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CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

Leadership for the Ecozoic is Moving to the Department of Anthropology!

By Dina Spigelski (McGill University)

McGill's Leadership for the Ecozoic (L4E) project is thrilled to announce that it is moving to the Department of Anthropology and is now co-led by CICADA's Colin Scott and L4E's founding director Peter G. Brown, who is cross appointed with the Bieler School of Environment and Departments of Geography and Natural Resource Sciences. This move is made possible by a gift from a private donor to fund PhD students and staff at both McGill University and the University of Vermont to advance the L4E vision and mission. The mandates of L4E and CICADA intersect and complement each other very well, presenting unique opportunities for major collaborative engaged research and pedagogy—CICADA in the arena of decolonizing approaches to the defense and resurgence of Indigenous 'territories of life' through projects driven by the collective 'life projects' of Indigenous communities; and L4E by mobilizing graduate education for a radical re-make of paradigms that underwrite the disciplines of Law and



Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre, Ontario, 2016.

Governance, Ethics, and Economics and Finance. L4E has two major nodes of activity: "Anthropology for the Ecozoic," led by Eduardo Kohn at McGill, and "Ecological Economics," led by Joshua Farley at the University of Vermont. These nodes house several research groups including the Law and Governance Research Group and the Ecozoic Policy Project. This fall, a

second cohort of very talented L4E fellows began their PhDs at one of the two universities, making it a total of 18 L4E Fellows.

The Ecozoic, "a vision for the future founded on mutually enhancing relationships between human societies and the global community of life through the lens of social justice," enlists innovations in transdisciplinary scholarship to focus higher education on research-to-action healing and restoration of Earth's life support systems. For more information, see [L4E's Strategic Plan](#), [L4E's website](#) or follow L4E on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#). ●



L4E Cohort 1: Population Field Course in New York City, 2019.



Why Participatory Video/Cellphilm and Why Now?

On June 10, CICADA and the Centre for Visual Methodologies for Social Change at McGill University co-hosted the online symposium, “Why Participatory Video/Cellphilm and Why Now?” The online conference was an opportunity for researchers and educators whose work involves supporting communities through participatory video or cellphilm techniques, to share and discuss their experiences and insights (a cellphilm is a short video with a concise and specific message that is shot entirely on a cell phone or tablet, often created in accordance with a previously-designed storyboard, rather than with more conventional methods of piecing a story together in the editing process after filming). The symposium began with a panel on the birth of cellphilm in Africa, following which practitioners gathered for a roundtable discussion on the relevance of participatory video and cellphilm practices today. What ensued was a rich and lively exchange, in which participants’ contributions included presentations on how they have incorporated participatory visual methodologies in their recent work; how they

have endeavoured, through this work, to foster meaningful social change; how their work has been received and taken up by the communities they are working with; some of the challenges and opportunities that they have discovered in using these tools and methods; how their work with these tools and methods has evolved over the years; their thoughts on some of the most important and relevant aspects of this work in today’s world; and what hopes the practitioners have for future uses of these tools.

Participatory video and photovoice comprise one of the two methodological axes of CICADA, and one symposium participant, Ramson Karmushu, Research Coordinator with the Indigenous Movement for Peace Advancement and Conflict Transformation (IMPACT), in Nanyuki, Kenya, received video equipment and training on participatory visual methodologies from CICADA Research Associate Steven Schnoor, at a training workshop held in Durban, South Africa, in November 2018. He also received photovoice training there from CICADA co-investigator and McGill professor of education, Claudia Mitchell. In Karmushu’s conference presentation, he offered a compelling account of the important role that this equipment and knowledge has subsequently played in

his work with IMPACT, from documenting the stories of Maasai elders to advocating for some of the pressing challenges facing community members today.



CICADA-led participatory video training workshop in Durban, South Africa, 2018. Photo: Steven Schnoor.

