

Original Peoples

By Rudolph C. Ryser, PhD

Fourth World peoples constitute a combined population of an estimated 1.9 billion people in more than 5000 nations. Located on all continents except Antarctica, Peoples also referred to as “indigenous” are located in territories they have used since long before the formation of the global system of states. As Figure 1 illustrates these nations have populations that are concentrated in varying degrees from the arctic, to the savannas, rainforests, semi-tropical regions, mangroves, on rivers, lakes and surrounded by oceans and seas across the Earth.

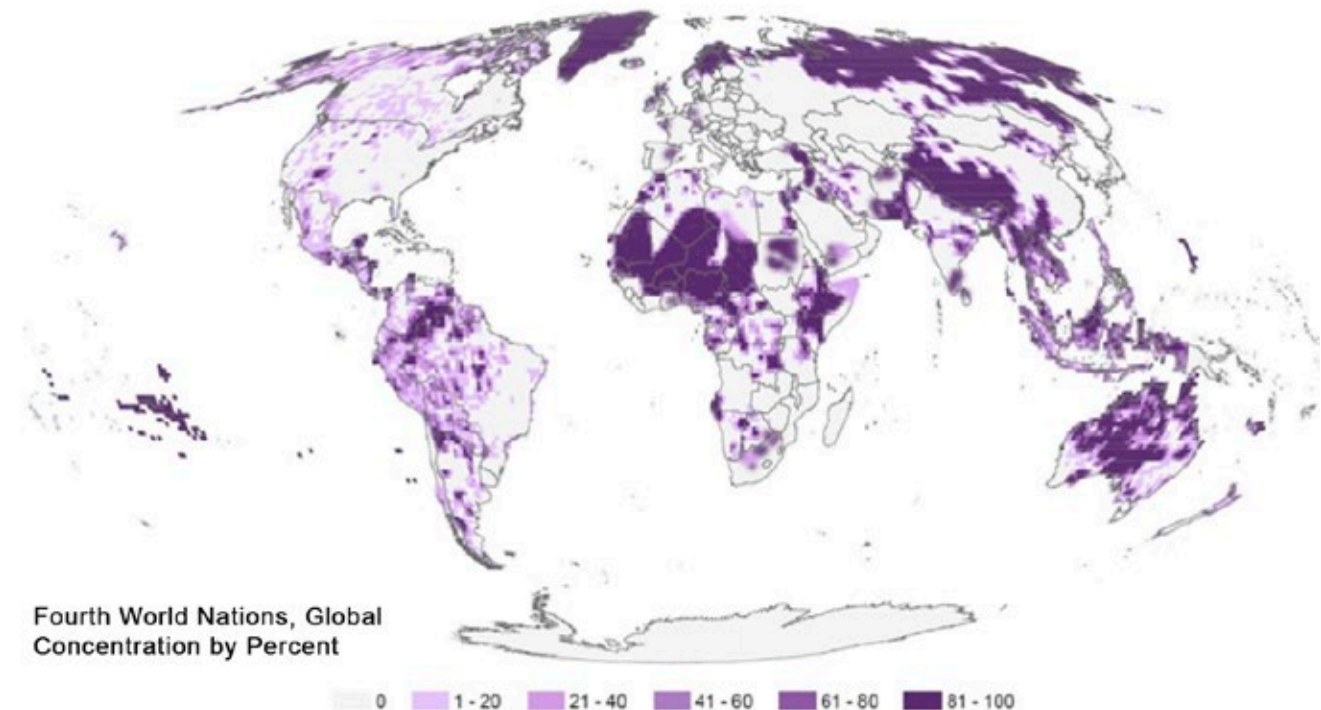


Figure 1 Concentration of FW Nations Globally 2020

It is “universally accepted” wisdom in state-based international law that all peoples have the right to freely choose their political status and their social, economic, political and cultural future without external interference¹. Peoples have rights and the right to exist.

¹ United Nations Charter (1945); International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); International Labor Organization Convention Number 169: Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989); Alta Outcome Document: Global Indigenous Preparatory Conference for the United Nations High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly to be known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, 10-12 June 2013.

These rather forthright assertions in various forms are included in a wide range of internationally approved declarations, treaties, conventions, and documents issued by Fourth World (indigenous) Nations and UN Member States. Indeed, state-based international law relies heavily on the concept of “peoples’ rights” that is grounded in the commonly held view that “all peoples” have the right to dignity and protection of their rights in the international as well as domestic environments. Despite the common principal of “peoples’ rights,” however, state-based international laws and discourse fail to define who or what these “peoples” are that possess “rights.” Such an omission rather renders state-based international laws and agreements that assert that “all peoples” possess certain rights muddled and fundamentally open to obstructive interpretations convenient to obscure accountability when those “rights” are violated. Chair and Special Rapporteur for the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples Erica-Irene Daez clarified this point when she wrote:

Indigenous groups are unquestionably “peoples” in every political, social, cultural and ethnological meaning of this term. It is neither logical nor scientific to treat them as the same “peoples” as their neighbours, who obviously have different languages, histories and cultures. The United Nations should not pretend, for the sake of a convenient legal fiction, that those differences do not exist. *(Erica-Irene Daez, Chair of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples. 1993)*

I have here paraphrased the central controversy between the world’s more than 5000 distinct peoples commonly referred to as “indigenous peoples” and the world’s 203 recognized and non-recognized states (196 states are recognized by the United Nations including the permanent observers Holy See, Palestinian, and Taiwan while different states recognize different numbers of countries.).

Recognition is a political process that usually connotes one or more states claiming sovereignty to recognize another “sovereign state” but leaves “peoples” undefined. In the international environment many terms are left undefined due in large measure to the many different ways that words may be translated and defined in different languages. “Peoples” is one of these terms. The failure to define “Peoples” leaves ambiguous whole parts of the human family and permits interpretations preferred by states. So central is this term to the reasonable conduct of international relations for self-determination, Fourth World Nations retaining their territories and relationship to the natural world, and the meaning of international law and agreements that it must be given primary consideration to advance peaceful relations between peoples and political entities. The political entities were only formed in the last 370 years since the first modern states were negotiated into existence by the Roman Catholic Church at the end of the 30-years’ war in Europe.

While the word “peoples” poses challenges to UN Member States and state-based international law the word “peoples” does not pose a challenge for Fourth World peoples (indigenous peoples). The word(s) in the language used by various nations to designate their collective identity usually means “the people” or “human beings.” Reflecting on collective names of peoples in North America and the Arctic region we can readily recognize self-identifying names translate to mean “people.” For example, Inuit, Anishinabe, Lenape, Nuxbaaga (for modern usage Hidatsa), Onandaga’ono (now referred to as Seneca), Terawken, Tsitsistas (modern usage is Cheyenne), or Wampanoag. Depending on language many peoples in the western hemisphere identified as “a people.” Elsewhere in the world the pattern is repeated where various nations use words unique to their culture and language. In other words, the idea of “people” is commonly understood throughout the world as an ordinary word meaning humans living in society in a particular territory and practicing a common culture.

