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## **Datu Lumandong and/or the Monkey-Eating Eagle: Issues in Biodiversity**

Ang sanaysay na ito ay isang pagsusuring pilosopikal sa mga isyung kaugnay ng pagkaubos at konserbasyon ng *biodiversity*. Kinatigan ng may-akda ang posisyon ng mga Katutubo (*Indigenous People*) sa pagmamay-ari ng kanilang lupaing ninuno. Pinuna rin ang mga programa ng gubyrno, mga pandaigdigang organisasyon at iba pang institusyon na madalas nagdudulot ng higit pang kasawian at dislokasyon sa mga katutubo.

There is one crucial ground that must be secured, defended and refunctioned if the planet earth want to continue to exist. This is not only the last frontier for biodiversity but more importantly, the home of 500 million Indigenous Peoples (IPs) scattered throughout the globe.

Collectively known as Ancestral Domains, this ground comprises the territories of Fourth World Countries whose occupants are called by a number of names such as Primitives, Tribes, Nations, Minorities, among other names. The United Nations has recently been prevailed upon to use the term Indigenous Peoples as it is more descriptive of their right and their continuing struggle for self-determination.

The movement for biodiversity conservation, propagation and maintenance which had caught fire in the First World

Countries since 1970's came to a head with the struggle for the survival of IPs themselves.

Brochures of environmental groups inadvertently, if not condescendingly, classified them with the forest flora and fauna. Insulting as this might be, the romantic preoccupation with the preservation of rare species in the different circles of societies defies human understanding.

*"I wish I were a monkey eating eagle, then you would be concerned about my survival,"* Datu Lumandong remarked in sheer desperation at the ethnocidal attacks which the government and development purveyors had perpetuated all these years. He added that *"because I am a human being occupying a richly endowed territory, the result of our untiring and meticulous care, you have no qualms decimating me and my people."*

The rapacious exploitation through development project points to a deeper malady that lies beneath the alarming destruction of biodiversity. This has escaped the critical mind of well meaning ecologists who pour their tears and sentiments along with their money to salvage the endangered species.

## **Historical and Theoretical Considerations**

Mind boggling as it is, challenging human rationality, the selective-species type of biodiversity conservation being bannered by *aficionados* needs to be historically and ideologically unravelled. This is rooted deep into the recesses of a complex past.

This paper seeks to root out the malady through no other means but the philosophical/cosmological consideration of the past that prompted humans to act as they had.

As it is, human lives continue to be sacrificed or pitted against biodiversity conservation, and domestication of exotic and rare species. This occurs when the latter caters to the fancies

of the rich and to the State's false sense of nationalism as in the case of the monkey-eating eagle being a national symbol.

A caveat is in order at this point. Historically, domestication of plants and animals brought about a sharp increase in population and quality of stocks. Wild sheep for instance, brought little wool compared to domesticated ones; wild cows produced little milk and only when nursing. Numerous species like corn, palms and bananas would have become extinct had these not become domesticated (Fagan, 1975).

Ironically, it is at this stage when majority of humankind produced food and subsistence in abundance, that the scourges of epidemics and famine, of conquest and warfare over nature and human nature were let loose. This unexpected outcome is the exact opposite of the preceding stages of over thirty thousand years -- the hunting/gathering and horticulture stages of which Indigenous Peoples are reckoned with as remnants.

It is interesting to note that at this early period of human existence, humans found themselves one with Nature. There was a deep kindred with the whole of creation even to a point of reverence, awe and wonder. Humans were nurtured by nature to a point of prodigality. Self consciously and reflectively, the farmers attuned themselves to the latter's rhyme and rhythm.

Over time through the growth and complexification of the human brain, keener observations of the surroundings, complex labor and other varied experiences, humans learned of the secrets of nature. These started as experiences, then as knowledge in the individual and collective brain. Creatively applied as humans looked for alternative ways of adaptation, the resultant concepts and ideas took concrete forms and structures, transmitted through generations, the totality of which we now call "culture". Seen as extrasomatic forms of adaptation, culture became the instrument through which

humans produce food, use and manufacture tools, build shelter, use fire and harness other forces of nature.

