

Deep reading 2 – second exercise

Academic Reading – Critical Reading

Task 1 - This exercise takes the same format as **Part 1**– except this time you should *reverse roles*. You work in pairs or with your ASK Tutor. You and your partner read the following text. The person who took the role of **Reader** in **Part 1** will now take the role of Author and vice versa.

The Reader will read the text 'dialogically'. You will prepare a set of questions that examine and question the arguments presented in order to refute or clarify the author's thinking.

The Author will read the text and prepare to defend or address critical questions posed by the Reader. Your job is to successfully defend or explain the arguments and thinking in the text.

Sold out

A rapid growth in ecotourism has been at the expense of indigenous peoples

Earlier this year, 250 Filipinos were evicted from their homes. Their lake-shore village of Ambulong, in Batangas province, was attacked by hundreds of police, who demolished 24 houses. Many people were reported wounded, four seriously and one with a bullet wound. Cesar Arellano, of Pamalakaya, a Filipino human rights organisation, said: "The people are not leaving - they have set up camp. They are going to fight for their land."

The intention of the authorities was to clear people to make way for a major business venture - not oil, logging or mining, but ecotourism, which is growing massively around the world and is now backed by governments, world bodies and international banks. This year has been declared by the UN the international year of ecotourism and this week, a world summit is being held in Quebec to consider the problems and potential for the fastest growing sector of the world's largest industry.

According to many conservationists and tour operators, this "benign" version of tourism offers a way to fund environmental protection, stimulate the incomes of the poor and encourage cultural exchange. Ecotourists are thought to spend considerably more than mass tourists and for debt-strapped developing countries, having people visit, look at things that require minimal investment and pay lots of money for the privilege, can seem manna from heaven.

Nature is a money spinner. Ecuador earns over \$100m a year from 60,000 visitors to the Galapagos, for instance, and Kenya as much income from its safari holidays. But the stakes are now getting higher and the dispossession of people from their land is increasingly associated with ecotourism.

The cases are widespread. In the Moulvibaza district of Bangladesh, over 1,000 families of the Khasi and Garoare indigenous groups face eviction from their ancestral lands for the development of a 1,500-acre eco-park. "We were born here and grew up here. We have been living here for hundreds of years . . . we will not leave this forest," said Khasi headman Anil Yang Yung in a public demonstration during a hunger strike in Dhaka last February. "We cannot survive if we are evicted from the forest."

In Brazil, two fishing villages near the coastal resort town of Fortaleza are fighting for their land. In one, Tatajuba, which was recently voted one of the world's top 10 beach sites by the Washington Post, a village of 150 families has gone to the courts to try to show that a real estate agency illegally took possession of publicly-protected land where they live. A company wants to build a 5,000- hectare "ecological resort catering for 1,500 tourists" in their place.

In Prainha do Canto Verde, a village of 1,100 fishing and farming families, the community is also defending itself against speculators who, they say, bought beach land deceptively from fishing families and then registered the land for clearance. "It wasn't illegal, but the fishing families can't read and didn't know what was happening," says Rene Schaerer, a US public policy adviser working with the community.

Governments in developing countries, keen to modernise, often say that "primitive" subsistence activities are incompatible with conservation. These were the arguments given to evict the Masai in East Africa and the Bushmen of Botswana, but the reality is that many indigenous and other poor communities are living on prime areas of ecotourism real estate and speculators want the land without getting involved in land rights claims.

Much ecotourism development comes as part of "development packages" funded by international banks. The Asian Development Bank is funding a \$1.2bn scheme in south-east Asia, which includes an ecotourism development that may affect many hill tribes. The Inter-American Development Bank has been the focus of protest by the Tatajuba and Prainha do Canto communities, and the World Bank is funding an eco-park in Karnataka state in India that involves a long-running land rights protest with indigenous communities.

"There are many cases in Indonesia where whole communities have been evicted - more accurately, driven out, beaten up and their possessions destroyed or looted - to clear land for tourist developments," says development consultant Sean Foley, who worked in Indonesia - including for the World Bank - during the 80s and 90s, .

The likelihood of mass evictions in Asia are "absurd", says Warren Evans, director of environment and social safeguards division at the Asian Development Bank. "We are looking at ecotourism as a part of rural development, poverty alleviation and to strengthen conservation. Any activity the ADB is supporting has to follow our safeguard policies on environment, indigenous peoples and involuntary resettlement."

Few poor communities are set against ecotourism, but they almost all want to be able to control it. "We were about to start community ecotourism on our lands, as Bushmen in Namibia have done," said a Khwe bushman. "But then the intimidation, torture and evictions started again. The government did not want to lose tourism business to us."

An international indigenous people's forum on tourism held last month in Mexico found feelings running high, says Deborah McLaren, a native American with the Rethinking Tourism Project, an international network of indigenous peoples campaigning on tourism. "We want to bring these issues to light. Communities are being oppressed. Governments and industry have corrupted the whole idea of ecotourism and it is proving just as destructive as any other industry. But somehow, no one wants to hear that."

• *Sue Wheat is a journalist with a campaigning charity, Tourism Concern.*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2002/may/22/guardiansocietysupplement.green?INTCMP=SRCH>