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CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

Climate change impact in Zenadth Kes: Connecting the past with the future

By Annick Thomassin, Jacinta Baragud and Michael Passi for the ANU Zenadth Kes Project team

The mid-1970s to the early 80s was a period of immense transformations in Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait, Northeast Australia). The pearling industry, a pillar of the region's economy, collapsed and was progressively replaced by non-Torres Strait Islander industrial prawn trawling and Islanders' small-boat fisheries. The island communities slowly became electrified. Airstrips and airplanes started to replace boats as a means of transport. Papua New Guinea also claimed independence from Australia, establishing an international border in the region, which impacted the traditional trade network and complexified family relationships. Over this period, a team of 10 Japanese researchers, mainly human geographers but also an anthropologist and an ethnomusicologist, journeyed across the entire Zenadth Kes and parts of *Koey (big) Daudai* and *Moegi (small) Daudai* (Australia and Papua New Guinea). Their surveys and maps, the music they recorded and the photographs they took provided a de-



Landscape photographs from George Ohshima's collection show how much the islands have changed. Photos courtesy of the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan.

tailed time capsule of Torres Strait's everyday lives.

In July 2024, we, the ANU Japan Zenadth Kes project team, embarked on a similarly ambitious journey across the region. Like the Japanese team before us, our goal is to visit each Island community. This time, to reconnect people

with this Japanese scholarship, record new stories about this period, and make the material relevant, meaningful, and accessible across generations.

Bringing back the translated texts, old photos and maps, and re-recording the old songs triggered important memories about life in the Torres Strait fifty

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Jacinta Baragud and Elder Mabel Lui discussing the photographic material.
Courtesy: Annick Thomassin

years ago. Many interesting themes emerged from the conversations. Among these, several Elders talked about how this material can help the younger generations understand the deep changes their island communities have encountered since this period.

Right now, Torres Strait Islanders are on the frontline of the climate crisis and urgent action is needed to ensure they can remain on their homelands. Advancing seas are already threatening homes and damaging fresh water supplies, crops, burial grounds, and sacred cultural sites. Rising sea levels, warmer atmospheric and ocean temperatures, more acidic waters, changes in ocean circulation, and more intense rain-fall patterns are expected to impact the Torres Strait in the future.

Among the stories emerging from engagement with the photographs are climate change stories. For Elder Florence

Gutchen, these images need to be seen by the younger generation to help them take stock of climate change's impact on the region and support their fight for climate justice. Some of these images tell of the loss people are experiencing. On Poruma, Councilor Francis Pearson notes that they have seen the coconut trees (urab) bordering the beach being progressively uprooted because of the erosion threatening their island. These trees were a heritage for the descendants of those who planted them. Urab are precious; they provide food, drink, and wood. The leaves are used for dance (zazie, coconut skirt). Where some of these urab once stood, there is now a seawall.



Seawall on Poruma in 2024. Courtesy: Jacinta Baragud

We look forward to recording more of these rich stories as we continue our work across the region. To find out more about the project and hear more stories as it unfolds, look up our [Storymaps](#) or visit our [Facebook page](#). ●

Congratulations!

CICADA is delighted to announce that the Taller de Tradición Oral Totamachilis, a research group made up of Maseualmej (Nahua) and Mestizo researchers from San Miguel Tzinacapan, municipio de Cuetzalan, Puebla, Mexico, and Pierre Beaucage, Professor Emeritus in the Anthropology Department at the University of Montreal, Quebec, jointly received a RECONOCIMIENTO A LA TRAYECTORIA ACADÉMICA from the Asociación Etnobiológica Mexicana on June 25th for their forty years of cooperation in research into Indigenous knowledge and practices concerning the flora and fauna of this region. The award was presented at the XIII Congreso Mexicano d'Etnobiología, held in the city of Cuernavaca, in the state of Morelos, from June 24-28. On this occasion, Alfonso Reynoso Rábago, Eleuterio Salazar Osollo, members of the *taller* (workshop), and Pierre Beaucage presented papers illustrating the key moments in this long-term research, which is still ongoing.



From left to right: Pierre Beaucage, Eleuterio Salazar Osollo and Alfonso Reynoso Rábago.

