

INDIGENOUS ENCOUNTERS WITH NEOLIBERALISM

Place, Women, and
the Environment in
Canada and Mexico

Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez



UBC Press · Vancouver · Toronto

Sample Material © 2013 UBC Press

Women and Indigenous Studies Series

The series publishes works establishing a new understanding of Indigenous women's perspectives and experiences, by researchers in a range of fields. By bringing women's issues to the forefront, this series invites and encourages innovative scholarship that offers new insights on Indigenous questions past, present, and future. Books in this series will appeal to readers seeking stimulating explorations and in-depth analysis of the roles, relationships, and representations of Indigenous women in history, politics, culture, ways of knowing, health, and community well-being.

Other books in the series:

Standing Up with Ga'axsta'las: Jane Constance Cook and the Politics of Memory, Church, and Custom, by Leslie A. Robertson with the Kwagu'ł Gixsam Clan

Being Again of One Mind: Oneida Women and the Struggle for Decolonization, by Lina Sunseri

Indigenous Women and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culture, edited by Cheryl Suzack, Shari M. Huhndorf, Jeanne Perreault, and Jean Barman

Taking Medicine: Women's Healing Work and Colonial Contact in Southern Alberta, 1880-1930, by Kristin Burnett

Sample Material © 2013 UBC Press

Contents

List of Abbreviations / x

Acknowledgments / xi

Introduction: The Articulation of Indigeneity and Neoliberal Governance / 1

1 The Political Economy of Indigeneity Articulation / 15

2 Indigeneity, Nature, and Neoliberalism / 67

3 Nunavut: Arctic Homeland and Frontier / 89

4 The Nisga'a "Common Bowl," Gender, and Property Rights / 121

5 The Zapatista Movement: Place-Driven Recognition? / 149

6 Indigeneity, Land, and Gender in Oaxaca / 177

Conclusion: Toward Spaces of Indigenous Repossessions / 209

References / 225

Index / 249

Abbreviations

CI	Conservation International
CIESAS	Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social
COCEI	Coalición de Obreros, Campesinos y Estudiantes del Istmo
COCOPA	Comisión de Concordia y Pacificación
EZLN	Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IQ	Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit
ITC	Inuit Tapirisat of Canada
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
LCAC	Land Claims Agreements Coalition
MBC	Mesoamerican Biological Corridor
MLA	member of the Legislative Assembly
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NDP	New Democratic Party
NGO	nongovernmental organization

NIC	Nunavut Implementation Commission
NLCA	Nunavut Land Claims Agreement
NTC	Nisga'a Tribal Council
NWT	Northwest Territories
PRD	Partido de la Revolución Democrática
PRI	Partido Revolucionario Institucional
PROCEDE	Programa de Certificación de Derechos Ejidales y Titulación de Solares
SEMARNAT	Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales
TFN	Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut
UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCIP	World Council of Indigenous Peoples

Acknowledgments

Academic work is seldom an individual activity. Individuals and institutions supported this project at different stages and in different ways. I am grateful to the people who participated in my doctoral research, to my supervisors, as well as to my colleagues Val Napoleon and Robert Nichols for the productive discussions that have enhanced my thinking. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their intellectual generosity and insightful comments. I am grateful for the generous support I received from the Canadian Circumpolar Institute at the University of Alberta, the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (National Council for Science and Technology) in Mexico, and the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (CIESAS) (Centre for Research and Advanced Studies in Social Anthropology) in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, where I was hosted as a guest researcher. I thank Robert Lewis for his dedication in editing this manuscript and Ann Macklem for overseeing the production of this book. Last but not least, I thank Darcy Cullen for her support throughout the different stages of the editorial process. Quixhe latu.

A section of Chapter 3 was published in *Canadian Woman Studies* 26, 3-4 (2008): 128-34, and later reprinted in Monture and McGuire (2009).

INDIGENOUS ENCOUNTERS WITH NEOLIBERALISM

Introduction

The Articulation of Indigeneity and Neoliberal Governance

“Government Labels Environmentalists ‘Terrorist Threat’ in New Report.” This was the headline on 10 February 2012 in the *Vancouver Observer*. The article said that the Government of Canada had presented its new counter-terrorism strategy, which notes that low-level violence by domestic “issue-based” groups remains a reality in this country. In its list, next to white supremacy, we can find environmentalism (Stoymenoff 2012). Three months later, Allan Adam (2012), chief of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, wrote in the *Edmonton Journal*, “From a First Nations perspective, it doesn’t matter whether we stand on the coast of B.C. [British Columbia] or in the heart of the oilsands – our struggle is largely one and the same. We don’t want our lands, our rights, or our people to be sidelined and destroyed by irresponsible development.” Are Indigenous peoples eco-terrorists?