The symposium also featured presentations on three recently-released guides for practitioners of participatory video and cellphilm techniques, and a session focusing on the use of these tools for social and environmental change. The conference concluded with the 9th McGill International Cellphilm Festival. The festival had received over 50 entries of videos in line with this year’s theme of “Transformation.” The winners in five different categories were announced and screened, with each winning team taking home a \$500 prize. Further details, including the videos of all of the entrants, can be found at internationalcellphilmfestival.com. ●

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Indigenous Mapping Seminar, May 2021

By Benoit Éthier (UQAT)



Closing ceremony of the Indigenous Mapping Seminar, May 14, 2021.

The Indigenous Mapping Seminar was held from May 12 to 14 and brought together several researchers and Indigenous partners who are CICADA members. The goal

of this seminar was to promote the mobilization and dissemination of knowledge related to Indigenous participatory mapping in order to equip Indigenous partners, research specialists and graduates to carry out participatory mapping in the communities. The event virtually brought together members of the academic scientific community, graduates and Indigenous research partners to share their research results and their expertise in Indigenous mapping. About thirty speakers—about half of which were CICADA members—were involved. Between 100 and 200 people attended each of the three days of the seminar. All the presentations and the summary report of the event are available on the seminar website (in French): www.uqat.ca/seminaire-cartographies-autochtones/.●

Indigenous Mapping Web Series

By Léa Denieul (PhD student, Concordia University)

What does mapping mean for Indigenous communities today? What are the main objectives of Indigenous mapping projects? What are the influences of ancestral spatial knowledge and Western colonization in these spatial expressions? Overall, what roles do maps and mapping play in contexts of education (of communities, of outside publics) as well as in social and legal contexts? These are some of the questions that have inspired us to create a Web Series showcasing the diverse work of Indigenous communities, activists, artists, and scholars within the CICADA and MappingBack networks involved in Indigenous mapping.

In order to maximize the visibility of these projects and the usefulness of this initiative for partnering communities, we have decided to work within a very flexible framework in which map-makers decide how they would like to present projects and what kind of as-

sistance they need (if any) to produce their videos. Taken together, this series of case studies and stories are a window into the diversity, richness, and importance of contemporary Indigenous mapping practices and outcomes.

To kick us off, a team from the Resguardo Cañamomo Lomapijeta (Colombia) will explain how they are designing and implementing their own

geographic information system (GIS) for the protection and recovery of the Cañamomo Lomapijeta Indigenous Reserve. Their goal is to guarantee access to cartographic information of the territory by and for Indigenous people for management, administration, follow-up and monitoring decisions.

Stay tuned for the first episode to be released on the web!●



“This system is seen as a tool to know and protect our territory, to understand needs of the land, its forms of use, the necessities in terms of regulation and tenure. From the beginning we have counted on the participation of community members to advance collectively in the process.”

- Claudia Zorany Ayala Leon, project coordinator



Hurricane Grace and its

Shared by Pierre Beaucage (University of Montreal)

This is an account of Hurricane Grace, as experienced by a resident of San Miguel Tzinacapan, who is a cultural activist at the community radio station “Radio Tsinaka.”

Saturday, August 21

At midnight, Hurricane Grace began to be felt in San Miguel Tzinacapan. The sounds of wind were accompanied by little rain, and the lights went out immediately. Between 1 and 4 o'clock in the morning, it was felt with greater intensity. The roof sheets began to fly off and fall on other houses. Many trees were toppled and blown away. The internet signal went down. Houses were flooded, clothes got soaked, windows were blown open. Some families had to leave in the middle of the night, into the rain and wind, to take shelter with a relative or neighbour. Some were too far away to do so and took shelter under their tables. No one slept.

At 8 o'clock in the morning, they began to look for sheet-metal roofs and remove the water from the houses. Some of the roofing sheets had already been taken by people, while others were bent or destroyed. There was no longer any drinking water because trees in the mountain had fallen on the pipes and

interrupted the system. In our fatigue, we began to repair some of the roofs. The price of sheet metal had already gone up.