Human-Animal Entanglements in the Pacific Anthropocene

By Scott Simon (University of Ottawa)

As the capstone year of my SSHRC-funded project “Austronesian Worlds: Human-Animal Entanglements in the Pacific Anthropocene,” I am conducting one year of ethnographic research in the archipelago of Taiwan. It is a multi-sited project with research in two Indigenous and two non-Indigenous communities, including main island and off-shore island groups. My large research questions are how people imagine their territories of life, in relation with other humans and non-humans. I pay special attention to birds because birds cross all their territories. I seek to understand a diversity of natural ontologies, with a phenomenological attention to onto-genesis in daily life.

From December 2023 to February 2024, I was based on Pongso no tao (“island of humans”), which is called Orchid Island in English and Lanyu in Chinese. It is a volcanic island of 45 km² located 90 km from Taitung (Taiwan) and 99 km from Mavulis (Philippines).



Lanyu polling station. Courtesy: Scott Simon

In December 2023, the population of the island was 5,318; 90% are Tao (alternatively called Yami). I was living in Iratay, with a view to the southwest of the uninhabited island Jimagaod. This was my second field work on Pongso no tao, following research during the 2019 summer tourist season.

I came in the winter (when there are few tourists because strong northeasterly winds disrupt transportation links with mainland Taiwan), because it is traditionally the time when people wait for *alibangbang*, flying fish. In the past, people were delighted to see the arrival of the migratory *angalalaw*, or Brown Booby, which also hunts the fish, be-

cause they precede the *alibangbang*. Some people even rowed to Jimagaod to climb the steep cliffs and catch boobies at night as they slept. People still tell stories about these birds and they appear on canoe iconography, but nowadays few are seen. People say they stopped nesting on Jimagaod in the 1990s, when Taiwan's Air Force used the island for bombing practice. Some people say they are repelled by development of lights and traffic noise on Pongso no tao; or maybe migration routes have been influenced by climate change. This year, children found an *angalalaw* with an injured wing on the volcanic reefs, but it died the following day.

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I have met people with very diverse perspectives about the place of Pongso no tao in the world. Some people identify very much with Taiwan, and embrace their citizenship in a liberal democracy. I was fortunate that my visit also coincided with Taiwan's presidential and legislative elections, and

I wrote a blog post about that. Others have given me more critical post-colonial perspectives, and may not even identify with the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan. Some instead emphasize their close relations with the Batanes Islands of the Philippines. In the summer of 2024, some of them plan to make a historical journey from Pongso no tao to

the Batanes in a 20-man traditional canoe. No matter how they feel about the state that encapsulates them, everyone identifies very much with the sea and the diverse marine creatures with whom they share their territory of life.



Niska project: International meeting of Mayan and Atikamekw youth

By Benoit Éthier (University of Quebec in Abitibi-Témiscamingue)

Organised jointly by the members of the Indigenous Knowledge and Education Partnership (IKEP) project, the Universidad de Oriente in Mexico, the Atikamekw Nation Council and Nikanik secondary school in the Wemotaci Nehirowisiww Atikamekw community, the Niska - Construyendo Territorios project enabled the organisation of exchange and knowledge mobilisation activities relating to indigenous territorial knowledge for young people from the Nehirowisiwok Atikamekw, Maya and Mapuche nations (17 au 24 février 2024).

The project brought together some sixty aboriginal participants, including 12 student members and teachers from Nikanik secondary school in the Atikamekw Nehirowisiw community of Wemotaci, some twenty Mayan students from the Universidad de Oriente (which is an indigenous university) and some twenty Mayan students from the Telebachillerato Comunitario Intercultural de Popolá pre-university school.



Meeting and exchange workshops between Atikamekw Nehirowisiwok and Mayan students at the Telebachillerato Comunitario Intercultural de Popolá. *Courtesy: Benoit Éthier*

The Niska project is so named because Niska means bustard in Nehirowisiw (the language of the Atikamekw Nehirowisiwok). Like the geese, the students flew to Mayan communities to discover new territory and broaden their horizons. They then returned to Nitaskinan (Atikamekw Nehirowisiw territory) with a wealth of experience. They will now be able to stand on their own two feet, just like the Niska after their first trip, to achieve the main objective of the initiative, which is to build alliances, exchange ideas

and share strategies between young aboriginals. This initiative is part of the young people's school projects and the new Atikamekw nehirowisiw history programme, which involves cultural exchanges between Sto:lo (Canada), Maya (Mexico), Mapuche (Chile) and Aymara (Bolivia) nations and aboriginal partners.