In all these endeavors, that part of culture which captures and translates humans' reflective capacities into moral behavior permeated every activity. The ethical considerations which modern philosophers like Levinas (1985), Husserl (1931), Heidegger (1962) asserted put much emphasis over the question of being or essence, and had been known and practiced by humankind since the earliest period of existence. "*Being-for-the-other before being-for-itself*" or "*being-with -others, or being-in-the-world*" which are some of the philosophical formulas of postmetaphysical thought (Levinas, 1985) are the order of conduct and the cosmologies of hunters/gatherers and horticulturists even to this day.

Contrary to the claims of the 17th century or modern political philosophers (i.e. Hobbes, Locke, Mark Twain) that life of these prehistoric people were harsh, brutish and short, they actually valued each other, their communities, their ecological niches. Social groups were important to them.

Their being spiritual, their being oriented to the transcendent spring from this societal orientation. Spirits pervading the world and the sources of the forces of nature including human nature enabled them to live unfragmented lives. Whether in war or in peace, in the midst of plenty or in scarcity, in pursuit of their daily subsistence, life was one integral activity. Although these are dismissed by the scientifically inclined as superstitious, Durkheim (in Levinas, 1985) sums this up otherwise:

*"This idea that the social is the very order of the spiritual, a new plot in being above the animal and human psychism; the level of the 'collective representatives' defined with vigor and which opens up to the dimension of the spirit seems to be recognized..."*

A comparison between peoples of the foraging horticultural stages, on one hand, and the succeeding periods, on the other, is therefore necessary. It is the former, now known as Indigenous Peoples or Tribes, whose egalitarian, communal and in-harmony-with-the-earth ethos that are the subject of discrimination and ethnocidal acts.

The shift from egalitarianism to a class society in the agricultural stage brought with it paradoxical and contradictory ramifications which continue to this day and age. It is at the agricultural stage where nature and biodiversity suffered major setbacks. Increase in food production and population explosion were the hallmarks of this period. Vast tracks of forest lands were cleared, irrigated and planted to grains, beans and squash. Grazing lands for the thousands of domesticated animals exacerbated the loss of biodiversity.

The discovery of metals and the alteration of these for tool production brought a profound intellectual awareness and new confidence in humans' capacity to meet their needs and wants (Farb, 1978; Leiss, 1972). These created impact on the environment, made more complex by the chain of reaction on the socio-political-ideological dimension of human existence.

Once underway, human existence and biodiversity was never the same again. The transformation of societies in all the dimensions of culture could not be held back. The evolutionary trajectory travels faster than ever wreaking havoc to biodiversity all the way. By hindsight, it can be said that the transition from foraging to food production was, in general, a wrong turn for humankind and biodiversity.

The succeeding period of industrialization and modernization rode roughshod on the same path in the trajectory. The double-edge character of the agricultural revolution is magnified a hundred times given the sheer pace and scope of change in this age of modernity. The historical

delineation of biodiversity issues takes on ideological and epistemological perspectives dominated by the 17th century cosmologies.

It is in this period with the ascendancy of Christianity that the attempt to take full control of nature to satisfy human needs and wants was taken seriously as a divine mandate. "To subdue the earth" definitely mirrored the Greco-Roman historical tradition of conquest and domination.

Francis Bacon, the precursor of modern scientific thinking, took the cue from this command to encourage intellectual pursuits and inquiry regarding nature (Leiss, 1972; McDonough, 1992). He took pains to place undertakings of this kind under the English royal patronage and State to ensure its viability and continuity. Moreover, the Christian sentiment that had swept Europe at this period created a backlash against magic, a pseudo-science, that was then prevalent in the Middle Ages. Christianity, in a way had helped Bacon won his cause (Leiss, 1972). Thus, the confluence of events paved the systematic and orderly method of probing into the secrets of nature known today as Science and its application, Technology.

Joint by Descartes and Newton centuries later, the philosophical underpinnings governing the relationship with nature departed completely from the hunting/gathering and horticultural cosmology. Rationality and its application rest on the premise: *anything that cannot be reduced to quantification or mathematical formulations are non-existent or are pure figment of the imagination*. This extends to the terrestrial and cosmic laws of gravity and motion which finally completed the wholesale transformation of nature (Leiss, 1977; McDonough, 1991; Ferkiss, 1969).

This mechanical paradigm did not just push the Homo Faber to create new machines and effectively control nature. It

also changed the manner in which humans view the earth, themselves included the culture and societies they created.

