

This article was downloaded by: [D Conversi]

On: 25 June 2014, At: 14:29

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



## The International Journal of Human Rights

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fjhr20>

### Subsistence societies, globalisation, climate change and genocide: discourses of vulnerability and resilience

Mark Levene<sup>a</sup> & Daniele Conversi<sup>bc</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Faculty of Humanities, University of Southampton, UK

<sup>b</sup> University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, Leioa, Spain

<sup>c</sup> IKERBASQUE, Basque Foundation for Science, Bilbao, Spain

Published online: 23 Jun 2014.

To cite this article: Mark Levene & Daniele Conversi (2014) Subsistence societies, globalisation, climate change and genocide: discourses of vulnerability and resilience, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 18:3, 281-297, DOI: [10.1080/13642987.2014.914702](https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2014.914702)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2014.914702>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms &

Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

## Subsistence societies, globalisation, climate change and genocide: discourses of vulnerability and resilience

Mark Levene<sup>a\*</sup> and Daniele Conversi<sup>b,c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Faculty of Humanities, University of Southampton, UK; <sup>b</sup>University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, Leioa, Spain; <sup>c</sup>IKERBASQUE, Basque Foundation for Science, Bilbao, Spain

Anthropogenic climate change poses the possibility of total human extinction. Subsistence societies, however, have been threatened with extinction primarily as a consequence of systemic development for a very long time. Recent genocide scholarship, more particularly in relation to indigenous peoples, has engaged with some of these issues, even while terminologies such as ethnocide, cultural genocide, and indigenocide may suggest a restricted field of vision. Here, we argue that the very nature of a neoliberal globalisation and concomitant nation-state building makes *all* subsistence societies vulnerable to what amounts to structural genocide. But how does climate change exacerbate or complicate this bleak picture? The political economy of ‘business as usual’ in its dialectical relationship with the biosphere (expressed in the rising concentrations of greenhouse gas emissions) poses an acceleration of subsistence society vulnerability with catastrophic potential for extreme violence. But another scenario also presents itself. The very ongoing, seemingly impossible existence of non-marketised societies in direct relationship with nature, poses the possibility of *their* resilience in the face of climate change rather than those operating according to standard globalised norms. In conclusion, we propose that the crisis of anthropogenic climate change directly challenges not only assumptions about the ‘inevitable’ trajectory of globalisation with its supposed cast of survivors and victims but more precisely the purposefulness of ‘techno-rational’ epistemologies as set against those which might help humanity recover the possibility of a ‘moral economy’.

**Keywords:** Anthropocene; climate change; globalisation; subsistence societies; structural genocide; resilience; vulnerability

### Introduction

Trying to get one’s head round the aetiology and morphology of anthropogenic climate change is a little like doing the same for genocide, except *much* more so. We might begin with the recently coined notion of the Anthropocene. The climate change equivalent to Raphael Lemkin’s big idea – in this case, with the responsible neologists, earth scientists, Paul Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer<sup>1</sup> – accepting the proposition would be to acknowledge that humanity writ-large now constitutes a geological actor on the planetary stage with the ability to change ‘the most basic physical processes of the earth’,<sup>2</sup> albeit involving a trajectory towards epochal terminus so rapid that the Anthropocene will register as little

---

\*Corresponding author. Email: [M.Levene@soton.ac.uk](mailto:M.Levene@soton.ac.uk)

more than a blip in earth history. Humanity, at least as we have normatively come to understand it since the onset some 10–11,000 years ago of the last great, *natural* shift at the Pleistocene-Holocene boundary, has always operated within ‘parametric conditions’, in other words a *relatively* stable climate which (mostly) year on year, millennium upon millennium, has allowed for cereal grasses to grow and for humankind to prevail in large numbers.<sup>3</sup> By contrast, the Anthropocene, whose beginnings c. 1750–1800, can be quite precisely dated in terms of increasing (previously constant) carbon emissions into the atmosphere as a direct consequence of the anthropogenic burning of fossil fuels (i.e. sequestered solar energy from earlier geological eras), is now having biospheric consequences so profound that before the planet re-balances its own dynamic thermal equilibrium a great extinction event, as has happened at other geological boundaries, cannot be ruled out.<sup>4</sup> This would suggest an appropriate terminology not of genocide but *omnicide*. Or to put the matter tersely, in the light of what the science is telling us, the entirety of the ‘developed’ world’s standard operating procedure encompassing economics, technologies, socio-cultural behaviour, not to say fundamental value systems, can no longer be sustained as viable or beneficial for ourselves, let alone for the planet’s many millions of other species upon whom we also fundamentally depend. The knock-on effects for all academic disciplines, genocide studies included, are equally stark. Either we rethink *some* of our first principles, not to say standard *modus operandi* in the light of anthropogenic climate change, or we literally consign ourselves to the dustbin of history.

If this is a case of throwing down a gauntlet to fellow colleagues, it also carries with it an acknowledgement that the genocide field is somewhat unusual in the degree to which detached clinical observation often carries over into a desire to ‘do something’ most obviously attuned to practical prevention against any number of crimes against humanity. That particular boundary may be elastic, even fuzzy. However, part of the challenge here, is not simply to review some of the basic theoretical assumptions we often take as ‘givens’ for genocide studies, but to translate those reformulated ideas into a broader stream of critical thinking which – in repudiating ‘business as usual’ – seeks to find practical, non-violent paths towards human survival and well-being for *all* people, across the breadth of the planet, and for the long-term.

In this discussion piece, therefore, one of the things we are seeking to do is run with some familiar ‘genocide’ terminology, but to radically recast it in order to delineate some of the power relationships which are making some peoples on the planet ostensibly more vulnerable to climate change than others, and, by implication, more threatened with violent extinction. Holocaust research has given us the notion of ‘perpetrators’ and ‘victims’ (as well as ‘bystanders’). The very terms may be debatable. But, just for argument’s sake, we use them here to develop a distinction between those most and least responsible for climate change. It is certainly a very unequal relationship. While the emerging middle classes in all rapidly developing countries, China and India in the lead, would fall into the first category, the lion’s share of carbon emissions can be directly or indirectly attributed to the lifestyles, working and consumer patterns of people in the First World,<sup>5</sup> a category, incidentally which would include nearly all, if not all, genocide scholars.

One might forcefully object that describing any population segment as perpetrators by dint of their carbon footprint is not appropriate, proportionate or kind. Perpetrators are people who kill and harm others, usually (though not always) knowingly. By contrast, the energy use of ordinary First World people is not so much consciously determined but rather predetermined by the function of the society they live in. If this leads indirectly to rising sea levels and methane emissions, glacial or Arctic melt, increased drought or flooding, deforestation, the death of the oceans, and so on, the evidence for *intentionalist* malice

may still be absent. On the other hand, just as in cases of genocide where individuals and communities ‘go along’ with a regime actions because they are unwilling to question its behaviour, or possibly fear the consequences, so here on the climate issue a general Western failure to change addictive behaviour associated with our normal quotidian consumerist activity does raise questions about the degree of ‘ordinary’ complicity with what amounts to systemic violence against people and planet.<sup>6</sup>

If the notion of ‘ourselves’ as climate perpetrators will undoubtedly excite comment, far fewer are likely to contest that the Third World’s very poor are its most obvious ‘victims’. What particularly interests us here, however, are those subsistence societies at this end of the spectrum whose modus operandi involves almost no carbon emissions whatsoever. Poor and subsistent are not necessarily one and the same thing. Indeed, while billions of poor may be dependants of the global system, what characterises subsistence *cultures* is the manner in which they have traditionally created a high degree of socio-economic autonomy. This has been largely achieved through deploying their own labour or that of domesticated animals, aligned with a usually conservation-minded utilisation of whatever renewable energy sources are available to them for their basic sustenance.