We began the household dynamics that we would follow for the next few days: collecting rainwater or carrying it from the pier, standing in long lines outside the mill and the *tortillera* (tortilla bakery) that were operating with a generator, or grinding nixtamal in the mill or the *metate* (mortar) to feed ourselves.



A house stripped of its roof sheet in Sierra Norte de Puebla, Mexico.

Sunday, August 22

We are still without electricity and potable water. In the midst of rebuilding houses, roofs, lifting trees and cutting up the pepper crops that the hurricane had uprooted, we dare to rehearse some dances for the party. We repeat, there is no drinking water and we are in the midst of a pandemic. Fortun-

ately, it rained and we stored enough water.

Monday, August 23

Tzinacapan continues without electricity and potable water. Apparently, it is the same for the entire region, since not a single radio station can be heard of those that usually reach us from Poza Rica and Tuxpan.

Life goes on between cleaning the pepper crops, picking ripe plantains thrown by the hurricane, and raising coffee plants with green fruit. Squirrels and birds come to eat guavas and plantains. What will they eat next?

During the night, electricity and cellular signal were reestablished in the municipal capital, Cuetzalan. Some people who work there were able to communicate by this means.

Most of the people have no work.

It rained again and the buckets, *tambos* (steel drums), tamale steamers and rice cookers were filled with water.

Tuesday, August 24

Tzinacapan continues without electricity and potable water. Work has begun in the bush. The roads are not recognizable because there are enormous

Aftermath: Sarai's Diary

trees that have collapsed onto them. People continue to grind nixtamal or wait in long lines at the *tortillera* or generator-powered mill, whose price is a little higher.

Some women go to the river to wash clothes. It did not rain today.



A field damaged by the hurricane.

Wednesday, August 25

It is not yet dawn and at the water basin there are already dozens of people carrying water to bathe. They even wash their clothes there, in the sinks that were built a few years ago. The whole morning was spent coming and going from the basin with jugs, gallons, *parihuelas* (wheelbarrows), *mecapales* (a kind of conveyor belt) and even bottles of water.

More than 100 men were involved in the water work and they were able to connect the largest pipes, but the entire system has not yet been reestablished.

We are still without electricity; however, there is electricity in Jonotla now, so the cell phone signal from there reaches the neighborhood of Tatempan. Once again, it rained a little.

Thursday, August 26

The collapsed utility poles in Chilkouta are still on the ground. The electricians from CFE (Federal Electricity Commission) travel to the communities but still do not repair ours. The schools begin to announce the tasks that lie ahead, their meetings, and their need to organize to return to classes in the midst of a pandemic and a hurricane. They are using the *perifoneo* (loudspeakers) as a means of communication. The other water committees begin to organize to repair their system.

In the afternoon, drinking water reaches the houses of Tzinacapan. It arrived long before the workers who fixed it in the forest. But there is still a lot of rebuilding to be done and the work will continue, as well as cooperation to buy the material that is needed.

Friday, August 27

Those who have gone to Cuetzalan to charge their cell phones and get a little signal hear that another cyclone is coming this weekend. Some houses already have roofs, while others are still open.

From wherever you are, you hear axes and saws cutting trees, the generators of the *tortillera* and the nixtamal mill.

Bacterial, viral and fungal diseases are beginning—the consequences of having been winded and frightened. In addition, COVID continues to creep into our daily lives. The schools will return to classes on Monday. Other schools have decided to continue with distance learning, but there is still no electricity.

Saturday, August 28

There is no electricity and little drinking water. There was cell phone signal for half an hour when they placed a generator at the cell phone tower.

Confirmed cases of COVID are increasing in the community, in addition to an epidemic affecting chickens that has worsened after the passage of the hurricane. Fevers, chills, scares, asthma, diarrhea and bacterial, viral, and fungal infections are on the rise.