McDonaugh (op. cit.) insightfully points out, for instance, that political economy views GNP (Gross National Product) as indicator of progress, tells of the speed at which industries take natural resources, process them, place them in market and, in a few years, discard them as junks in a heap. It does not tell of the interchange of goods and resources between all species in the life community. GNP surely does not tell of the domination of humans by fellow humans.

This domination of nature and of fellow humans take place covertly and overtly, and knows no limits. With human ingenuity, through the instrumentality of Science and Technology, domination ranges from outright usurpation of lands and resources from indigenous and rightful occupants; annihilating the latter if need be. Mass media, tourism, missionary work, laws, decrees, development projects and the almighty market system are all conspirators in this wanton abuse of nature.

### **Ethnocide and Biodiversity Conservation Strategies**

At the close of the year 2000, the global community has all the possibilities of achieving a more stable and satisfying ways of life. So says Barbara Ward in 1966. Furthermore, she says that both developed and underdeveloped countries can overcome the hindrances to good life.

Yet the post-colonial upheavals: wars between states and insurgents, between states and indigenous peoples; the consequent siphoning of population to urban areas either to escape the shooting or bombing or to seek jobs in the industrial sectors; the industries in turn wreaking up more natural resources for the market leaving and heaping up tons of garbage

and population -- all these changes and demands make planetary survival precarious.

Against this backdrop of modernity with its confused and contradictory preoccupations for biodiversity, on the one hand, annihilation of species including humans, on the other hand, the picture of Datu Lumandong and the monkey-eating eagle pitted against each other becomes lucid but unacceptable. For at the bottom of this is the moral question of "*equity and availability*," of "*compassion and frugality*" which humans have failed to exercise all the four centuries of colonialism, the two centuries of industrialism and modernism, and a few decades of advanced communication and space technology (Ward, op. cit.).

The main issue this paper seeks to examine is why species, humans included, are made to compete for survival when survival itself hinges on the presence of variety, cupped in the buzzword: biodiversity.

By definition, biodiversity is the existence of the variety of the world's genes, species including humans, and ecosystems, the totality of which provides the basis of life on earth. Biodiversity is most apparent in the rainforest of the world and the marine life of seas and oceans, rivers, and lakes most of which happens to be in the ancestral domains of Indigenous Peoples.

The current initiatives of the international environmental organizations, well meaning as they are, fail to see the incongruity of their programs (Gray, 1991). For one, they leave out the Indigenous peoples as subjects and partners for biodiversity conservation. They are not only rightful occupants but, more importantly, ecologists in their own right in their understanding and harmonious dealing with the habitat. This complete disregard and or discriminatory acts toward the indigenous peoples is rooted in the 16th century European mindset which needs to be reiterated here in stronger accents.

Indigenous peoples or Tribes, as they are traditionally known, who were occupying their native lands at the time of European expansionism were labelled as barbarians, savages or primitives, as is done today. Condescendingly, they were considered the "*white man's burden*".

The Christian moral order, the same which inspired Bacon to encourage scientism with crusading fervor, moved the Europeans to bring those humans in Asia, Africa, and Americas, under their supposedly "*Christian*" yoke. One of the ironies of history, however, is the fact that Christ's yoke was brought upon the indigenous people through the cruel and rapacious take over of lands and peoples. It should not be forgotten that colonization was the offshoot of the industrial boom that needed more raw materials for the production of goods and markets as outlets for such goods.

Almost half of the indigenous population of the New World were thus decimated either by the sword, forced starvation, and diseases brought by the colonizers. James Cook, the English explorer of the Tahiti and the Caribbean (in Lewis 1990) wrote in his diary: "*It would have been far better for these poor people never to have known us.*"

At the close of the 20th century, with only over 500 million left of the indigenous peoples of the world, they found themselves as before; hunted, derided, displaced, decimated by the twin achievements of the western world: Christianity and technology (Lewis, 1992; Escobar, 1989).

The western biodiversity type of conservation along with its anti-indigenous peoples' sentiment are both reminiscent of the 16th century colonization which had so preoccupied Europe. This time it is driven by the fear of planetary annihilation, a global levelling both for the rich and poor, mighty and the downtrodden. This fear, manifested in selfish emotionalism and narrow nationalism, makes a bid for domestication, conservation, and preservation of selective species that cater to their fancies.