Readers should see that what we are setting up here is a double-edged dialectic. The threat to the biosphere is symptomatic of a particular industrialising trajectory in human development, which we usually speak of as ‘progress’, and which, in the short-term, has favoured ‘our’ Western-led planetary predation. Putting to one side the important debate as to whether a wider range of subsistence cultures has modified the climate over the *longue durée*, in Anthropocene terms, their impact, by comparison with our own, has been negligible.<sup>7</sup> But viewed through the prism of self-sufficiency and sustainability, the argument is arguably reversed. While subsistence societies are not all alike but actually very different – itself indicative of long-term local adaptations to specific ecological niches – what they have in common is their direct *productive* relationship to habitus and hence nature. *Homo anthropocenus*, by contrast, is entirely dependent as a consumer within a globalised, inherently non-sustainable monoculture – one which takes from the global commons but gives nothing back in return and when it finally breaks down, as it *must* under the weight of this negative equity, will have no obvious access to, or ability to work *with*, nature for survival, let alone renewal. It is this tension between profligate consumers and productive subsisters as either vulnerable or resilient that is at the heart of our discussion.

### **Subsistence societies: the vulnerability of history, the evaluation of genocide scholars**

To lump together peasants, nomads, fishing and swidden communities, foragers, pastoralists and hunter-gatherers, ought itself to excite comment. Granted that many of these communities have traditionally practised a mix of subsistence techniques, any immediate similarity between, for instance, Inuit and Masai, Tuareg and Yanomani, the Ijaw fishermen of the Niger delta, or the Banaue terrace rice cultivators of the northern Philippines should automatically be negated by simple contrast between the range of lived practice and cultural behaviour as operating within entirely distinct ecosystems. Lévi-Strauss-style structuralism notwithstanding,<sup>8</sup> the ability to survive – and cross-generationally change – is a function not of subsistence societies’ sameness, but marked ecologically adapted versatility. So, why consider them as a whole? Two important reasons present themselves in the context of this discussion. The first we have already hinted at: their commonality lies in the fact that none of them have traditionally survived except in direct, physical relationship to the land, seas,

forests or waterways and their respective *biota*. The primary concern of all such communities thus is to extract enough food and fuel to live from season to season, year to year, generation to generation, any surplus as such being exactly that: something in the first instance to be conserved or stored for future moments of scarcity or crisis. This does not mean that subsistence societies either live in isolation from one another or from thoroughly marketised societies. Across time and space, barter and trade has been a normal function of *all* societies. The subsistence variety does not live entirely outside or apart from the market. The point is one of priorities; the notion of economy for subsistence societies means first and foremost providing for the needs of the household from and through nature.<sup>9</sup>

But it is exactly such priorities which the modern marketplace rules out of court. The now-accelerated drive towards the commodification of everything within a global, capitalist, political economy, has no truck or time for ecological versatility except in so far as it can be quantified in terms of monetary value. As for what the biosphere itself provides for human need, for standard economics these are no more than externalities with no tangible ‘value’ whatsoever for contemporary, economic forecasting.<sup>10</sup> In a critical sense this tells us why not only ecocide is becoming inexorable, but is also inextricably linked to the destruction of subsistence cultures.<sup>11</sup>

We picked the names of six such diverse groups above quite at random: yet each is faced with the imminence of foreclosure either directly, because market forces have been grounding down their ability to survive outside the system, or indirectly, because these same forces have damaged, polluted, despoiled or sequestered their *habitus* to the point where its natural resource base is no longer *replenishable*. In each instance, climate change is becoming a demonstrable and increasing factor in this negative equation. However, first cause is a political economic system that, as it has arisen to universal hegemony, has claimed for itself a sole monopoly over the global commons. As a result, not only is the entirety of nature disposable to *its* needs, but so too are alternative, local, human ecosystems whose reluctance to forego *their* existences or, worse, refuse to submit to globalisation, makes them obstacles in the path of progress and, hence, ripe for ‘legitimate’ erasure.

This perpetrator rationale will not be lost on genocide scholars, especially those who have charted Western colonial expansion. It is noteworthy that some of the most acute analysis has been of the ‘Anglo’ conquest of Australia. Here the ensuing settler encounter with the continent’s aborigines, by the very nature of its usurpation of native lands and livelihoods regardless of any conscious intent *inevitably* led to what has been described in Marxist terms as ‘relations of destruction’, or indeed, as a specific ‘process’ of *indigenocide*.<sup>12</sup> Such assessments particularly resonate with our argument, not only because they offer a historical sub-set of a wider natural historical disaster viz. the ‘ecological imperialist’ assault on the fauna and flora of Australia,<sup>13</sup> but also because they can be cross-referenced with a broader metahistorical consideration of the Anthropocene. Here, after all, was arguably the starkest of cultural collisions at the onset of the modern world: one part of which consisted of peoples who had lived in largely unchanging ecological balance with their environment for not less than 50,000 years, the other part of which constituted an extrusion of peoples from half way across the planet at the very moment when *their* industrial revolution was wrenching the biosphere into an altered state. It followed that Anglo settler aims had nothing to do with sharing an actually very fragile ecosystem for subsistence purposes, but engrossing it as rapidly and rapaciously as possible, in order to create and then maximise its agro-business potential for the global market. One rapid anthropogenic consequence was the huge jump in Australia’s methane contribution to global warming, thanks to the wholesale turning over of conquered territories to livestock production.<sup>14</sup>

Viewed through this Anthropocene prism, however, this destruction process, while still dialectical, has a further exquisite twist. From an earlier generation of genocide scholars, a farsighted Richard Rubenstein argued that the relationship between genocide and modernity can be traced back to the new economic relationships arising out of the English enclosure movement and the displacement of a hence superfluous peasantry overseas to new colonial habitats including Ireland and Australia.<sup>15</sup> Putting to one side the deeper ecological crisis of feudalism, out of which these new economic relationships emerged,<sup>16</sup> one might be inclined to dispute the Rubenstein thesis on the grounds that while an English peasantry was almost entirely dispossessed, often criminalised and repeatedly deported en masse as penal settlers to the colonies, it were *not* exterminated. But viewed anthropocentrically we might equally propose that, not only is the distinction between Anglo and aboriginal subsistence cultures less sharp, but that their shared tragedy was to be victims of an emerging hegemonic, fossil fuel energised, Smithian-Ricardian 'economy of profit' which in the process turned English peasants into aboriginal exterminators.

Even more exemplary, one might argue, is the case with the former's northern counterparts in the Scottish Gaeltacht. This truly ethnographically distinct, autonomous, tribally-based and almost entirely subsistence society was 'cleared' to make way for Cheviot sheep, thus confirming that the destruction of native cultures in the interests of 'Anglo' agro-business could be enacted simultaneously and without notable racial differentiation on both sides of the globe.<sup>17</sup> Once again, however, one set of subsistence victims – evicted Scottish highlanders – played a notable role in the destruction of another indigenous set on the frontiers of Anglo expansion, Australia included.<sup>18</sup>

Is this the point at which to propose that there might be something structural in the nature of modern genocide, as a by-product of its very developmental trajectory? And that this in turn might act as a window into the *violent* origins of climate change? Lemkin, by dint of writing in an earlier time and with a focus primarily on nation-state versus 'minority' communities, may have only dimly conceived the connection. However, a recent piece by Adam Jones does pose the relationship between structural violence and genocide. Jones adumbrates a range of examples where 'core structural inequalities in the international system', or more precisely the distinction between the rich Western (or northern) world and the poor South, year on year, lead to the misery, debility and the premature or violent death of tens of millions.<sup>19</sup> He does not fully spell out that most of this death is itself an outcome of a developmentalist logic, underpinned by a contemporary neoliberalism whose ethos and practice effectively denies subsistence cultures their where-withal outside, or apart from, the global market. Nor does he explore, except in passing, how the biospheric consequences of this accelerating trajectory are eating away at the parametric conditions essential to subsistence survival. That said, by way of Dirk Moses, we might be able to offer some linkage between Jones' structural violence proposition and Lemkin's cultural grounding to his genocide premise.

