



I n t e r n a t i o n a l I n d i g e n e i t y

Indigenous Politics in the Face of the New Right

Lecture Series

Manuela Picq PhD • Senior Lecturer of Political Science and Sexuality,
Women's and Gender Studies • Amherst College

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 • 3:00PM

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What do Indigenous peoples have to do with international relations and the foundation of the modern state? One of the key arguments of this talk is that even as Indigenous peoples and their concerns have appeared quintessentially marginal to the modern state, they are, in fact, what holds the modern state system together. The modern state was, quite literally, defined in relation to Indigenous peoples (as we demonstrate in Chapter Two). Indigeneity was conceived as the other side of political modernity and served as Europe's looking glass even if, with the passing of centuries, the image of the savage in America became implicit rather than explicit. This talk explores Indigenous-state relations to make two main arguments: the first is that indigeneity is a political identity relational to modern nation-states, the second that Indigenous politics, although marking the boundary of the state, are co-constitutive of colonial processes of state-making. Together, these two reasons explain why Indigenous peoples are important in the study of the international system of states.



Manuela Picq, is Senior Lecturer in the Departments of Political Science and Sexuality, Women's and Gender Studies at Amherst College (USA) and Professor of International Relations at Universidad San Francisco de Quito (Ecuador). She is the author of scholarly books and articles, including *Vernacular Sovereignities: Indigenous Women Challenging World Politics* (University of Arizona Press 2018) and contributes to international media outlets. Her work at the intersection of scholarship, journalism, and activism led her to be nominated a New Generation of Public Intellectuals (2018) and featured in the FemiList 100 (2021) of women working in law, policy, and peacebuilding across the Global South. She does legal work in defense of indigenous peoples and territories, and set an international precedent with her Kichwa-Kañari partner Yaku Pérez when the United Nations recognized their indigenous marriage and made Ecuador codify indigenous marriage into law in 2022. In 2021 and 2023, she coordinated the presidential campaign of indigenous candidate Yaku Pérez in Ecuador.

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