Indigenism, Resurgence, and the Contemporary Global Condition of Indigenous Peoples: “Resurgent Indigenism”

Resurgence

Anthropology After Extinction

Why “Resurgence”?

Examples: “Red Power”
WCIP
1992
Rigoberta Menchú
Suriname, Guatemala, Zapatista rebellion (Mexico)
UNPFII
Vine Deloria, Ward Churchill, etc.
Native Title actions
Evo Morales (Bolivia)
Idle No More (Canada)
Indigeneity

“Maori culture is not something that has been lost, it is the loss; being ‘a Maori’ is struggling to be a Maori” (Webster 1993:228)

Essentialism vs. Processualism

“Indigenous” as a relational term
1829: Western Australia was colonized
1836: South Australia was colonized
1919: Australia was given mandates over Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands
→ Were there any “indigenous peoples” before 1492?

→ *indigenous* came into being as a result of European conquest

→ *indigeneity* to refer to a process, a project of *becoming*
Problems and Questions with Definitions of “Indigenous” as Being

→ Jose Martinez Cobo, the Special Rapporteur to the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, in his lengthy 1986 report titled, “Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations”, stated that:

“Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which have a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems” (Cobo 1986, 5: para. 379)


→ Self-identification as indigenous:

Cobo emphasized self-identification as central to the definition of indigenous (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1986/7/Add.4. para.381) and stresses historical precedence and cultural difference as aspects of indigenous status.

→ The ILO in 1989:

“self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of the Convention apply” (ILO 1989: Article 1.2)
→ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA): **350 million people worldwide are considered to be indigenous, at least 5,000 different linguistic groups.**

→ no single, universally agreed upon and fixed definition of “indigenous” under international law

**Indigenism**

→ *Not* “indigenismo”—indigenismo as state policy in Mexico, vs. “indigenism” as a philosophy and practice of politicized indigeneity, even as a form of “Indigenous Nationalism”
→ State vs. Indigenous nation
→ Incorporation vs. Autonomy
→ centrality of identity, legitimacy, belonging, and *ownership*