Sunday, August 29

One day before the start of classes, there is no electricity. There is not much communication between teachers and parents. It is known that the cycle will begin virtually in most schools. There is still a lot to rebuild. ●

Land Rights in North Australia Again at Risk?

By Jon Altman (The Australian National University)

The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 is Australian government legislation that has provided the highwater mark for land rights law in Australia: it is limited to Australia's Northern Territory (NT) and has resulted in nearly half of the terrestrial estate (about 700,000 km²) and 85 per cent of the coastline being transferred as inalienable freehold title to Aboriginal land trusts. The free, prior and informed consent rights over these lands vested with traditional owners exceed the limited native title rights and interests provided by the later Native Title Act 1993. Consequently, conservative governments are continually seeking to dilute the more powerful Land Rights Act.

In June 2021, the Australian government announced 'the most comprehensive reforms' of the Land Rights Act since 1976. These reforms seek to establish a Northern Territory Aboriginal Investment Corporation (NTAIC), to streamline exploration and mining provisions; and to improve and clarify land administration provisions of the Land Rights Act. These reforms have been co-designed with the four Aboriginal land councils—the statutory authorities established to assist traditional landowners to manage their land.

An innovative element of the Land Rights Act was the establishment of the Aboriginal Benefit Account (ABA) that receives the equivalents of mining royalties raised on Aboriginal-owned land. Since 1978-79, the ABA has received \$A4 billion in mining royalty equivalents and earned \$A350 million in interest. This income is expended to provide compensation to the owners of areas affected by mining (30% of income), to fund land councils, and to provide grants to or for the benefit of Aboriginal people in the NT more generally. The ABA has also accumulated \$A1.4 billion in equity that has grown rapidly in recent years.

The proposed amendments look to transfer half of this equity (\$A680 million) to the proposed NTAIC established as a new statutory authority to economically empower Indigenous peoples. This body will use its income to make grants, but also to invest in new projects. The balance of the equity remains at ministerial discretion.

This all sounds very positive, like a step towards self-determination—but is it? One problem is that these reforms have been negotiated between the Australian government and land councils in secret, excluding local communities and the Northern Territory govern-

ment. Much of this has occurred during the debilitating COVID-19 period during which much Aboriginal land has been a biosecurity zone. Another is that a complex set of amendments have been tabled with the parliament and have been supported by the Opposition. Under Australia's parliamentary system, such action precludes public scrutiny of amendments to check if they have shortcomings.

As always in Australia, these amendments are highly politicised and the government's narrative promoting their passage is highly developmental looking to increase mineral and gas extraction from Aboriginal lands. Such extraction could extent onto 15 Indigenous Protected Areas, Australia's most environmentally intact conservation lands, currently covering 260,000 km² of the NT. The leverage available to traditional landowners to either stop extraction or gain a more equitable return will be diluted. As I complete this news item, a range of stakeholders have successfully advocated for a brief Senate Inquiry that will ensure that these risky amendments are given some transparent scrutiny, especially by traditional landowners who may not have been consulted, and whose free, prior and informed consent for their passage into law may not have been secured. ●

Awards won by CICADA partners

- Étienne Roy Grégoire, [CLSA Article Prize 2021 \(French\) - Honourable mention](#): "Gouvernementalité extractive et autodétermination au Canada. Écosystèmes normatifs et charge critique de l'inter-normativité" (2020) 35(3) CJLS/RCDS 455-475.
- KRPAVIS, [winner of India Biodiversity Awards 2021](#).

Congratulations!

Special Issue on Environmental Defenders

By Caroline Seagle (PhD Candidate, McGill University)*

In 2019, before the COVID epidemic shook the world, members of [CEESP](#) came together to begin developing a special issue of Policy Matters—an open-access, peer-reviewed journal edited and published by IUCN-CEESP—devoted to the topic of environmental defenders. The project quickly evolved into launching a landmark, three-volume, interdisciplinary mix of academic articles, poetry, music, art, videos and photos. The special issue seeks to capture stories, stakes and voices of environmental defenders across the globe. At the 2021 World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Marseille, the special issue was launched at three events, including the High-Level Dialogue on Environmental Defenders, at which the UNHCR Special Rapporteur called for closer collaboration and immediate action.

