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## The Indians and Brazil

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perhaps on more defensible ground when he includes reference to the Jívaro and the Yahgan, who are described in their respective ethnographic literatures as living in dispersed families. Yet, even here, the families belonged to bands that came together for warfare among the Jívaro and for important ceremonies among the Yahgan. Perhaps it should be mentioned that Johnson does not distinguish the Ona and Yahgan but instead refers generally to Tierra del Fuego.

Some other issues might be raised in considering the publication under review, but they are relatively minor or overly recondite, having to do with points of information and interpretational details, methodological problems and philosophical stance.

***The Indians and Brazil.* Mercio Pereira Gomes. Translated by John W. Moon. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000. xvi + 300 pp., notes, appendices, bibliography. \$55.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-8130-1720-3. [www.upf.com]**

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This book is an anthropological study of the relations between Brazilian society and the indigenous peoples who live within Brazil's borders. Central to an understanding of this association is an appreciation of the history of the dealings between the two peoples. Gomes presents three different phases through which these parties have passed. The early phase, during which the War of Extermination occurred, was when many Indians were killed or enslaved as Portuguese colonial dominance was established. The middle phase was when Brazilians conceptualized Indians as *caboclos* (tame Indians) and foisted a paternalistic relationship on them (p. 54). The present phase is characterized by what Gomes calls "the Indian demographic turnaround" (p.x), in which, beginning in about the late 1950s (p. 91), indigenous populations increased rather than decreased to the point of extinction. Today they have ceased to be *caboclos* and are in the process of affirming their ethnic identity.

However, having described this sequence, Gomes offers the tantalizing observation that what is important about this history is the role Indians have played in the construction of the Brazilian self-image and consciousness. He places indigenous peoples at the core of the process whereby Brazilians forged their national identity, and he warns that, although this may offer Indians their greatest chance of survival, economic realities may ultimately defeat them (p. 12). From early royal orders and recommendations to debates about Indians that took place during the Brazilian empire on into the twentieth century when the Indian Protection Service (SPI) was created and Indian rights were debated at national constitutional conferences, Gomes shows us the key position

indigenous peoples have occupied in Brazil over the centuries.

He charts the sequence of events through which Indians ceased to be treated as children, even by anti-Indian forces, and Brazilians began to think seriously about a new Indian policy based on ethnic survival and respectful coexistence (p. 99). For such a policy to be constructed, the author contends that the average Brazilian needs to be better informed about indigenous cultures. In chapter four he summarizes the wide variation that exists between the remaining two hundred or so Indian groups. He also explains the role that Brazilian anthropologists have played in contributing to our understanding of how the indigenous populations were decimated and how they struggle to survive (p. 154). Starting with Curt Nimuendajú and Herbert Baldus in the 1920s and 1930s, he describes the foundation of studies that document the ways in which Indians are profoundly different culturally as well as how they are political beings fighting for themselves in a larger political world.

In the last seventy-five pages or so of the text, Gomes discusses the plight of Indians today and their future as he sees it. He cogently lays out the field, identifying the forces that are negatively affecting “the Indian question.” Economic interests in the form of mining and logging; colonization projects and squatting; the construction of dams, railways, and highways that are financed by international lending institutions and are part of national development programs, together head up a list of formidable threats to Indians. The military and the Roman Catholic Church are also discussed. On the side of the Indian, he cites members of society who from time to time rally for indigenous causes, including Brazilian anthropologists, the press, and occasionally, lawyers.

Gomes claims, in concluding, that, as a result of the demographic turnaround and the way the Indians are perceived by Brazilians, indigenous peoples are politically organizing themselves. He refers to the new generation of indigenous leaders, many of whom live in Brazilian cities so that they can better organize and interact with powerful parties. By the 1990s practically every Indian group had its own NGO (p. 226), and some of these have tried to obtain economic help from foreign NGOs and the World Bank. He states that the survival of the Brazilian Indians is a goal that is in reach of Brazil and humanity, and that Indians and Brazilians must be partners in a common destiny (p. 244).

Gomes, who is the new president of FUNAI (the National Indian Foundation), has written an important analysis of the history of relations between two distinct peoples. He is in control of both his historical facts and his ethnographic details. His discussions are in-depth and rigorous. In the end he offers wise and intelligent advice, calling for the development of policies that will benefit both indigenous and nonindigenous Brazilians. He is informed about the economic and political realities that Indians are up against. Yet, he is filled with hope and inspiration about what can be done to ensure that they prevail.

The only shortcoming of the book that I feel compelled to identify concerns the theoretical analysis, which could benefit from greater development. In trying to account for why Brazilians assumed that the Indians would become extinct, he refers to the paradigm of acculturation. This model assumes that when two cultures come together, the stronger one will overpower the weaker (p. ix). This clearly has not happened in Brazil. He then calls for the development of a new paradigm, that of cultural diversity, that will include concepts such as self-determination, autonomy, ethnic survival, and cultural resistance (p. 243). In neither case does he provide the reader with an understanding of the theoretical issues involved or the relevant literature.

This book is appropriate for use in the classroom by undergraduate and graduate students from a wide variety of disciplines, by policy makers, by those who are interested in indigenous populations all over Latin America, by historians, and by members of development and conversation organizations.

*Kayapó Ethnoecology and Culture*. Darrel A. Posey (Kristina Plenderleith, editor). New York: Routledge, 2002. xviii + 285 pp., figures, tables, foreword, glossary, index. \$80.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-415-27791-4. [www.routledge.com]

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Those of us who had the privilege of knowing Darrell Posey personally will not be surprised by the exuberant humanism, eloquence, vibrancy, and scientific depth of this book, which is an edited collection of some of his most important work. The book is a tribute not only to his depth and breadth as an anthropologist, but also to the superb effort of his editors and friends to bring these articles to print even as Darrell lay dying of brain cancer. Darrell inspired many people, and that inspiration is reflected in the superb workmanship and quality of this publication.

Of the dozens of important contributions written by Darrell Posey alone or in collaboration with other authors, this volume collects twenty-one that not only reflect the core of his scientific work with the Kayapó people of Brazil but his commitment to their stewardship of a unique environment and continuation as a people. After long hours of flying across the Amazon to a place he thought was incredibly isolated, Darrell discovered that the people he chose to study were being threatened by the encroachment of a nearby *fazenda* destroying the rainforest that was the home of his new friends. Trained as an entomologist, geographer, and anthropologist to do the precise and sometimes tedious work of a field scientist, Darrell could not ignore the global implications of the conflict between the ancient culture he studied and the forces of impending obliteration.