A year and half earlier, in December 2010, at the opening ceremony of the United Nations (UN) climate change talks in Cancún, Mexico, Simona Gómez, an Indigenous woman, addressed the audience before Mexican president Felipe Calderón. Gómez explained how she and other Indigenous female forest dwellers, who heavily depend on the forest for food and wood, have found a new way to protect the environment and, at the same time, reduce their workload. She said that with the help of the Mexican government, her community had begun to use more “fuel-efficient” stoves and kilns. Gómez was showcasing a new gender initiative launched at Cancún, which ensures that women are an integral part of the UN Collaborative

Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries.

What do these stories have in common? They highlight the complex relationship that exists between the market, colonialism, Indigenous peoples, and gender. The first story speaks of how the expansion of global markets requires more natural-resource extraction and how this demand continues to dispossess peoples. If Indigenous peoples resist dispossession, they are perceived as a “threat” to the “white, male control of natural resources” (Strang 2009, 249). There are also some racialized gender issues in these stories. Whereas natural resources are considered a white, male domain, caring for the environment is Indigenous peoples’ and women’s responsibility. These stories are about who has the right to control resource extraction and who bears the cost of protecting the environment. These stories are about how nature and difference are produced and gender inequalities re-inserted when place is neoliberalized. Thus knowledge of how indigeneity is defined in relation to the environment is useful in understanding how gender is produced and how socio-natures are neoliberalized in both the global North and South. Socio-natures are a product of the relationships established by human-nonhuman interactions. These relationships and interactions are subsumed within the process of neoliberalization (Nast 2006; Bakker 2010).

Although the governance of nature is often considered an apolitical exercise, the management of resources is implicated in relations of power and informed by hegemonic knowledge that authorizes who has the truth about how nature should be managed (Peet and Watts 1996; Harcourt and Escobar 2002). Environmental and resource policies and interventions are embedded in power relations that reproduce inclusions and exclusions and particular understandings of gender and nature (Kabeer 2005; Leach 2007).

If policies and interventions have produced hegemonic understandings of nature and Indigenous women, Indigenous peoples have responded in different ways. In their demands for recognition, territory, and self-determination, Indigenous peoples have articulated meanings of indigeneity and cultural difference that are intelligible to the state and other transnational actors and institutions. In doing so, these peoples have reproduced the problematic distinction between “authentic” or “intelligible” and “inauthentic” indigeneity, a distinction that perpetuates structural inequalities (Povinelli 2002; Hale 2005). In challenging these inequalities, Indigenous peoples have also attempted to expand the grid of intelligibility that neoliberalism has imposed on indigeneity and have also articulated non-state-centred understandings

of identity. Thus determining the meanings of indigeneity in terms of resistance to and integration into the neoliberal project is important to understanding the complexity of Indigenous peoples' struggles and to questioning essentialized Indigenous identities.

This book builds on the work of critical geographers and anthropologists who have argued that identity and the environment constitute two axes of neoliberalism and that state practices shape the spatial and social reconfigurations of landscapes and communities (Brosius 1999; Chapin 2004; Castree 2005; Perreault and Martin 2005; Robbins 2006; Baldwin 2009; McAfee and Shapiro 2010). This book examines how indigeneity, gender, and the environment have been articulated under neoliberalism in Canada and Mexico. Specifically, this book asks: What kinds of social configurations result from the intersection of indigeneity, gender, neoliberalism, and the environment? How do neoliberal governance and environmentalism inform local agency and the global articulation of indigeneity? What effect does the global articulation of indigeneity have on Indigenous places? How are meanings negotiated in place? How does neoliberalism materialize in places with different colonial histories?

To address these questions, I put forward a set of interrelated arguments. First, Indigenous understandings of place are grounded in specific locations that are heterogeneous. Second, the articulation of indigeneity is a contingent product of global articulation and local agency; different articulations of indigeneity have different effects on different places. Third, the neoliberal spatial and economic reorganization of Indigenous peoples' places rests not only on the liberalization of the natural environment per se but also on schemes aimed at commodifying "saved" or "untouched" nature for the global market. Fourth, although neoliberalism is a hegemonic project, it has materialized differently in diverse places. A critical approach to neoliberalism starts by considering how its processes unfold in specific locations in which neocolonial power is exercised. Fifth, the articulation of indigeneity is both produced and productive. Through the articulation of specific understandings of nature and indigeneity, the inequalities between men and women are maintained and reinscribed in struggles over resources. Through alternative and place-based articulations of indigeneity, Indigenous peoples have challenged such inequalities.

