INTRODUCTION

Indigenous peoples throughout the world survive policies
and practices ranging from extermination and genocide
to protection and assimilation. Perhaps more than any
other feat, survival is the greatest of all Indigenous peoples'
achievements.

*The Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Peoples' Rights in
Education, §3.1*

F REE, PUBLIC, AND COMPULSORY SCHOOLING
was designed to be not only a great equalizer but also an
efficient homogenizer. A robust democracy and a functioning economy, it was
thought, required that citizens speak a common language, share common values,
and profess a common identity. The task of generating these commonalities fell
largely to schools. In France, free and compulsory village schools sprang up in
the nineteenth century to convert peasants into Frenchmen (Weber 1976). In
the United States, "common" schools of the same era assimilated the working
masses and immigrants into the national polity (Tyack 2003).

By whatever name—common, village, or something else—schools played
an integral role in nation-building enterprises. They were predicated on the
notion of replacement: Traditional cultures and mother tongues had to be discarded before one could gain entry into the imagined community of nationhood (Anderson 1991). It simply was not possible to speak patois and be French,
or Wampanoag and be American. For indigenous peoples as for immigrants

and peasants, common schools obliterated native languages and cultures with startling efficiency.

The belief that common schools could (and should) transform "ignorant" indigenes into "civilized" citizens had remarkable staying power and geographical reach. In 1880, the Board of Indian Commissioners in the United States reasoned that "if the common school is the glory and boast of our American civilization, why not extend its blessings to the 50,000 benighted children of the red men of our country, that they may share its benefits and speedily emerge from the ignorance of centuries" (Adams 2005: 18). Nearly a century later and an ocean away, government officials in Australia issued a policy report declaring that "a major instrument of assimilation is education of aboriginal children" (Hasluck 1961: 4). Assimilation would be achieved more effectively, the report continued, if Aboriginal children were educated in "normal" schools—the same schools as white children—rather than in "special" schools catering exclusively to Aboriginal communities. As in American and Australia, this was the policy also in Canada, New Zealand, and virtually everywhere else European colonizers displaced indigenous peoples.

Much has changed in recent decades. The use of schools to expunge minority cultures, once a core element of national assimilation policies, offends contemporary standards of propriety. Common schools have largely abandoned their assimilationist designs in favor of pluralism and multiculturalism (Feinberg 1998). But if states have relinquished the goal of cultural homogenization, they have also not ceded it to racial or ethnic groups. The appropriate antidote to Eurocentrism and nationalism is the celebration of diversity, not the valorization of difference.

In this book I argue that indigenous peoples have turned the tables on *both* assimilation *and* multiculturalism by establishing their own "uncommon schools" charged with preserving traditional languages and cultures, promoting local economic development, and fostering political autonomy. The past forty years have witnessed the emergence of postsecondary institutions established by and/or for indigenous peoples around the globe. The first such institution, Diné College in Arizona, was chartered as the Navajo Community College in 1968 by the Navajo Tribal Council. Similar institutions currently serve indigenous peoples in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Scandinavia, Russia, Latin America, and throughout the western United States.

By most accounts, these "indigenous postsecondary institutions" should not exist. They serve exceedingly small, destitute, and poorly educated populations that until recently were targeted for wholesale assimilation. Moreover, their existence contradicts an otherwise general trend toward integration in higher education. In an era when the legitimacy (and, indeed, the legality) of race-based admissions policies is suspect, it is fairly commonplace for indigenous postsecondary institutions to restrict admission to indigenous students.

Against these odds, postsecondary institutions for indigenous peoples are now a standard, even mandatory, feature of existing or aspiring democracies with an indigenous population. In other words, indigenous postsecondary institutions have become *institutionalized*, such that a state's failure to establish one—or at least to support indigenous peoples' efforts to establish their own—is considered "negligent and irrational" (Meyer and Rowan 1977: 350). But it would be a mistake to attribute their existence to the magnanimity of national governments. In establishing their own postsecondary institutions, indigenous peoples have overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles, due in large measure to their exceptional status as "quasi-sovereign" political groups under international and domestic law.