Moses has repeatedly insisted that Lemkin's reference to *cultural* genocide was not some dispensable afterthought but fundamental to his exposition of his entire legal-preventative framework.<sup>20</sup> Through this perspective we might read Lemkin's proposed instrument as an attempt to quell the political violence inherent in the modern, monocultural nation-state as directed against diverse but disempowered ethnic or ethno-religious pluralities. However, it would also be difficult to detach the notion of culture from most subsistence societies, not least given their relationships to native habitus and, hence, discrete ecological adaptations as sustained and developed over generations. In these terms, any culturally homogenising and/or economically driven project that might seek to violently disrupt or suffocate traditional, diverse, subsistence practice could also be taken to be genocidal.

The most obvious and devastating example would be Stalinist collectivisation, which, by dint of its overt intent to physically liquidate a top tier of Soviet peasantry, branded by the authorities as ‘kulaks’, offers a rather convenient confirmation of these events as genocide in a more standard sense. However, as a recent study illuminates, this was not a selective attack on only part of the Soviet peasantry, but rather a war against the peasantry *tout ensemble*, aimed at the complete destruction of an entire set of subsistence cultures.<sup>21</sup> The fact that this was ordained by a communist regime should also give us pause before ascribing to capitalism sole responsibility for such ruthlessness. Instead, the connecting thread between the Soviet industrialising rupture and the Russian *longue durée* had been anticipated by the somewhat longer, if still quite rapid, destruction of Britain’s peasant base at plutocratic hands, culminating some 100–150 years earlier. Through an Anthropocene lens, these cataclysmic events might be understood as part of a series of environmentally Pyrrhic victories by elites who, blinded by their conviction of the possibilities of a rationally based terrestrial dominance, ascribed to themselves the role of progressive modernists against the antediluvian inertia of a peasant ‘savagery’.

In this manner, *modernism/modernity* has appropriated to itself the notion that it is always on the right side of history. As an all-pervasive institutionalised ideology indeed, it can invoke ‘the progress of the nation’ to make any argument to the contrary ‘luddite’ and so inadmissible on grounds of its alleged, backward-looking refusal to bow to the ‘inevitable’ and *good*.<sup>22</sup> As a result, it is almost inconceivable to imagine what the world might have been like if Western subsistence societies had been allowed to survive, even flourish. Or, for that matter, where we would be today in terms of climate change.<sup>23</sup> Such counterfactual musings aside, it was the subsisters themselves who paid the consequences for the mandated current of history, whether they actively resisted it or not. A hundred years on from ‘Captain Swing’ and the last gasp of English peasant opposition to the new hegemony, a repeat sequence of epic droughts swept *fin-de-siècle* Asia, Africa and Latin America. Climate science now knows that they were part of the signature of a periodic shift in tropical weather patterns otherwise described as ENSO: El Niño–Southern Oscillation. At least 30 million subsistence peasants starved to death or died from epidemics as a result.<sup>24</sup> But it was not a climatic shift *alone* that did for them. It was that the doctrinaire *laissez-faire* diktats, economic wisdoms and taxation regimes of the new imperialism (formal or otherwise) ensured that traditional practices and technologies of conservation and replenishment, which *normally* would have come into play to feed the vulnerable, were prevented from doing so. Was this genocide? Not in the exact sense we have come to understand the term. But, structurally speaking, the late-Victorian famines were the ‘forcing houses and accelerators of the very socio-economic forces’<sup>25</sup> which helped to destroy the stability and resilience of peasant societies world-wide. In a trice, these forces created what we now so egregiously denote as ‘the Third World’, while setting humanity on its relentless path towards, not just massive global inequality, but *sustained* biospheric emergency.

### **The situation now: how does the high Anthropocene heighten subsistence societies’ vulnerability?**

One might argue *plus ça change, plus c’est la même change*. Just as usually affluent people are inclined to intone biblical verse to the effect that ‘the poor will always be with us’, by the same token one might propose that peasants, nomads, and the like, have always been vulnerable to the power of states, seigneurs and economic asset-strippers, so long as there has been civilisation. Update the *dramatis personae* to include transnational corporations,



government technocrats and International Monetary Fund planners and it remains the same old story of the weak making way for the strong, preferably accepting their misfortune or even extinction without a fuss, while the rest of 'us' look on, perhaps comforting ourselves as did white Australians not so long ago, when they hoped that something might be done for the aborigines 'to smooth the dying pillow'.<sup>26</sup>

Except now there is qualitative and quantitative difference. To be sure, we would not need climate change *per se* to confirm the acute threat to the existence of *all* subsistence societies. An incipient literature on the Friedmanite-informed deregulation of the 1970s and 1980s makes abundantly clear the relationship between the rise of neoliberal globalism and Third World debt, displacement and degradation, environmental or otherwise.<sup>27</sup> Against this merciless juggernaut, international efforts to protect what residually remains in the hands of native cultures, such as the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, not only lack teeth but are unlikely of themselves to stop predatory states or corporates in their tracks from wresting whatever fossil fuels, minerals, timber or water resources may lie on or beneath native soil.<sup>28</sup> It is this very process of globalising overdrive which is now pushing the biosphere over the brink, but with the frontline in the assault the very same subsistence cultures whose dependence on some basic predictability, not to say sustainability of our 'parametric conditions', remains absolute. The problem is that such conditions no longer pertain.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – the United Nations (UN)-supported, consensual and, thus, in its published findings actually rather conservative, scientific body which assesses and summarises the current state of climate change research – has identified what is climatically known as the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ). This is the arena in which the most deleterious impacts on human populations are already taking place and predicted to rapidly worsen as greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise.<sup>29</sup> The ITCZ, as its name implies, embraces the tropics and with them the vast majority of the remaining subsistence societies. And putting aside underlying indicators of climate change, such as increasing surface temperature and sea-level rise, the most immediate bad news for these subsisters is the seasonal shortening and weakening of annual rains; for instance, in the Indian sub-continent monsoon cycle. Paradoxically, this is often accompanied by a dramatic *increase* in annual precipitation in which truly torrential deluges can lead to the sort of catastrophe visited on Pakistan in July 2010 or the Philippines in November 2013. There should be no need to reprise here the long-term impact of these floods on a country like Pakistan, where serious malnutrition among some of the original 20 million displaced people – mostly peasant farmers – is still rife.<sup>30</sup> But ironically, while Western observers might be ephemerally aware of these extreme weather events through headline media, they are much less likely to be cognisant of the ongoing and cumulative catastrophe of drought, which, as in neighbouring Afghanistan, has been the 'invisible' crisis of the last 40 years, and to which all other issues of insurgency and counterinsurgency, while closely related, are essentially ancillary.<sup>31</sup> We might at this point add in a host of other related climate factors such as the effects of deforestation and glacial melt, but the human matter in immediate question is how sustained climate emergency determines that 'subsisters' eat what remaining seed they otherwise would put aside for next year's harvest or, among pastoralists, slaughter the cattle which provides them with just about everything, or yet again, among river delta and shoreline communities who find that there are no longer any fish to be fished.