Peoples’ Rights and Self-determination

Fourth World peoples are “peoples” in the ordinary sense and in the international legal sense. All states’ governments and

indigenous nations agree that “peoples” rights exist extending to not only the right to self-determination but also the right to exist freely without external interference². Why am I making such a point to stress that the term “peoples” applies to the 5000 Fourth World polities? I do so to establish that the word “peoples” though undefined in state-based international law actually has concrete meaning and must be understood to have its meaning applied especially when concerned with the “rights of peoples.”

Indeed, the ability of Fourth World nations to exercise the right of self-determination and to govern themselves³ is directly connected to the sustainability of biodiversity and global cultural diversity— essential to sustaining life on the planet. It is no coincidence that where healthy Fourth World nations live and prosper based on their freely chosen political, cultural, economic and social way of life the living Earth also thrives. Thus, it is no surprise that Fourth World nations occupy 80% of the world’s remaining biodiverse rainforests, plains, tundra, mountain regions, estuaries, rivers and streams, and deserts.

As peoples they possess the knowledge, experience and cultural practices essential for maintaining a balanced relationship between

² Without reference to “states” possessing rights, the rights of Peoples are clearly stated in state-based international laws and nation-based international agreements and policy. For example, under the 1948 Convention on Genocide, International Labor Organization Convention 169 (1989), UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007 and the Alta Outcome Document (2013) the rights of peoples to exist is explicitly stated. General Assembly resolution 41/128 of 4 December 1986, “Declaration on the Right to Development” (affirming in article 1 (2) “the right of peoples, which includes, subject to the E/CN.4/Sub.2/2004/30 page 22 relevant provisions of both International Covenants on Human Rights, the exercise of their inalienable right to full sovereignty over all their natural wealth and resources”) (Emphasis added). In the 1955 Report of the UN Secretary General this statement affirmed agreements in the General Assembly: “The right of peoples to self-determination shall also include permanent sovereignty over natural wealth and resources. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence on the ground of any rights that may be claimed by other States.” Ibid. para. 19.”

³ As “peoples” the right of self-determination and the exercise of self-government is a conceptual connection that undergirds the aspirations of Fourth World nations the world over.

their communities and the natural world. For that achievement, all humanity benefits.

The United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) rather renders the concept of “peoples’ rights” explicit when in its 1989 report⁴ it states:

- Peoples’ rights are not State rights;
- Peoples’ rights may not be used to derogate from individual human rights;
- Peoples’ rights, to the contrary, provide the pre-conditions necessary to the fulfillment of individual human rights;
- Peoples’ rights, far from justifying anti-democratic actions by States against peoples, assert and protect peoples from anti-democratic actions against them by the State, where it is undemocratic or otherwise illegitimate.⁵

The UNESCO Expert Meeting went further to list characteristics inherent in the description of a “people:”

- a) A group of individual human beings who enjoy some or all of the following common features:
 - i) A common historical tradition; ii) Racial or ethnic identity;
 - iii) Cultural homogeneity;
 - iv) Linguistic unity;
 - v) Religious or ideological affinity; vi) Territorial connection;
 - vii) Common economic life;

b) The group must be of a certain number which need not be large (e.g. the people of micro-States) but which must be more than mere association of individuals within a State;

c) The group as a whole must have the will to be identified as a people or the consciousness of being a people—allowing that groups or some members of such groups, though sharing the foregoing characteristics, may not have that will or consciousness; and possibly;

d) The group must have institutions or other means of expressing its common characteristics and will for identify.⁶

The UNESCO Experts’ Report conclusions are instructive and pertinent to my discussion here:

i) The concept of peoples’ rights is now established by universally recognized international law. Its existence cannot now validly be controverted.

ii) Some peoples’ rights are universally accepted. These include the right to existence, the peoples’ right to self-determination and other rights.

iii) There is however a continuing and legitimate debate about the precise content of still other rights claimed to be peoples’ rights.

⁴ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. International Meeting of Experts on further study of the concept of the rights of peoples. UNESCO, Paris. 27-30 November 1989. SHS-89/CONF.602/7 (English)

⁵ (UNESCO 1989. Page 7)

⁶ (UNESCO 1989. Page 8)

iv) The concept is a dynamic one which is in the process of elucidation and clarification. International and regional legal instruments, resolutions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, national constitutions, scholarly writings and other texts contribute to this process.⁷

The right of a people to self-determination and to choose their form of government is a straightforward way to assert these conclusions. Furthermore, it should be noted that UNESCO's experts conceived of peoples' rights to include "a safe global environment for such issues as the so-called Greenhouse Effect and global warming or in response to disasters of transnational significance..." and the right to peace.

When we talk about Fourth World peoples (indigenous peoples), various institutions, scholars, political leaders and governments seek to narrow our understanding and even deny altogether the existence of or presence of Fourth World peoples inside the boundaries of many states. Indeed, the United Nations claims there are just 370 million individuals who can be identified as "indigenous" in 70 countries.⁸ Such a limitation by states undermines the "recognized rights" of Fourth World peoples. And

of equal importance the intentional obscuration of Fourth World peoples obstructs the exercise of Fourth World peoples' rights that could prevent the destruction of the world's biodiversity and the world's biocultural diversity. It is, therefore, critical to the rule of international law and to peaceful relations between peoples and states that we understand who are "peoples" that possess rights that must be recognized and guaranteed? The rule of law as a key mechanism for the conduct of domestic state and international relations must rely on an understanding of "peoples."

Ultimately the prevention of mass destruction of peoples and biodiversity is dependent on our understanding and respect for the rights of peoples.

State-based international law does not recognize indigenous peoples as separate or distinct peoples. They are claimed by states as minorities or ethnic groups constituting a sub-demographic within a state's claimed dominant population. They fall with few exceptions under the state's general population. Despite this claim by states' governments Fourth World peoples do, however, share the characteristics of "peoples" as noted by UNESCO even as they do not share the benefits of the universally recognized

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⁸ The United Nations, International Labor Organization, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and other multilateral state institutions identify "recognized" indigenous peoples. Russia claims 41 indigenous nations comprised of more than 250,000 people occupying territory two-thirds of currently defined Russia. Russia has decided not to recognize. According to the UN Human Rights Council (2015), "the Committee expresses its concern at "insufficient measures being taken to respect and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and to ensure that members of such peoples are recognized as such." The lack of recognition particularly concerns the situation of the Izhma Komi or Izvatas, who are denied recognition as indigenous peoples, excluding them from decision-making over their territories, which are ever more devastated by oil exploration and extraction." UN Member states choose to "recognize" or not recognize according to economic and political considerations denying most of the world's 1.9 billion indigenous peoples (CWIS study 2019) international endorsement of their inherent rights as peoples.

body of international law. And, nor do Fourth World peoples benefit from lawful rights under domestic laws of states. The concept of “a people” designates each Fourth World community just as the term can designate a State. Indeed, though Fourth World peoples created and are therefore represented by many forms of government—many of which are not well known to States—they have the capacity to represent themselves. A common characteristic of Fourth World peoples not mentioned by UNESCO is that each engages in cultural practices specific to their environment and location. And here we note that culture helpfully means: *The dynamic and evolving relationship between a people, the land and the cosmos*. With this designation it can be said without confusion that all Fourth World peoples have a culture whether they are sedentary in their territory, or they occupy territory as migrants as do many aboriginals in Australia and Bedouins and Roma.⁹

Understanding that Fourth World peoples are “peoples” is directly relevant in terms of the principle of “self-determination of all peoples, by virtue of which they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” that stands as a common article in numerous state-based international laws and agreements. It is

particularly noteworthy that the state-based Convention on Biological Diversity recognizes the primary role of Fourth World Nations as major contributors to the perpetual existence of diverse eco-systems. The states’ ratified convention inserts under Article 8 (j) the principle that Fourth World nations are the regulating authorities over the “conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.”