This book accounts for the emergence and institutionalization of postsecondary institutions for indigenous peoples. Briefly stated, I contend that the nature and purpose of indigenous peoples' education have changed in tandem with their legal standing and normative status, which in turn reflect broader structural, political, and cultural transformations in the global polity (Thomas, Meyer, Ramirez, and Boli 1987; Meyer, Boli, Thomas, Ramirez 1997). The right of indigenous peoples to self-determination as currently recognized under international law, rooted in their claims to precontact sovereignty and traceable to fifteenth-century legal discourses, empowers them to establish and control their own postsecondary institutions. A complete understanding of indigenous postsecondary institutions, which first emerged less than fifty years ago, therefore requires an analysis extending back 500 years. It also necessitates a comparative analysis of the conditions that facilitate the establishment and shape the development of indigenous postsecondary institutions in different countries. Finally, it compels an explanation as to what makes these institutions different from other colleges and universities. These are the central tasks of this book.

After World War II, two global processes—the destigmatization of "peripheral" groups such as women and minorities and the massification of higher education—combined to produce the expanded participation of underrepresented students in tertiary education (Trow 2006) and the increased representation of marginalized cultures and perspectives in formal curricula (Frank, Schofer, and Torres 1994; Frank, Wong, Meyer, and Ramirez 2000; Olzak and Kangas 2008; Rojas 2007; Wotipka, Ramirez, and Martinez 2007). These twin processes gave women and minorities access to educational institutions from which they were previously excluded. As a consequence, separate institutions that had been established to accommodate women and minorities during their segregation from "mainstream" institutions began to close.

Without question, indigenous peoples have also profited from improvements in the status of minorities and from the expansion of mainstream higher education institutions to include underrepresented groups. But unlike the situation of women and other minorities, the efforts of indigenous peoples to establish and control their *own* postsecondary institutions are increasingly permitted and in many cases actively supported by states. In fact, postsecondary institutions for indigenous peoples arrived on the scene just as separate colleges for other groups came under scrutiny for their role in perpetuating racial and gendered segregation. The rise of tribal colleges in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, for instance, coincided with the closure of many women's and black colleges. What accounts for this anomaly?

In addition to destigmatization and massification, which promote the integration of disadvantaged groups into mainstream institutions, indigenous peoples also lay claim to a distinctive political and legal status—sovereignty—that supports the creation of separate institutions. Participation in the mainstream political process is a *human* right, whereas control of the political process itself is a *sovereign* right. Likewise with education: Equal access to and participation in mainstream educational institutions is a human right, whereas control of separate institutions is a sovereign right. Sovereignty, I argue, is the crucial variable accounting for the contemporary emergence and continued sustainability of postsecondary institutions for indigenous peoples. In liberal societies that privilege individualism, equality, and nondiscrimination, groups without claims to sovereignty find it difficult to establish or maintain separate institutions.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Indigenous Sovereignty

Unlike racial, ethnic, or cultural groups that immigrated (voluntarily or involuntarily) to existing states, indigenous peoples occupied their lands prior to the arrival of colonizers. They had historical precedence in a territory now dominated by culturally different "others," typically European colonizers and their settler descendents, and they remain culturally, socially, and legally distinct from the ambient settler and migrant populations.[1] Prior occupancy, in turn, implies claims to prior sovereignty that most racial or ethnic minorities lack (Werther 1992; Macklem 1993; Kingsbury 1998). American Indians, for example, are accordingly treated "not as a discrete racial group, but, rather, as members of quasi-sovereign tribal entities" (*Morton v. Mancari* 1974: 554), and international human rights discourses clearly delineate between indigenous peoples and other minorities (Daes 1996).

In addition to the putatively objective criteria of historical continuity, colonial subjugation, and cultural difference, contemporary international discourses also underscore the importance of subjective self-identification. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 2007, asserts that "indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions" (United Nations 2007: Article 33[1]). In the American context, the Supreme Court ruled in *Santa Clara Pueblo v. Martinez* (1978: 72, n. 32) that "a tribe's right to define its own membership for tribal purposes has long been recognized as central to its existence as an independent political community." The prerogative of self-identification therefore applies to indigenous peoples as autonomous political communities, not as members of racial groups.

Today, many indigenous peoples contend that the sovereignty of their ancestors remains intact because it was either never extinguished or else illegitimately usurped. Not surprisingly, some commentators deny that indigenous groups currently possess, or ever had, valid claims to sovereignty as currently understood (Boldt and Long 1984; Corntassel and Primeau 1995; Flanagan 2000). Part of the problem is that the very nature of sovereignty has evolved over time. Max Weber might have concluded that precontact indigenous peoples (and, for that matter, premodern Western polities) exercised traditional sovereignty, whereas

sovereignty is now understood distinctly and exclusively in legal-rational terms. Rather than view sovereignty as having an all-or-nothing quality—either an entity is or is not sovereign—I propose to reconceptualize it as a continuous variable supporting a variety of possible claims.