How can genocide scholars get to grips with what this long-term absence of food means for family groups and *communities*, let alone all the other psychological, emotional and cultural ramifications? Should we be reminding ourselves of the calorific intake of Warsaw

ghetto inhabitants in the years 1940–1942? Or, perhaps, of how some peasants descended into cannibalism during the Ukrainian *Holodomor*?<sup>32</sup> The latter case is arguably more apposite in the sense that it gives some indication of what subsisters in a famine situation do: sitting tight in the first instance, eating domestic animals, next year's seed, weeds, indeed, whatever they can, and only in utter extremis abandoning hearth and home. But it is interesting to consider how just as rural access to towns was denied with lethal effect by the Soviet authorities, the primary *leitmotif* of US and other advanced states' response to climate change has been to plan for how most effectively to keep the 'barbarians at the gate'.<sup>33</sup> In fact, as one recent assessment makes clear, it is unlikely even under the most severe pressures that the majority of famished subsisters will seek, or have the wherewithal to move as far as, the heavily barricaded borders of the planetary plunderers. Much more likely is that movement, where it occurs, will be in the famished subsistence zones themselves, leading to intense inter-group conflict for remaining water holes, cattle, and whatever land which is not so desiccated as to produce some meagre crop.<sup>34</sup> Some of this type of interaction has impinged on genocide scholarship by way of Darfur, though more seasoned East Africa observers will know that acute climate variability has always been a factor setting different groups of pastoralists and farmers against one another. Recent studies, however, suggest that the situation in particularly challenged regions is getting much worse; and not just in East Africa. Large swathes of central Asia as well as Central America are unravelling into conditions of extreme, endemic violence.<sup>35</sup>

It might be convenient to blame this descent on specific climate change impacts in these regions or, more conveniently still, on the supposed propensity of particular societies to Kalashnikov-assisted, warlord rule for which the blame can then be levelled at 'failed' states. The value of the latter explanation lies in the way it distances First World actions from responsibility for *anything*. But monocausality equally misses the point about climate change that *nearly* always 'unfolds as part of a matrix of causality'.<sup>36</sup> Pentagon speak talks of climate change as a 'threat-multiplier'. While accepting the general point, genocide scholars ought to be wary of where this sort of analysis is coming from: US and allied security 'think-tanks' being much keener to address the 'threat' of Third World collapse to 'us', rather than attempting to give serious consideration as to how an orderly retreat from the fossil fuel-driven global economy might be accomplished.<sup>37</sup>

In fact there *are* instances where climate change by itself represents a primary and direct threat to some indigenous societies, particularly those whose livelihoods are dependent on the *icebound* migration of semi-wild reindeer (caribou). The place where global warming is advancing at its most alarming rate is not actually in the ITCZ but in the Arctic north. And while we do not have space to develop a chapter and verse explanation of how Arctic melt is having disastrous consequences on the well-being not just of large mammals, but of an entire ecosystem, it should be obvious why, as reindeer numbers collapse, the impact on otherwise extraordinarily well-adapted herding communities, such as the Saami of northern Scandinavia or the 5000 Mongolian-related Dolgans still living on the remote Taimir peninsula in the far northern reaches of central Siberia, is looking decidedly bleak.<sup>38</sup>

If the fate of such peoples should focus our attention on the fragility of *all* humankind in the face of biospheric blowback, the psychological and actual remoteness of small, sub-Arctic cultures may provide an obstacle to 'our' full appreciation of their particular dilemma.<sup>39</sup> Arguably less marginal to Western cognitive maps but also closer to how climate change is accelerating toxic, developmental factors already strongly disintegrating a range of subsistence societies are provided by the leading Indian environmental activist Vandana Shiva. It is Shiva who, without apology, uses the term 'disposable' to describe how the modernising 'monocultural' mind set treats subsistence cultures.<sup>40</sup> Shiva also

makes no bones about the *value* of subsistence societies for combating climate change and feeding the world population. Yet on the sub-continent, peasants are under relentless attack. The first cause appears to be the increasing sequence of long-term drought, punctuated by catastrophic flooding. Shiva writes of the Bundelkhand region between Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh where, as ‘agriculture has virtually come to a halt’, not only starvation but also suicide is endemic. In fact, this situation has become rife across much of central India where official estimates of 200,000 rural suicides over the last decade, on average one every 30 minutes, may be an extreme underestimate given that family members are often not included in the fatality figures.<sup>41</sup>

However, as Shiva and others have demonstrated, drought is, inaptly speaking, only the tip of the iceberg. The real crisis began in 1997, when having previously encouraged peasants to switch to cultivating a cotton cash-crop, the Indian government then dropped the subsidy. At the same time, the US transnational Monsanto introduced genetically modified seed heavily backed as drought-resistant but, in practice, very dependent on artificial fertiliser and pesticides for success. Equally telling, from a peasant perspective, is the fact that because the seed is a hybrid it cannot be saved from the previous crop for re-use but *has to be* re-purchased. In short succession, subsistence farmers found themselves producing something which they could not eat, demanded crippling quantities of scarce water to grow, rapidly degraded generation upon generation of carefully nurtured soil fertility and then promptly failed when drought kicked in. However, the first cause of the farmers’ woes was *not* climate change, it was the structural violence visited on them by Delhi’s embrace of globalisation, combined with Monsanto’s suave purveyance of what amounted to agro-industrial dependency.<sup>42</sup> Having given up their social and cultural capital to these forces and been forced foursquare into full market economy obligations over which they had no control, the further stations of the subsisters’ cross were enacted when massive debt incurred in order to make the switchover in the first place could not be repaid to unscrupulous *zamindaris* and moneylenders, and against which the state was meant to protect them. This ensured that a return to sustainable micro-husbandry also became impossible. Only three options at this point thus remained: eviction, self-induced flight (to the already burgeoning mega-slum ghettos of India’s cities – some 20 million hungry peasants decided on taking this route in the last decade) – or suicide.<sup>43</sup>

A case of genocide? Clearly not, at least not according to the conventional wisdom. A further example of how we are perpetrators and they are victims, indubitably. Because this is not just about the destruction of peasant autonomy, the loss of biodiversity, or even with it, the massive hole in carbon sequestration which this high entropy agro-industrial disorder has brought in its wake. What is entirely less visible is the massive carbon footprint from taking raw cotton to be manufactured, usually in exploitative sweatshops (the labour again very often being displaced subsisters) and then transported again, all over the world, so that we, already affluent consumers, may purchase *cheap* cotton clothes before finally squandering a whole lot more CO<sup>2</sup> machine-washing them.<sup>44</sup> The last point may sound throwaway. Instead, it should reinforce that manner in which our political economy is ordered to convenience a largely First World section of the global family at the, albeit several steps removed, exterminatory expense of Third World subsisters.<sup>45</sup>

