



The return of the  
“native” is a return to  
primitivism,  
essentialism, and a  
hierarchy of  
differences.

Adam Kuper, “The Return of the Native,” *Current Anthropology* 44 (3) June, 2003: 389-402.

Session 8: “Reflecting on Patterns of Anthropological Relationships with Indigenous Peoples” Part One

- Who are tribal peoples? How are they determined?
- 1996 - South African Boers demand to be allowed to attend inaugural Forum for Indigenous peoples held in Geneva.
- Re-entry of the “Primitive.” Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s speech re-traditionalizing the native.
- Anthropologists should question the logic of indigeneity as a special interest
- Special rights for special peoples, *against* immigrants and foreigners?
- Romanticism and indigenous identities
- Culture loss as genocide
- Indigenous peoples as ecologically noble savages

- Indigenous peoples are as modern as their Euro-American counterparts (e.g. Inuit of northern Canada, Alaska)
- Indigenous rights: taking chiefs at their word
- Indigenous cosmologies vs. science: no migration across the Bering Straits
- Some indigenous groups were in fact colonizers
- Politics of descent as a revival of racism?
- New forms of racial segregation, primitivism
- Discredited ways of thinking, now influential when dressed up as indigenous rights discourse