).

The book provides a critical assessment of what “benefits” conservationist strategies of
“ecodevelopment” have produced for local people. It speaks to the need for hard, scientific data that
confirms that the local people actually derive tangible benefits from “community-based” or “commu-

ity-oriented” programs. Using empirical data from real cases, the authors seek to uncover whether
the rhetorical goals of “local” control and management are really being implemented. Included
articles examine such issues as resident displacement, the use of natural resources by local popula-
tions, the implications of making parklands off-limits to humans for local rural development, and
discuss methods of conflict resolution.

Several chapters are particularly relevant to our discussion of indigenous peoples. Chapter 1 by
Brechin, et al, usefully lays out a theoretical framework for discussing the problem of resident
peoples in protected areas. This article establishes a strong background of the multiple issues and
groups involved: it provides a definition and typology of resident peoples in protected areas, a classi-
ification scheme for the different types of protected areas and an analysis of important basic concepts in cultural preservation and rural development. Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 discuss the displacement of resident tribal groups from national parks in India and Africa. The following sections examine development strategies based on sustainable local resource use and tourism, and include discussions of indigenous peoples in Nepal, Colombia, North America, Malaysia and Australia. The latter sections examine the potentials and drawbacks of joint management strategies for integrating conservation, development, and cultural preservation objectives.


Without their land base, Indians may be able to survive as individuals in the dominant economy and culture of their non-Indian neighbors, but they will not be able to survive and prosper as distinct peoples with distinct cultures and traditions. [p. 348]

Wiggins, a Miskito Indian from the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, recounts in this article of number of political and theoretical points in need of consideration for thinking through alliances between indigenous peoples and environmentalists. Arguing that indigenous peoples are doing anything but disappearing, Wiggins notes the centrality of land rights to many indigenous peoples. Wiggins recounts a number of recent cases in which relations between indigenous peoples’ organizations and environmental groups have been strained by poor communication of goals, failure to adequately understand the importance of land and resources to indigenous peoples, and conflicts over representation. In particular, the author references efforts by conservationists to designate indigenous territories as a national park in Ecuador in order to halt petroleum development; the prospect of debt-for-nature swaps involving indigenous peoples territories in the Amazon; protection of Yanomami land rights as a means to stop destruction of forests and pollution caused by mining in Brazil, and; sustainable development initiatives led by Miskito Indians in Nicaragua. In all cases, alliances have either failed or succeeded to the extent that indigenous use of resources and access to land are recognized as rights of the community. In guiding this debate, Wiggins reviews binding and non-binding international law that recognizes indigenous peoples’ human right to live in and control their ancestral territories will contribute to the greater social equity necessary for effective conservation of resources and sustainable development.


This article discusses the circumstances of “Remote Area Dwellers” (RADs), a title given by the Botswana Government to small, scattered communities throughout the Kalahari—“normally of hunter-gatherer (San, Bushmen, Baswara), not Tswana agro-pastoral origin,” (p. 6). Today the RAD population is characterized by its “extreme poverty, landlessness, and dependence upon the state…for even basic subsistence,” (p. 6). The Botswana Remote Area Development Programme (RADP), developed in the early 1970s, became a means of sedentarizing, “civilizing” and villagizing Baswara through their aggregation and relocation in “settlement” villages. As a result of this project, many of
the RAD population have lost access and/ or all rights to their traditional lands. Others continue to reside on their lands, but are seen as “squatters” by the cattle-owning Tswara who immigrated there at the urging of the state.

This case is an example of how States frequently fail to recognize the customary land tenure systems of indigenous peoples, whose traditional uses of the land do not meet state standards of land “use” or development (where land use is defined as cultivation). Unfortunately in the Botswana case, due to a lack of Baswara group consciousness and political organization, the Baswara have met state appropriation of their tribal lands largely with silence and compliance. This has only contributed to their continued dispossession from the land. Nevertheless, recent instances of RAD mobilization through the establishment of two organizations indicate the emergence of both “voice” and advocacy. Wily argues that if RADs are to have any hope of maintaining their traditional lifestyle and cultural integrity, RAD activists must urgently compel the government to begin “identification, registration, and certification of existing (customary) rights of occupancy of RADs/ Baswara.” (p. 18).


Winzeler’s edited volume compiles detailed case studies addressing the various ways in which indigenous peoples in peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak, Brunei and Kalimantan are identified and constructed as subjects of the Malaysian and Indonesian states. In the introduction, Winzeler argues that indigenous peoples in post-colonial, “indigenous” states are best understood in terms of their relationship to the state power. In the absence of clear patterns of “settler-colonial domination comparable to the New World,” Australia and New Zealand, indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia are best understood in terms of their relationships to developing post-colonial states that institute or expand on policies often inherited from colonial governments. The modern states of Indonesia and Malaysia have in fact gone much further in their effort to cultural and socially transform indigenous peoples into subjects of the state than their colonial predecessors as the chapters in this volume illustrate. This concept of indigeneity is useful to understanding the role of indigenous peoples in post-colonial states.

Many of the chapters in this volumes address the inter-relationships between state efforts to assimilate indigenous peoples in state society and natural resource development, primarily logging. Kirk Endicott’s chapter on the Batek people of peninsular Malaysia examines the changes that logging brings to an indigenous people as they move from a nomadic lifestyle to sedentary communities in response to government logging policy, and the difficulties such a transformation implies for their autonomy and cultural identity. Ida Nicolaisen’s chapter entitled “Timber, Culture, and Ethnicity: The Politicization of Ethnic Identity among the Punan Bah” examines the way in which the traditional organization of power in Punan Bah communities contradicts with the role of the forest in their indigenous identity. Though many of the community members describe the negative impact of logging to their livelihood, the leadership of the community has allowed logging directly within the community.