A further brief example is relevant here by way of the scandal of biofuels. On paper, the increasing worldwide, government-backed conversion from oil to renewable biomass – as part of the route by which current energy demands can be ensured while reducing carbon emissions – would seem laudatory. The practice is quite different; the rich West, including the European Union, is effectively subsidising Third World countries to either destroy millions of hectares of virgin rain forest to plant biofuel crops or to appropriate subsisters’

habitus for the same purpose. Leave aside the studies demonstrating that the net result is *more* greenhouse gas emissions, strain on water supply, soil depletion, not to say spiralling food prices, as Third World land is switched from food to fuel production.<sup>46</sup> Instead, let us concentrate on the immediate impact on subsisters. Again, our source is Shiva and her focus is the tribal peoples (*adivasi*) of Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, where traditional food security founded on rice production has been supplemented by customary grazing rights on the village commons. It is these very commons, however, that the Indian government sees as a major arena in its drive to develop the biofuel crop, *jatropha*. The government's planning commission describes the land in question as 'unused' or 'waste'. We are literally back where we began with the forcible eviction or marginalisation of the English subsister, the difference being that the current high Anthropocene phase in the enclosure of the global commons is now favouring not just rich, urban, Western people but a whole tier of globalised consumers who either cannot see or do not understand how their lifestyles are driving not only climate change but the most vicious, structural violence against subsisters everywhere. As Shiva succinctly puts it: 'cars will run while animals and people starve'.<sup>47</sup>

One might rejoinder: how can global consumers know what is going on? It is a function of our digital-age media that even the ongoing, sometimes very violent aspect of subsister resistance, and the massacres which ensue, are either strikingly underreported, or, as in Chhattisgarh, easily blamed on left-wing Naxalite extremism.<sup>48</sup> But, should we really expect otherwise, given that it is not just India's internal colonialism which is at issue here but, behind it, some of the most powerful political and economic forces on the planet striving to keep afloat a system which, biospherically speaking, is entirely redundant?

### Subsistence societies as champions of resilience

One thing which is notable in hegemonic discourses about subsisters is how little the language has changed in 200 years. What was 'improvement' and 'progress' then is simply 'sustainable (sic) development' now, while those who insist on doing things the old way are clearly mired in their own uneducated obduracy and backwardness. Three or four decades ago, when there was a vogue for peasant studies, René Dumont recounted with almost perverse pleasure the story of the old Auvergnais peasant woman, who 'as late as 1936' was gathering wild hazelnuts from hedgerows, shelling them and after two months of spare-time work producing three or four litres of wild oil, 'her only concession to progress the use of an old mechanical press'.<sup>49</sup> Dumont seemed to concede the woman's 'mere collecting' might be quaint but otherwise entirely antiquated. But through knowing what we know today, might we not offer a very different assessment? After all, here was someone working through an indigenous knowledge of her local woodland habitat, enabling her year on year to harvest a crop without damage to the environment, and then by the sweat of her own brow, producing a highly valuable product without any carbon emissions whatsoever. To be sure, there is a temptation in reading into such practice some romanticised notion of a prelapsarian paradise. Subsistence existence was never and has never been anything of the sort. Over and beyond the sheer, monotonous hard grind of daily backbreaking toil, peasant life in particular has always had elements of hide-bound small-mindedness, and certainly its own very visceral quality.<sup>50</sup> Nor has living close to nature always meant getting it right; cases of ecological maladjustment or worse, rampant despoilation, littering both the deep historical and more recent historical landscape.<sup>51</sup>

However, *much* of this litany of disaster can be laid at the door of *civilisations*; in other words, more complex societies, rather than those operating at grass-roots subsistence level.<sup>52</sup> Part of the enduing quality of the latter is bound up with, on the one hand, constant anxieties about the unpredictability of nature and the potential scarcity that carries with it, and, on the other hand, a recognition that avoidance of dearth means both working with nature (as indeed with one's neighbours), to ensure its sufficient regenerative capacity for the next season, the next generation. This is the reason why we can speak, with Fernand Braudel, of the *long durée*.<sup>53</sup> And why the discontinuity with our own dominant political economy is so jarring.

Shiva has described this disjuncture as between a self-organising, self-renewing autopoietic system, founded on self-generative endosomatic energy and that of a mechanistic, allopoietic system founded on external, exosomatic sources. The contrast might equally be described as that between a flexible heterarchy and brittle hierarchy, the former providing for both ecological and human diversity, the latter for monocultural conformity. It is significant, notes Shiva, that the allopoietic labels its opposite either 'undeveloped' or 'underdeveloped'.<sup>54</sup> And to be sure, because subsistence cultures as fundamentally autopoietic work within and are dependent upon the seasonal and cyclical rhythms of nature their mind set is one of deferred gratification. The good life, for them, necessarily means, for instance, not consuming the 'instant' yet perfect globally sourced meal, but rather *conserving* diverse seed varieties derived from local soils and microclimates. The very nature of such long-term cultivation requires meticulous nurturing and goes hand in hand with what Shiva calls 'grandmother knowledge'. Translated into a broader vision of a resilient future, Shiva's earth democracy is particularly, if not defiantly, woman-focused. And Shiva's own Navdanya biodiversity and organic-farming movement has shown through repeated practice that fossil fuel-free, GM-free, sustainable, agro-ecological techniques, using for example saline-resistant seed varieties to counter the effect of climate change, can lower the costs of production, produce *more* food yet without 'destroying the environment and killing peasants'.<sup>55</sup> But it cannot be replicated or repackaged for the instant 'green revolution' (sic) fix. The contrast, thus, at its starkest, is between a localised, women-orientated continuity and big solution, intrinsically 'male', globalised rupture, the end game of which can only be mass, anthropocenic violence.

A further example of this collision between life-giving and death-dealing cultures is presented in the British environmental activist Nicola Peel's documentary film, *Blood of the Amazon*.<sup>56</sup> The blood in question actually refers to the 18.5 billion tons of toxic waste spilled into the Panacocha region of Ecuador's Yasuni national park, over the last 30–40 years, as the 'price' for Chevron-Texaco's major oil and gas production programme there. For the record, this amounts to a spillage 30 times greater than that of the Exxon-Valdez disaster, which disastrous enough in terms of Alaska's wildlife, is belittled by the impact on the supposedly 'pristine' Yasuni rain forest, a mere 0.2% of the planet's *terra firma*, yet with 25,000 different plant species alone, its most bio-diverse habitat. Nor is it just the flora and fauna that have suffered. Put aside the million metric tons of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere, at ground zero the Panacocha's contaminated soil and water translates not only into daily illness but 'an epidemic of cancer, miscarriages, birth defects' and the like for its five groups of indigenous people. Indeed, the mortality rate currently runs at 143 deaths for every 1000 births.<sup>57</sup> Thus far, the Yasuni story sounds like just another addition, if a particularly egregious one, to the litany of 'sacrifice zones' developed for the unconscionable benefit of corporate interest; its *indigènes*, the hapless victims as well as bystanders to their own fate.<sup>58</sup>

Yet the other side of the story is rather different. It speaks of people resistance *and* resilience. The very fact that from being originally cowed by both Chevron and their frontline Ecuadorian military accomplices, the Cofan, Siona, Secoya, Kichwa and Huaorani have come together as a federation to mobilise against further encroachment, symbolised in the non-violent defence of Sarayacu, in 2002, when the community's women prevented soldiers and oil workers from invading their land.<sup>59</sup> Better known internationally is their success in the Ecuadorian courts where they have forced Chevron to stand trial. In a classic court ruling in February 2011, the company was found liable for \$8.6 billion for environmental clean-up costs.<sup>60</sup> This dovetails with the aspirations of the present left-leaning government of Rafael Correa to become a post-petroleum economy. While this promise has yet to be fulfilled, the communities themselves have embarked on a decidedly post-petroleum 'development'. On the one hand, they have brought in experts in *mycoremediation*, a biological technique to help sponge up the soil and groundwater contamination. On the other hand, in the area along the Napo river, they have sought not only to reinvigorate but to share with outsiders their native craft, fishing, permaculture and herbal medicinal skills, intrinsic to living *and flourishing* in and from the forest.<sup>61</sup>