It is one great cause for amazement and puzzle why a rich matron cries her heart out over a dog whose time has come, and yet remains unmoved at the sight of a gory massacre of peasants, factory workers or urban poor. What happens at the individual level is more appalling when carried out by organizations, by state apparatus, the academe, or even by such prestigious international body as the United Nations. The uncritical and ahistorical crusade for conservation of species brings more harm than good. The idea of conservation, laudable as it is in principle, must unearth hidden motives and sentiments that should decidedly bring out unfragmented solutions to ecological destructions.

Deep ecology argues for inherent right of every species to sustained existence independent of their instrumental value to humans (Mitlin, 1992). Inherent in this view is the questioning stance to the scientific Christian rationality: "*to subdue the earth*".

While biodiversity conservationists hide behind the principle of deep ecology, they cannot hide their gross preferential option for animals that answer their emotional and selfish desire for a "faithful," and loyal but subjugated companion that the pets are.

Misplaced priorities, resulting from narrow and sentimental nationalism that places so much emphasis on symbols instead of the people being symbolized puts this craze for the monkey-eating eagle in the media.

A series of writeups (Phil. Daily Inquirer, Nov. 1995) and pictures showed journalists crying over the death of the eagle fertilized in captivity. Only a few of the journalists however, saw the episode in perspective, i.e. that the destruction of the forest, spells doom for this species.

No group of Indigenous Peoples (IP) whose existence depended on the forest in much the same degree as the eagle, was greatly honored with a coverage by the media.

Given this attitude of unconcern by the mainstream, the struggle of the IPs for survival and self determination stands to reason. Andrew Gray (1991) argues pointedly that biodiversity crisis which has alarmed environmentalists is matched by world cultural diversity crisis brought about, unwittingly this time, by conservationists for biodiversity.

Unless biodiversity and cultural diversity are seen as two-sides of a coin and addressed jointly as complimentary roles enhancing each other, nothing will ever come out of the hardnose planning and strategizing from governments and conservationists.

Basic to the conflict between biodiversity conservationists and the IPs (Gray, Ibid; Duhaylungsod and Hyndman, 1993; TABAK, 1990) is the age-old contest over resources. While concern for resources by conservationists is unlike that of the industrialists and development surveyors, the net effect is displacement of Indigenous Peoples in their ancestral domains.

Schemes and strategies formulated by ecological international organizations financed by World Bank, endorsed by governments of various States were done without consulting the Indigenous Peoples who are directly affected.

One scheme was the bill for the demarcation of protected zones known as IPAS (Integrated Protected Areas System or NIPAS (National Integrated Protected Areas System) in the Philippines. The bill prepared beforehand by consultants in the Philippines was surreptitiously "forced" down on participants in a conference purportedly convened to explore indigenous knowledge in biodiversity. Having smartly uncovered the hidden agenda, the participants passed a resolution then and there to exempt the ancestral domain from the NIPAS.

With the protected zones in place, the harvesting of the timber product for economic gains is also strategized.

Leaving out the needs of the Indigenous Peoples, this scheme called "*green capitalism*" glosses over the fact that IPs live off the fruits of the land and that without complete control of production and marketing they are at the mercy of the people of the First World Countries and the rich in their own country (Gray, *Ibid.*).

Biodiversity conservation in this manner is ethnocide, a killer cure (Gray, *Ibid.*) done in varied ways and means, ranging from cordoning off protected zones and shooting those who dare to trespass, to direct flushing out of forest inhabitants to other villages where they become internal refugees with the state.

Assimilation or integration into the mainstream whether forcibly or as a natural occurrence eventually spells death to their indigenous culture. Ethnocide which is the killing of cultures, not necessarily the culture bearers, results to the disintegration of human species in the long run.

### **Biocultural Diversity and Ancestral Homeland Defense**

Considered the drags of society, the IPs, may yet be the anchor for humankind gone adrift; their ancestral domains the last frontier of the source of life for the planet earth.

These are neither romantic atavism nor desperate futurism. The IPs struggle for survival and self determination is itself Gaia or the organic earth's own fight for survival and existence. Humans, the summit of Gaia's consciousness moves towards that fullness albeit in a tortuous, contradictory and seemingly irrational manner. It is probably nature's way that when things hopelessly shift from bad to worst, or when situations reaching crisis point moves in to long drawn out paralysis, nature shakes humans to a sobering realization.