In the special issue, Manuela Picq, a scholar-activist and environmental defender working with Indigenous groups in Ecuador, notes that Indigenous Peoples and local communities are the first guardians of the world's biodiversity and that we must respect their human rights. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Indigenous rights defender and climate negotiator from Chad, underlines the importance of recognizing Indigenous ecological wisdom, territorial rights, and livelihoods if we are to conserve nature. And yet these groups are persistently targeted by extractive industries and silenced—often violently—for speaking out against environmental and social injustices. The situation is urgent and dire. 331 environmental and human rights defenders were killed in 2020, the largest number on record (Front Line Defenders 2020). As academic researchers, we must deepen our understanding of the complexities, drivers, and solutions—how might an ethical solution be crafted, by whom, and for what purpose?

Among the multiple calls to action in the special issue, Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim outlines the need to immediately stop the criminalization of environmental defenders; to dedicate support, resources, intelligence and funding to

environmental defenders; and to make climate policies and actions more participatory.

Indigenous Peoples and local communities—many of whom are environmental defenders—play an outsized role in the governance and conservation of the world's biodiversity and nature ([ICCA 2021](#)). It is crucial that the conservation community take a stand on the dire situation of environmental defenders worldwide and recognize and uphold their rights. Our goal with this special issue is to bring to light the stories of defenders worldwide, stressing the urgent need to change the mind-set of the conservation community and spread awareness of these issues. We hope this special issue will stir meaningful debate and result in policy recommendations and effective practices that are equally respectful of Indigenous and local communities and conservation of nature.

The special issue is dedicated to each and every defender who, day after day, put their lives in peril in the defense of nature and their community from mining, logging, agribusiness, large-scale land acquisitions, and conservation-related evictions. We hope that it brings awareness to their plights and struggles, and serves as a catalyst for transformative action. The open-access, three volume issue is available [here](#). ●



*Text adapted from the preface, signed by the 2021 Policy Matters Editorial Team:

- Ameyali Ramos (IUCN CEESP)
- Philippe LeBillon (University of British Columbia)
- Caroline Seagle (IUCN CEESP)
- Masego Madzwamuse (IUCN CEESP)
- Kristen Walker Painemilla (IUCN CEESP)
- Iryna Petriv (Independent Consultant)
- Liliana Jauregui (IUCN Netherlands)

Aski Masinahikan: Indigenous Mapping Workshops

The Aski Masinahikan mapping workshops aimed at bringing together Atikamekw nehirowisiwok youth and elders in order to share territorial and cartographic knowledge. To this end, we invited youth, elders of the Nation and Atikamekw and university researchers to present their work and take part in the exchanges and sharing of territorial experiences that enriched the presentations. The Aski Masinahikan workshops were held on October 27 and 28, 2021 at [Club Odanak](#), located less than 15 km from the city of La Tuque (Capetciwotakan). This event was made possible thanks to a financial contribution from CICADA (small grant) and SSHRC (connection).

For more information, please contact Benoit Éthier: benoit.ethier@uqat.ca.

Recent publications by CICADA partners

Beaucage, Pierre & Xánath Rojas Mora. 2021. "Cosmologías nahua (maseual) y totonaca (tutunakú) de la Sierra Norte de Puebla (México) Primera parte: el tiempo de la creación." *Anales de Antropología* 55, no. 2 (july-december): 151-167.

Delamour, Carole, Jo Anni Joncas, David Bernard, **Benoit Éthier** & Franscesca Croce, eds. 2021. [Kasalokada ta lagwosada: Réalité et enjeux de la recherche collaborative en milieux autochtones](#). Collection ^e.Cogito. Sherbrooke: Éditions Peisaj.