Held in the heart of Yucatàn, Mexico, the conferences, workshops and discussions raised a number of issues re-

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lating to the transmission of Indigenous territorial knowledge in the current context of colonialism, abusive extractivism and the devastation of Indigenous territories. In such internationalised contexts, how can we ensure the preservation of Indigenous territories and territorial knowledge? How can we also move away from colonial education and research, which have led to a series of ontological and epistemological abuses, particularly in terms of content, interpretation and pedagogical approaches? It has been established that the authority of knowledge and the ways in which it is transmitted belong first and foremost to the custodians of knowledge in the Indigenous communities themselves, who decide what, when and to whom this knowledge is transmitted. These methods must be understood and accepted in schools. In schools, the work begun at the Universidad de Oriente, as an Indigenous (Mayan) university, is a concrete example of an initiative that encourages Indigenous researchers to transmit territorial knowledge in ways that they can identify with. During our stay,

we were able to take part in workshops held in outdoor ceremonial and knowledge-transmission spaces, including knowledge related to history, archaeology, medicinal plants and ceremonial practices aimed at preserving territories and resources, as well as reciprocal relations with the living entities of the territory.

The workshops, conferences and visits



Medicinal plants taught by teacher Carolina Murguía at the Universidad del Oriente (UNO) interpretation site for UNO Maya students and Atikamekw nehirowisiwok students and teachers from the Niska school (Wemotaci). Courtesy: Benoit Éthier

organised as part of this international meeting contribute to the development of partnerships, alliances and international solidarity networks. This event follows on from others held in recent

years, which have also been supported by CICADA, CNA, SSHRC, EDRAC-CÉA, UQAT and UNO: Tejiendo Lazos entre Pueblos y Territorios Indígena meeting (virtual meeting from 15 to 17 June 2022), International meeting on education and Indigenous knowledge (Lof Ranco, Chile, 24-27 October 2022), Notcimik Pimatisiwin: International meeting on territorial pedagogies (Wemotaci, Canada, 4 to 6 September 2023). These meetings have led to the production of summary reports, short films and journal articles, many of which are or will be available on the PHEA project website (www.educpsea.ca). Thanks to these sustained meetings and activities, the relationships based on trust, sharing and mobilising knowledge are becoming increasingly solid, and the exchanges are growing, evolving, deepening and becoming more complex. Lastly, these knowledge mobilisation and transmission activities contribute to Indigenous self-determination movements and struggles to preserve Indigenous territories, languages, cultures and ontologies. ●

Congratulations!

Josie Auger, Ph.D. started a new employment position on September 16th, 2024, with the Bigstone Health Commission as the Chief Executive Officer. Bigstone Cree Nation is in Wabasca, Alberta which is in Treaty 8. Dr. Auger's educational background in Public Health Sciences and Indigenous Studies and academic career, along with living cultural teachings, and previous work in senior executive positions, supports her determination to make a difference in the lives of approximately 10000 nation members. She would like to continue to make research count for Bigstone Cree Nation members and looks forward to future collaborations through the CICADA network.



Photo courtesy: Josie Auger



Ceremony and roundtable on CICADA's programming on Indigenous and Interlegalities

By Kirsten Anker and Viviane Weitzner (McGill University)

"We came to share with our brothers and sisters, with the objective of reconstructing and inter-weaving different processes towards our self-determination."

– Sebastiana Par, Maya K'iche', Guatemala

"We will not wait for the government to recognize us – we will recognize ourselves. We will adopt our own constitution."

– Hélène Boivin, Mashteuiatsh, Canada

"Indigenous Justice falls always between guarantee and the threat of criminalization."

– Rachel Sieder, CIESAS-Mexico

Just over a year ago, CICADA's "Indigenous Law, Indigenous Rights and Interlegalities" Research Axis co-organized a gathering in Michoacan, México entitled "Collaborative methodologies, legal pluralism and struggles for Indigenous and Afro-Descendant Self-

determination in the Americas." In conjunction with Mexico's National Autonomous University (UNAM-ENES) and Colectivo Emancipaciones, a collective of militant lawyers supporting the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico, the gathering brought together dyads of community leaders and their academic allies from Chile to Canada. It was funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Connections grant matched with CICADA funding from Fonds de recherche du Québec-Société et Culture (FRQSC).