Indigenous Peoples and ancestral domains for all intent and purposes are one and integral. For so was humanity before the advent of scientism, before the Newtonian mechanical and nucleated worldview of the cosmos

Early human existence described in the preceding pages traces in part the genesis of ancestral homelands. Over these lands, primordial rights are claimed by the Indigenous Peoples. This however, is not just an ordinary land claim. Bennagen (1987) aptly describes it as:

*"...an affirmation of a whole history where a piece of earth becomes culturally defined to a point that it touches the deepest of human sentiments spurring one to act heroically to uphold and defend it."*

Ancestral domain, therefore, is the embodiment of a people's history, cosmology, and spirituality; their very life in fact. It is held sacred and in perpetuity for generations to come. It is the one tangible thing that binds the dead ancestors to the present generation of occupants who are obliged to take care of it for themselves and the descendants yet to come. The elaborate and time tested rituals and ceremonies call to mind the memories of these ancestors. They who toiled and wrestled with the enlivening forces of nature; whose deeds, made fruitful because they are watered by sweat, tears or even blood, can secure for the progeny an inheritance valuable and transcendent (Bennagen, Ibid.).

Cultural diversity emerges as members of each population groups dynamically interact with each other within their ecological niche. They pursued a lifestyle and created a culture according to the demands of that particular environment. The rugged mountains of the Cordillera, for instance, posed no obstacles to the human beings who lived there. The breathtaking and magnificent rice terraces attest to the human wisdom and ingenuity tested to the limits. This is exemplified by the people we now call Igorots.

The lowland coastal and riverine dwellers developed commerce and trade that went beyond villages to the wider lands and across the seas of Asia (Scott, 1983). Forest dwellers engaged in hunting and gathering or progressed on to

swiddering. They formed bands whose mobile lifestyle maintain an egalitarian political economy. This anarchic, leaderless or "lawless" political system are seriously being studied and considered as alternative paradigms by western scholars, disillusioned as they are by their Greek type of democracy (Leacock and Lee, 1986).

For sure there were wars and feuds between and among the various tribes and peoples. Their myths and legends were replete with accounts of their daring and brave ancestors who fought and shed blood to preserve the integrity of their lands and cultures.

Peace pacts were forged as often as the wars they fought. Or even to prevent one. Thus pacts of friendship and mutual protection were also very much part of their culture. (Scott, 1983).

The twin processes of colonization and modernization had challenged all these cultural diversities. Colonists forcibly took lands and resources for themselves and their respective government. Their first act of arrogation was the declaration that "all lands belong to the crown or sovereign," a legal fiction called the Regalia Doctrine. This had condemned all indigenous peoples as squatters in their own lands.

An entirely different cosmology based on commoditization relegates the sacredness, the inalienability and the progeny orientation of land to the category of superstition, irrationality and primitivism. The well entrenched western legal apparatus backed by powerful military enforcement system and the almighty market and business conglomerates, posed a formidable triad of a foe against the Indigenous Peoples and their ancestral domains.

Backed only by their moral claim over their lands and resources of prior rights, a number of Indigenous Peoples

succumbed to threats and outright show of superior military force. Others have fallen prey to the more insidious lure of the trimmings of modernity, and have readily given up their birthright for a pottage. Like any other human being, they have allowed convenience, ambition and greed to prevail over social consciousness and self respect. Thus we see them in tourist belt, aping their ancestors in empty regalia for a fee; desacralizing their rituals and ceremonies to feed on curiosity seekers (Barrameda, 1993).

To this day, as it was on colonial days, their culture commercialized and misrepresented, and their territories usurped, encroached upon and raped of their resources, are monuments to the prodigious and enduring metaphors of how humans can degrade themselves, each other and their environment.

Bleak as this picture is, the other scenario is the more encouraging and humanizing. For over two decades now, Indigenous Peoples movements had taken a moment the United Nations particularly can no longer ignore. Among others, their insistence in being reckoned as *Peoples* and not just population groups or ethnic groups is rational, for so are they.

Parallel to the member States aggrupation, the First Nations or the Fourth World Countries as they are referred to, have consolidated to demand the recognition of their right to self determination. This right to direct their own destiny includes recognition of their ancestral domain, as well as right to their cultural traditions, practices, arts, music, belief systems, etc.

