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General Introduction

Ian KEEN

*Australian National University
Canberra, Australia*

Takako YAMADA

*Kyoto University
Kyoto, Japan*

This volume consists of two independent parts: Part One: Changing Identity in Post-foraging Societies edited by Ian Keen; and Part Two: Gender and the Dynamics of Culture edited by Takako Yamada. Both arise from sessions in the Eighth International Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies, held at Osaka in October 1998: 'Gender and the Dynamics of Culture' convened by Takako Yamada, 'Ethnicity, Church and State' convened by Ian Keen, and 'Identity, Transformation and Performance', convened by Anne Fienup-Riordan.

While the two parts are discrete, there are connecting themes. Both are concerned with social change among hunter-gatherers and former hunter-gatherers in the light of relations with the state and wider society, changing government policies, and economic transformations. Themes of cultural change and continuity, as well as the revival and revitalization of traditions emerge in both parts of the volume.

Within these commonalities, the parts have distinct but complementary concerns. Part I focuses on questions of identity in the context of relations with the state and the wider society, including the effects of assimilationist policies, symbols of identity, indigenous and anthropological constructions of identity. Part II is concerned with gender issues, including changing power relations, sexual strategies, the continuity and revival of gender values and roles. The chapters discuss the social lives and cultures of peoples from many parts of the world: Australia, Japan, India, the United States of America, Canada, Russia, and Southern Africa.

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