



Pilgrims and Tourists

Discussion Guide

- ❖ What relationship to land does a pilgrim have? And a tourist?
 - How can tourism harm culture and sacred lands? How might it protect them?
 - What are some of the strategies indigenous people employ to counteract destructive land practices, such as resource extraction or irresponsible tourism?
- ❖ The federal government is currently considering raising Shasta Dam and flooding yet more Winnemem Wintu land, in order to provide more water for large-scale agricultural production throughout California and for urban water needs.
 - What responsibilities do the government, and by extension the U.S. citizenry, have toward native people and their lands?
- ❖ How would you balance ecological and social responsibility with the increasing global demand for resources, such as the proposed natural gas pipeline that will disrupt sacred lands in Altai or the water from an enlarged Shasta Dam that will submerge Winnemem sacred sites?
- ❖ What role do indigenous spiritual leaders play in the fight to preserve sacred lands? In cultural preservation? Does their message—and their values—have resonance far from their homelands?
- ❖ Is there a spiritual leader in your life? What kind of guidance does that person provide?
- ❖ Have you ever felt a difference between visiting a constructed sacred place, such as a church or temple, as compared to a special place in nature?
- ❖ Sacred places are now recognized as “the oldest protected areas on the planet.”
 - What are the forces that have led to the Russian and American governments’ failure to support protection of culturally important places?

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Profit and Loss

Discussion Guide

- ❖ *"In our culture, food is the center of life, all rituals are developed from food."*
—Ramu leader, Papua New Guinea
 - What kind of food rituals do you participate in?
 - How can a focus on traditional foods reconnect you to place?
- ❖ Economic development should be locally defined, yet globalization often means that remote indigenous lands are mined for industry and consumers thousands of miles away.
 - What effective strategies can local communities use to defend their rights to determine their own forms of economic development?
 - How can indigenous groups resist and recover from the displacement and environmental degradation that comes with large-scale mining operations?
- ❖ How can non-indigenous citizens and organizations reduce consumerism and encourage corporate responsibility, to help stop land degradation and slow climate change worldwide?
- ❖ Are there places you would be sad to see damaged or destroyed? What does it feel like to be in these places—whether they are "threatened" or already degraded?
- ❖ The people of Papua New Guinea and Alberta are suffering the degradation of air, land, water and health.
 - What feelings did these two stories evoke?
 - Do they trigger insights or emotions about other environmental problems facing the planet?
 - Does talking with friends about your feelings of sadness, and honoring your feelings of grief, help you process difficult emotions and regain a sense of hope and personal power?

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Fire and Ice

Discussion Guide

- ❖ Religious ties to land are sources of environmental protection as well as conflict.
 - What tools might help conflicting communities, with different beliefs about land value and land use, find common ground to respect each other and the environment?
 - Should the state enter into, or mediate, inter-religious conflicts over land? If so, how?
 - Do fundamentalism and evangelicalism pose a problem for other religions or for individuals' freedom of religion?
- ❖ In the Andes, there are 4,000 varieties of potatoes, and this diversity is a safeguard against a harsh and variable environment.
 - As the climate becomes increasingly unforgiving and unpredictable, how might we protect food diversity and so strengthen food sovereignty?
 - As glaciers melt and water sources become increasingly scarce, what other strategies can communities employ to maintain sustainable lifeways?
- ❖ Indigenous people make up 4% of the world's population and control 12% of the Earth's land surface. That land contains 80% of the remaining biodiversity on the planet.
 - How do the value systems associated with sacred places lead to preserving biological diversity?
 - What are the links between biological and cultural biodiversity?



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Islands of Sanctuary

Discussion Guide

- ❖ Many island nations in the Pacific have been militarized by the United States and other governments, often for decades.
 - What are the ecological and cultural consequences of this militarization?
 - What are effective ways to restore lands and cultures, to recover from these long-term impacts?
 - How does militarization, and resistance to it, affect people living far from these islands?
- ❖ Australian Aborigines believe in The Dreamtime, or Dreaming, a creation time when place, story, song and memory converge. These “songlines” are critical to recognizing, remembering and respecting sacred places.
 - In your own experience, how have story and song tied you to a place?
 - Do you think such indigenous songs could be used to demarcate ancestral territory in courts?
- ❖ What is a sanctuary? Have you ever been somewhere you consider to be a sanctuary?
- ❖ Native Hawaiians attribute the success of their decades-long struggle to regain Kaho‘olawe to their focus on one spiritual value as central to their political strategy: they focused on *aloha ‘aina*, love for the land.
 - Do you think this is an effective resistance strategy to regain or protect land?
 - Do you think Western spirituality is connected to the land where people live? Either way, has this always been the case? What are the consequences of that connection, or lack of connection?
- ❖ In this series we have visited eight unique cultures. What common values came through?

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