skilled “forest managers” that his own description shows them to be.

Although Reed describes the production of fruits and other products in house gardens and orchards, most of the information included in the book deals with the Chiripa’s forest activities, including the collection of yerba. The author clearly reports that most yerba sold by this indigenous people comes from their forests; their agroforestry activities are only superficially described. While it is of little value to quibble about where “agroforestry” and “forest management” actually begin and end, I find that the Chiripa people would be far better described as “prophets of forest management” rather than prophets of agroforestry. The complex and sophisticated cleaning, thinning, and other management techniques that the Chiripa apparently practice are recognizable as excellent forestry. Acknowledging them as such should help to strengthen the argument recently made by other researchers that indigenous people have often been excellent—and usually overlooked—manipulators and managers of forests. Reed presents considerable evidence that most yerba sold by Chiripa families is not planted by them but is collected from their managed forests.

Apart from his somewhat confusing categorization of the Chiripa, the author clearly understands that the patterns of agriculture, agroforestry, and forest management activities carried out by the Chiripa are strongly interconnected. In this, the Paraguayan evidence clearly supports and reinforces the results of recent ethnographical and ethnobotanical studies conducted in other tropical regions.

This finding should be of considerable interest to those planning and pursuing programs of reforestation, agroforestry, and forest management in indigenous communities of Amazonian South America and elsewhere in the tropics.

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Virtually all current writing on Borneo highlights the very rapid recent pace of environmental, social, and economic change on the island and in neighboring regions. This new volume, written by a team of geographers who are both highly experienced field researchers and innovative scholars, is no exception. In Place of the Forest, however, stands out strikingly from the rest. The volume not only discusses the recent trends and transformations of a highly dynamic area of Southeast Asia, but it presents and explicates their complex historical and geographical contexts and precedents, and then even reinterprets and updates what we always thought we knew about the past of the region in light of new multidisciplinary data and understandings.

This volume is one of a series of
allows them to write about the area’s environments and peoples on many levels. They jump between these various descriptive and analytical planes, discussing broad regional trends and then illustrating their generalizations with detailed narratives of what happened in particular communities in decades past. The reader gets a useful general picture, and yet the complexity and diversity that characterize the area are not lost.

The book is also notable for the specific environments and communities it chooses to highlight. Borneo’s forests, forest users, loggers, and shifting cultivators are here, as in many recent books, a focus of discussion. In this volume the exposition of those issues is extremely interesting, full of recent data and new interpretations, and should not be missed. More unusual and striking, however, may be the volume’s discussion of some Bornean communities, resource users, environments, and events that often go ignored. These include a broad assortment: urban areas, mining, grasslands, droughts, and fires.

For instance, many of us know something about alang-alang (Imperata cylindrica) grasslands in Borneo and all of us have an opinion—generally negative—about their extent, creation, usefulness, and future. But few readers will not learn a good deal from the detailed historical, multilevel discussion presented in an extensive chapter on Borneo’s expanding (and at times, contracting) grasslands. This and several other sections take the reader far beyond the familiar, ahistorical view of the great tropical island’s environment, until the recent
onslaught of loggers, transmigrants, and oil-palm planters, as a pristine, featureless forest inhabited by a few foragers and traditional communities of slash-and-burners and fishers.

My quibbles with the volume are very few. Even though the authors attempt an explanation, it is not altogether clear why Borneo and the eastern Malay peninsula were combined as a focus. The book is, in any case, very largely about Borneo and presumably will be more useful to those interested in the island than in the peninsula.

The authors’ skilled combination of the particular and general, past and present, continues into their concluding chapter that attempts to foresee the future. They do not shy away from making generalizations about environmental and social trends in the focus area sites, and they cautiously suggest what prospects are likely. They do not, however, predict an unstoppable, unidirectional trajectory of environmental degradation. Their complex predictions for the future reflect a profound appreciation of the great diversity and complexity of the past and present of the region, its people, and its environments.

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This book is a wonderful exposition of the art of French ethnogeography, one of the contemporary manifestations of the rich regional tradition in geography in France. In that tradition the region is seen as both a symbolic appropriation of a portion of space by a group and a constituting element in its identity, and as the analysis of territoriality, defined by the network of relationships by which information—knowledge and practice—is transmitted and reproduced. For this very readable book, credit must also go to the translator and the series’ manuscript editor, not only for their effort and care, but for their collaboration with the author to produce an engaging English-language account of a vision of time and space in a resilient and adaptive society, that of Tanna in Vanuatu, where the author carried out field research between 1978 and 1980. To produce this type of understanding of places necessarily involves an emotional attachment to place and people, and an ability to become more of an inside participant than an outside observer, especially in terms of frames of intellectual reference. The outcome, this book, reflects this more than most