Our three-day programme (June 10-13, 2023) examined the current contexts and struggles to advance recognition of Indigenous law and uphold Indigenous rights in Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Canada. We also considered the collective rights and ancestral law of Afro-Descendant Peoples. The event came together after several years of planning and postponements on account of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Yet our insistence on waiting to hold our conversations in person on Indigenous territory and placing centre-stage the role of ceremony, was critical for deepening



The group at UNAM morelia. Courtesy: Carlos Flores

Discussions in Mexico feed into Indigenous Rights, Indigenous Law & Illegalities



Ceremonial Flames. Courtesy: Carlos Flores

relationship-building and outcomes.

The gathering's key objective was to share specific experiences and examine the challenges and priorities for implementing Indigenous rights, revitalizing Indigenous law and engaging in legal defense of ancestral territories; to develop an agenda for collaborative research based on these challenges and priorities; and to develop a framework for strategic, collaborative communications and outreach.

We grounded our conversations in the experience of the Purépecha People hosting us, with a visit to the com-

munity of Santa Fe de la Laguna. Here we heard first-hand from Authorities about their historic and violent struggle for autonomy, and recent successes in achieving administrative autonomy. Our community visit coincided with the vibrant, annual corn harvest celebration (see photo).

We also honoured the role of ceremony. Maya K'iche' ajq'ijab' Ancestral Authority Sebastiana Par, and her partner, Julian Ventura Tiño, opened our workshop with the gift of ceremony. And on the second day, Afro-Descendent Leader Leidy Lorena Mina

from Northern Cauca in Colombia and Embera Chamí Authority Héctor Jaime Vinasco also from Colombia collaborated to lead our opening ceremony. These centred our roundtable discussions, elevating the contribution of ceremony and its teachings in our examination of ancestral law and justice.

The essence of our joint analysis and discussions was distilled in a jointly penned declaration. It stated, among other things:

"We... observe the numerous obstacles Indigenous, Afro-Descendant and Original Peoples face in the states in which they live with regards to the recognition and exercise of their internationally recognized political, territorial and cultural rights, the development of their own systems of law and justice, and the exercise of their self-determination.

We express concern that the normative frameworks of most states, including their constitutions and laws, often do not recognize these rights. We also see that in those states where recognition does exist, lack of political will, bureaucracy or structural racism and discrimination often render these rights a

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dead letter. All of this has serious impacts on Indigenous, Afro-Descendant and Original Peoples systems of life, with augmented impacts on the rights of women and children.

We want to highlight with particular concern some critical realities common to the territories in which we live, and that extend more generally across the Americas, namely:

- The intensification of natural resource extractive investment projects promoted by states and/or private corporations imposed on ancestral territories, in ways that often use rhetorically language included in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples—or even cite Indigenous, Afro-Descendant and Original Peoples' own laws—interfering with these Peoples' efforts to exercise their self-determination, while generating serious environmental impacts, and impacts on their ways of life and organization;
- Often linked to opposition to these projects, or as a consequence of the work they carry out in defence of the rights of their communities and peoples, we see how many Indigenous, Afro-Descendant and Original Peoples' leaders are stigmatised, persecuted, threatened or assassinated, with states failing to adopt measures to prevent this from happening, or investigating and punishing the agents responsible for these actions;
- The scant and sometimes non-existent willingness of states to accommodate the jurisdictions, legal and justice systems of Indigenous, Afro-Descendant and Original Peoples, often subordin-



Music and resistance, Santa Fe. Courtesy: Carlos Flores

ating them to state justice systems and denying or obstructing this essential form of exercising the right to self-determination.

The situations of discrimination and oppression referred to here are aggravated by the openly discriminatory treatment that most of the media give to Indigenous, Afro-Descendant and Original Peoples, distorting their struggles for self-determination, making them invisible, manipulating them, stigmatising them to the benefit of the interests of the sectors of power they represent, and to the detriment of these Peoples.

Despite these negative tendencies, we observe that forms of self-determination and defence of rights grounded in the laws of Indigenous, Afro-Descendant and Original Peoples themselves have been gaining ground. In many cases this has resulted in the revitalisation of their legal systems, of political institutions rooted in their millenary traditions, as well as constitutional frameworks drawn up by the Peoples themselves. All this determines relationships marked by dynamics of interlegality.