The central reality is that understanding that Fourth World nations as occupants of territories and practicing distinct cultures helps firmly establish their status as “peoples” and as peoples they actively engage directly in reciprocal relationships with Earth’s natural life. Their existence without external interference is critical to the maintenance of the world’s biodiversity and life on the planet.

To understand this in concrete terms one need only place a world map on a table depicting all of the world’s natural environments in color. Then overlay that map with the locations of Fourth World nations. You immediately see that where Fourth World nations occupy or use territories their locations are green and rich with life. Anthropologist Mac Chapin¹⁰ overseeing a research team including Dr. Bernard Nietschmann from 1992 to 2002 interviewed

⁹ A Fourth World nation’s territory cannot be reasonably limited to the constraints imposed by the definition of a state where boundaries are claimed affirm absolute jurisdiction. Some Fourth World nations migrate with seasons from one land area to another. Other nations remain settled in an area for generations and still others possess a territory that traverses across lands as if in a wandering pathway. The state claim to territory with boundaries, internal police powers, universal law within the boundaries, claimed sovereignty and recognition of the boundaries by other states is the definition of a state. A nation does not fit this restricted definition that was first proclaimed for new states by the Westphalian Treaty (1648) in Europe.

¹⁰ Chapin is a PEW Research Fellow (1995) and applied the support of PEW to his research including the “First Indigenous Conference on Land, the Environment and Culture” held in June 1996 and was attended by nearly 200 people representing 98 organizations, including 57 indigenous groups from all seven countries in Central America and from South America, Mexico and the United States. The objectives were to increase dialogue among indigenous peoples working on land and natural resource issues in Central America, to share experiences, to learn more about concrete, technically solid conservation activities, to begin networking to implement action plans and initiate communication on environmental issues among indigenous peoples, NGOs and the governments of the region.

more than 3,500 individuals from Fourth World nations during 130 workshops in Central America to identify various nations' territorial bounds. The resulting information was plotted on a satellite generated regional map of Central America's seven countries.

The map illustrates how Fourth World nations are located on territories where the ecosystems remain intact (green on the map) while areas occupied by unsustainable economic models of land use are mainly in collapse (brown on the map).

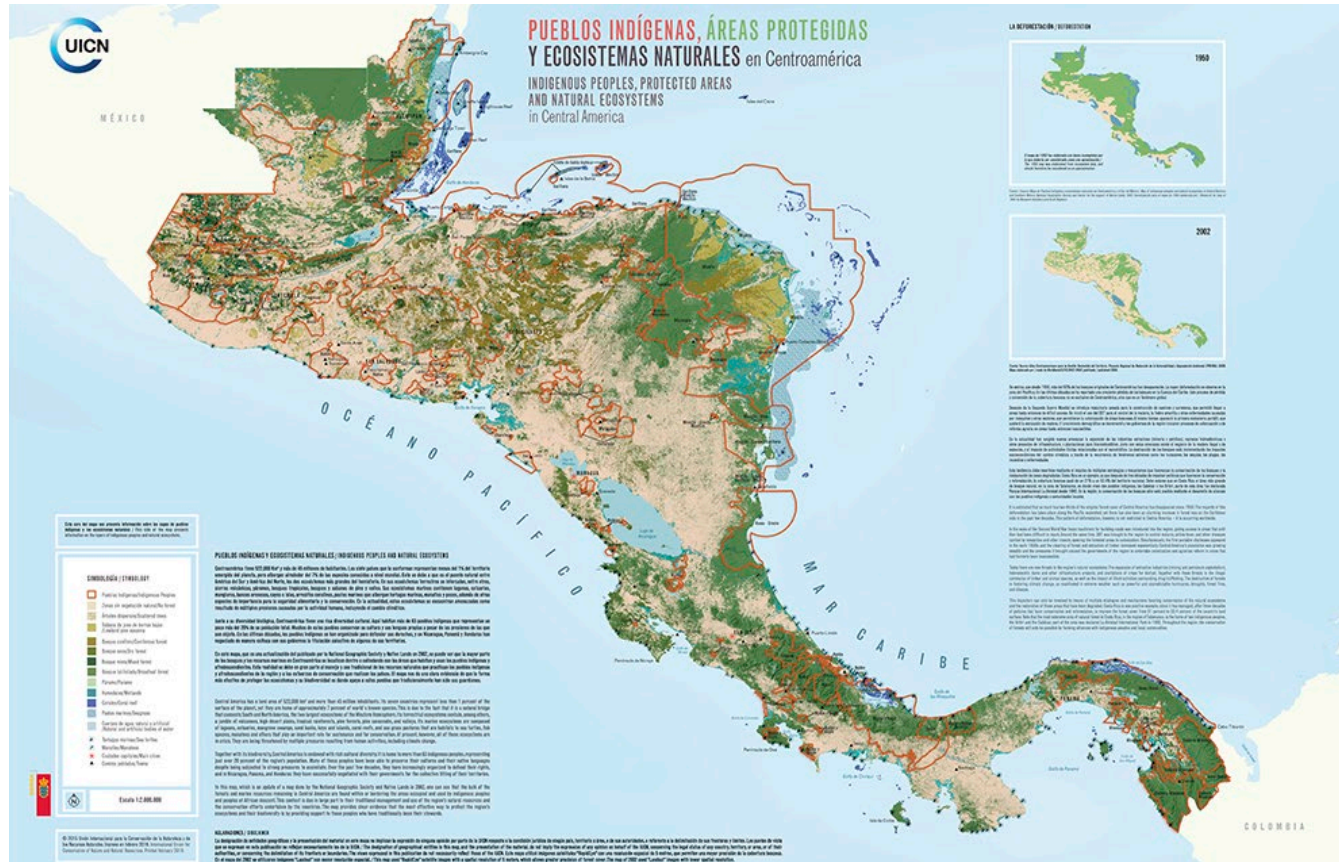


Figure 2 Indigenous Peoples, Protected Areas & Natural Ecosystems - Central America (Printed with permission from the Unión Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (IUCN), San Jose Costa Rica)

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (Switzerland & Costa Rica) verified the findings of Chapin’s researchers and Fourth World nations’ information by generating a satellite map (See Figure 2) of the Central American countries (2016) illustrating the homelands of 63 Fourth World nations

occupying 40% of the region. The map clearly illustrates with scientific precision¹¹ correlation between Fourth World territories and sustained natural life on the land and in the seas. Where

¹¹ The map used “Red Eye” satellite images with a special resolution of 5 meters. Such precision ensured accurate forest cover resolution unobtainable by other methods.

