

**From Dr. Peter Hulme, Professor of Literature, University of Essex:**

The indigenous peoples of the Caribbean are widely supposed to have been extinct since shortly after Columbus's arrival in the area. Despite huge loss of population, they never were extinct, just "persisting in quiet remembrance", as one contributor to this book memorably puts it, but over the last 25 years their presence has been increasingly felt. Now, at last, in this volume, we have a project which charts their resurgence in fourteen varied and fascinating chapters. Expertly marshalled by editor Max Forte, these chapters range across the whole of the Caribbean, from Cuba to Suriname, from the Dominican Republic to Belize, from Trinidad to Dominica. Their authors explain the various reasons for the growing contemporary understanding of indigenous survival in the Caribbean over the last five centuries: how colonial practices erased indigenous identities, the much-touted "disappearance" of indigenous peoples often being a matter of political economy; how, in matching fashion, indigenous resistance often adopted the tactic of simply avoiding the state; how local creole practices – domestic and agricultural – are now being better understood as indigenous cultural survivals; and how the new understanding of descent given by DNA analysis has taken over from crude accountings of blood quanta. Contemporary indigenous identity has changed over 500 years just as much as other cultural or ethnic identities have, and this book offers an excellent guide as to how transformation should be thought of as survival rather than loss. The general cultural and intellectual climate has changed dramatically in recent years. There is now a better appreciation of the possibility of multiple personal identities relating to multiple ancestries, and censuses now tend to work through self-ascription rather than "expert" opinion as to someone else's ethnicity. While some of the stigma of being indigenous in the Caribbean has disappeared over recent years, the actual advantages are still zero, so it's intriguing that some of the pride in being so has returned, or at least begun to become more public, as Caribbean indigenous peoples begin to draw on material and symbolic resources from a broader world culture in order to reproduce their indigeneity in some of the ways so well analysed here. But there is more than just scholarly analysis: throughout this volume resonate the voices of three particular indigenous leaders, Panchito Ramírez Rojas (eastern Cuba), Ricardo Bharath Hernandez (Trinidad), and Joseph Palacio (Belize), all eloquently testifying to what survival and resurgence might really mean.