

Indigenous Peoples: Resource Management and Global Rights

Svein Jentoft, Henry Minde & Ragnar Nilsen (eds.). 2003. "Indigenous Peoples: Resource Management and Global Rights". Eburon Academic Publishers. Delft. 328pp., sewn paperback. ISBN 90 5166 978 X. € 27.50 / NOK 298. Distribution: Eburon (www.eburon.nl/info@eburon.nl); Centre for Sami Studies, University of Tromsø (www.sami.uit.no/globalisering/bok.html); University of Chicago Press (<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/>).

This is an important book. Not because it according to its title, is supposed to analyse indigenous management practices or the complexity of indigenous rights – actually it does not address these topics very much as such. The book is important, however, because it presents the reader with articles that in different ways give important insight in the interplay between ethnicity, power and politics – or ethno-politics as the term is these days. Such analyses are necessary tools, if we ever are to understand the occurrence of terms like "indigenism" and "global rights". As current discussions – both academic and political – tells us, the idea of "indigenusness" is either embraced or rejected, and it is rather fair to state that much of the debate has turned into a quagmire. The public debate in Norway is an illustrating example. Here public exercises in framing Sami land rights have more or less ended in perverted local debates or governmental schemes to change the ownership of land without taking international law into consideration and against the will of the Sami Parliament and different NGOs.

The articles of the book are organized according to whether they are relating to the global debate ("The World"), the national management of marine resources ("The Sea") and terrestrial resources ("The Land") *vs.* indigenous interests. What is more interesting to the reader, however, are those articles which thoroughly follows the political interaction between and among indigenous groups and institutions and their governmental or public counterparts – both in space and over time at a local, national or international level. It is only by such an interactional approach that one is able to get beyond the more rhetorical use of concepts like "indigenous rights", "ethnic identity" or "sustainable development".

Henry Minde's article is exactly of such a kind. He identifies the old political domain regarding Sami matters in Norway and analyses how this power structure fell apart because of old assimilation politics, the outcome of the Alta-affair and the development of an international indigenous movement. As far as I know, this is the first and thus an important tour-de-force in demonstrating how "The Challenge of Indigenism" has affected both Norwegian and

Sami politics. Today Norway has accepted (through the ratification of ILO Convention 169 and UN declarations) a globally acknowledged responsibility to defend the interests of indigenous peoples.

This worldwide perspective is the point of departure for Peter Jull's presentation of the political activity among indigenous peoples. He tells the story of indigenous internationalism exemplified through the Inuit and Indians of Canada, the Sami in northern Scandinavia and the different Aboriginal peoples of Australia. By relating this activism to the concept of sustainability (but without exploring the concept itself), Jull describes how these indigenous efforts have established new political institutions and shaped new political cultures.

This work is internationally framed as human rights and Erica-Irene Daes presents the search for a new legal paradigm regarding indigenous cultural and intellectual property within the context of United Nations. She is concerned about the consequences of globalisation when it comes to indigenous peoples, addressing the fact that local cultural knowledge – be it folklore or ecological insight – might be marketed (by digital means, for instance) without any control. This is a challenge for the UN system and international law.

Returning to the important interplay between ethnicity, power and politics, Bjørn Hersoug tells his story of how the Maori came to control one third of the entire fishing industry in New Zealand. Their point of departure was old treaty rights and the government's introduction of individual transferable quotas in the fisheries. Legal action regarding fishing rights, gave different Maori tribes ownership of ten per cent of all quotas, thereby enabling them to expand their interests in the fishing industry. Combined with customary fishing rights, Hersoug argues that this success story makes it possible for the Maori to take part in the commercial sector, without dismantling their customary cultural practices. May be they are keeping "the best of two worlds" (p. 125), but this is a contested conclusion at least in the Maori world – only 50.6% of the affiliated Maori accepted the final plan for quota allocations. Such numbers raises further questions about repre-

sentativity and conditions for ethnic incorporation among the tribes.

While Hersoug does not go into the issues of representativity and power, this is the very topic of Einar Eythorsson's "reflections on ethnicity and power in Norwegian resource management". How can it be, he asks, that the Sami along the coast of northern Norway just recently have become visible as stakeholders in the Norwegian fishery regime? By demonstrating how the Sami ethnic identity had no relevance whatsoever within the realm of fishery politics (as in other public walks of life), the Sami fishermen thus became the subjects of domination within the Fishermen's Union. It is only recently through a general Sami ethno-political revival, that these Sami fishermen have been able to present themselves as latent stakeholders in relation to Norwegian fishery management. The legitimacy of their claims (based upon indigenous rights) is becoming slowly recognized and the current processes can be labelled as a quest for power.

