Land Is Like Gold: (In)commensurability and the Politics of Land
Sarasij Majumder

This chapter examines how local discourses and narratives about land and development connect property as things and property as relationships. “Land is our mother; it cannot be bought and sold,” “Land is like gold, it is good even if weeds grow on it,” “We are the proprietors,” “Cash vanishes, land remains,” “We (the landed) are more civilized and developed than the landless.” These statements and the local political contexts of their emergence together provide landowning villagers with rhetorical strategies to imagine, talk about, and take positions regarding their relationships with the state, the political regime, and the landless lower caste.

Liberalization, Hindu Nationalism and the State
Nikita Sud

In this path-breaking account, Nikita Sud critically re-examines the post-independence history and politics of Gujarat, one of India’s leading federal units. Today, Gujarat is known for its pioneering role in market liberalization and as the site of ethno-religious strife. Adopting a long-term view, Sud offers a fresh perspective on the seemingly puzzling coexistence of economic liberalism and political illiberalism. Challenging paradigms that posit the decline of the developmental state in India, she places the ideas, institutions and politics of the state at the heart of the analysis. Highlighting the state’s recent re-orientation, both as an enabler of the market and as a vehicle for Hindu cultural nationalism,
Sud explores how interactions among a re-invigorated state, private corporate capital and ethno-nationalism are configuring the ‘new India’.

Gaining ground, losing ground: the politics of land reform in twentieth-century Ireland

Tony Varley

in Land questions in modern Ireland

Published in print: 2013 Published Online: January 2015
Item type: chapter

What Irish state elites in the twentieth century were prepared to concede by way of land reform, the circumstances in which concessions were made and implemented and some of the effects that followed are considered in this chapter. The challenge throughout in this chapter is one of assessing the relative contributions of state elites, political and class forces to what was conceded, implemented and achieved by way of land reform. Popular agitations, under nationalist guidance for the most part, are shown to have been of importance to the timing and content of the land legislation conceded in 1903, 1909, 1923 and 1933. Who won and who lost in the course of twentieth-century Irish land struggles is a topic considered at some length.

Mobilizing Bolivia's Displaced

Nicole Fabricant

Published in print: 2012 Published Online: July 2014
Item type: book

The election of Evo Morales as Bolivia's president in 2005 made him his nation's first indigenous head of state, a watershed victory for social activists and Native peoples. El Movimiento Sin Tierra (MST), or the Landless Peasant Movement, played a significant role in bringing Morales to power. Following in the tradition of the well-known Brazilian Landless movement, Bolivia's MST activists seized unproductive land and built farming collectives as a means of resistance to large-scale export-oriented agriculture. This book illustrates how landless peasants politicized indigeneity to shape grassroots land politics, reform the state, and secure human and cultural rights for Native peoples. It takes readers into the personal spaces of home and work, on long bus rides, and into meetings and newly built MST settlements to show how, in response to displacement, Indigenous identity is becoming ever more dynamic.
and adaptive. In addition to advancing this rich definition of indigeneity, the author explores the ways in which Morales has found himself at odds with Indigenous activists and, in so doing, shows that Indigenous people have a far more complex relationship to Morales than is generally understood.

Urban Agriculture, Food Justice, and Neoliberal Urbanization
Michelle Glowa

in New Food Activism: Opposition, Cooperation, and Collective Action
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Item type: chapter

While urban agriculture has been immensely popular in the San Francisco region, highly competitive land markets increasingly compel landowners, both public and private, to put their properties to uses other than gardening. Gardeners have developed a variety of strategies to gain and maintain access to land. In so doing, they connect gardening to a “land politics” that asks who should have access to and decision-making power over particular properties as well as broader urban design. This chapter explores how gardeners influence the production of space and the institution of property.

Outsider Monkey, Insider Monkey On the Politics of Exclusion and Belonging
Radhika Govindrajan

in Animal Intimacies: Interspecies Relatedness in India's Central Himalayas
Published in print: 2018 Published Online: January 2019
Publisher: University of Chicago Press
DOI: 10.7208/chicago/9780226560045.003.0004
Item type: chapter

This chapter describes how, over the last decade, hundreds of monkeys captured in Delhi and small towns in Uttarakhand have been released into forests across this region to keep them out of contact with people. However, these monkeys are resolutely urban creatures accustomed to living with humans, and soon make their way to the nearest village in search of people and resources. The chapter recounts how the sharp rise in instances of monkey-human conflict has become an urgent social and political issue in Uttarakhand over the last decade. These anxieties about marauding monkeys who are not from the mountains speak volumes about the contemporary politics of belonging in this region. As mountain
villagers are dispossessed of their land by outsiders from the plains and face growing unemployment, they relate their status to that of mountain monkeys who are, they argue, similarly driven off their homes by interlopers. What sets these conversations in the Central Himalayas apart from anxieties about invasive species elsewhere in the world, the chapter argues, is a recognition of these outsider monkeys as distinctive individuals within a species, with their own tendencies and desires that sets them apart from local, mountain monkeys.

Racial Democracy and the Black Metropolis
Preston H. Smith II

This book examines housing debates in Chicago that go beyond black and white politics, and shows how class and factional conflicts among African Americans actually helped to reproduce stunning segregation along economic lines. Class and factional conflicts were normal in the rough-and-tumble world of land use politics. They are, however, often not visible in accounts of the postwar fight against segregation. The book outlines the ideological framework that black civic leaders in Chicago used to formulate housing policy, both within and outside the black community, to reveal a surprising picture of leaders who singled out racial segregation as the source of African Americans’ inadequate housing rather than attacking class inequalities. What are generally presented as black positions on housing policy in Chicago, the book makes clear, belonged to the black elite and did not necessarily reflect black working-class participation or interests. This book details how black civic leaders fought racial discrimination in ways that promoted—or at least did not sacrifice—their class interests in housing and real estate struggles. And, as it demonstrates, their accommodation of the real estate practices and government policy of the time has had a lasting effect: it contributed to a legacy of class segregation in the housing market in Chicago and major metropolitan areas across the country that is still felt today.

Slavery before Race
Katherine Howlett Hayes
The study of slavery in the Americas generally assumes a basic racial hierarchy: Africans or those of African descent are usually the slaves, and white people usually the slaveholders. This book draws on years of fieldwork on Shelter Island's Sylvester Manor to demonstrate how racial identity was constructed and lived before plantation slavery was racialized by the legal codification of races. Using the historic Sylvester Manor Plantation site turned archaeological dig as a case study, the book draws on artifacts and extensive archival material to present a rare picture of northern slavery on one of the North's first plantations. The Manor was built in the mid-seventeenth century by British settler Nathaniel Sylvester, whose family owned Shelter Island until the early eighteenth century and whose descendants still reside in the Manor House. There, white settlers, enslaved Africans, and Native Americans worked side by side. While each group played distinct roles on the Manor and in the larger plantation economy of which Shelter Island was part, their close collaboration and cohabitation was essential for the Sylvester family's economic and political power in the Atlantic Northeast. This book addresses the significance of Sylvester Manor's plantation history to American attitudes about diversity, Indian land politics, slavery and Jim Crow, in tension with idealized visions of white colonial community.