Faced with these common realities and challenges, those of us who participated in this gathering want to strengthen our links in the future through processes of collaborative and intercultural action research and the implementation of a network weaving together reciprocity, solidarity, and accompaniment. We consider that the initiatives shared by the different Peoples and communities attending, based on their own world-views, spiritualities and legal systems, are examples of courage and political imagination. They should therefore be shared throughout the Americas and internationally as alternatives to overcome the profound social and environmental crises facing humanity as a whole."

You can find the full text in English, Spanish and French [here](#).

We look forward to deepening our work programme and collaborations in coming years, drawing on the rich discussions at the Michoacan gathering. Thank you to all those who worked so hard to make this international collaborative meeting a success. ●

Harnessing Herder Knowledge for Plant Species Regeneration in the *Orans* of the Indian Thar Desert

By Aman Singh and J.P. Singh

Krishi Avam Paristhithiki Vikas Sansthan
(KRAPAVIS), Alwar, Rajasthan (India)

O*rans*, or Community Conserved Areas (CCAs), have long been integral to the culture of the Indian Thar Desert. These diverse ecosystems, dedicated to local deities, saints and to community heroes, provide a sanctuary for rich native flora and fauna. While activities like foraging and grazing/browsing are permitted, the cutting of green trees is strictly prohibited. Herders play a crucial role in managing animal grazing within these sacred lands. In the course of studying the *Orans* in the Jaisalmer district, we conducted additional interactions with herders who oversee livestock grazing in these areas. Their deep-rooted connection to the *Orans* and their understanding of local conditions grant them invaluable insights into grazing resources and the biodiversity of these ecosystems. Herders also closely monitor the grazing and browsing behavior of both livestock and wildlife.

In the *Orans*, certain plant species produce fruits/pods that play crucial roles in the ecosystem. These fruits/pods are consumed by animals during grazing and browsing. As the seeds pass through the animals' digestive tracts and are excreted, they contribute to the regeneration of plant species within the *Oran*. Herders have observed that livestock commonly consume the fruits/pods of plants such as *Acacia nilotica* subsp. *indica* (Desi-babul), *Acacia senegal* (Kumat), *Capparis decidua* (Kair), *Grewia tenax* (Gangeran), *Prosopis cineraria* (Khejari), *Salvadora oleoides* (Jaal), *Ziziphus mauritiana* (Ber) etc. After passing through the digestive system, the seeds of these species germinate effectively,



Interviewing a herder within an *Oran* in the Jaisalmer district. Courtesy: KRAPAVIS

aiding in their regeneration within the *Oran*. Additionally, livestock often consume the fruits of cucurbits, which have shown remarkable regeneration potential according to herders. This mutualistic relationship between animals and plants highlights the delicate ecological balance within the *Oran*, and underscores the importance of preserving and understanding these natural processes for sustainable ecosystem management.

Conversely, many herders, drawing from their extensive experience managing livestock and wild life in the *Orans*, have expressed concerns about the significant damage inflicted on seedlings of key species such as *Prosopis cineraria*, *Salvadora oleoides*, *Ziziphus mauritiana* by roaming animals. Similarly, seedlings of *Capparis decidua*, *Acacia senegal*, *Acacia nilotica* subsp. *indica*, *Commiphora wightii* (Guggal) and *Grewia tenax* also struggle to thrive amid these threats. Herbaceous species such as *Boerhavia diffusa* (Sinawdi), and *Euphorbia* spp (Dudheli) are similarly affected by grazing from both livestock and wild life activities, with herders noting these species as particularly vulnerable. Wild animals, including wild boar, even consume the roots of *B. diffusa*. Additionally, instances have been reported of Nilgai eating the seedlings of *Calotropis procera* (Aak). The insights provided by herders are crucial for the conservation and management of the *Orans*, particularly in safeguarding native plant species. ●



Germination of cucurbit seedlings from cattle dung in the *Oran* of Hameera village, Jaisalmer. Courtesy: KRAPAVIS

Visual Methodologies workshops held in the Colombian Amazon

In March 2024, CICADA's Associate Director and co-leader of the Visual Methodologies axis, Steven Schnoor, travelled to a remote region in the Colombian Amazon, where he provided audiovisual equipment to CICADA's Uitoto partner organization and led workshops on how to use it. Their territory is in the Resguardo Predio Putumayo, which is the largest of the hundreds of resguardos (roughly translated as Indigenous reservations) in Colombia, covering approximately 5.8 million hectares (58,000 km²) in the southeast of the country, near the borders with Brazil and Peru. The resguardo is principally inhabited by the Uitoto, Bora, Ocaína and Muinane peoples, who live in 22 different communities along the Igara Paraná River, which is a tributary of the Putumayo River.

