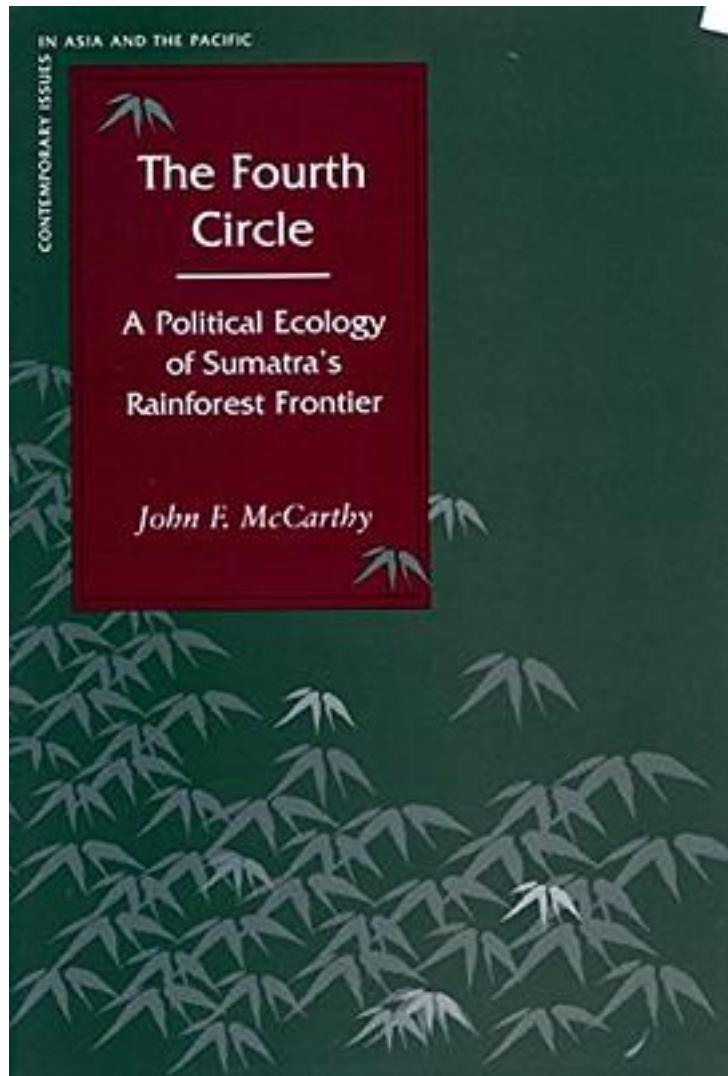


# The Fourth Circle



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This book addresses the politics of environmental change in one of the richest areas of tropical rainforest in Indonesia. Based on field studies conducted in three agricultural communities in rural Aceh, this work considers a number of questions: How do customary ("adat") village and state institutions work? What roles do they play in managing local resources? How have they evolved over time? Are villagers, state policies, or corrupt local networks responsible for the loss of tropical rainforest? Will better outcomes emerge from revitalizing customary management, from changing state policies, or from transforming the way the state works? And why do projects designed by outsiders so often fail? The book describes how, as key actors interact, they create arrangements that effectively manage local resources, eclipsing "adat" and formal state management structures. While outside interventions try to work with "adat" and the state, they fail to engage fully with the main problem--that is, that district webs of power and interest, coalescing around local resources and reaching into the wider society, lead inexorably to environmental decline.

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