The United Soybean Republic and Argentina's indigenous peoples: The impact of multinational corporations in developing countries

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Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to explore the impact that the multinational soybean industry has had on the local populations, domestic firms and national economies of developing countries in Latin America’s Southern Cone, with a central focus on Argentina and the vulnerable indigenous peoples living in the country’s northern provinces.

To that end, this research therefore discusses the so-called United Soybean Republic, a powerful yet unofficial geoeconomic entity formed during the last twenty years by large corporations working within a complex network of alliances and collaborative modes of production. Its presence expands to Argentina’s neighboring countries of Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, and more recently Bolivia.

An important highlight of this thesis is its analysis into the social and economic struggles of the Wichí, Kolla, Guaraní and other indigenous groups living in the El Gran Chaco region. Their daily lifestyle and culture have been adversely affected as a direct result of this multinational incursion, which has caused landlessness, forced migration and created a dependence on handcrafts as a main source of income. Part III discusses these effects through personal interviews with indigenous artisans conducted by the author.

Keywords

United Soybean Republic - soybean industry - biootechnology - GMOs - multinational corporations (MNCs) - global - neoliberalism - FDI - economic growth - GDP - host governments - poverty - indigenous - land rights - displacement - Wichí - Guaraní - handcrafts - fair trade - culture - sustainability