Part of the work of the Visual Methodologies axis entails providing such technologies and trainings to CICADA members to support their ongoing efforts of conserving their territories, cultures and lifeways. Schnoor has previously offered audiovisual equipment and training workshops to CICADA's Maya Mam partner in Guatemala, Ngäbé and Buglé partners in Panama, Mapuche partner in Argentina, Maasai and Chepkitale Ogiek community organizations from Kenya, and San partner from Botswana. Among the equipment provided to the Uitoto community was a mirrorless camera with multiple lenses and filters, a gimbal stabilizer, microphones, lighting equipment, a portable projector, waterproof backpacks and numerous other components.

Community leader Maria Kuiru, who also goes by her traditional name, Jitomakury, is the General Coordinator of Women, Families and Children of the CICADA partner



Maria Kuiru tests out new audiovisual equipment in a training workshop led by CICADA's Associate Director Steven Schnoor. Photo by Steven Schnoor

organization AZICATCH (Asociación Zonal de Cabildos y Autoridades Tradicionales de La Chorrera, or Zonal Association of Councils and Traditional Authorities of La Chorrera). She took part in the multi-day trainings and describes the experience as an important part of her community's work of conserving local knowledge and communicating broadly about the myriad issues that they face. She comes from a cinema background, having previously studied at the Escuela Nacional de Cine (National Cinema School) in Bogotá. She looks forward to using this equipment to produce video materials that may be of use to address the principal challenges that her community currently faces. Among them include territorial conservation and defense, the loss of their Indigenous language and knowledge of traditional practices, gender-based domestic violence, the high cost of living, and the ongoing effects of the brutal enslavement and massacres that were inflicted upon them with the arrival of the rubber industry in their territory over a century ago.

While she plans documentaries that would be available for public viewing and may screen internationally, she also speaks of her community's plans for producing videos that will be of use primarily within the communities, such as in producing pedagogical materials that can be used in local schools to educate young children about traditional mythologies, histories, language and customs.

Now that the equipment and trainings have been provided, a second phase of this work will involve CICADA offering support for the development of these important projects, be it through further on-the-ground workshops, or assistance offered remotely. ●



The village of Puerto Milan, in the Resguardo Predio Putumayo, where the trainings took place. Photo by Steven Schnoor

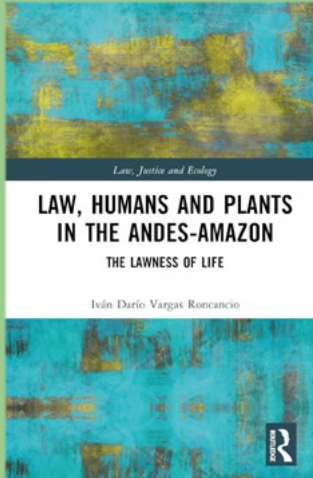
Recent publications by CICADA partners

Law, Humans and Plants in the Andes-Amazon: The Lawness of Life

By Iván D. Vargas Roncancio

Extending law beyond the human, the book probes the conceptual openings, methodological challenges and ethical conundrums of law in a time of deep socio-ecological disturbances and transitions.