Fourth World nations are displaced or replaced by corporate societies those locations are brown or dead, though when states set aside protected areas and animal sanctuaries those parcels tend to be green though separated from larger green areas. Fourth World nations perpetuate the world's natural life and therefore they are essential to sustaining biodiversity and all life on the planet.”

The IUCN map gives weight to the assertion that the presence of Fourth World nations located in and using biodiverse ecosystems ensures sustained biodiversity. By way of illustration the Chapin map and the IUCN map both draw attention to the fact that two thirds of the forest cover in Central America has been significantly diminished since 1950.

Due to extensive road building and construction, timber extraction and colonization the various states' governments introduced agrarian reforms that extended their reach into otherwise unreachable areas originally thick with forests. After 52 years' time the natural forests had been significantly reduced to small areas preserved primarily by Fourth World nations and small state authorized preservers.

The remaining land area is brown and essentially no longer part of the vital and diverse natural ecosystem. Fourth World peoples have been warning against unrestrained development and its adverse effects on the living earth.

The peoples of Maya encoded these warnings in their ancient Popol Vuh while Fourth World nations leaders around the world have sounded the alarms in the current era.

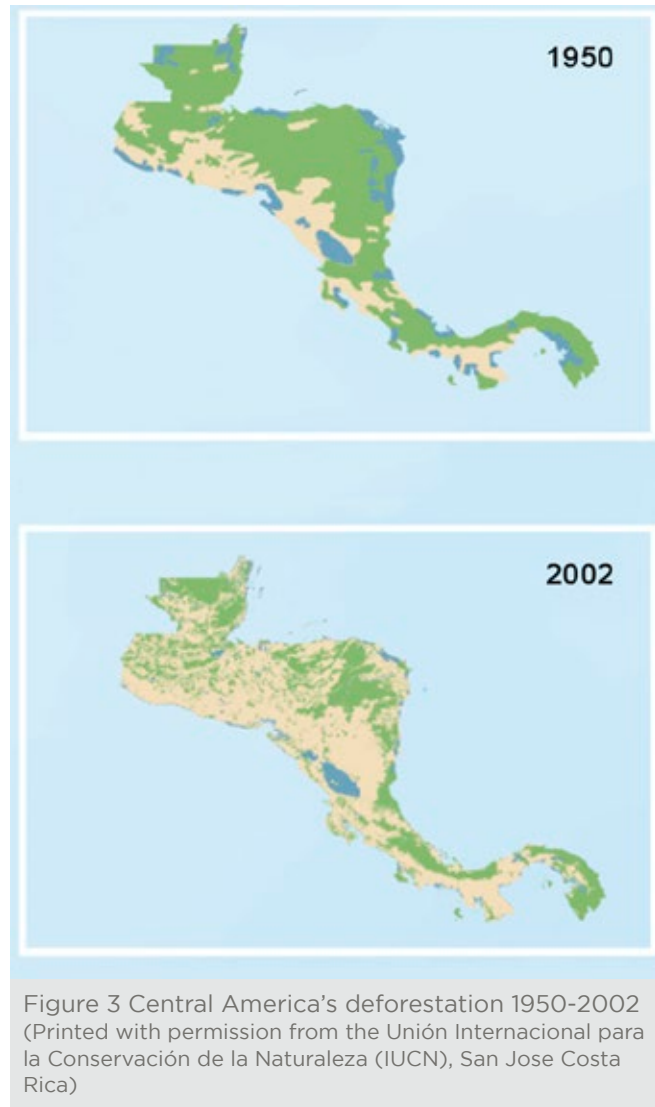


Figure 3 Central America's deforestation 1950-2002 (Printed with permission from the Unión Internacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (IUCN), San Jose Costa Rica)

Making an “enemy of the Earth?”

The twentieth century Chutpalu¹² leader Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekt has been quoted to say: “The earth and myself are of one mind. The measure of the land and the measure of our bodies are the same” In these two simple

¹² This is the name of the people the French came to call “Nez Perce” (pierced nose) due to the ornaments worn on the face.

sentences the man English speakers called “Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce” captured the essential thinking of most Fourth World nations. They are egalitarian and engaged in a reciprocal relationship with the environment in a constant balancing act. It is the reality and spirit of Hinmah-too-yah-lat-kekt’s thought that explains why there is such a close relationship between the continuing existence of these nations and the continuity of Earth’s biodiversity.

The Popol Vuh (The Mayan Book of Life) states the concept in starker terms, “S/he who makes an enemy of the earth makes an enemy of here or his own body.” Fourth World nations are located in or near 80% of the world’s biodiverse ecosystem and it is their presence in these ecosystems that ensures biodiversity. In other words, biocultural diversity (the interdependence of culture and human biology) equals biodiversity (the variability of living organisms of all kinds). The perpetual existence of biodiversity equals sustainability for human life on the planet. To ensure global biodiversity that is widely recognized as threatened now, it is essential that states, companies, militias, and multi-lateral organization cease targeting Fourth World nations as targets for destruction. In other words, states in particular must cease considering Fourth World nations as threats to state continuity but must open the door to coexistence under new international rules of nation and state conduct.

While Fourth World nations may from time-to-time cause damage to the biosphere, their actual effect is comparatively small and quickly restorable. When massive damage is perpetrated against ecosystems by corporate societies through

the establishment of massive cities, mining operations, river diversions, nuclear detonations and testing, toxic chemical contamination and nuclear/ hazardous waste storage and any number of other forms of development and consequent ecological disruption the damage is often permanent and therefore fundamentally destructive of natural life.

The Kings and Empires of the 15th century and before introduced into the world the concept that human beings must dominate all of nature for the benefit of some human beings. This thinking is captured in the Christian Biblical verse Genesis 1:28 that reads, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

This pronouncement was and continues to be fundamental to became in the 16th century vast colonization of the earth by just a few European Kingdoms and Empires. The Christian biblical verse has been taken explicitly or implicitly as a commandment from God and thus serves as the justification for unrestrained occupation and destruction of Fourth World peoples, lands and ultimately unrestrained development and constantly increasing levels of consumption at the expense of earth’s natural life.

Some followers of the Christian faith such as Justin Holcomb, Pastor of the Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington (USA) interpret Genesis 1:28 as personal “responsibility” and that “It is important to avoid flawed convictions about the right and power of humankind in relation

to the rest of the natural world.” But Holcomb’s interpretation appears to be a minority view among Christians and others who tend to accept the more aggressive “false view of dominion” that has played a role in the “mistreatment of creation” according to Holcomb.

