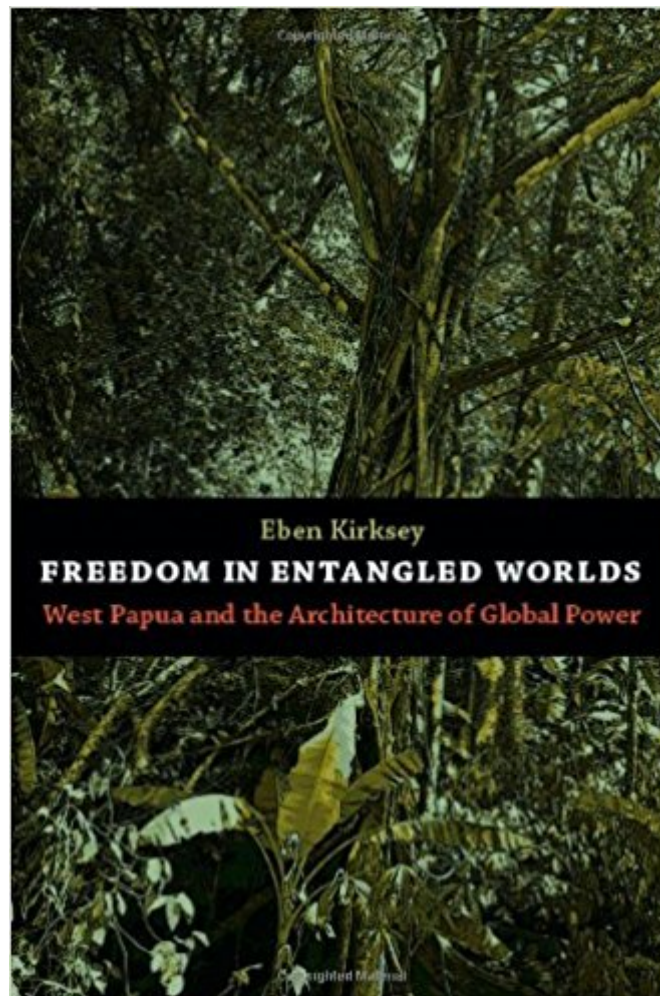




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Freedom In Entangled Worlds: West Papua And The Architecture Of Global Power



Synopsis

Eben Kirksey first went to West Papua, the Indonesian-controlled half of New Guinea, as an exchange student in 1998. His later study of West Papua's resistance to the Indonesian occupiers and the forces of globalization morphed as he discovered that collaboration, rather than resistance, was the primary strategy of this dynamic social movement. Accompanying indigenous activists to Washington, London, and the offices of the oil giant BP, Kirksey saw the revolutionaries' knack for getting inside institutions of power and building coalitions with unlikely allies, including many Indonesians. He discovered that the West Papuans' pragmatic activism was based on visions of dramatic transformations on coming horizons, of a future in which they would give away their natural resources in grand humanitarian gestures, rather than watch their homeland be drained of timber, gold, copper, and natural gas. During a lengthy, brutal occupation, West Papuans have harbored a messianic spirit and channeled it in surprising directions. Kirksey studied West Papua's movement for freedom while a broad-based popular uprising gained traction from 1998 until 2008. Blending ethnographic research with indigenous parables, historical accounts, and narratives of his own experiences, he argues that seeking freedom in entangled worlds requires negotiating complex interdependencies.

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Customer Reviews

This book takes a well written journalistic take on the struggle for independence in West Papua. However the extreme activist focus leaves out almost any exploration of the cultural context. Only the perspectives of those fighting on the frontline are sought after in this book which creates an

unbalanced view of society in West Papua and how it is effected by and itself effects the independence movement. Overall a good read, but lacking in depth.

I follow current events in Indonesian controlled West Papua closely but greatly appreciated this deep examination of the events since the fall of Suharto. Kirksey's thoughtful well researched take on the complex interplay between activists/leaders and the power structure is important. He has a unique perspective as a westerner who was present and taking notes at a critical time at the end of the 1990s. I feel he has given me a nuanced picture and new insights. It is an engaging and fascinating read

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