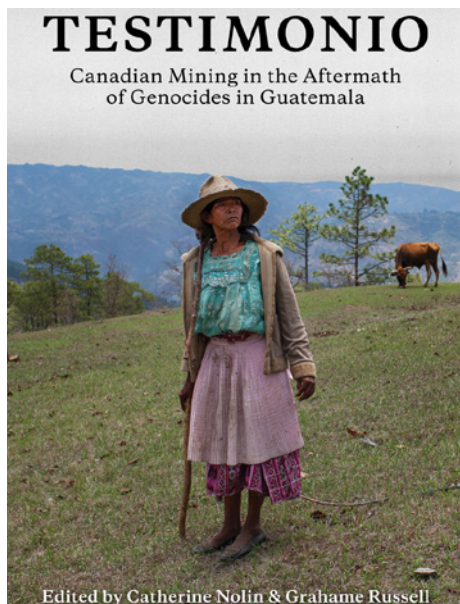
Gabbert, Echi Christina, Fana Gebresenbet, **John G. Galaty** & Günther Schlee, eds. 2021. [Lands of the Future: Anthropological perspectives on pastoralism, land deals and tropes of modernity in Eastern Africa](#). New York: Berghahn Books.

Manikuakanishtiku, **Justine Gagnon**, **Caroline Desbiens** & Éric Kanapé. 2021. "[A river of names: the multiple voices of an Innu Riverscape](#)." *River Res Applic* (special issue paper): 1-10.

Rodriguez, Iokine & Vladimir Aguilar Castro. 2021. [Juegos de poder en la conquista del Sur: dominación, resistencias y transformación en la lucha contra el extractivismo en el Parque Nacional Canaima, Venezuela](#). Venezuela: Fundacion Buría.

Weitzner, Viviane. 2021. "[¿Guardia, Guardia!': autonomías y defensa territorial en el contexto del pos-Acuerdo colombiano](#)." In *Autonomías y Autogobierno en la América Diversa*, edited by Miguel González, Araceli Burguete Cal y Mayor, José Marimán, Pablo Ortiz-T. & Ritsuko Funaki, 591-626. Quito-Ecuador: Editorial Universitaria Abya-Yala.

Testimonio: Canadian Mining in the Aftermath of Genocides in Guatemala, edited by Catherine Nolin & Grahame Russell (2021)



Maya land defender Diodora Hernández is featured on the cover in this beautiful photo by [James Rodríguez](#) of [mimundo.org](#).

What is land? A resource to be exploited? A commodity to be traded? A home to cherish? In Guatemala, a country still reeling from thirty-six years of US-backed state re-

pression and genocides, dominant Canadian mining interests cash in on the transformation of land into "property," while those responsible act with near-total impunity.

Editors Catherine Nolin and Grahame Russell draw on over thirty years of community-based research and direct community support work in Guatemala to expose the ruthless state machinery that benefits the Canadian mining industry—a staggeringly profitable juggernaut of exploitation, sanctioned and supported every step of the way by the Canadian government.

This edited collection calls on Canadians to hold our government and companies fully to account for their role in enabling and profiting from violence in Guatemala. The text stands apart in featuring a series of unflinching testimonios (testimonies) authored by Indigenous community leaders

in Guatemala, as well as wide-ranging contributions from investigative journalists, scholars, lawyers, activists, and documentarians on the ground.

As resources are ripped from the earth and communities and environments ripped apart, the act of standing in solidarity and bearing witness—rather than extracting knowledge—becomes more radical than ever.

Order the book at: btlbooks.com/book/testimonio.

The book was officially launched by *Between the Lines* on October 25. At the launch, contributors to the volume presented on the problems posed by Canadian mining activities in Guatemala, and the roles that the Canadian state has played in supporting these activities. Video of the launch is available at youtu.be/T7ZeNaMaFtk.