Indigenous Encounters with Neoliberalism does not undertake a comprehensive comparison of Indigenous experiences in Canada and Mexico. Rather, the book shows how the articulated nature of indigeneity implies a sense of the political, consensus building, exclusions, alliances, and antagonisms on

different scales. Indigenous peoples do not have a unique trajectory; their politics are motivated by specific aspirations and are shaped by different colonial entanglements.

Indigeneity, Meanings, and Articulation

As a concept, indigeneity has been defined in “criterial” and “relational” ways (Merlan 2009). Criterial definitions identify conditions that enable a diversity of peoples from around the world to identify as Indigenous. These definitions rest on the understanding that Indigenous peoples were the first to occupy the land and on their shared experiences of colonization (Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Abele and Rhodon 2007; Turner and Simpson 2008). In complex ways, these criterial definitions are informed by racialized constructions connected to colonial and government recognition. However, all of these criteria are represented as part of a self-evident category. Relational definitions, on the other hand, emphasize relationships between Indigenous peoples and “Others.” Indigeneity also refers to multiscale politics involving the state, international organizations, networks, place, and academics, all of which shape the “collective social, political, cultural, and economic interests of Indigenous peoples” (Bennett 2005, 73). Indigeneity is a product of the articulatory practices of Indigenous peoples and different sites, and it constitutes a field where power, social practices, knowledge, governance, and hierarchies are produced, contested, negotiated, and altered in the process of producing the meanings of indigeneity. The concept of articulation is useful in characterizing the diversity of peoples making indigeneity claims and the multiscale politics of indigeneity production.

Indigenous peoples construct their identities based on meanings and social practices situated in place. Under neoliberalism, these meanings are disarticulated to establish new cultural meanings that depoliticize Indigenous peoples’ claims. Articulation theory is useful in understanding how cultural assemblages are produced to mediate economic formations. Thus articulation of meanings does not always involve radical contingency; rather, its possibilities are historically constrained by structural relations of domination (Clifford 2001, 472). Although Indigenous peoples are agents shaping the articulation of indigeneity, the sites involved create a complex field in which Indigenous peoples negotiate a balance between local needs and global wants.

I see the intersection of power and space as being useful in understanding the specific discursive, social, and material effects of neoliberalizing socio-natures on how indigeneity is defined, policies are framed, political

possibilities are envisioned, and gender hierarchies are reproduced. In mapping the different scales on which political relations are configured, I hope to demonstrate that the interactions between the global, state, and local levels are neither natural nor inevitable. Such interactions result from people's agency and occur in specific contexts.

Neoliberalism, Indigeneity, and the Environment

In recent decades, there has been a considerable expansion of the literature on neoliberalism. Debates have focused on either conceptual discussions or contrasting research agendas. There has also been a diversity of studies on neoliberalism in practice. Larner (2003) points out that this diversity of accounts suggests that there is no single or unitary neoliberalism. Rather, we can understand neoliberalism as a process that involves a multiplicity of – often contradictory – effects and practices. Neoliberalism is hegemonic but not total. Although neoliberalism is a contradictory and messy process that has materialized differently across diverse geo-political spaces, there are important commonalities that account for patterns (Castree 2009).

Neoliberalism has usually been treated exclusively as an economic project involving deregulation, privatization, individualization, and transformation of the state-citizen relationship. However, as a form of governance, neoliberalism involves practices, knowledge, and ways of inhabiting the world that emphasize the market, individual rationality, and the responsibility of entrepreneurial subjects (Hale 2005; Brodie 2010). The reorganization of society under neoliberalism occurs along the lines of decentralization of power, reduction of state intervention in the market, affirmation of basic human rights, re-regulation, and development of civil society and partnerships. The recognition of cultural difference and the “compensatory measure” of granting collective rights to “disadvantaged” social groups are integral to neoliberalism. These cultural rights, along with the socio-economic components, distinguish neoliberalism as a specific form of governance that shapes, delimits, and produces difference (Hale 2005, 12-13).

