



# Sovereignty, Indigeneity, and the Law (South Atlantic Quarterly)

*Eric Cheyfitz, Shari M. Huhndorf, N. Bruce Duthu*

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Although Indigenous groups include diverse cultures and colonial experiences, Indigenous communities around the globe are united by a common struggle: to achieve self-determination and land rights as original occupants of the land prior to colonization. Historically, Western law has served both as an instrument of colonial control and as a means for Indigenous peoples to assert their claims to sovereignty and territory against those of nation-states. The essays in this issue of *SAQ* consider historical and contemporary colonial conflicts and explore key topics in Indigenous studies, including land rights, human rights, legal jurisdiction, Indigenous governance, and questions of language, culture, and the environment.

This wide-ranging collection addresses the political possibilities of Western law and the international meanings of sovereignty and Indigeneity. One essay analyzes the autonomous government through which local citizens in Indigenous Zapatista communities in Mexico hope to dissolve systems of top-down sovereignty altogether. Another explores narratives of Native American law and the treatment of sovereignty in contemporary Mohawk visual culture. Several essays discuss the legal and political implications of the field's pivotal public documents, including the 2007 U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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