Take, for instance, the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States (1933), Article 1 of which identifies four criteria for sovereign statehood: (1) a permanent population, (2) a defined territory, (3) a government, and (4) the capacity to enter into diplomatic relations with other states. The standard approach treats each criterion as a necessary condition of statehood. Sovereignty, in this view, is a binary qualitative state: Entities satisfying all four conditions are sovereign, while entities lacking even one of them are not. A different approach, one that I advocate, treats the criteria as additive. Thus, sovereignty varies as a matter of degree rather than kind. Most indigenous peoples satisfy the Montevideo requirements in some fashion:

- They have distinct populations, delimited and regulated by their own principles of membership.

- By virtue of their prior occupancy, they assert compelling territorial claims.

- They were self-governing prior to conquest or colonization, and many remain so today (for example, band councils in Canada, tribal governments in the United States, Home Rule in Greenland, Miskito autonomy in Nicaragua).

- Historically, many entered into formal diplomatic or treaty relationships with colonial powers.

To the extent that indigenous peoples meet these criteria, they can assert an international legal personality on par with sovereign nation-states. But not all indigenous peoples can meet these criteria, and those who can often do so in circumscribed fashion. Tribal lands in the United States, for example, are delineated by clearly defined boundaries, but the land is held "in trust" by the federal government. Moreover, in countries where formal treaties with indigenous peoples were signed—and in places like Australia they never were—"government-to-government" relations are typically restricted to the colonizing state or its successor. So it is that in the United States the Supreme Court held in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831) that Indian tribes could no longer enter

into treaties or agreements with foreign governments, and Congress unilaterally ended the policy of making treaties with Indian tribes in 1871.

A different way to conceptualize sovereignty has been advanced by Stephen Krasner, who identifies four distinct modalities: international legal, Westphalian, domestic, and interdependence (Krasner 1999). In contrast with the theory of statehood promulgated by the Montevideo Convention, whereby entities that satisfy predetermined criteria are regarded as sovereign ipso facto, international legal sovereignty depends on formal recognition by other sovereign states. Westphalian sovereignty entails the right (if not always the ability) to exclude external actors from internal affairs and authority structures, whereas interdependence sovereignty pertains more specifically to the ability to enforce territorial boundaries. Finally, domestic sovereignty consists of the organization and effective exercise of authority within a territory.

Once again, indigenous peoples enjoy many of these prerogatives of sovereignty, as illustrated by the status of Indian tribes in the United States. To be treated as sovereign nations under U.S. law, Indian tribes must first be formally recognized by the federal government; this constitutive act of recognition bears at least some resemblance to the process by which international acts of diplomacy constitute nation-states as legally sovereign.[2] Once recognized, Indian tribes are empowered to exclude nonmembers from their reservations (Pevar 2002: 105), a clear manifestation of interdependence sovereignty. More fundamentally, tribes possess the sovereign authority to form governments and enforce tribal laws. Thus, while Indian tribes do not enjoy Westphalian sovereignty in a strict sense—Congress has plenary power over Indian tribes, giving it the ultimate authority to intervene in tribal affairs or even to extinguish tribal rights—they nevertheless enjoy and exercise other forms of sovereignty as identified by Krasner.

Indigenous peoples clearly possess many attributes of sovereignty and are not unlike stateless nations such as Catalonia, Scotland, Quebec, and Puerto Rico that exercise substantial regional autonomy, or associated states such as Niue and the Cook Islands that are self-governing with respect to internal affairs but voluntarily defer to a "protector" state on external matters such as defense. To be sure, many Indian reservations are larger and more populous than several microstates that currently enjoy complete sovereignty (Deloria 1985: 161–186).

Of course, most indigenous peoples would find it difficult if not impossible to achieve full sovereignty in the form of nation-statehood. Nor do most indigenous activists desire this outcome. Rather, they seek forms of self-determination that can be exercised *within* existing nation-states. Unlike sovereignty, which is an end state, self-determination is an ongoing process whereby peoples "freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."[3] Claims to self-determination include a range of external and internal alternatives, not all of which threaten to dismember existing states. As applied to and claimed by indigenous peoples, self-determination has been equated with everything from sovereign statehood—the ultimate external variety—to municipal-level powers exercised within established states—a relatively weak, even co-opting, internal alternative (Alfredsson 1987; Fleras and Elliot 1992; Sanders 1991). Where along this continuum indigenous peoples fall is an empirical question, as it varies both historically and cross-nationally. Suffice it to say at this point that self-determination is becoming increasingly extricated from its rather close association with overseas decolonization but that it confers at least some degree of internal control over important social institutions such as schools.