It is undeniable, however, that Medieval Christians acting on behalf of European kings and Emperors actively pursued the aggressive interpretation of Genesis 1:28 by confiscating lands (under concepts such as *terra nullius* – Latin expression for “nobody’s land,” engaging in “treaty making” and then violating the agreements, extracting natural resources and colonizing peoples to enrich royal coffers. For centuries their descendants pursued the aggressive challenge to “natural creation” into the present day.

The contrast between the Chutpalu leader’s perspective and the Biblical commandment practiced as a form of aggression against “*natural creation*” couldn’t be starker. The long-term sustainability of Earth’s biocultural and biodiverse ecologies depends on finding a reversal of the *unrestrained dominion approach and the emergence of balance between human need and Earth’s capacity to restore approach*. That is the challenge we face and throughout this volume I recount the ways that “domination” and “balance” clash just as the perspectives of corporate societies and Fourth World people’s perspectives clash. Remedies to this clash, is essential to the prospects for ending the centuries long struggle for domination and balance through new regional and international mechanisms for cooperation

and coexistence. Fourth World nations have the potential and the capacity to reverse the drive toward biodiversity collapse by asserting their role as equal and active players in the human dialogue—in the proactive efforts to move Fourth World nations and states societies together to restore balance in the global ecology.

I suggest later in this volume that Fourth World nations must now proactively author new international rules for conduct between nations and between nations and states to alter the destructive path on which most states travel. While many Fourth World nations conceive of their peoples as victims of predatory kingdoms and states, they are under the new circumstances obligated to abandon “victimhood” and they must adopt a proactive engagement between the different Fourth World nations and with corporate societies and their governments. Corporate states must now realize that their predatory conduct is not sustainable for their continued existence (considering that some 52 states are in near or total collapse). Human societies are at ultimate risk.

Is “Nation” a Pejorative?

Political scientists and lay political observers have since the early 19th century engaged in a tug and push over the meaning of “nation.” The result has been confusion and frequent extremist exhortations by popular uprisings in defense of “blood relations.” So distorted have many such claims become by state citizens that the powers of a state are invoked to sully whole populations as being somehow illegitimate—not worthy—because they are not considered part of what

often turns out to be a fictive “nation” claimed on the basis of skin color or blood relations that is actually a cabal seeking to control a state. Since states are by definition centrally organized under one set of laws, formalized boundaries, central governmental authority, recognition by other states and asserted sovereignty (absolute internal rule) individuals claiming this power can exercise domination in extraordinary ways. This is especially true when exercising centralized state power in the name of “nationalism.” Indeed, centralized states often act to legitimize bigotry to preserve and express state power by claiming a national identity at the exclusion of other nations within state boundaries. Legitimized bigotry is a more accurate description of conduct where a group exercises centralized power of the state control and sometimes violently threaten nations that have been included within a state without their consent.

When I mention “fictive nationalism” to be clear, I am asserting that claims of national dominance are not expressions of nationalism at all, but the most profound expression of chauvinism intended to benefit a criminal clique holding on to power and wealth.

In this volume I refer to “Fourth World nations,” an expression that may be unfamiliar to many.

In light of the confusion about the term “nation” and the perhaps greater confusion about the use of “Fourth World” I simply state that there are more than 5000 Fourth World nations ranging in size from perhaps few hundred people to as many as tens of thousands. These are not

“states”, and non-self-governing territories of which there are at this writing some 203 in the world. Fourth World nations are the foundation of all human societies—the original peoples defined by their culture (relationship between people, the land and the cosmos) from which virtually all other populations have emerged. Within the original Latin meaning of the word “nation” these Fourth World nations are commonly understood to exist by virtue of their relationship to the land or use of land. While some analysts wish to assert “blood” or “geneticities” in a population as definitional of a “nation” this narrow claim has no basis in human history. Virtually all nations include people tied to other nations. It is self-serving nonsense to engage in such sophistry.

While individuals in nations may have different loyalties to cultural identities in other nations by virtue of clan associations, marriage, and familial relations, “peoples” as defined earlier are nations in the “Latin” sense of the word.

Nations Under Duress: Celti Peoples Ancestors to Modern Europe

Peoples in Europe were for more than 400 years (beginning about 2447 years ago) subjected to what we now understand to be cultural genocide targeted by the Roman Republic to eliminate their cultures. The peoples we commonly think of as “Celts” entered and have occupied most of what we now think of as Europe since about 3720 years before the present. These peoples settled in what we now refer to as Lombard [Italy], Ireland, Breton [France] for 1,273 years before the Romans began to systematically strip Celti peoples of their

language, heritage, social, economic and political practices and their traditions.¹³ They had been settled in nations and communities and in the first years of the present millennium they fell under the control of the Roman Republic and then the Roman Empire.

I traveled with my partner Leslie Korn to southwestern Germany in the summer of 2019 in search of new knowledge about the indigenous peoples of Europe and I found—much to my delight—an abundance of evidence of the still present and influential Celti people known as the Vindelici Confederation including the Brigantii (named after the Goddess of the Alps) and the Suevi or Swabians. These descendants of the Celti peoples (of which there are many in southwestern Germany) celebrate the summer solstice in a manner deeply rooted in their heritage—they light bonfires atop their mountains in the late night to restore the light of the Sun.

Perhaps the most influential peoples in the last 4000 years are the peoples who called themselves Celti dominating the European continent and sending their members and descendants throughout the world. Evidence of their presence in southwestern Germany 2,700 years ago was documented by researcher under an Iron Age mound that proved to be a grave site in the Kappel near the Rhine River predating the Roman presence by more than 700 years. The Suevi—ancestors to peoples in southern Bavaria

and southeastern Baden Württemberg Germany remain a powerful influence through their contributions to modern scholarship.

Originating in what we now think of as Central Europe, Celtic peoples were formed in large and small distinct aggregates for centuries. They began migrating about 2500 years ago to the west, north, east and south into new enclaves. Many of the nations crossed the Rhine river west into what is now France and Spain and within two hundred years they began moving north into what is now the British Isles, Scotland and Ireland (See Figure 4). Meanwhile, other Celtic nations moved to the south east into what is Bulgaria and Turkey. Teutonic peoples to the Central European north blocked Celtic movements. They became more settled in their territories. To their south they faced the Roman Republic and eventually the Roman Empire. While the Celts adapted to their local cultural and territorial environments, several Celtic nations pushed south into Rome, sacking it and taking control. But that was not for long. The Roman Republic reversed its losses and vigorously extended its political controls over many Celtic nations. But, unlike the Celtic posture of adapting to local cultures and lands, the Romans chose to replace Celtic cultures with Roman ethos, language and religion—effectively destroying many cultures through Roman replacement.

