

Satellite Remote Sensing and Database Management
Who Owns Digitalization of Indigenous Peoples, Antiquities and Their Artifacts

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Satellite Remote Sensing is the specific application of satellite imagery (or images from space) to archaeological survey (Zubrow 2007, Parcak 2012). Such surveying involves searching for ancient sites on a particular landscape at different scales (Wilkinson 2003, Parcak 2012). Imagery analysis within geographic information systems (also known as GIS) and satellite imagery analysis are forms of remote sensing. Remote sensing is a term which refers to the remote viewing of the surrounding world, including all forms of photography, video and other forms of visualization. (Parcak 2012) Satellite remote sensing allows the scholar to see an entire landscape at different resolutions and scales on varying satellite imagery datasets, and to record data beyond the visible part of the electromagnetic spectrum. I am concerned with indigenous knowledge, settlements and how the current intellectual property laws as evolved have helped to displace property identities of black, African, natives and Hispanics in America. Two scientists recently used Google Earth satellite imagery to estimate the area of the fields and the size of the village of a remote tribe in Lowland South America, surrounding the Amazon Basin. This is reportedly one of the last indigenous societies having limited contact with the outside world. Is the information a cultural or tribal property interest? Do indigenous peoples, antiquities, their farming methods, their building efforts, their migratory patterns belong to Google's database, solely to the Universities? Is there an ethical clarion to apply appropriated knowledge gained through technological intrusions to the indigenous people? I propose to examine the technology which allows Google Earth to map, identify, hidden indigenous people, their artifacts, buildings, cultural and geophysical property location; and to examine the ethical obligations in utilizing database information.

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