Power relations, legitimacy and representativity however, are not on the agenda in Jan-Åge Riseth's description of conflicting strategies among Sami reindeer herders. He observes differences in herd productivity between Sami reindeer herders in southern parts (Trøndelag/Hedemark) and northern parts (West-Finmark). He explains this by going through the new reindeer management regime set up by the Ministry of Agriculture a couple of decades ago, coins this a "modern co-management institution" and concludes correctly that these institutions have only been successful in the south. Now, as other reports inform us, the reasons why the governmental management regime has gone astray in the north, has very much to do with the fact that the regime through its laws and regulations consequently has demolished the indigenous Sami management system and thus created most of the problems it was set up to solve. It is thus rather daring to define the Norwegian administration of Sami reindeer herding as "co-management institutions", bearing in mind Sen and Raakjær Nielsen definition of co-management as "an arrangement where responsibility for resource management is shared between government and user groups" (1996:406).

According to one of the editors (Jentoft), Riseth's example of success is due to "a sustainable herding strategy" in the south (p. 16). It may be. Fortunately, this book has a very instructive article that takes a closer look at concepts (or better: catch words) like "sustainability" and "traditional use". Jukka Nyysönen analyses the environmental sustainability of two property rights regimes in Inari, northern Finland, namely the forest government and the reindeer

herding co-operatives. I would like to quote Nyysönen on his definition of a property right regime and its sustainability, because it takes our understanding a step forward, namely to the *performances* of the regime:

"The success of a regime is judged by the way it is able to combine a maximum flow of generated income, while maintaining its stock of assets (economic sustainability), as well as maintaining the integrity of its social and cultural systems, securing equity (social sustainability) and maintaining the stability of its biological and physical systems, at the same time as utilizing them economically (environmental sustainability)" (p. 250).

Armed with such an analytical approach, the story of different property regimes would generate much more relevant knowledge – whether it be coastal fishing or reindeer herding. Nyysönen's important contribution is to demonstrate how management decisions and the interaction between forest management and reindeer husbandry strategies has resulted in loss of both economical, social and environmental sustainability in both regimes.

Going beyond the conventions of the ethno-political debate, is also the task of another Finnish researcher. Seija Tuulentie deconstructs the debate on Sami rights in Finland and shows how this debate actually strengthens the national Finnish identity. It is a fascinating demonstration of how local narratives and debates among the Finnish people "relate the concept of nation to that of the majority of the nation state while they relate the Sami to the concept of ethnicity" (p. 287). As also shown in Minde and Eythorsson's articles, the idea of a common national identity represents the very context for the relationship between the majority and the minority population within the national state.

Tuulentie's article reminds us not to only look at global discourses, but also to look into how history and identity is shaped from below. Whether it is Finnish settlers in Lapland or Torres Strait Islanders north east of Australia, we are confronted with people reconceptualising concepts like "history", "culture" and "tradition". Creative local processes now challenge our conventional dichotomy regarding "traditional" and "modern" when industrial technologies and practises are integrated into the cultural repertoire of indigenous peoples. The fact that these peoples are reconstituting their own cultural ideas and life styles seems to be difficult to cope with for people and institutions belonging to the majority.

Today there is an ongoing discussion about indi-

genism and essentialism – both on a more local level (cf. Tuulentie) and in academic circles (e.g. Kuper¹, 2003). Many people – scholars and others – are sceptical to indigenous narratives regarding culture and identity, arguing that these are “counterfeits” and none the less in contrast with their actual lives. Further insight into these processes of identity management and into this debate would have enriched this book. Svein Jentoft has written a comprehensive introduction where he comments upon different dimensions in the indigenous peoples movement

on a worldwide basis. But the ongoing debate about essentialism remains uncommented – what do we mean by phrases like “traditional” and “modern adaptations” (which also frequently are to be found in this book)? Why do we for instance expect an Inuit person to present himself as Inuit all the time and to engage in forms of resource extraction that are considered “traditional” – while we do not expect the same from a member of the majority society? Does the lure of “tradition” constitute an ideological trap where indigenous movements frequently are caught?

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¹ Kuper, Adam. 2003. The Return of the Native. – *Current Anthropology* (3).

Handbook of northern ungulates in Europe and Asia

Leonid Baskin & Kjell Danell. 2003. "Ecology of Ungulates: A Handbook of Species in Eastern Europe and Northern and Central Asia". Springer-Verlag (orders@springer.de). 434pp., incl. 251 tables and 61 figs. Hardcover. ISBN 3 540 43804 1. € 199.95.

This book extracts the rich Russian information from the 20th century available in more than 1000 theses and major scientific papers. It reviews the ecology and behaviour of 25-26 species of ungulates (among them 6-7 cervids). Included are species on the tundra and taiga (reindeer, moose, snow sheep and musk-oxen), temperate forests (roe deer, red deer, sika deer and European bison), mountains of Caucasus and Central Asia (five species of goats, three species of sheep, chamois and goral) as well as steppes and deserts (gazelle, saiga and kulan).

Focus is on quantitative data and each autecological description covers geographical range and variability, preferred biotopes, limiting factors and mortality factors, feeding and breeding, population structure and abundance and interaction with man. According to the publisher the book is primarily meant for researchers, wildlife managers and conservationists.

List of contents and some sample pages are found in Springer Catalogue Search http://www.springer.de/cgi/svcat/bag_generate.pl?ISBN=3-540-43804-1.