Postsecondary Institutions

Sovereignty plays such a central role in my analysis because of its implications for indigenous peoples' control of their own postsecondary institutions. Indeed, political authority has always implied the authority to control higher education (Riddle 1996). During the Middle Ages, sovereignty invested the papacy and its secular counterpart, the Holy Roman Empire, with the authority to establish and control universities. As nation-states became the exclusive loci of legitimate political authority, control over universities was nationalized. I advance a similar argument that links the rise of indigenous postsecondary institutions to the resurgence of indigenous peoples' quasi-sovereign status under international and domestic law.

Defining what exactly constitutes a "postsecondary institution" is complicated by the cross-national and historical scope of my analysis. Its meaning is spatially and temporally contingent, differing across countries and changing over time. Precise definitions therefore await the analyses that follow. In general terms, however, postsecondary institutions vary along two dimensions, degree level and institutional autonomy.

The first dimension, *degree level*, refers to the highest degree or credential awarded by an institution. Based on definitions and classifications established by the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) for standardizing cross-national data collection and analyses (UNESCO 1997), I include institutions offering programs at levels 4, 5, or 6. Level 4 institutions provide postsecondary nontertiary programming of up to two years in duration and award certificates such as associate's degrees that prepare students either for admission into level 5 programs or for direct entry into the labor force. Level 5 is defined as the first stage of tertiary education, with programs culminating in a bachelor's degree or its equivalent worldwide. Level 6 programs, representing the second stage of tertiary education, require students to produce original research and lead to advanced research qualifications such as master's degrees or doctorates. Throughout the book, the terms *postsecondary institutions* and *postsecondary education* should be understood to encompass ISCED level 4 and higher.

In addition to an institution's degree level, I classify the extent of its *institutional autonomy* using three categories: independent, affiliated, or integrated (Barnhardt 1991; Hampton 2000). Independent institutions are fully autonomous; they are accredited to award their own degrees. Affiliated institutions are administered "under the academic purview and accreditation umbrella of [a] cooperating institution" (Barnhard 1991: 211) but retain some measure of autonomy. Integrated structures, such as academic departments, are completely subsumed within an encompassing institution. If control over postsecondary education is indeed a prerogative of sovereignty, as Riddle (1993, 1996) argues, then indigenous sovereignty should bear directly on the level of autonomy indigenous postsecondary institutions enjoy.

A THEORY OF INSTITUTIONAL ORIGINS

The resurgence of indigenous sovereignty claims, in combination with the massification of higher education and the destigmatization of minorities, produced conditions amenable to the rise of indigenous postsecondary institutions. These global processes, in turn, are mediated by cross-national differences in the structure of indigenous–state relations and higher education systems. Nation-states act as prisms that bend and refract global processes to produce variation in the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions
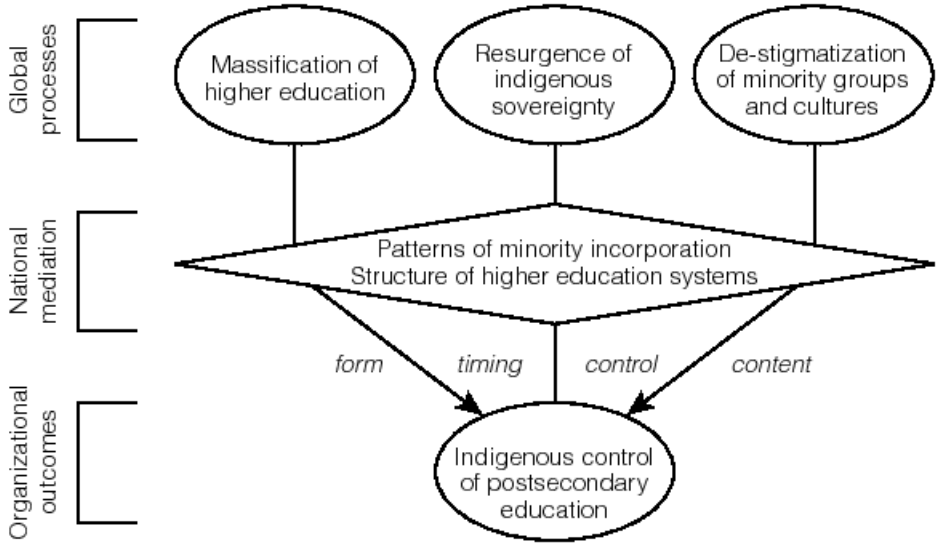
Global processes

National mediation

Organizational outcomes

Massification of higher education

Resurgence of indigenous sovereignty

De-stigmatization of minority groups and cultures

Patterns of minority incorporation
Structure of higher education systems

form   timing   control   content

Indigenous control of postsecondary education

FIGURE I.1. Multilevel processes contributing to the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions.

along four dimensions—timing (when was the first one established?), number (how many colleges are there?), control (how autonomous are they?), and form (which organizational structures do they adopt?). Figure I.1 diagrams the contours of this argument.

