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Title: Contesting Water Rights

As globalization processes and related neoliberal agendas promote privatization through state action, people’s struggles for rights to water have intensified. Set within this context, this book examines the role of the ambivalent state in local struggles for water, which are deeply intertwined with global forums that support and/or challenge privatization of water resources. These local-global struggles have redefined the relationships between the state, corporations, and other social actors that impact the local politics of inequality and marginalization. The book examines three cases of local struggles – two from India and one from the U.S. - to provide a local perspective of the mobilization and protests against privatization of water. The analysis of these local struggles is tied to the discussion of rights to water in global forums such as the World Water Forums and Peoples Water Forums as broader transnational coalitions that support and/or challenge privatization of water. The global water justice movement has enabled global networks that demand clarity on peoples’ rights to water. In addition to the theoretical contributions of conceptualizing the state as ‘ambivalent,’ the analysis in this book has policy implications for both the state and international agencies that are invested in developing mechanisms for maintaining water supplies and ensuring access to clean water by including local communities, particularly marginalized groups, in dialogues. These issues are also related to broader issues of environmental justice.