Gray (1991) asserts that this movement first emerged in North America, Scandinavia, and Australia in the early 1960s linked with the consciousness of social and racial exploitation. In the 1970s this spread to the Central and South America, followed by the Pacific and Asia in the 1980s.

In the Philippines, the struggle of the Indigenous Peoples was brought to the world's attention with the historic struggle of the Igorots of Cordillera against the World Bank-funded Chico Dam project during the Marcos Regime in the late 70s. Other Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines followed suit consolidating themselves into a national federation known as Kalipunan ng Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KKAMP) (Barrameda, 1993).

All these years, the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples through KKAMP's two member organizations, the Lumad Mindanao and the Cordillera Peoples Alliance have been influential in internationalizing the Indigenous Peoples movement.

A promising development for the survival of humanity and the cosmos, the movement attracts various support groups at the global, regional and local levels.

### **Ethical Considerations: Participatory Research and Advocacy**

The attempt to articulate the issues inherent in the present biodiversity conservation movements is an acknowledgment of the Indigenous Peoples' moral claim (Pain, 1985 in Duhaylungsod, 1993) on researches and development projects undertaken by the various disciplines in the academe, particularly the natural and social sciences.

Every other person who puts his finger into the biodiversity pie (it's where the money is) is motivated by concern and interest on the planet earth. This benefit of doubt is accorded him. However, in the situation where much of the reality of biodiversity is "*defined by those who hold power*" (Duhaylungsod, *Ibid.*), the academe included being the generator and repository of knowledge, studies and researches as forms of political advocacy for Indigenous Peoples are a must.

The “*politics of truth*” (Berreman, 1981) which research endeavor is all about, requires persistence and skill. It also requires that studies and researches be presented in a form and structure which are not just intelligible to the Indigenous Peoples, but that they are enabled to speak for themselves, articulate their views and influence development.

This is specially true where well intentioned environmentalists feel compelled to insist in their tried and tested scientific paradigms because these are accompanied by credentials and connections with funding agencies.

It is instructive to note that Indigenous Peoples unequivocally forbid voices other than theirs concerning their environment... (Gray, 1991, p.1)

*“We are concerned... that the Amazonian peoples and in particular, the indigenous peoples have been left out of the environmentalists’ vision of amazonian biosphere...”*

*“We are concerned that the Indigenous Peoples and their representative organizations have been left out of the political process which is determining the future of their homeland, the environmentalists have spoken and lobbied in our behalf;...while we appreciate these efforts it should be made clear that we never delegated this power to the environmentalists’ community, nor to any individual organization within that community.”*

*Ethical considerations ought to guide all phases of biodiversity conservation researches and programs. This is best achieved by a collaboration and/or partnership with the Indigenous Peoples as the latter are very much handicapped and limited in getting into the discourse of the mainstream. Some of them have gone through formal schooling and have become professionals themselves.*

Unfortunately, a number have been coopted and had worked against their people. Most Indigenous peoples,

however, are "*organic thinkers*" whose indigenous knowledge and philosophy are being sought after, if not pirated and appropriated by big business corporations. This is true especially of pharmaceutical and medical enterprises.

Biodiversity conservation, a concern of global proportions needs the contribution of all and sundry. Ethics comes into the picture because both "being" and "becoming" are deeply at stake. Put another way, existence and living out this existence to the fullest as the "be all and end all" can be realized only in communion with others. Interrelatedness and relationships are subsumed in ethics. Furthermore, humans have reached a point where euphoria over scientific and technological achievements are blunted by the trade off which destroys interrelatedness in all levels.

## **Conclusion**

Participatory research and development planning flows from ethical requirements. More so, because humans are equipped with brains, wherever and whoever they are. It is not without reason that they are called *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* (sapientia-wisdom) for they are doubly wise.

That the generation and acquisition of knowledge has been appropriated and the sole prerogative of academe, where only the moneyed and the powerful have access to, is an aberration of history.

All who have not the opportunity to enter the portals of the educational system and do not have the "union card" are excluded and are dismissed as incapable of comprehending the expert language of science and technology.

To reverse the process is to demystify this usurpation of human intellect. The struggle primarily rests on the Indigenous Peoples themselves. Badly beaten by history, they have emerged, consolidated and are asserting their rights cupped in their agenda: To repossess their land and defend it!

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