¹³ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission sponsored by the Canadian government defined cultural genocide in this way: ““Cultural genocide is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred, and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next.” (Washington Post, June 5, 2015)



Figure 4 Extent of Celtic influence c. 400 BCE

“Celtic Time” is carefully documented in contrast to the time when the Roman Republic took control of many parts of the Celtic Region (See Figure 5). Celtic descendants are deeply conscious of their history and the time when the Romans came to dominate their societies.

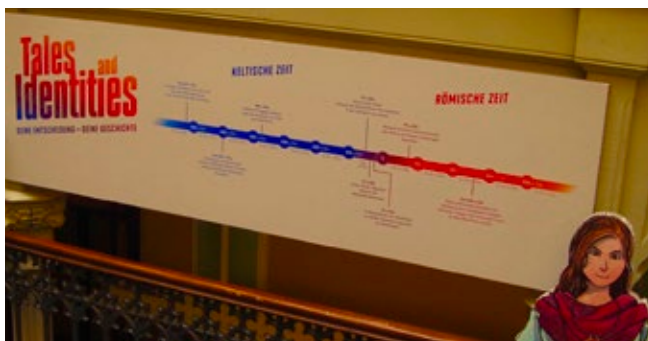


Figure 5 Personalized Timeline for Celtic Times and Roman Times
Celtic Time (Keltische Zeit) and Roman Time (Römische Zeit) in Germany (Photo by the Author)

Indeed, their generalized name remains a common term that now refers to peoples in western and northern Gaelic Ireland and Scottish Gaelic, the Welsh, Cornish and Manx of western and central England, and Breton's of western France. But these are the only Celti peoples

on whose lineage millions in the Western Hemisphere, parts of Africa, the Pacific Islands and even parts of Asia depend. The peoples of Spain have Celti ancestors, as do Bohemians and Slovaks; and the Celti Lombards in northern Italy who once ruled Rome. As peoples they have shaped world history and do so in the politics of the present. Suevi and other Celti peoples are further revealed by the artifacts of earlier times in architecture, and pottery.

Among the contemporary state citizens of Europe's 27 countries rarely refer to their origins or cultural connections to their ancestors who predate the fixed boundaries of modern-day states such as Spain, Italy, Germany, Slovakia, Italy, Poland, Austria and England. These state designations are relatively recent labels attached to geographic regions whose boundaries have come into existence only in the last 400 or 500 years. Before this time boundaries were quite flexible and frequently non-existent except to define “duchies” as small territories ruled by a relative or designee of a King or self-proclaimed Emperor. The foundation of Europe's heritage is rooted in Teutonic peoples and Celti peoples. These broad references provide a collective umbrella under which many distinct peoples (or some would say “tribes) coexist in the European “culture-scape.” As the 1999 Richard Griggs map of resurgent nations published in the Encyclopedia Britannica clearly demonstrates many Fourth World nations rooted in Celtic heritage remain fixtures in Europe. Griggs' map points notably to Swabia in the upper right-hand corner in Figure 6.



Figure 6 Resurgent Nations of Europe - 1998

Europe's Nations

To illustrate the modern day meaning of these observations I point to the Brigantii and Suevi peoples along the borders of Bavaria and Baden Württemberg, Austria and Switzerland—southwest Germany. The Vendelici Confederation identifies a collection of distinct peoples (Brigantii, Consuanetae, Estiones, Leuni, Licates, Runicates and Vennonetes including the Suevi). The principle walled settlement of the Confederation was until 2,030 BP located at what is now Manching, Bavaria with a population of about 7,500 people.



Figure 7 Oppidum of Manching Central Settlement (right) and Architecture (left)

While these names are not widely used to self-identify the specific peoples, their descendants continue to prosper in Baden Württemberg and Bavaria as did the peoples who originally located in this area by 2,700 BP.

About 800,000 people especially in western and southern Bavaria provide echoes of their tribal reality in their brand of the German language and their cultural practices. To the present, they practice the pre-Christian celebration of lighting bonfires at the top of the mountains around Garmish-Partenkirchen in southern Bavaria. More than 800 men and women climb the mountain carrying wood to build fires along the mountain crest marking the summer solstice (See Figure 8). This Swabian tradition demonstrates their cultural identity through the act of affirming the relationship between the people, the land and the cosmos.



Figure 8 Solstice Bonfires atop mountains Garmish-Partenkirchen - Bavaria, Germany 2019

The Vindelici and their sub-nation of Suevi and many smaller culturally related groups were subjugated by Rome's Tiberius in 2004 BP. In particular the Romans claimed to have defeated the Cosuanetes, Rucimates, Licates and the Catenates at that time. The cultural influence of

these ancient peoples lives on in the modern places of Swabia, Bavaria and Thuringia (regions and states in southern Germany) that received their names from the Suevi.

At the Center for World Indigenous Studies (CWIS) we call on our employees, interns and volunteers to engage in a study of their individual “cultural connections” to understand that each of us is culturally influenced by our ancestors. In other words, the Fourth World nations with whom CWIS engages every day are often culturally connected to the many different peoples in Europe, Central Asia, the Americas Africa and the Pacific region. One’s cultural connections more often than not reach into different cultures producing a multi-cultural heritage that is worth knowing and understanding. Such understand reveals how the migrations of peoples over the span of time mingle cultural ties and affirm our collective heritage in the root cultures reaching into antiquity.

Migrations of peoples are not a new phenomenon, but a dynamic process extending back more than 50,000 years producing transformational changes in societies. It was the “tribes” of Celti that confronted the “civilized” Roman legions more than 2000 years ago that eventually formed the basis of what we now know as modern Europe. The presence of tribal roots for the Suevi in southern Germany and other Celti peoples throughout Europe and now virtually all parts of the world is evidence that migration is a normal part of life enriching as much as altering the cultural landscape.

Where we are standing decides our point of view

Discussing international relations and, in particular, geopolitics from the Fourth World perspective may seem unfamiliar to you, and that is not surprising. The conventional wisdom in politics is that one can achieve more by going with the tide of opinion than going against it.

Thus, the political and diplomatic importance of the Fourth World perspective that often goes against the conventional tide goes missing in international discourse. My analysis of history and relations between nations and states is not conventional wisdom. Instead, it reflects how we see the world: that operates from the view of standing on Fourth World soil and not merely how we wish it to work. Understanding the Fourth World Nations perspective on the development and advance of international and domestic policies requires that you engage the discussion while standing on Fourth World Nations’ territory. If you are located in the territory of a Fourth World nation, the perturbations by and among the world’s states’ governments can be seen as responses to insecurities acted out in violent strikes, often against Fourth World peoples. States’ anxieties too frequently arise from fears about the loss of territorial control and challenges to the exercise of state sovereignty. The actions of states too often demand access and control over Fourth World nations’ lands, resources, and other forms of wealth—ultimately to deny Fourth World peoples’ access to the lands, foods, and wealth that ensures their survival. From the view inside a Fourth World nation, the

state seems insatiable in its demands for raw materials, lands, and exclusion of various peoples. These demands necessitate that each nation applies a Fourth World geopolitical analysis to states' actions and their decisions to anticipate where the next challenges will emerge—and consider and implement countermeasures, defenses, and alternative political and strategic decisions.