Through interconnections between the global discourse of rights, environmentalism, and the market, neoliberalism opens up a space for the recognition of Indigenous rights as well as for the institutionalization of management practices that have uneven implications for Indigenous places and for Indigenous peoples' senses of place (Swyngedouw 2009, 122-23). As a mode of governance, neoliberalism expands the scope of what is considered “nature” to include relationships between the human and nonhuman world, moving beyond nature as a resource to the concept of “socio-natures.”

Swyngedouw (2009) and Bakker (2010) point out that the concept of socio-natures is useful in accounting for how human bodies, genetically modified organisms, feelings, and environmental services are transformed into commodities under neoliberalism. Thus moving beyond an anthropocentric understanding of nature is useful in addressing the full range of strategies and socio-natural entities being subsumed within processes of neoliberalization. Neoliberalization strategies vary depending on the target and include property rights, governance practices, and different types of socio-natures (Bakker 2010, 717). In some places it might be easier to pursue strategies that target socio-natures, and in some others a focus on property rights may be more lucrative.

Since territorial and resource conflicts are among the most pressing issues for Indigenous peoples, it is crucial that we consider how power and knowledge shape the processes through which rights are secured and gender is reinscribed. The legal protection of Indigenous lands has opened the door to new forms of economic autonomy, political participation, and the conceptualization of new forms of Indigenous land tenure (Stock 2005, 86). One of the serious consequences of linking rights with economic development is that nature and natural resources are almost exclusively depicted as economic potential, a depiction that does not always match Indigenous peoples' understandings of their place-based relationships with nature. Writing on the Maori experience in New Zealand, Bargh (2001, 252) argues that "re-colonisation is the embedding and re-embedding of Neoliberalism utilising multiple avenues including institutional, state, corporate and intellectual pressure."

Producing Place, Producing Gender

Although places exist as specific locations, people construct them according to their own subjectivity. Feminist geographers have produced an important literature that reflects on the spatiality of cultural practices, identity formation, and meaning production. They argue that because people's lives unfold in specific locations and because environments are socially constructed, we need to consider what meanings people attribute to the relationships they build with place (Benwell and Stokoe 2006). From this point of view, Indigenous peoples' sense of place stems not only from their specific roles, practices, and responsibilities but also from their established relationships with identifiable natural and cultural landscapes (McKinley 2007). Moreover, place is crucial to defining what it means to be "Indigenous" and a "woman" in specific locations.

Significantly, this approach highlights how the production of nature brings into existence categories of social difference, including gender. Feminist critical geography is also useful in understanding how place is imagined and reified. Spatial representations are important for political purposes because they anchor historic claims to land/territory and validate identities. Since places are loci of collective memory and political identities, Indigenous peoples' ability to mobilize identity into forces of solidarity depends largely upon the specificities that determine the construction and maintenance of their identities. Although interactions between the local and the global enable Indigenous peoples' politics, they also constrain Indigenous peoples' possibilities. I argue that struggles involving place are struggles over who controls how place is lived and imagined. How place is represented, what stories are heard, in what forums they are told, and for what purposes are political phenomena. Thus the issue of which stories are recovered and which ones are erased has consequences for different groups of people and for how place is imagined in terms of a collective, unified, Indigenous nation.

Global articulations of indigeneity have an effect on place, a fundamental component of Indigenous identifications. Place is simultaneously powerful and constrained by neoliberal governance. Place is heterogeneous; however, essentialized traits bring us face to face with contested local experiences and visions of "identity," "belonging," "exclusions," "rights," and "responsibilities." The adoption of global discourses of indigeneity at the local level, although politically empowering, raises a number of extremely political questions. Who defines "Indigenous" and what is "authentic" or "traditional"?

Feminist theory on gender and nationalism is relevant to understanding the discursive and material effects of reproducing place. As a discourse of power, the language of nationalism enables local Indigenous peoples to define themselves with the authoritative vocabulary of peoplehood. In this process, gender roles are constructed, traditional and historical models are evoked, and symbols, customs, and political and social practices are selected in asserting the right to a homeland and self-determination. Nationalist rhetoric uses culture, tradition, gender roles, and sexuality as border guards aimed at controlling and maintaining a fixed, homogeneous, stable identity. However, rather than expressing the "organic" and "timeless essence" of indigeneity, nationalism becomes a battleground over how culture and belonging are defined and how decolonization is envisioned. Therefore, the intersection of power and space involves both the discursive and the

material, which are codified in how indigeneity is defined, policies are framed, resistance is constituted, and possibilities are envisioned.