How much can such subsistence cultures teach *us*? And is this just a matter of the transmission of practical Amazonian or Arctic skills, which, otherwise, may not seem terribly relevant? Let us get down to some fundamentals. In 2006, the British Met Office's climate research wing, the Hadley Centre, having collated copious data and observations, produced a climate model which forecast that fully one-third of the planet's land mass will be desert by 2100, while up to half of land surface will suffer drought.<sup>62</sup> The conventional wisdom nearly always assumes that the poorest, subsistence societies under these sort of pressures will be the first to collapse, with unmitigated violence the corollary. However, there is equally a case for arguing that the most vulnerable societies to this sort of scenario are the *most* advanced, developed ones such as 'ours'. Why? First, because of our almost total dependency on thin, often distant supply lines to provide basic services, including water, food, heat and light. Overwhelmed by some extreme, sustained weather event and the truism about hierarchic, complex, urban societies being only three or four meals away from anarchy could well be confirmed to disastrous effect.<sup>63</sup> But if this speaks to the physical realities before us, it critically misses the emotional, and what one might call psychic, element of the equation. With only a linear script of secularised, terrestrial mastery to hand, there is, paradoxically, an almost palpable absence, not just of any awe of nature, but alertness to Gaia's refusal to take any more violation. One result is a form of schizophrenia. On the one hand, there is assumption that whatever happens, there will be a technical fix to sort it. On the other hand, there is a set of semiotically informed stories we tell each other, particularly through fantasy and science fiction films, in which there *is* catastrophe, it is overwhelmingly apocalyptic, but to which the only response can be a highly individualised, social Darwinian struggle for survival.<sup>64</sup>

Compare and contrast with societies close to nature. Traditionally built into their very fabric is not just the wonderment but also an entirely 'normal' precognitive alertness of nature's unpredictable and capricious power. Subsistence societies thus carry within themselves the imminence of disaster at all times. It is there in their cosmologies – often only partially dampened by any monotheistic superstructure – ensuring that a *religious* interpretation of the world is ever-present. Subsisters know that to ignore or defy nature is to bring down its wrath on the whole community with cataclysmic force.<sup>65</sup> What to us may be superstitious nonsense, to them is the forearming of the *collective* whole so that, faced with the approaching storm, they are not just physically but mentally equipped to ride it out. To which, one has to ask, in destroying these cultures,

are we simply cutting the umbilical cord which might yet be humanity's lifeline in the face of climate catastrophe?<sup>66</sup>

### Violent nemesis or resilient future?

Genocide is a by-product of the modern international, political economy.<sup>67</sup> But underneath that is something else: an ongoing structural violence whose origins lie in the very rupture with traditional subsistence lifestyles as sustained over thousands of years. Patrick Wolfe has notably argued that the settler colonial assault on the Aborigines is a case of structural genocide.<sup>68</sup> Whether the wider, developmental, state-cum-corporate degradation, displacement and destruction of *all* subsistence societies falls in this same category may be discussable. However, viewed through the contemporary biospheric crisis, the inference takes on an altogether broader meaning. As Shiva, as always overturning standard wisdoms, puts it:

In the biodiversity paradigm, to be developed is to be able to leave ecological space for other species, for all people and future generations of humans. To be underdeveloped is to usurp the ecological space of other species and communities, to pollute the atmosphere, and to threaten the planet.<sup>69</sup>

Shiva has no doubt that, putting all other things aside, the industrialisation of food 'has put the human species on a slippery slope of self-destruction and self-annihilation'.<sup>70</sup> Parenti has equally noted that rather than changing course in response to climate change, 'business as usual' is now operating on repression, surveillance and violence as its form of adaptation.<sup>71</sup> Not only can we expect this Schmittian-style state of emergency to become the 'new normal' as possibilities of climate mitigation recede, but with the richest, most powerful states moving to a further default position by way of geo-engineering.<sup>72</sup> All this implies not only a more pronounced role for military-industrial complexes as the defenders of the status quo but an accelerating, militarised scramble for what remains of the global commons.<sup>73</sup> Traditional subsistence societies necessarily will be the ones who suffer most in the path of this trajectory.

That said, we must reject any notion that this entails the vulnerability of these societies but not of ourselves. On the contrary, the globalising project that has brought us both genocide *and* climate change urgently demands interlocutors who can articulate an entirely different epistemology of human relationships to each other, as to nature. In a recent volume on this theme, Lewis Williams and his co-authors significantly argued not only for a repudiation of an overtly techno-rational approach to ecological dilemmas but a decolonisation of consciousness to accompany it.<sup>74</sup> We propose that scholars dealing with human rights, genocide and related areas need to be part of that 'decolonising' tendency: beating the path not only to solidarity with subsisters everywhere, but giving backing to the insight that climate resilience is founded on both our own recovery of native, practical skills and on that pre-Anthropocene virtue called the 'moral economy'.

### Notes on contributors

**Mark Levene** has written extensively on genocide and anthropogenic climate change. His recent work includes *The Crisis of Genocide, The European Rimlands (1912–1953)* 2 volumes (2013). He is founder of Rescue!History, <http://www.rescue-history.org.uk/> and co-founder of Crisis Forum ('The Forum for the Study of Crisis in the 21st Century') <http://www.crisis-forum.org.uk>

**Daniele Conversi** is a social historian and political theorist best known for his comparative work on nationalism, ethno-cultural diversity and the politics of culture, particularly in Spain and the Mediterranean. He has written extensively on the interaction between ideologies of modernity, conflict, war,

genocide and globalization, more recently focusing on the cultural foundations of the nation-state. He is currently Research Professor at the University of the Basque Country, Bilbao and the Ikerbasque Foundation for Science.