Separate postsecondary institutions for indigenous peoples emerged within a broader world polity, defined as a global system of social and political actors—individuals, organizations, nation-states, and, I will argue, indigenous peoples—that are constituted by and operate under a shared cultural framework (see Meyer 1980; Meyer et al. 1997a). This "world culture" provides the fundamental building blocks of society. Culture in this sense is not so much a collection of traditions, customs, beliefs, and folkways as it is a system of cognitive templates, organizational blueprints, action scripts, and normative rules that underlie social reality. Culture, in other words, is deeply ontological: It confers status, identity, and rights to social actors; it provides these actors with schemas for making sense of the world; and it sets parameters around what is "proper" or even thinkable at any given historical moment. World culture is

therefore constitutive rather than expressive (Meyer, Boli, and Thomas 1987; Jepperson and Swidler 1994; Meyer 1999).[4]

The basic tenets of world culture derive from medieval Christendom. Tracing long-term changes in the trajectory and substance of world culture as it pertains to indigenous peoples is a core task of this book. It was once natural to think of indigenous peoples as savages and to debate whether they had souls. Obviously, such ways of thinking were hardly conducive to the rise of indigenous postsecondary institutions. Neither, for that matter, was the sentiment that indigenous peoples were "uncivilized," which prevailed during the rise of nation-states and the expansion of state-based empires. Only after the deeply transformative events of World War II did notions of indigenous peoples and their rights change in such a way that made indigenous postsecondary institutions possible.

Another source of dynamism in the world polity is rooted in cross-sectional differences among nation-states. The existence of world culture vis-à-vis constitutive subunits, particularly nation-states, is constant at any given point in time, but states exhibit substantial variation with respect to their historical legacies and institutional structures. As world-cultural principles sift through nation-states, they get modified in ways that engender distinctive policies and practices. In this fashion, my analysis explores "the way in which 'common' international events or trends translate into different challenges in different countries as a result of their intersections and interactions with ongoing domestic processes" (Thelen 1999: 389). Although the overall tenor and trajectory of national policies regarding indigenous peoples reflect common world-cultural models, factors such as the conditions of colonization and the institutional configuration of governmental authority produce variation in the formal structure of indigenous–state relations and ultimately in the extent to which indigenous peoples are recognized as sovereign in domestic law. This variation, together with differences in the timing, scope, and structure of postsecondary educational expansion, shaped the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions cross-nationally.

My analysis builds on previous work that examines cross-national differences in "incorporation regimes," defined as institutions and policies that structure the integration of migrants into national polities (Brubaker 1992; Soysal 1994; Koopmans and Statham 1999). Yasemin Soysal (1994), for example, shows how

the ideology of human rights was funneled by nation-specific institutional configurations and discursive frameworks to produce variation in the incorporation of migrants. By focusing exclusively on patterns of migrant incorporation, however, these studies imply that an integrated and internally consistent set of institutional logics operate within countries, even if those logics differ across countries. In fact, multiple logics of incorporation often coexist in the same country, and the incorporation of indigenous peoples is frequently governed by policy logics that differ greatly from those structuring the incorporation of other minority or immigrant groups. These differences shed light on the vitally important role that indigenous sovereignty plays in the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions.

The cross-national component of my analysis compares the efforts of indigenous peoples, all with stronger or weaker claims to sovereignty, to establish separate postsecondary institutions. But to isolate the crucial impact of sovereignty on control of separate postsecondary institutions, it is necessary to make comparisons between indigenous peoples with claims to sovereignty and nonindigenous minorities that lack such claims. To this end, I analyze the effect of *intra*national differences in the incorporation of African Americans and American Indians on the origins, purposes, and curricula of tribal and historically black colleges in the United States. On a basic level, the very emergence of tribal colleges is exceptional, as it contradicted a powerful social and legal trend toward racial integration in higher education during the 1960s and 1970s. Another prominent feature that distinguishes tribal from black colleges (and, for that matter, from "mainstream" colleges) is the curriculum: Colleges serving American Indians incorporate culturally distinctive content into the formal curriculum much more extensively than do colleges serving African Americans. My analysis of tribal colleges as organizations demonstrates how political claims rooted in sovereignty empower Indian tribes not only to resist legal pressures that otherwise discourage the establishment of minority-serving colleges but also to defy institutional processes that impel curricular homogeneity or "isomorphism" across schools (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1978; Scott 2003).