It is well established in the international legal and political space that “peoples” have the right to choose their own social, economic, political and cultural future without external interference. As we now must understand, the usage of this word “peoples” applies to Fourth World nations. The word “peoples” is considered an international norm to identify the beneficiary of “natural rights.”

As a UNESCO Expert panel in 1989 stated (I have noted elsewhere) defined “peoples” as a group of individual human beings who enjoy some or all of... common features of common history, cultural homogeneity, linguistic unity, territorial connection, as well as a common economic life.” The panel asserted that “peoples” have rights. States do not have rights.

As we know, many diverse peoples have historically located in biologically and bioculturally diverse territories. They tend to view their inherent right to self-determination to ensure safe and secure biodiversity—the foundation for life on the planet. Indeed, self-determination of peoples is the norm on which the United Nations founding Charter of 1945 served to guide the implementation of the right of

peoples to political self-government. The rights of peoples accelerated a process that formed many new states containing a majority of Fourth World nations in the 1950s through the 1980s. The UN language originally drew on earlier interstate agreements made at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919-1920 that established the League of Nations (1919-1946). Post-World I political initiatives taken by members of the League of Nations proved disastrous for the world with the rise of authoritarian states and the onset of economic collapse.

Haudenosaunee Sachem Deskaheh, of Cayuga and Maori spiritual leader Tahupōtiki Wiremu Ratana of the Ngāti Apa and Ngā Wairiki iwi, opened the 20th century with their attempt to present their political concerns representing their nations at the League General Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland In 1923. They were both denied access to the Assembly to speak their concerns. Notably, however, the Haudenosaunee and Maori initiative to step into the League of Nations launched the current period during which Fourth World nations began to step forward to engage in diplomatic relations—seeking to engage states and other Fourth World Nations on a political plane—as political equals.

The events following the Great War (1914 – 1918) carried forward fundamental realignments between states in the international space. Japan, in 1931, invaded Manchuria and started a bloody war against China. Germany's new government in 1933 rejected the demands for reparations for the damages caused by World War I, thus providing the impetus for the ultimate rise of the Nazi

Party that would be joined by the Fascists in Italy, Spain, and Japan. What followed in 1939 was what would become World War II (1939 – 1945). This war was really an extension of the Great War and it ushered in significant changes in relations between states and eventually the actors in the United Nations. Before the end of the War states' leaders were already planning for changes in the international political space that had long been occupied primarily by Kingdoms and Imperial powers. States assumed a major role in the conduct of relations between peoples throughout the world, culminating in the formulation of new international laws touted as measures to stabilize relations between states. States' governments at the United Nations approved the Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948), the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (1960), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) and seven additional Conventions affirming "peoples'" rights under state-based international laws and declared norms.

All of the so-called "non-self-governing" territories under colonial control were considered candidates for decolonization. Virtually all of these territories were populated by Fourth World peoples and were located distant from their colonizers. (SEE Figure 9). The United Nations settled on what would become known as the Belgian Thesis or the "Saltwater Thesis" as the rationale for decolonization. . The principle was so-called since the government of Belgium decided to give up its colonial possessions.

Belgium offered its plan: In exchange for the United States government decolonizing American Indian nations, Belgium would, at the same time, decolonize its claimed territories.

Belgium's perspective was based on the recognition that distinct peoples, or what I refer to as Fourth World peoples, have an inherent political identity, and the international community must recognize all such peoples. Belgium's gambit was defeated when the UN General Assembly at the behest of the United States declared that for a territory to be eligible for decolonization, the presence of "blue water" between the colony and the colonizing country or a discreet set of boundaries would be needed. The US delegation obtained general UN member state support, especially from those states that had large numbers of Fourth World peoples "inside" their boundaries. From that point on, the "blue water rule" held sway over future UN decolonization decisions. The result? Thousands of Fourth World nations remained under "re-colonial" rule of more than sixty new states created by the 1980s, and thousands more nations remained under control inside existing



Figure 9 Fourth World Nations Globally Colonized

UN member states. Fourth World nations were then and are now concentrated in territories of settler states as well as decolonized states.

In 1945 the newly established United Nations debated what to do with 750 million people or about 30% of the world's 2.5 billion people living in so-called dependent territories. France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, the United States, Australia, Belgium, Spain, Portugal were the leading colonial states, all of which stood as founding members of the United Nations. Many of the colonized peoples held by these states were in territories primarily located in the African continent, southeast Asia and islands in the Indian, Atlantic, and the Pacific Oceans (SEE Figure 10).

Decolonization under the “blue water rule” created a radical shift in political, economic, and strategic relations between states. This change was despite the process of decolonization leaving more than 700 million Fourth World peoples still under the colonial control of settler and decolonized states throughout the world (e.g., Russia, China, United States, France, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Brazil, New Zealand, Chile, Australia). Indeed, the decolonization process carried out over fifty years resulted in the “recolonization” of many thousands of Fourth World nations. They were inside the newly decolonized states that were often ruled by one dominant Fourth World nation (e.g., Burma, Nigeria, Congo, Rwanda, Melanesia, Sri Lanka

[Ceylon], Kenya, Madagascar, Aden [Yemen]). Recolonization followed the same pattern of colonization implemented by Empires. Peoples were recolonized by states that were formed from collapsed Empires. Many Fourth World nations fell under the control of political systems created by recolonizing powers such as in Pakistan and India, Nigeria, and Indonesia. Consent of the peoples to be governed under the “new state” rulers was not obtained when the Empires collapsed, and so the pattern repeated.

When the States “decolonized” Fourth World nation consent was not obtained to ensure that participation in the new state was freely chosen.

While occasional plebiscites were organized, the minority voices of Fourth World nations often lost out. Under the “decolonized states” nations have remained in an agitated condition. Their claims to “land rights” as well as “self-determination” have consistently been the basis for Fourth World tensions resulting from “newly created state” denial of these fundamental rights. At the center of decolonization, as with the breakdown of Empires, has been questions of consent, territory and all that means for life support from the natural Earth, and the choice to freely decide a political future without external interference. Decolonization of the “recolonized” and the “still colonized” must now give way to the exercise of “peoples” rights to determine their own social, economic, political, and cultural future in accord with the international principle.

