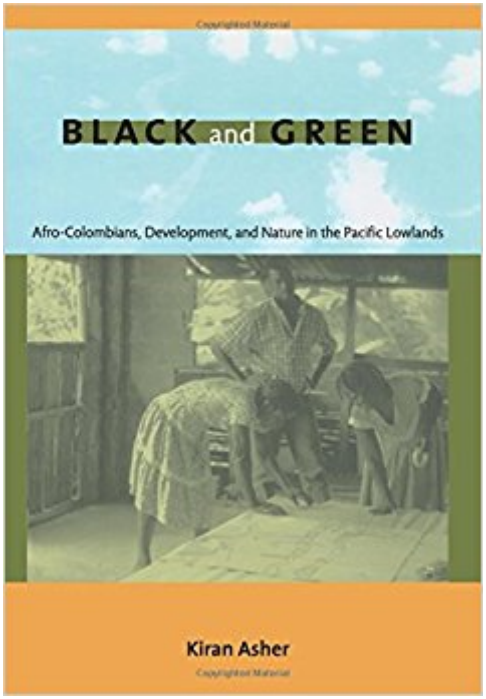
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Black And Green: Afro-Colombians, Development, And Nature In The Pacific Lowlands



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Synopsis

In Black and Green, Kiran Asher provides a powerful framework for reconceptualizing the relationship between neoliberal development and social movements. Moving beyond the notion that development is a hegemonic, homogenizing force that victimizes local communities, Asher argues that development processes and social movements shape each other in uneven and paradoxical ways. She bases her argument on ethnographic analysis of the black social movements that emerged from and interacted with political and economic changes in ColombiaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Pacific lowlands, or ChocÃƒÂ region, in the 1990s.The Pacific region had yet to be overrun by drug traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitary forces in the early 1990s. It was better known as the largest area of black culture in the country (90 percent of the regionÃ¢â ¬â„¢s population is Afro-Colombian) and as a supplier of natural resources, including timber, gold, platinum, and silver. ColombiaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Law 70, passed in 1993, promised ethnic and cultural rights, collective land ownership, and socioeconomic development to Afro-Colombian communities. At the same time that various constituencies sought to interpret and implement Law 70, the state was moving ahead with large-scale development initiatives intended to modernize the economically backward coastal lowlands. Meanwhile national and international conservation organizations were attempting to protect the regionÃ¢â ¬â„¢s rich biodiversity. Asher explores this juxtaposition of black rights, economic development, and conservationÃ¢â ¬â •and the tensions it catalyzed. She analyzes the meanings attached to Ã¢â ¬Å“culture,Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬Å“nature,Ã¢â ¬Â• and Ã¢â ¬Å“developmentÃ¢â ¬Â• by the Colombian state and Afro-Colombian social movements, including womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s groups. In so doing, she shows that the appropriation of development and conservation discourses by the social movements had a paradoxical effect. It legitimized the presence of state, development, and conservation agencies in the Pacific region even as it influenced those agenciesÃ¢â ¬â„¢ visions and plans.

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Ã¢â ¬Å“The strength of the work is AsherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s sophisticated conceptualization of how the various forces in play are mutually reactive. She consistently and lucidly explains the connections and ambivalent interplay between development projects, international environmentalism, the state, and global liberalization on the one hand, and local knowledge, community activism, gender roles, and Afro-Colombian traditional practices, whether in reference to land tenure or cultivation practices, on the other. . . . Highly recommended. Upper -division undergraduates and above.Ã¢â ¬Â• - J. M. Rosehthal, ChoiceÃ¢â ¬Å“This book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on indigenous and black resistance in Latin America. . . . Asher gives an ethnographically rich account of how the black movement emerged in the context of what appeared to be a changing rationale for sustainable development in theregion.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Ulrich Oslender, The AmericasÃ¢â ¬Å“This book is ideal for those conducting graduate-level research onColombia and black movement issues in Latin America.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Jan Hoffman French, Journal of Latin American StudiesÃ¢â ¬Å“The author manages to enthral the reader into her line of argument. . . . The combination of an ethnographic sensitivity and fluid and contextualising writing has a seductive effect on the reader whether or not they are an expert on the topic or region. This aspect, without a doubt, gives the book the potential to be an excellent tool for undergraduate programmes in a wide array of disciplines ranging from anthropology to development studies, and from political science to Latin-American studies.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Eduardo Restrepo, Bulletin of Latin American ResearchÃ¢â ¬Å“Overall, Black and Green is an engaging study that signifies a defining moment for academic studies about both Afro-Colombians and nature in Latin America.Ã¢â ¬Â• - Sophie M. Lavoie, Feminist Review BlogÃ¢â ¬Å“Kiran Asher effectively captures the nuances of the multiple positions taken by Afrocolombians and their allies regarding the development of the Pacific lowlandsÃ¢â ¬â •ethno-cultural activists, mainstream politicians, black womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s networks, nongovernmental organizations, and social scientistsÃ¢â ¬â •producing an intricate and multifaceted vision of the heterogeneous interests at play in the creation of the black movement in Colombia. AsherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s keen ethnographic eye explores the contradictions that emerge when local demands are translated into transnational discourses of identity, rights, environmentalism, and