[T]ribes’ land bases are the linchpin to tribal existence and autonomy as sovereign nations… they continue to be the core and integral foundation of tribal existence. [pp. 151-152]

It is the traditional ecological knowledge—an interactive natural world science—which has preserved many tribal homelands in pristine condition and protected medicines and foods for generations. This traditional ecological knowledge held by indigenous peoples of the United States will continue to be the beacon for tribal ways of life to guide us into the next century. [p. 152]

Wolfley highlights the need to incorporate a tribal perspective into the practice of ecological risk assessment and management. She argues that most risk assessments altogether ignore project impacts on tribal homelands or on treaty-conferred hunting, fishing, and gathering rights. Affected tribal governments are completely left out of policy-making decisions. Nevertheless, the solution to the effacement of tribal presence within risk assessment will not involve the mere insertion of the “Indian factor” into the present techno-scientific model, for Wolfley warns, “[I]nstitutionalized science and technology… attempt to justify human actions to manipulate, contaminate, and deteriorate the environment,” (p. 152). Rather, the model must be restructured to acknowledge the urgency of cultural values and diversity alongside biological diversity; “[C]ultural knowledge must be considered equally in evaluating and planning for future projects or activities impacting tribal rights and resources,” (p. 153). Wolfley believes that tribal ecological understanding can and must play a vital role in preserving both the environment and the tribal communities that inhabit it.


ABSTRACT

In rural Africa differences in modes of subsistence are widely represented as ethnic differences. A fundamental distinction is often made between agriculturalists, pastoralists and hunter-gatherers. Evidence suggests that these categories are indigenous and enduring. This article focuses on serious discrimination against hunter-gatherer ethnic minorities. The forms of discrimination considered are negative stereotypes, denial of rights and segregation. Reasons underlying these forms of discrimination are analyzed—the political weakness of hunter-gatherers, the distorted notions that they are impoverished, backward, uncivilized, eaters of revolting foods and animal-like or child-like in their behavior. Less negative notions are also assessed: hunter-gatherers as original inhabitants, their identification with fertility and as shedders of blood. Religious responses to such hegemonic ideologies and to discrimination are considered. Hunter-gatherer religions are not usually religions of protest but are focused on their own sense of self-worth, on the celebration of their distinctive ways of life, on health and well being.
Woodburn argues that in spite of the difficulties of identifying indigenous peoples in Africa, there are distinct classes of people whom are discriminated against by dominant societies on the basis of their specific relationship to the environment. In making his case, Woodburn uses the example of hunter-gatherers to demonstrate the particular forms of institutionalized discrimination against these groups even in situations where those groups may share certain elements of their culture, including language, with dominant society. As such indigeneity is not so much a racial category, but rather a lifestyle characterized by particular patterns of settlement and resource use.


Karl Zimmerer addresses the fundamental relationship between Quechua farmers in the Paucartambo Andes of southern Peru and the world-renown diversity of agricultural crops they maintain. Zimmerer critically addresses the much heralded call for *in situ* conservation of biological diversity (cf. Brush and Stabinsky 1996) by assessing the variety of cultural, ecological, political and economic forces that affect the ability of Quechua farmers to maintain crop diversity. Though widespread loss of crop diversity has occurred, it has occurred unevenly according to any number of biogeographic, cultural and economic factors. In areas where biological diversity has been maintained, it has not so much been a factor of accordance to strictly “traditional” forms of land use, such as vertical tiering across a variety of altitudes, but rather through the degree to which Quechua farmers could exercise degrees political, economic, and cultural flexibility. This flexibility has gone so far to include the re-invention of Quechua identity and traditions in many communities. Zimmerer’s conclusions challenge the notion that indigenous resource management techniques are inherently “sound” or “sustainable,” implying quite the opposite; they are dynamic and constantly changing, succeeding at certain tasks while failing at others. Any soundness that indigenous resource management strategies is facilitate by the flexibility of Quechua farmers to dynamically respond to change. Zimmerer concludes that certain forms of development—and not a whole scale rejection of development—have best allowed for the maintenance of biological diversity, concentrating biological diversity conservation unevenly through the region. While trends towards the consumption of cheap, processed food stuffs such as noodles have threatened crop diversity, sale of crops in the market has facilitated the ability of some farmers to maintain crop diversity. In turn, this same diversity is now increasingly valued by agro-industrial crop breeders, and Quechua farmers should receive some form of compensation for their contribution to the development of new crop varieties.
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Founded in late 1996, the **BERKELEY WORKSHOP ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS** emerged from a long-standing commitment to environmental studies on the Berkeley campus and from the presence of a core group of faculty whose research and scholarly interests linked environment, culture, and political economy. The workshop draws together over fifty faculty and doctoral students from San Francisco Bay Area institutions (the University of California campuses at Berkeley, Santa Cruz, and Davis, and Stanford University) who share a common concern with problems that stand at the intersection of the environmental and social sciences, the humanities and law. The Berkeley Workshop on Environmental Politics has three broad functions:

- to assist graduate training and scholarly research by deepening the theoretical and methodological toolkit appropriate to understanding environmental concerns in an increasingly globalized world;
- to bring together constituencies of local and international scholars, activists, and policy makers for transnational conversations on environmental issues; and,
- to bring community activists and policymakers to Berkeley as Residential Fellows, thus providing synergistic possibilities for developing new learning and research communities.

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