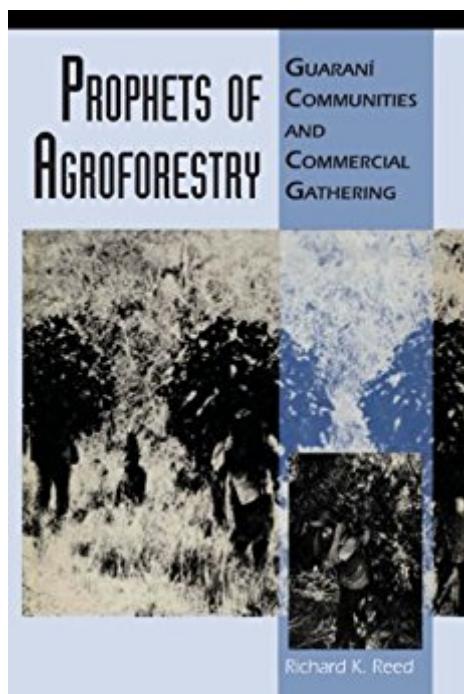


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# Prophets Of Agroforestry: Guarani- Communities And Commercial Gathering



## **Synopsis**

For almost four centuries, the indigenous ChiripÃ¡ (GuaranÃ- ) people of eastern Paraguay have maintained themselves as a distinct society and culture, despite continual and often intense relations with Paraguayan society and the international economy. In this study, Richard K. Reed explores the economic and social basis for this ethnic autonomy. Reed finds that ChiripÃ¡ economic power derives from their practice of commercial agroforestry. Unlike Latin American indigenous societies that have been forced to clear land for commercial agriculture, the ChiripÃ¡ continue to harvest and sell forest products, such as caffeinated yerba mate, without destroying the forests. Reed also explores the relation of this complex economy to ChiripÃ¡ social organization and shows how flexible kin ties allowed the ChiripÃ¡ to adapt to the pressure and opportunities of the commercial economy without adopting the authoritarian nature of rural Paraguayan society. These findings offer important insights into the relations among indigenous groups, nation-states, and the international economy. They also provide a timely alternative model for sustainable management of subtropical forests that will be of interest in the fields of development and environmental studies.

## **Book Information**

File Size: 4405 KB

Print Length: 271 pages

Publisher: University of Texas Press; Reprint edition (February 19, 2014)

Publication Date: February 19, 2014

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00IJLK5GQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,083,295 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #28 inÂ Books > History > Americas > South America > Paraguay #431 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Economics > Sustainable Development #465 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Americas > Latin America > South America

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