The Multilevel Process of Institutional Innovation

A complete understanding of the institutional and political dynamics giving rise to indigenous postsecondary institutions requires attention to each of the

three levels of analysis just discussed: global, national, and organizational. My analytic framework unifies all three levels of analysis into a coherent empirical and theoretical whole. As formal organizations, indigenous postsecondary institutions are influenced by the structure of national indigenous policies; in turn, nation-states—and indigenous peoples themselves—are embedded in and shaped by the global institutional environment.

A good deal of theoretical and empirical work focuses on the institutional processes that link different levels of analysis to one another. W. Richard Scott (1994: 83), for example, distinguishes between bottom-up "processes by which institutional forms are created or generated" and top-down "processes by which they are reproduced or diffused." In similar fashion, Francisco Ramirez and his colleagues (1997: 739) draw a "theoretical distinction between eras of innovation and contestation and eras of consolidation and institutionalization." This book focuses primarily on the initial emergence and institutionalization of indigenous postsecondary institutions, touching only briefly on their subsequent reproduction and diffusion.

The genesis of new practices or institutions is closely linked to and shaped by the characteristics of innovators and early adopters (Tolbert and Zucker 1983; Baron, Dobbin, and Jennings 1986; Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan 1997; Jang 2003). Indeed, the term *adopters* at this stage in the process may be a misnomer; *adapters* is perhaps more appropriate, as it better captures the agency involved in tailoring new practices or forms to local conditions. Once an organizational model or practice is fully institutionalized—that is, once it assumes a taken-for-granted quality—it flows around the world and is adopted irrespective of functional utility or the characteristics of adopters (Strang and Meyer 1993).

For too long, scholars have tended to portray these distinct processes as theoretically opposed. But as Paul DiMaggio explained in a now-classic essay, the emergence, institutionalization, and diffusion of novel organizations constitute different moments in the same overall process:

The theoretical accomplishments of institutional theory are limited in scope to the diffusion and reproduction of successfully institutionalized organizational forms and practices. Institutional theory tells us relatively little about "institutionalization" as an unfinished process (as opposed to an achieved state). . . . The first step in developing a fuller understanding of the creation, reproduction, and demise of institutions

must transcend the theoretical opposition between political and institutional models and recognize the explanatory tasks to which each kind of model is better suited. (DiMaggio 1988: 12, 16)

Figure I.2 presents a heuristic model that reconciles the "political" and "institutional" aspects of organizational innovation, institutionalization, and diffusion. The first half of the figure is inspired by the causal imagery of methodological individualism and is based on James Coleman's (1986) analysis of Weber's "Protestant Ethic" thesis. In this model, macrolevel norms (for example, Protestant doctrine) influence microlevel actors (individuals and their values), whose relationships and transactions with one another (economic behavior) aggregate back up to produce systemic changes (the emergence of capitalism). Methodological holists, including world polity theorists (Meyer et al. 1997a), turn this imagery on its head by focusing on what might be called, following Peter Berger (1967), a "sacred canopy." This view of the world begins with "externalization," the process by which individuals pour themselves out into the world (Berger 1967; Berger and Luckmann 1966). Over time, the inventions, innovations, customs, and practices that emerge from this outpouring become objectified, institutionalized, and cemented into practice—in Durkheim's terms, they confront people as "social facts." At this point, institutions become available for widespread diffusion and adoption. As depicted in Figure I.2, the whole process consists of five sequential steps:

1. First, world culture defines and constitutes social actors at multiple levels of analysis—states, individuals, indigenous peoples, and so on—by endowing them with identities, purposes, and capacities (Meyer 2000; Meyer and Jepperson 2000; Frank and Meyer 2002). The number of actors that claim legitimate standing in the world system has contracted and expanded over time in ways that directly impact the legal standing of indigenous peoples (see Chapter One).