community development. She lays bare the complex texture of the negotiations that gave rise to legislation and planning, on the one hand, and of the voicing of local hopes and aspirationsÃ¢â ¬â •particularly of Afrocolombian womenÃ¢â ¬â •on the other. She moves with ease between the halls of the Colombian Senate and the workshop of a womenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s cooperative, revealing the numerous levels at which Afrocolombian environmental discourse emerges. In the process, Asher crafts a sensitive and sympathetic, yet also sharp-edged and daring portrait of a significant social movement that is coming to the fore across Latin America.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Joanne Rappaport, author of Intercultural Utopias: Public Intellectuals, Cultural Experimentation, and Ethnic Pluralism in ColombiaÃ¢â ¬Å“Kiran Asher provides the best exploration we have of Afro-ColombiansÃ¢â ¬â„¢ experiences in the wake of an unprecedented 1991 constitutional clause recognizing collective land rights for black communities. Across the disciplines, students of racial politics and environmental organizing will benefit from her thoughtful analysis and the clarity of her approach.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, author of Dulcinea in the Factory: Myths, Morals, Men, and Women in ColombiaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Industrial Experiment, 1905Ã¢â ¬â œ1960Ã¢â ¬Å“Overall, Black and Green is an engaging study that signifies a defining moment for academic studies about both Afro-Colombians and nature in Latin America.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Sophie M. Lavoie, Feminist Review Blog)Ã¢â ¬Å“The author manages to enthral the reader into her line of argument. . . . The combination of an ethnographic sensitivity and fluid and contextualising writing has a seductive effect on the reader whether or not they are an expert on the topic or region. This aspect, without a doubt, gives the book the potential to be an excellent tool for undergraduate programmes in a wide array of disciplines ranging from anthropology to development studies, and from political science to Latin-American studies.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Eduardo Restrepo Bulletin of Latin American Research)Ã¢â ¬Å“The strength of the work is AsherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s sophisticated conceptualization of how the various forces in play are mutually reactive. She consistently and lucidly explains the connections and ambivalent interplay between development projects, international environmentalism, the state, and global liberalization on the one hand, and local knowledge, community activism, gender roles, and Afro-Colombian traditional practices, whether in reference to land tenure or cultivation practices, on the other. . . . Highly recommended. Upper -division undergraduates and above.Ã¢â ¬Â• (J. M. Rosehthal Choice)Ã¢â ¬Å“This book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on indigenous and black resistance in Latin America. . . . Asher gives an ethnographically rich account of how the black movement emerged in the context of what appeared to be a changing rationale for sustainable development in the region.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Ulrich Oslender The Americas)Ã¢â ¬Å“This book is ideal for those conducting graduate-level

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"Kiran Asher effectively captures the nuances of the multiple positions taken by Afrocolombians and their allies regarding the development of the Pacific lowlands--ethno-cultural activists, mainstream politicians, black women's networks, nongovernmental organizations, and social scientists--producing an intricate and multifaceted vision of the heterogeneous interests at play in the creation of the black movement in Colombia. Asher's keen ethnographic eye explores the contradictions that emerge when local demands are translated into transnational discourses of identity, rights, environmentalism, and community development. She lays bare the complex texture of the negotiations that gave rise to legislation and planning, on the one hand, and of the voicing of local hopes and aspirations--particularly of Afrocolombian women--on the other. She moves with ease between the halls of the Colombian Senate and the workshop of a women's cooperative, revealing the numerous levels at which Afrocolombian environmental discourse emerges. In the process, Asher crafts a sensitive and sympathetic, yet also sharp-edged and daring portrait of a significant social movement that is coming to the fore across Latin America."--Joanne Rappaport, author of Intercultural Utopias: Public Intellectuals, Cultural Experimentation, and Ethnic Pluralism in Colombia "Kiran Asher provides the best exploration we have of Afro-Colombians' experiences in the wake of an unprecedented 1991 constitutional clause recognizing collective land rights for black communities. Across the disciplines, students of racial politics and environmental organizing will benefit from her thoughtful analysis and the clarity of her approach."--Ann Farnsworth-Alvear, author of Dulcinea in the Factory: Myths, Morals, Men, and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960

This text offers an excellent introduction to Afro-Colombian lived experience, and meaningfully connects those experiences to larger processes. Great read.

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