

CONFLICTING PERSPECTIVES:

MODERN CANADIAN IMPERIALISM IN GUATEMALA

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ABSTRACT

Indigenous communities in post-authoritarian states are actively resisting foreign-driven resource development on their territories. Resource companies are increasingly encroaching on the lands of indigenous peoples, by virtue of global processes of globalisation, neoliberalism and democratisation, all of which affect local land rights. Indigenous rights are being violated by the state and by resource companies, leading to the displacement of people and the loss of their lands and resources. Large-scale resource development is driven by the global market, which is increasingly dominated by resource companies. This paper examines the impact of resource development on indigenous communities in Guatemala. Four weeks of fieldwork in Guatemala in 2004 and a literature review demonstrate that indigenous communities in Guatemala are demanding to be consulted prior to any development on their territories. As economic pursuits supersede indigenous rights in many post-authoritarian states, indigenous peoples are rarely consulted about resource development and, as a result, these peoples are increasingly resisting imposed development schemes on a worldwide scale.