

Chinnagounder's Challenge: The Question of Ecological Citizenship



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Reviews

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(Alexander Jacobi)

CHINNAGOUNDER'S CHALLENGE: THE QUESTION OF ECOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP



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Indiana University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW PRINT ON DEMAND., Chinnagounder's Challenge: The Question of Ecological Citizenship, Deane Curtin, Just who is Chinnagounder? He is one man in India, trying to deal with the competing stresses of postcolonialism and environmentalism - a man to whom Deane Curtin introduces us in this sophisticated work of public philosophy which explores questions such as: Can indigenous peoples define the terms of change for themselves? What impact does postcolonialism have on population, social justice, and women's rights? How can inhabitants of our global village balance the preservation of wild nature and the ever-increasing need for access to land and to safe food and water? When Indian centenarian, Chinnagounder, asked Deane Curtin about his interest in traditional medicine, especially since he wasn't working for a drug company looking to patent a new discovery, Curtin wondered whether it was possible for the industrialised world to interact with native cultures for reasons other than to exploit them, develop them, and eradicate their traditional practices. The answer, according to Curtin, defines the ethical character of what we typically call "progress." Despite the familiar assertion that we live in a global village, cross cultural environmental and social conflicts are often marked by failures of communication due to deeply divergent assumptions. Such conflicts include the globalisation of trade versus the authority of traditional and indigenous peoples, the need to control population versus the recognition of women as active participants in framing social policy, and the need to preserve nature and the wilderness versus the ever-increasing need for access to land, safe food, and water. Curtin articulates a response to Chinnagounder's challenge in terms of a new, distinctly postcolonial, environmental ethic.



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