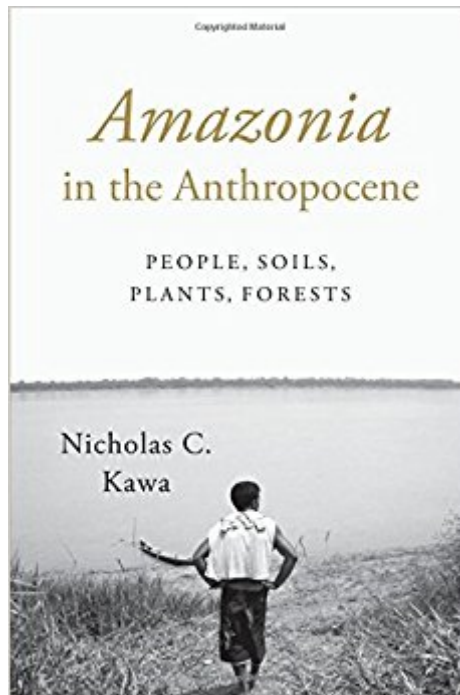




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# **Ia In The Anthropocene: People, Soils, Plants, Forests**



## Synopsis

Widespread human alteration of the planet has led many scholars to claim that we have entered a new epoch in geological time: the Anthropocene, an age dominated by humanity. This ethnography is the first to directly engage the Anthropocene, tackling its problems and paradoxes from the vantage point of the world's largest tropical rainforest. Drawing from extensive ethnographic research, Nicholas Kawa examines how pre-Columbian Amerindians and contemporary ruralians have shaped their environment, describing in vivid detail their use and management of the region's soils, plants, and forests. At the same time, he highlights the ways in which the rural environment resists human manipulation and control— a vital reminder in this time of perceived human dominance. Written in engaging, accessible prose, *Life in the Anthropocene* offers an innovative contribution to debates about humanity's place on the planet, encouraging deeper ecocentric thinking and a more inclusive vision of ecology for the future.

## Book Information

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"Growing awareness of humankind's role in shaping rural environments raises new questions about anthropology's hoariest dichotomy: the distinction between nature and culture.

Anthropologists working elsewhere in Latin America - notably Philippe Descola, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Eduardo Kohn - have embraced strands of post-humanist thought that reject an exclusive focus on human intentionality in favour of indigenous ideologies that portray the natural world as an eminently social domain...*Life in the Anthropocene* offers an admirably concise and accessible contribution to

this analytical ferment...[Kawa] "wishes to challenge current scientific thinking about the Anthropocene, the proposed geological epoch defined by humanity's pre-eminent role in reshaping the planet's physical features - land, water, and atmospheric conditions. We may think of ourselves as having achieved planetary mastery, but ultimately, Kawa insists, "humans are not the only actors of consequence in the world, nor are humans the only ones who can see or think or know;" --Michael F. Brown, Times Literary Supplement

"A provocative read. Densely packed, this richly constructed, engaging ethnography explores biodiversity, human adaptation, risk, vulnerability, and resilience in the immensely complex and rapidly changing realm that is the . Writing in an effective, reflexive style, Nicholas Kawa offers the reader a nuanced, deeply supported, and multifaceted view of life in times that are truly momentous. This is, simply, an insightful, beautiful gem of a book." (Barbara Rose Johnston, Center for Political Ecology Senior Research Fellow and principal author of *Who Pays the Price?: The Sociocultural Context of Environmental Crisis*) "I didn't realize such a recent coinage as 'anthropocene' is already in desperate need of revision. Kawa provides that in his intriguing account of soils, forests, and rivers. These stories sparkle with analytic insight and unfold through vivid ethnographic details that cumulatively challenge the centrality of the West in the narrative of how the world is changing. This book will change our thinking about the planet." (John Hartigan, University of Texas at Austin, author of *Aesop's Anthropology: A Multispecies Approach*)

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