Why Canada and Mexico?

Conducting the research for this book has taken me on a journey as an Indigenous academic. I first became interested in comparing Canada and Mexico when, as an undergraduate student of social anthropology, I was invited to participate in a research project on the movement for Indigenous Hemispheric Resistance to the Fifth Centennial of the “Discovery of the New World” in 1992. As an Indigenous transnational undertaking, the Indigenous Hemispheric Resistance movement was an important effort to build alliances throughout the Americas.

A striking political difference was found along the English-Spanish divide, or between “rich” and “poor” countries. For instance, whereas some Indigenous representatives from Canada insisted on reclaiming “sovereignty” and “land title,” Indigenous organizations from Mexico insisted on “human rights” and to some extent “dignity.” Was this transnational difference a result of the global North-South divide? If not, what else was behind the difference between these claims and their distinct language? I argue that the contrast resulted from different forms of dispossession, exploitation, and othering as well as from spatially and economically distinctive colonial and neocolonial projects.

Settler and extractive colonialism pursued different strategies, modes of governance, and operation. As a specific type of colonialism, settler colonialism relied on a logic of racial disappearance and spatial seclusion (Wolfe 2006, 388). As a “structure” (Wolfe 2006), settler colonialism heavily relied on the acquisition of land. Mythical notions such as “vacant land,” “empty land,” and “wilderness” erased prior Indigenous connections to the land. In contrast, in Mexico, extractive colonialism implied that Indigenous peoples were recognized as *subjugated peoples* who had to render tribute and pay taxes to the colonial authority. Although the configuration of intimate colonial spaces disciplined bodies, the colonized also generated clandestine practices and strategies aimed at resisting, adapting, and remaking such spaces. A historically grounded comparative analysis reveals how reclaiming certain Indigenous rights and mobilizing certain concepts in the present stem not only from the opportunities opened by global articulations of indigeneity but also from different geographies of colonialism.

Before the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the intellectual value of comparing Canada with Mexico appeared limited. Each

nation shares a geographical space in North America, and each has evolved as a colonial society superimposed on Indigenous populations. Canada belongs to the so-called global North and Mexico to the global South, but both countries subscribe to NAFTA, bringing the North-South divide to a different scale. That neoliberalism is uneven and fragmented in different places suggests the existence of territorialized power hierarchies among and within countries. Thus the examination of specific locations enables a different reading of the complexities of Indigenous peoples' political actions and their engagement and disengagement with global discourses. At the same time, this examination reveals how neoliberal policies selectively and unevenly target Indigenous peoples in different places.

The four studies presented in this book – Nunavut, the Nisga'a, the Zapatista *caracoles* (administrative centres) in Chiapas, and the Zapotecs in Juchitán, Oaxaca – are a window onto the diversity of Indigenous peoples' responses to neoliberalism and different strategies of neoliberalization. Both the Nunavut and the Nisga'a self-government agreements resulted from land claims negotiations with the Canadian government. Through these agreements, the Canadian government made important promises in return for reconciling the Crown and Indigenous interests and for ensuring development in more than half of Canada's land mass and exploitation of the resources contained therein. The terms and fulfilment of these modern agreements offer some important insights into the questions of how indigeneity is defined, how rights are recognized in Canada, and how self-government is exercised. The Zapatista *caracoles*, on the other hand, constitute a de facto and non-state-driven autonomous political project. By selectively delinking from the global economy and the state, the Zapatistas have sought to control place, give themselves a law, and articulate a meaning of indigeneity that is inclusive and place-centred. Finally, in the study on the Zapotecs in Juchitán, I demonstrate how the Oaxaca Indigenous Law of 1998 differentiated between Indigenous communities according to their social organization, livelihoods, and environments. The two Mexican studies are relevant in terms of the importance Indigenous communities place on communally owned land and in terms of the strategies used to reorganize Indigenous economies in southern states. These studies offer important insights for understanding how neoliberalization processes unfold differently in specific locations in which nature is unevenly produced.

The cases presented here demonstrate different strategic responses to broader colonial and global economic processes affecting place. They exemplify how, in resisting or integrating into neoliberalism, different peoples

draw on different sources of power, engage with different discourses, create alliances that are not always transnational, develop varied political and social practices, and mobilize different concepts. Indigenous peoples' engagement or disengagement with neoliberalism is shaped by their specific understandings of who they are in the world. Thus these engagements and disengagements have not only discursive but also material consequences for Indigenous peoples' everyday practices.