2. Social actors are, by their very constitution as "actors," innovative and entrepreneurial: They modify world-cultural models and scripts, transpose them to novel situations, and even invent or improvise new ones (Swidler 1986; Friedland and Alford 1991; Sewell 1992).[5]

3. As innovations and inventions become institutionalized, they begin to diffuse. At this stage, innovations are not adopted so much as they are adapted
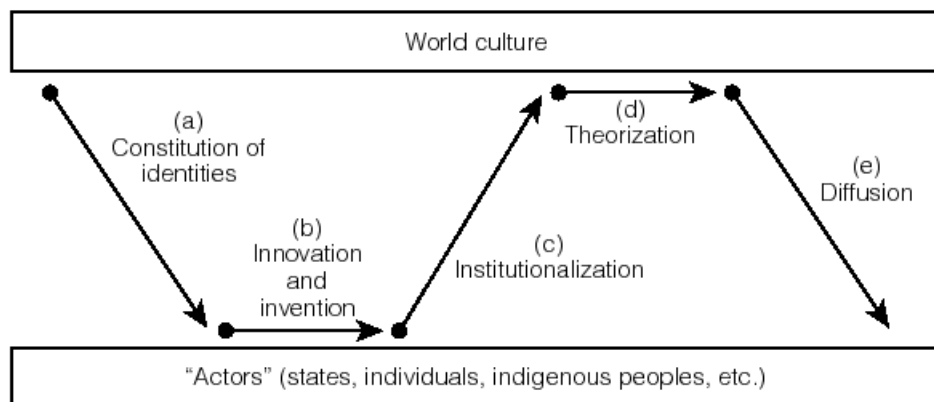
FIGURE I.2. Heuristic model for the analysis of indigenous postsecondary institutions.

to local conditions (as the "prism" imagery of Figure I.1 is intended to convey).

4. Once fully institutionalized, practices or models are incorporated as new elements of world culture, where they undergo theorization: They are made abstract and assume a necessary or functional character (Strang and Meyer 1993).

5. Highly theorized models diffuse around the world in rapid and disembedded fashion.

This general model explains well the development of indigenous postsecondary institutions. Briefly, (a) world culture constitutes indigenous peoples as legitimate actors with claims to self-determination, which supports (b) the establishment of indigenous postsecondary institutions, a microlevel innovation. The precise timing, number, and organizational characteristics of these institutions, however, vary cross-nationally based on the structure of indigenous–state relations and higher education systems. As more indigenous postsecondary institutions were established, they eventually (c) became an institutionalized feature of world culture that is now supported, for example, by the United Nations (see the discussion in Chapter Two). Once institutionalized, an indigenous postsecondary institutional model (d) was made available for widespread adoption and (e) has since diffused throughout the world. The

analyses reported herein aim to unpack the long-term and multilevel process by which indigenous postsecondary institutions emerged locally and were institutionalized globally.

NOTES ON METHOD

Understanding the processes operating at each level of analysis—global, national, and organizational—requires different methodological strategies. To explicate the historical, political, and educational contexts that fostered the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions, I construct analytical narratives "that respect the specifics of time and place but within a framework that both disciplines the detail and appropriates it for purposes that transcend the particular story" (Levi 1999: 155). These narratives explain changes in the status and standing of indigenous peoples and are anchored in a generalizable account of global-institutional change that can be extended to other empirical cases.

The cross-national analyses situate individual countries within this broader global context. I focus primarily on four countries—Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States—that were among the first in the world to experience the establishment of indigenous postsecondary institutions. Formal comparisons of these cases uncovers striking similarities but also important differences in the status of indigenous peoples and, consequently, in the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions.

Consistent with the arguments reviewed previously, general policies toward indigenous peoples in these and other countries reflect broader shifts in world-cultural understandings. This approach follows a whole-to-parts logic that explains the characteristics of lower-level units by reference to systemic properties (Bergeson 1980; Tilly 1984), and is consistent with the "top-down" constitution of actors by a shared world culture.

A deeper comparative analysis reveals historically rooted differences in the status of indigenous peoples and the conditions that gave rise to indigenous postsecondary institutions. These analyses are predicated on a "similar systems" design that aims to explain variation rather than similarities in outcomes. Such a design proceeds as follows: First, cases that vary with respect to the outcome of interest, but that are otherwise as similar as possible in ways theorized to

be causally important, are selected for comparison. Then, comparative analysis unearths causal conditions that covary with the outcome. The countries in my analysis are indeed similar in many respects, as each inherited Britain's legal traditions, cultural heritage, and liberal institutions (notwithstanding the French-speaking areas of Canada and the historically Spanish-speaking regions of the United States). My design effectively controls for these characteristics to isolate crucial differences in the ways each country incorporated its indigenous peoples into the mainstream polity. These differences have real and lasting consequences for the legal status of indigenous peoples and the rise of indigenous postsecondary institutions.