## Notes

1. Paul J. Crutzen, and Eugene F. Stoermer, 'The "Anthropocene"', *Global Change Newsletter*, 41 (2000): 1718. See also Will Steffen, Jacques Grinevald, Paul Crutzen and John McNeill, 'The Anthropocene; Conceptual and Historical Perspectives', *Philosophical Transaction of the Royal Society A* 369, no. 1938 (2011): 843–5, for antecedents to and emergence of the concept.
2. Naomi Oreskes, 'The Scientific Consensus on Climate Change: How Do We Know We're Not Wrong?', in *Climate Change, What it Means for Us, Our Children, Our Grandchildren*, ed. Joseph F.C. Dimento and Pamela Doughman (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 93. See also Mark Williams, Jan Zalasiewicz, Alan Haywood and Mike Ellis, 'The Anthropocene: A New Epoch of Geological Time?', *Philosophical Transaction of the Royal Society A* 369, no. 1938 (2011): 835–41, for a broader discussion of the Anthropocene debate.
3. Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry* 35 (Winter 2009): 217–18.
4. Anthony D. Barnosky et al., 'Approaching a State Shift in Earth's Biosphere', *Nature* 486 (6 June 2012): 52–8, for one of the most recent assessments to this effect, by a team of 22 leading earth scientists; and Johan Rockström et al., 'Planetary Boundaries: Exploring Safe Operating Space for Humanity', *Ecology and Society* 14, no. 2 (2009): 32, for the wider set of earth-system planetary boundaries which, once transgressed by anthropogenic pressures, are likely to lead to irreversible changes gravely deleterious to human existence.
5. See Aubrey Meyer, 'The Case for Contraction and Convergence', in *Surviving Climate Change: The Struggle to Avert Global Catastrophe*, ed. David Cromwell and Mark Levene (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 32, Figure 1.
6. Clive Hamilton, *Requiem For a Species: Why We Resist the Truth about Climate Change* (London: Earthscan, 2010), for a searing indictment. See also the discussion of Western societal responsibility by way of Holocaust analogy in Harald Welzer, *Climate Wars: Why People Will Be Killed in the 21st Century* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), 13–18. On the issue of intentionality versus unintentionality, see Rebecca Hofmann, 'Culturecide in Changing Micronesian Climates? About the Unintentionality of Climate Change', *The International Journal of Human Rights* 18, no. 3 (2014): 336–49.
7. William F. Ruddiman, *Plows, Plagues and Petroleum, How Humans Took Control of Climate* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), Chapters 7–10. However, see Erle C. Ellis et al., 'Used Planet: A Global History', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences/ PNAS* (29 April 2013). <http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2013/04/25/1217241110.abstract> (accessed 11 November 2013), for a recent article proposing that the most significant earth system changes were caused by human populations over 3000 years ago.
8. Edmund Leach, *Lévi-Strauss* (London: Fontana, 1970).
9. Karl Polanyi, 'Societies and Economic Systems', in *The Great Transformation, The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston MA: Beacon Press, 2001[1944]), Chapter 4.
10. Ulrich Loening, 'The Attitude of Human Ecology', in *Radical Human Ecology, Intercultural and Indigenous Approaches*, eds Lewis Williams, Rose Roberts and Alastair Macintosh (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 22.
11. See Martin Crook and Damien Short, 'Marx, Lemkin and the Genocide–Ecocide Nexus', *The International Journal of Human Rights* 18, no. 3 (2014): 298–319.
12. Tony Barta, 'Relations of Genocide: Land and Lives in the Colonisation of Australia', in *Genocide and the Modern Age*, ed. Isidor Wallimann and Michael Dobkowski (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1987), 237–51; Raymond Evans, "'Crime without a Name": Colonialism and the Case for "Indigenocide"', in *Empire, Colony, Genocide, Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. Dirk Moses (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 133–47.
13. Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); A.J. Marshall, ed., *The Great Extermination: A Guide to Anglo-Australian Cupidity, Wickedness and Waste* (London: Heinemann, 1966).



14. David I. Stern and Robert K. Kaufmann, *Estimates of Global Anthropogenic Methane Emissions 1860–1993* (Australian National University, 1995). [cdiac.ornl.gov/trends/meth/ch4.htm](http://cdiac.ornl.gov/trends/meth/ch4.htm) (accessed 11 November 2013).
15. Richard L. Rubenstein, *The Age of Triage: Fear and Hope in an Overcrowded World* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1983), esp. 34–59, 120–7.
16. Jason W. Moore, ‘Crisis: Ecological or World-Ecological?’, in *Depletion Design: A Glossary of Network Ecologies*, ed. Caroline Wiedmann and Soenke Zehle (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2012), 34.
17. See Eric Richards, *The Highland Clearances: People, Landlords and Rural Turmoil* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2000).
18. See Don Watson, *Caledonia Australis: Scottish Highlanders on the Frontier of Australia* (Sydney: Collins, 1984), 165–7, for the Warrigal Creek massacre, one particularly notorious example.
19. Adam Jones, ‘Genocide and Structural Violence: Charting the Terrain’, in *New Directions in Genocide Research*, ed. Adam Jones (New York and London: Routledge, 2012), 132–51.
20. See A. Dirk Moses, ‘Raphael Lemkin, Culture and the Concept of Genocide’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 19–41, esp. 22–30, 37; Jennifer Huseman and Damien Short, ‘“A Slow Industrial Genocide”: Tar Sands and the Indigenous Peoples of Northern Alberta’, *The International Journal of Human Rights* 16 no. 1 (2012): 221–2, for further exploration.
21. Lynne Viola et al., ed., *The War against the Peasantry, 1927–1930: The Tragedy of the Soviet Countryside*, trans. Steven Shabad (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2005).
22. Daniele Conversi, ‘Modernism and Nationalism’, *Journal of Political Ideologies* 17, no. 1 (2012): 13–34.
23. Mark Levene, ‘Historians for the Right to Work: We Demand a Continuing Supply of History’, *History Workshop Journal* 67 (Spring 2009): 69–81. The essay is itself an *homenaje* to the great English social historian, E.P. Thompson, whose Marxism notwithstanding, looked back to the ‘moral economy’ of the eighteenth century as set against the emerging ‘economy of profit’.
24. Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts, El Nino Famines and the Making of the Third World* (London; New York: Verso, 2001), 6–7.
25. *Ibid.*, 15.
26. Quoted here in Anna Haebich, ‘“Clearing the Wheat Belt”: Erasing the Indigenous Presence in the Southwest of Western Australia’, in *Genocide and Settler Society, Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 276.
27. Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (London: Penguin, 2008); David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neo-Liberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Manfred B. Steger, ‘Ideologies of Globalization’, *Journal of Political Ideologies* 10, no. 1(2005): 11–30; Daniele Conversi, ‘The Limits of Cultural Globalisation?’, *Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies* 1, no. 3 (2010): 36–59, for a small clutch of such studies.
28. Moses, ‘Raphael Lemkin’, 39–40; Survival International monthly email updates. <http://www.survivalinternational.org/news/enews> (accessed 11 November 2013), for the ongoing litany of struggle.
29. IPCC 5th Assessment Report (AR5), 2014. [https://www.ipcc.ch/publications\\_and\\_data/publications\\_and\\_data\\_reports.shtml](https://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data_reports.shtml) (accessed 11 May 2014).
30. ‘BBC News – Pakistan Floods’, 8 February 2012. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special\\_reports/pakistan\\_floods/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/special_reports/pakistan_floods/) (accessed 11 November 2013).
31. Christian Parenti, ‘Drugs, Drought and Jihad: Environmental History of the Afghan War’, *Tropic of Chaos: Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence* (New York: Nation Books, 2011), Chapter 9.
32. Timothy Snyder, *Blood Lands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (London: The Bodley Head, 2010), 46–52.
33. See Dave Webb, ‘Thinking the Worst, The Pentagon Report’, in *Surviving Climate Change*, ed. David Cromwell and Mark Levene (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 59–81; and Steve Wright, ‘Preparing for Mass Refugee Flows, the Corporate-Military Sector’, in *Surviving Climate Change*, ed. David Cromwell and Mark Levene (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 82–101. Also Parenti, *Tropic*, Chapter 2, ‘Military Soothsayers’; Gwynne Dyer, ‘The Geopolitics of