Looking Back

How did this book become what it is? It is difficult to specify the exact moment when I decided upon the topic of this book. The choice was shaped, in part, by who I am as a Zapotec woman. As I started my doctoral research, I focused on the relationship between Indigenous nationalism, gender, and tradition. I became concerned that most theories of nationalism do not even consider Indigenous nationalism and that postcolonial critiques of nationalism and gender mostly reflect the experiences of women of colour. The few studies on gender and Indigenous self-determination foreground the voices of Indigenous female scholars. However, few theorize about Indigenous nationalism. The studies that address Indigenous women's experiences with self-determination processes are divided between those that openly support Indigenous feminisms and those that strongly criticize feminism. Aware of this distinction, I formulated the following questions for my doctoral dissertation: How is Indigenous nationalism different from other types of nationalism? What kinds of cleavages and disparities exist in our communities? In what ways do Indigenous women relate to nationalism? How do Indigenous men and women envision decolonized spaces?

I was committed to including Indigenous people's perspectives, particularly women's voices. I asked for guidance about the proper cultural protocols for contacting different Indigenous communities. I sought research-ethics approval from the University of Alberta and the Nunavut Research Institute as well as permission from authorities. I was accepted as a student researcher at the Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social (Centre for Research and Advanced Studies in Social Anthropology) in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, where I had the opportunity to work, once again, with Araceli Burguete, a long-time Indigenous activist and, later, scholar.

There were some limitations on this research as well. In places like Chiapas, where a low-intensity war has developed, my research became

“flexible.” Instead of focusing on one location, my research became itinerant. I followed research participants around at meetings and gatherings and did volunteer work for an Indigenous women’s co-operative operating in San Cristóbal de las Casas. In Oaxaca I also interviewed Zapotec leaders and activists mostly at meetings and forums. In Nunavut I concentrated mainly on Iqaluit, and in the Nass Valley of British Columbia I focused mainly on New Aiyansh. This research was conducted between January 2003 and September 2004. Eighty people agreed to participate, and I followed the “snowball” approach. In writing my dissertation, I did not draw from all of the interviews or regard the participants as representing the overall views of the different locations. Rather, I saw places as heterogeneous and the views of the participants as expressing this complexity. A constant theme in these conversations was economic development. However, my dissertation’s contribution in this regard was limited.

As I worked on my doctoral research, I also did some research concerning the intersection of Indigenous rights and neoliberalism and concluded that Indigenous nationalism is closely connected to neoliberalism (Altamirano-Jiménez 2004, 2007). Although the convergence of these two lines of research was clear in the case of the Zapatista movement, I had some difficulties accounting for specific neoliberalization processes in the other locations. This was partly because only a few studies explicitly connect neoliberalism and Indigenous rights in Canada (Stewart-Harawira 2005; Bargh 2007; Feit 2010). The limited literature on this subject suggests that neoliberalization in countries like Canada and New Zealand has somehow provided progressive opportunities for Indigenous peoples. Nonetheless, a superficial review of the two bodies of literature suggests that neoliberalization has provided better opportunities and expansive rights for Indigenous peoples in the global North than in the global South, where these peoples seem to be resisting neoliberalism.

As I continued to conduct research on this topic, I realized that part of this superficial account of Indigenous experiences was that many studies fail to compare countries of the global North with those located in the global South in order to understand the diversity of expressions. More important, these studies fail to fully consider how different colonial modes of governance have shaped contemporary Indigenous experiences and reinserted gender inequalities. Anthropologists and critical geographers have contributed an important body of literature that explores the connection between neoliberalism and the environment. Scholars have detailed how notions of

property rights and resources are crucial to how ecological systems are being reworked through colonialism, capitalist development, and neoliberalism in specific locations (Neumann 2004; Robbins 2004). From this perspective, taking this spatial element into account to explain neoliberalism's locally contingent forms remains important (Jessop 2002; Perreault and Martin 2005; Magnusson 2009).