In applying a similar-systems design, researchers typically seek to identify necessary and sufficient conditions that explain a qualitative (that is, binary) outcome: In cases where the conditions are present, so too is the outcome; in cases where the conditions are absent, the outcome is absent as well. My approach, consistent with the notion that sovereignty is an ordinal rather than a dummy variable, is more akin to a fuzzy-set view of the world (Ragin 2000), one in which both conditions and outcomes are seen in shades of gray as opposed to black and white. Given that the relative strength of indigenous peoples' sovereignty claims in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States can be rank ordered, my goal is to determine whether these countries can be similarly ranked on key dimensions regarded as causal.

The organizational-level analyses extend the similar-systems design by comparing the experiences of minority groups within a single country, the United States, to isolate the effect of sovereignty on the development of minority-serving colleges and universities. This component of the book uses comparative-historical methods to inform quantitative analyses of the curriculum offered at black and tribal colleges. I attribute differences in the extent to which minority perspectives are represented in the formal curricula of black and tribal colleges to the contradictory ways that their primary constituents—African Americans and American Indians—were incorporated into the mainstream polity. I use constitutional, juridical, and legislative milestones as lenses through which to examine these inverse patterns of incorporation. The argument again turns on sovereignty: Indian tribes claim a sovereign status, which black Americans never possessed, that supports the establishment of separate institutions and the implementation of culturally distinctive curricular programming.

LOOKING AHEAD

The book is organized into three parts, each corresponding to a sequentially nested level of analysis. Part I focuses on *global* processes. It examines the origins and evolution of indigenous sovereignty claims in international legal discourses and accounts for indigenous peoples' control (or, at least, management) of postsecondary institutions. Chapter One links changes in the international legal standing and normative status of indigenous peoples to broader transformations in the world polity. I argue that the present-day claims of indigenous peoples to self-determination ultimately derive from their recognition as sovereign nations during the sixteenth century. Chapter Two then considers how the changes discussed in Chapter One engendered corresponding changes in the control and purpose of indigenous peoples' education. I argue that the claims of indigenous peoples to self-determination intersected with the postwar "massification" or expansion of higher education to produce the conditions under which indigenous postsecondary institutions first emerged.

Part II analyzes *cross-national* variation in the strength of indigenous sovereignty claims under domestic law and shows how country-specific structures of indigenous–state relations and higher education systems shaped the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions. Chapter Three demonstrates that the overall tenor of national policies vis-à-vis indigenous peoples in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States, and elsewhere followed a broadly similar trajectory over time, shaped in common by the global transformations discussed in Chapter One, but also shows that cross-national differences in the political incorporation of indigenous peoples moderates the strength of their sovereignty claims. Chapter Four then explores how these differences, together with variations in the timing, pace, and structure of expansion in each country's postsecondary educational sector, generated distinct patterns in the emergence of indigenous postsecondary institutions.

Part III, which focuses on the United States, isolates sovereignty as the crucial variable giving rise to indigenous postsecondary institutions by comparing the emergence of colleges for an indigenous minority, American Indians, with those for a nonindigenous minority, African Americans. This part of the book considers two *organizational* outcomes—institutional legitimacy and curricular content—with a comparative analysis of tribal and historically black colleges. Chapter Five considers the social, political, and legal circum-

stances giving rise to colleges and universities that serve American Indians and African Americans. I argue that fundamental differences in the origins, goals, and even the constitutional legitimacy of tribal and black colleges are best understood with reference to the contradictory ways in which American Indians and African Americans were incorporated into the national polity. Chapter Six then presents results from a statistical analysis of tribal and black college curricula. I conclude that tribal sovereignty invests American Indians with the authority not only to charter their own colleges but also to infuse curricula with culturally distinctive content. To conclude the book, Chapter Seven summarizes key findings at each level of analysis, unifies those findings into a coherent theoretical framework, considers some of the challenges currently facing indigenous postsecondary institutions, and speculates about their future.

This introduction has established the conceptual and theoretical foundations on which the remainder of the book rests and also presented the core argument of the book: *Indigenous peoples advance legally and morally compelling claims to political sovereignty that, while not conferring independent statehood, nevertheless support their efforts to establish independent, culturally relevant postsecondary institutions.* To argue that indigenous peoples' control of postsecondary education derives from their sovereignty claims requires an analysis into the origins and content of those claims. That is the task of Chapter One.