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# "Genealogies and Politics of Belonging: People, Nature and Conservation in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu"

Menon, Ajit, and Manasi Karthik

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The landscape of Gudalur, located in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu, India, has been shaped and re-shaped by multiple waves of in-migration that date back to the mid-nineteenth century. The political-economic imperatives for these phases of migration have ranged from the development of capitalist relations within the estate economy to the compulsions of the Grow More Food Campaign to the political repatriation of "Indian" Tamils from erstwhile Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. This article focuses on how the politics of belonging in Gudalur is a consequence of this history and has resulted in a sedentarist metaphysics shaping state policy and contestations around conservation. The article highlights how the state increasingly sees *adivasis* (=indigenous people) as a possible ethno-environmental fix for conservation and how non-*adivasis* project their environmental subjectivities to claim that they too belong. By unpacking the politics of belonging through a historical account of the making of conservation in the region, the article attempts to illustrate how conservation includes and excludes people from the hill landscape. (Text from authors' abstract)

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