This book draws on the foregoing body of literature, my doctoral dissertation, and research on neoliberalism and Indigenous peoples. This comparative research applies the insights of various approaches, including Indigenous feminism, feminist ecology, critical geography, political economy, articulation theory, and colonial studies. I combine these approaches because traditional political science, although useful, is insufficient to account for how neoliberalism as a mode of governance unevenly produces subjects, places, spaces, and nature. I think these approaches help us to provide a more nuanced analysis of the diversity of Indigenous peoples' responses to neoliberalism in both "poor" and "rich" countries. Furthermore, these approaches are important to revealing the variety of political-economic, cultural, environmental, and symbolic processes through which gender is produced. By exploring Indigenous peoples' relations both *to* and *in* place within different locations, this study attempts to uncover the contingencies, fixities, and complexities of materializing neoliberalism and the fluidity of indigeneity.

Chapter 1 focuses on the theoretical and historical approaches that are used to map the different scales on which indigeneity is produced. By looking at the effects that sites of articulation of indigeneity have on the negotiation between specific places and the global, this chapter shows how colonial formations shape patterns of relationships between Indigenous peoples and the state, gender relationships, and political actions. Chapter 2 explores how neoliberal understandings of the self, difference, and the market are grounded in colonial legacies and how neoliberalism shapes state practices and articulations of indigeneity. By analyzing the intersection of Indigenous identity, rights, the environment, and neoliberalism, this chapter shows how indigeneity articulations shape Indigenous political (im)possibilities and gender inequalities.

Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 explore how indigeneity is articulated in different places and how articulations mediate economic processes that continue to reproduce racial and gender inequalities. Chapter 3 shows how contested visions of Arctic sovereignty complicate the Inuit's struggle to expand the grid that neoliberalism has imposed on indigeneity and to control their

homeland. Chapter 4, on the Nisga'a of the Nass Valley, explores how private property highlights the contradictory character of indigeneity articulation as it intersects with neoliberalism. As a form of governance, neoliberalism disarticulates established meanings and establishes new ones. Under neoliberalism, the recognition of indigeneity is shaped by imperatives that fail to maintain difference.

Chapter 5, on the Zapatistas, highlights how the discourse of rights and environmentalism has been a critical platform for neoliberal interventions in Chiapas. It shows that neoliberal commensurability with a hegemonic understanding of indigeneity as attachment to land has resulted in the exclusion of landless Indigenous communities from being recognized as Indigenous. This distinction, I argue, facilitates the reorganization of Indigenous communities and economies through livelihood changes and through different land uses and land tenures. Chapter 6 focuses on the contradictions that emerge from bringing together specific definitions of indigeneity, self-government, women's rights, and natural-resource management in Oaxaca state. By looking at the experiences of the Zapotecs of the Tehuantepec Isthmus, this chapter shows how the Oaxaca Indigenous Law provides no protection against the neoliberal strategies being implemented to drive Indigenous peasants off of their lands.

Finally, I offer some concluding thoughts on repossessing place and note four paradoxes: (1) global/state articulations of indigeneity unevenly empower Indigenous peoples; (2) not all landscapes are created equal; (3) Indigenous nationalism may lead to new internal divisions and further gender discrimination; and (4) struggles for rights increase state power.

© UBC Press 2013

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior written permission of the publisher.

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Altamirano-Jiménez, Isabel

Indigenous encounters with neoliberalism [electronic resource] : place, women, and the environment in Canada and Mexico / Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez.

(Women and indigenous studies series, 1924-1429)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Electronic monograph issued in various formats.

Also issued in print format.

ISBN 978-0-7748-2510-8 (PDF). – ISBN 978-0-7748-2511-5 (EPUB)

1. Inuit – Nunavut – Case studies. 2. Niska Indians – Case studies. 3. Indians of Mexico – Mexico – Chiapas – Case studies. 4. Zapotec Indians – Mexico – Juchitán de Zaragoza – Case studies. 5. Inuit women – Nunavut – Case studies. 6. Niska women – Case studies. 7. Indian women – Mexico – Chiapas – Case studies. 8. Zapotec women – Mexico – Juchitán de Zaragoza – Case studies. 9. Neoliberalism – Canada. 10. Neoliberalism – Mexico. I. Title. II. Series: Women and indigenous studies series (Online)

E78.C2A398 2013

305.897'071

C2013-900502-1

Canada

UBC Press gratefully acknowledges the financial support for our publishing program of the Government of Canada (through the Canada Book Fund), the Canada Council for the Arts, and the British Columbia Arts Council.

This book has been published with the help of a grant from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, through the Awards to Scholarly Publications Program, using funds provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

UBC Press
The University of British Columbia
2029 West Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2
www.ubcpress.ca