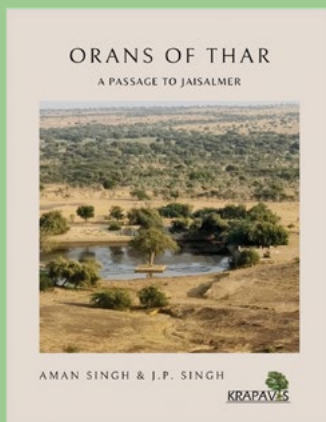
How do we learn and practice law across epistemic and ontological difference? What sort of methodologies do we need? In what sense does conjuring other-than-human beings as sentient, cognitive and social agents—rather than mere recipients of state-sanctioned rights—transform what we mean by “law” and “rights of nature”? Legal institutions exclusively focused on human perspectives seem insufficiently capable of addressing current socio-ecological challenges in Latin America and beyond. In response, this book strives to integrate other-than-human beings within legal thinking and decision-making protocols. Weaving together various fields of knowledge and world-making practices that include—but are not limited to—Indigenous legal traditions, Earth Law and multispecies ethnography, *Law, Humans and Plants* focuses on the entanglement of law, ecology and Indigenous cosmologies in Southern Colombia. In so doing, it articulates a general postanthropocentric legal theory which is proposed, a tool to address socioecological challenges such as climate change and bio-cultural loss.



This book will be of interest to scholars and students in the disciplines of environmental law, Earth Law and ecological law, legal theory and critical legal studies as well as others working in the fields of Indigenous studies, environmental humanities, legal anthropology and sustainability and climate change justice. The book is available for purchase [here](#).

Orans of Thar: A Passage to Jaisalmer

By Aman Singh & J.P. Singh



The publication titled “Orans of Thar-A Passage to Jaisalmer”, edited by Aman Singh & J.P. Singh and published by Krishi Avam Paristhitiki Vikas Sansthan (KRAPAVIS), Alwar, Rajasthan (India), was officially released in June 2024. The release ceremony was graced by the Environment Minister of Goa and by Mr. C. Achalendra Reddy, Chairman, National Biodiversity Authority of India. Orans, also known as Sacred Groves, are woodland areas preserved to honor local deities in the Indian Thar Desert. These community forests or Community Conserved Areas (CCAs), are vital repositories of Biodiversity and can be classified as Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs). This publication represents the culmination of nearly two years of rigorous field research and comprehensive on-ground mapping of 100 Orans within Jaisalmer district, the heart of the Thar Desert. It provides an in-depth investigation of these sacred grooves, detailing their physical characteristics, biodiversity, threats, ownership, governance, ecosystem services and intangible customs. This work aims to strengthen the conservation of Orans, and serves as a valuable resource for researchers, organizations, and government bodies, offering crucial data on their conservation and management.

Recent publications by CICADA partners

Rasiulis, Nicolas. 2024. "[Expletive] the Permit, the Reindeer Herder Answered Constitution and Contestation of State Territorialising Power in Northernmost Mongolia." *Inner Asia* 26 (1): 3–28. <https://doi.org/10.1163/22105018-02601002>.

Simon, Scott E. "Indigenous Religious Rights in Taiwan: The Invisibility of Animism in Modern State Law," in Claude Gélinas, Sébastien Lebel-Grenier, and Raphaël Mathieu Legault-Laberge (eds.), *International Perspective on Indigenous Religious Rights*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 262-282, 2023.

Simon, Scott. 2024. "Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan's Election: Voices from Orchid Island." Centre for International Policy Studies (CIPS) Blog (<https://www.cips-cepi.ca/2024/01/17/indigenous-peoples-in-taiwans-election-voices-from-orchid-island/>), January 17, 2024.



Migrating from summer to autumn camps in West Taiga, Tsagaannuur, Mongolia. Courtesy: Nicolas Rasiulis

Congratulations to Nicolas Rasiulis!

Granted by the Sutasoma Trust and the Royal Anthropological Institute, the Sutasoma Award recognizes the "potentially outstanding merit" of doctoral theses about to be completed by students "handicapped by lack of finance." In an effort to understand the conditions of conservation conflict in Mongolia's Tengis-Shishged National Park, and to imagine potential pathways for conflict resolution, Nicolas' thesis accounts for economic production, security competition and cooperation, contested territorial mastery, as well as relations between Duha reindeer herders, states and, more recently civil society organizations, in the area of present-day northernmost Mongolia dating back to the 17th century. Focusing especially on the interfacing of reindeer herders' traditional lifeways and of states' border defence and nature conservation regimes, the thesis draws the Duha shamanic landscape into dialogue with international relations realism in a way that surfaces their co-articulation in terms of strategic interests.

Special thanks to Katrina Burch Joosten, Ségolène Guinard, Camilo Gomez Chaparro, Steven Schnoor, and Lucía Justo for their support in the design and translation of this new issue of the CICADA newsletter.