- Climate Change’, in *Climate Wars: The Fight for Survival as the World Overheats* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2010), Chapter 1.
34. Foresight report, *Migration and Global Environmental Change, Future Challenges and Opportunities* (London: The Government Office for Science, 2011). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-and-global-environmental-change-future-challenges-and-opportunities> (accessed 11 November 2013).
  35. See Jürgen Scheffran, Tobias Ide and Janpeter Schilling, ‘Violent Climate or Climate of Violence? Concepts and Relations with Focus on Kenya and Sudan’, *The International Journal of Human Rights* 18, no. 3 (2014): 369–390; Andreas Exenberger and Andreas Ponderfer, ‘Genocidal Risk and Climate Change: Africa in the Twenty-First Century’, *The International Journal of Human Rights* 18, no. 3 (2014): 350–68; Parenti, *Tropics*; Welzer, *Climate Wars*; and Dyer, *Climate Wars*, for the broader canvas.
  36. Parenti, *Tropic*, 184.
  37. Mark Levene, ‘The Apocalyptic as Contemporary Dialectic: From Thanatos (Violence) to Eros (Transformation)’, in *Future Ethics, Climate Change and Apocalyptic Imagination*, ed. Stefan Skrimshire (London and New York: Continuum, 2010), 68–9; Chris Abbott, Paul Rogers and John Sloboda, *Global Responses to Global Threats, Sustainable Security for the 21st Century* (Oxford: Oxford Research Group, 2007), 28; Parenti, *Tropics*, 14–20.
  38. Tim Flannery, *The Weather Makers: The History and Future Impact of Climate Change* (London: Penguin, 2005), 100–3; Moki Kokoris, ‘Perspectives on the Evidence and Impacts of Changing Environments in the Far North’, The Arctic Institute, Center for Circumpolar Security Studies, 16 February 2012. <http://www.thearcticinstitute.org/2012/02/perspectives-on-evidence-and-impacts-of.html> (accessed 11 November 2013).
  39. See Hugh Brody, *The Other Side of Eden: Hunter-Gatherers, Farmers and the Shaping of the World* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), for tour-de-force analysis on the distinction between the mind set of hunter-gatherers, and the rest.
  40. Vandana Shiva, *Soil not Oil: Climate Change, Peak Oil and Food Insecurity* (London: Zed Books, 2008), 3, 121.
  41. *Ibid.*, 12; Oxfam report, ‘He died in front of us. The head of the family died in front of his wife and children can you imagine?’, as cited in Alex Renton, ‘India’s Hidden Climate Change Catastrophe’, *Independent on Sunday*, 2 January 2011. <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change/indias-hidden-climate-change-catastrophe-2173995.html>.
  42. Helena Paul and Ricarda Steinbrecher, *Hungry Corporations: Transnational Biotech Companies Colonise the Food Chain* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2003), esp. Chapter 8, ‘Opening Up the South’.
  43. Renton, ‘India’s Hidden Climate Change Catastrophe’.
  44. Fred Pearce, ‘King Cotton: Drought, Diggers and Dirty Secrets’ in *Confessions of an Eco-Sinner: Travels to Find Where My Stuff Comes From* (London: Eden Project Books, 2008), Chapter 11.
  45. The scale of the April 2013 Savar building collapse in Dhaka, Bangladesh in which over 1100 mostly garment-workers were killed, and the entirely ephemeral spotlight it placed on the co-responsibility of major Western clothing brands, actually underscores the degree of First World indifference to Third World suffering.
  46. Biofuelwatch. <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk> (accessed 11 November 2013), for regular updated information.
  47. Shiva, *Soil*, 89–92.
  48. Even then, the major Naxalite attack in Chhattisgarh in late May 2013 on a Congress Party convoy leaving at least 27 dead, leading politicians included, hardly registered in Western news coverage; see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2013\\_Naxal\\_attack\\_in\\_Darbha\\_valley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2013_Naxal_attack_in_Darbha_valley); ‘Chhattisgarh Naxal Attack/24 Killed’. <http://www.ndtv.com/blog/show/chhattisgarh-naxal-attack-24-killed-371356> (accessed 11 November 2013).
  49. René Dumont, ‘Agriculture as Use and Transformation of Nature’, in *Peasants and Peasant Societies*, ed. Teodor Shanin, 2nd ed. (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 151.
  50. See John Berger, *Pig Earth* (London: Vintage Books, 1992), for a magnificent portrayal.
  51. Joachim Radkau, *Nature and Power: A Global History of the Environment*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), for a masterful overview; also Paul Martin, ‘The Discovery of America’,

- Science* 179 (1973): 969–73, for a key exposition of the argument for a major wipe-out of a range of fauna by hunter-gatherer societies at the onset of the Holocene.
52. See Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive* (London: Penguin, 2005); Joseph A. Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
  53. Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation and Capitalism: 15th–18th Century*, 3 Volumes, trans. Sian Reynold (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979).
  54. Shiva, *Soil*, 13–14.
  55. *Ibid.*, 110–15.
  56. Nicola Peel, *Blood of the Amazon* (2011). [http://www.eyesofgaia.com/pb/wp\\_e91307a5/wp\\_e91307a5.html](http://www.eyesofgaia.com/pb/wp_e91307a5/wp_e91307a5.html) (accessed 11 November 2013).
  57. *Ibid.*; ChevronToxico, ‘The Campaign for Justice in Ecuador’. <http://chevrontoxico.com/about/health-impacts/> (accessed 11 November 2013).
  58. See Huseman and Short, ‘A Slow Industrial Genocide’, esp. 220–1, 224–7, for the parallel and strikingly similar Canadian experience of chronic ‘war zone’ pollution from massive quantities of toxic waste water required to process oil from tar sand deposits in the once bio-diverse lower Athabasca river region, with resulting ‘biological warfare’ on its native peoples, plus both federal and provincial government efforts to deny the medical evidence of the deadly carcinogenic results. For a highly informative and lucid discussion of the genocidal impact of tar sands extraction, see also Martin Crook and Damien Short, ‘Marx, Lemkin and the Genocide–Ecocide Nexus’, *The International Journal of Human Rights* 18, no. 3 (2014): 298–319.
  59. Marisa Handler, ‘The New Amazon’. <http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/10/> (accessed 11 November 2013).
  60. [chevrontoxico.com/about/historic-trial/about-the-trial.html](http://chevrontoxico.com/about/historic-trial/about-the-trial.html) (accessed 11 November 2013).
  61. Peel, *Blood*.
  62. Parenti, *Tropic*, 47.
  63. Deborah MacKenzie, ‘The End of Civilisation’, and ‘Are We Doomed?’, *New Scientist*, 5 April 2008.
  64. Levene, ‘The Apocalyptic as Contemporary Dialectic’, 59–61.
  65. Kazimierz Dobrowolski, ‘Peasant Traditional Culture’, in *Peasants and Peasant Societies*, ed. Teodor Shanin, 2nd ed. (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 261–77; and John Berger, ‘The Vision of a Peasant’, in *Peasants and Peasant Societies*, ed. Teodor Shanin, 2nd ed. (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 278–83.
  66. Jared Diamond, *The World Until Yesterday: What Can We Learn From Traditional Societies?* (London: Allen Lane, 2013), for a recent, ostensible incarnation of the argument. Even so, Diamond’s environment-cum-geography thesis is notable for its absence of engagement with traditional cultures’ ‘realm of ideas’. See Wade Davis’ review in *The Guardian*, 9 January 2013. Much closer to the argument herein, see Alastair McIntosh, *Hell and High Water, Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2008), ‘Part 2 – The Human Condition’.
  67. See Mark Levene, *Genocide in the Age of the Nation State*, 2 Volumes (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005).
  68. Patrick Wolfe, ‘Structure and Event, Settler Colonialism, Time and the Question of Genocide’, in *Empire, Colony, Genocide, Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. Dirk Moses (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 119–22.
  69. Shiva, *Soil*, 131.
  70. *Ibid.*, 143.
  71. Parenti, *Tropic*, 208.
  72. *Ibid.*, 209; Levene, ‘The Apocalyptic as Contemporary Dialectic’, 61–3.
  73. See Dyer, *Climate Wars*, for the geopolitics and some truly terrifying future scenarios.
  74. Lewis Williams with Rose Roberts and Alastair McIntosh, ‘Introduction: Human Ecology: A Pedagogy of Hope’, in *Radical Human Ecology, Intercultural and Indigenous Approaches*, eds. Lewis Williams, Rose Roberts and Alastair Macintosh (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 4.