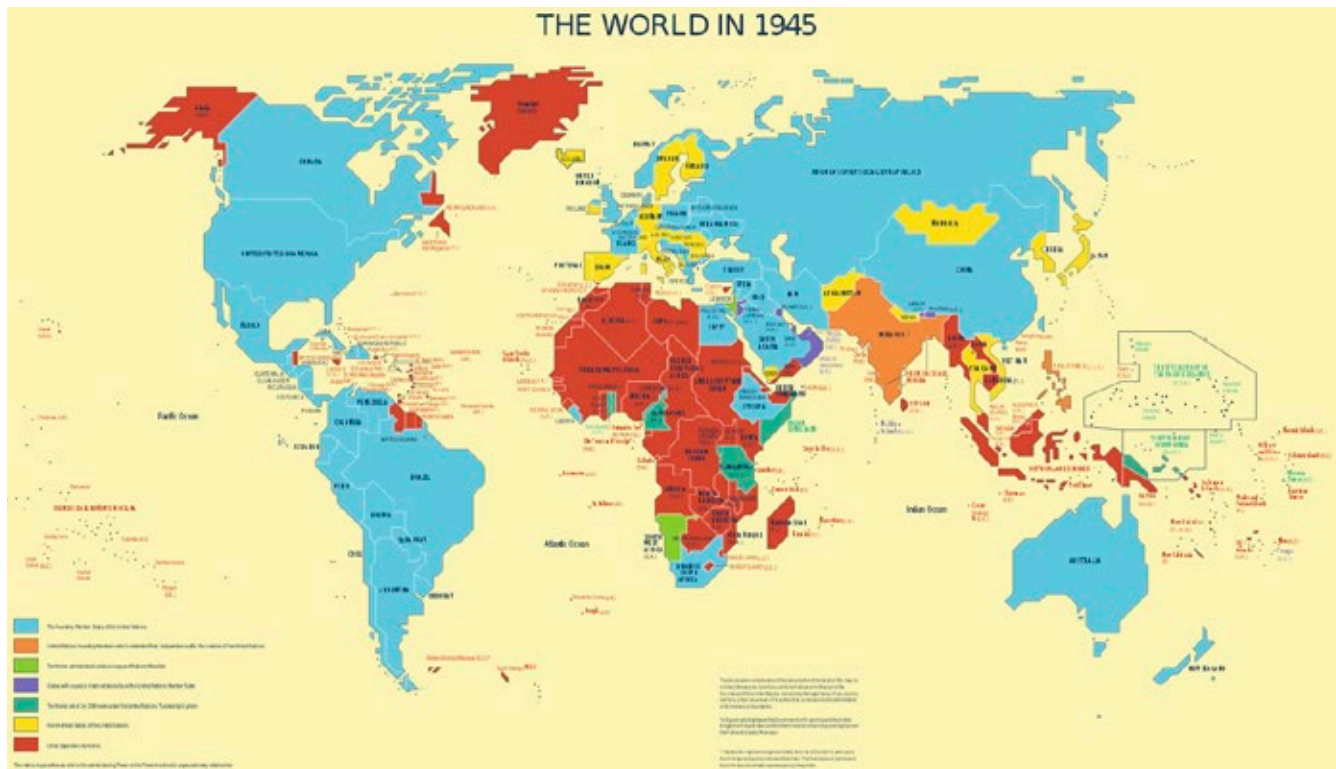


Figure 10 States Mandates and Dependencies - 1945

The Post-UN Charter era constituted a marked change in global geopolitics. The UN Charter introduced a new period that would continue for seventy-years during which many Fourth World nations under the guise of newly formed states took steps to engage in political, economic and security relations between themselves, international state agencies and with the UN founding member states.

Non-state Fourth World nations began to participate in United Nations meetings in the 1970s and became full-blown contributors in the fashion of non-governmental organizations. They did so at the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, at sessions of the International Labor Organization and meetings on climate

change, intellectual property, human rights, labor relations, and other subjects. The UN Member States, the states with limited international recognition and Fourth World Nations engaged on the international stage defining a new Fourth World Geopolitical framework. Multi-lateral state organizations such as the United Nations, Organization of America States, and the International Labor Organization allowed Fourth World nation representatives to offer recommendations and criticisms, but at no session of these organizations were nations' representatives permitted to express their political will through voting.

In the period from 1970 through to the present, the more than 5000 Fourth World

nations (a global population is now estimated at 1.9 billion) still located inside existing states took political and diplomatic actions to establish their claim to the right of self-determination—indeed to the full exercise of self-government without external interference in accord with the widely accepted norm defining the rights of peoples. Within European states, there are many Fourth World nations seeking to exercise their right of self-determination—to govern themselves (SEE Figure 11).



The unresolved tensions between Fourth World nations located inside existing states threaten the survival of both nations and states. The persistent political distance between many Fourth World nations and the states that claim them has resulted in the generational nation and state conflicts that have the nature of chronic political tension (Warm wars) and violent confrontations (Hot wars) on all continents. As

illustrated in Figure 12, no fewer than 540 Fourth World Nations are engaged in warm or hot wars with 25 UN member states in the present.



The central motives behind the warm and hot wars for Fourth World nations have been to protect their territories or access to their territories; and the desire to exercise the right of self-determination—to practice self-government.

The States' central motive for engaging in tensions with Fourth World nations has been the exploitation of Fourth World nation raw materials (forests, petroleum, minerals, water, agricultural lands), maintain control over territory inside of claimed boundaries. In other words, States seek to prevent the dismemberment of the state and to preserve the state's exercise of sovereignty over the claimed territories. These tensions have contributed to the rapid decline of biodiversity, genocides against Fourth World nations (156 such incidents since 1945 involving 52 UN member states), and destabilization of states. Fourth

World nations' unresolved claims to exercise the right of self-determination and state opposition to exercising such a right stand in the way of the peaceful conduct of relations between nations and states. The continuing political and violent conflicts prevent the full realization of "all peoples' rights" to freely choose their political, social, economic, and cultural future without external colonial interference.

The diversity of Fourth World peoples acting to preserve and ensure the continuity of diverse ecological systems as well as their cultures is intimately connected to global human survival. Fourth World peoples' diversity and ecological diversity ensure perpetual biological diversity on which all humanity depends on for life-giving foods, medicines, clean waters, and clean air. Fourth World geopolitical realities where lands and resources are the central tension between states and nations present us nevertheless with a focus for moving toward comity between nations and states. It is evident to all who notice radical climate changes that the persistent, unrestrained exploitation of Earth's living wealth and destruction of Fourth World peoples' living cultures must cease. The alternative is for states and nations to work toward comity and consequently reverse damage to biodiversity and human diversity. Respect between nations and

states as political equals is essential to eliminate the destructive conduct that threatens both the existence of Fourth World nations and the world's states as well.

For more than one hundred years, Fourth World peoples and the citizens of states have agreed in principle on the basic requirements for organizing mutually established forums to develop and settle the few points of disagreement. The evidence of such agreement is spelled out in language developed and adopted in such instruments and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Fourth World nations located inside existing states and the states that claim sovereignty over them have agreed in principle to social, economic, political, security, and environmental measures needed to bring about peaceful relations for the good of humanity. While there are some disagreements still, the next steps must be defined and carried out to establish new mechanisms that ensure nations and states engage on an equal political plain. From that point, they can implement the agreed-upon principles, sort out the remaining disagreements, and thus establish comity for all humanity. The framework for engagement will necessarily rely on modifications in state-based international laws and also nation-based international laws. Comity between nations and states to realize the "rights of peoples" as for all of humanity can require no less.

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