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FOREST PEOPLES OF THE AMAZON

ORIGINS

Long, long ago the ancestors did not exist. There was only Omao, the ancestral hero, and his brother Soawe. It was Omao who created us human beings, and the enemy Indians to the south and the foreigners. All these Omao created. It was us Indians that he was just about to create.

Down by the great river, Umao went to collect a hardwood tree, the slender *poli* tree that peels its smooth bark. He went on downstream, far downriver, to find it. When he returned to his house with the tree trunk, he said to his younger brother Soawe, who was lying in his hammock: 'Go and collect me more human beings!', then he went off to collect more himself.

Soawe lay in his hammock. 'Oh!' he thought after a while, 'My brother will expect me to work quickly to collect this wood, I'm afraid'. So he went out and hastily cut many lengths of softwood. Omao returned and saw all the softwood lying on the ground.

'That bad younger brother of mine has made me really angry,' said Omao. 'It was snakes that I was going to make all feeble, and it was human beings that I was going to make from the *'poli'* tree so that they could cast their skins. Once they had become really elderly, a man and his wife could have dived in the river and stripped off their skins, and become beautiful again.'

But instead Soawe had collected a load of rubbish and Omao became angry and made us humans from that. So it is that we human beings die really quickly. We were created from that rubbish. So we became weak. So we die. So we mourn, instead of being able to peel off our skins when we become really old, as we would like.

Myth, which provides the explanation for the origin of all things, underpins the societies of the Amazon. The myths describe a visionary world, through a rich imagery of nature, where the characteristics of plants and animals are explained and linked to human frailty, and behaviour. In myth, indeed, the animals are created from human ancestors and the behaviour of their human prototypes reflects the Indians' acute observation of animal behaviour.

In Indian belief the spirits which shaped the world and gave it meaning are still active. For behind the physical world that we all see the Indians perceive the continued working of these same forces. These energies can be seen in the play of light on water, the shining of seed down as it floats down from the canopy, the drip of moisture falling from puddles trapped in the great branches of the forest trees.

Dreaming provides ready but uncontrolled access to this realm and reveals the spirits' activities. Dreams warn of visitors approaching the isolated villages,

provide news of wild pig nearby in the forests and reveal illness caused by the vengeful spirits of animals eaten by the community.

For the Indians know that whenever they kill animals or take produce from the forest they incur a debt. Natural forces, they say, are 'expensive'. They seek repayment. Eating meat in particular, while necessary to life, is dangerous. The Indians become charged with blood, 'smelly' and easily perceived by the ghosts of the dead animals, which seek revenge. Elaborate precautions must be taken to minimize this risk. Meat must be well cooked to drive out the smell and the blood. Some meats must be avoided by certain age groups. Women who are menstruating and their husbands, and men who have recently killed enemies are considered to be particularly at risk. They are already charged with blood and cannot risk consuming more. Hunters often do not consume the meat of animals that they themselves have killed.

The Indians' social world is ordered by their relations with the natural world that surrounds them.

Shamans and the cosmos

Most illness, the Indians believe, is caused by vengeful animal spirits. As one Indian explains: 'Your wife is menstruating. You kill a peccary. You eat the peccary. Then it is night. You dream. You see peccaries rooting on the ground, snuffle! snuffle! snuffle! Those dream peccaries are the evil spirits of the peccary. You hurt all over. Your guts begin to ache. You are infested with the worms that the peccaries eat. You get pains in your legs and back. You may die.'

Shamans are the Indians' spiritual specialists. It is they who learn to move at will in this spirit world, to control the forces of nature and restore health. They gain access to the spirit world by using powerful hallucinogenic drugs from infusions and snuffs made from a wide variety of barks, leaves, resins and seeds.

The colourful visions induced by these drugs are direct expressions of spiritual force. Young shamans must learn to control these experiences, recruiting the master spirits of the animals as their allies in the struggle against the spirits that cause disease. The Yanomami say that the shaman's body is like a house. The ribs of the chest are like rafters and the arms and legs like corner posts. The spirit allies must be brought in to populate the house.

At initiation, the young shaman is given massive doses of snuff. As one recalls:

After I had taken a lot of snuff, I started to chant. The ground became red and flattened; beautiful. They sky began to sing *we! we! we!* The colours of the rainbow began to appear and swirl about like a snake. Then the spirit allies began to arrive. They were dancing as for a festival, their bodies all painted up. The toucan spirits arrived with their big ear sticks and bright red loin cloths. The hummingbird people arrived and flew around the place. My soul began to shine. One by one the spirits arrived, the *moka* frog spirits with quivers of arrows on their backs, the peccary spirits, the bat people, all the animal spirits came, the spirits of waterfall and fish spirits. All came and slung their hammocks in my chest.

These first experiences of the spirits' world are dangerous and insecure. The spirits may leave at any time and the young shaman has difficulty in controlling their force. It may be many years before he is trusted to cure the sick.



A headman of the Bororo tribe, photographed at the end of the nineteenth century. Traditionally the Indians of Amazonia, with the exception of the Kampa, have always gone virtually naked. On ceremonial occasions, however, the men in particular wear elaborate headdresses and body decorations.

The battle of the spirits

Curing is perceived by the Indians as a battle. The vengeful ghosts of dead animals in the soul of the sick person must be driven out by the more powerful master spirits recruited by the shaman. The spirits in the shamans' chests reveal themselves through their chants. In contrast to the often bellicose imagery of curing, the chants of the spirit allies are expressed in a different kind of poetry. The spirits playfully reveal themselves in an often comic manner, while their power is manifested in the light which shines from them.

Arching, arching,
The anaconda essence
Arches downstream.
The seed down falls
Shining down, shining down.

Down the river of little gourds
The anahinga people are flirting.
The anahinga man sticks foam
On the anahinga girl,
As they sail down the great river,
In midstream, in midstream.

The shaman's access to the spirit world also give him other powers – to see into the future, to experience events far away. The master animal spirits who are allies also give him control over natural forces – to cause rain and storms, to attract game into nearby hunting grounds, to bring illness and death to his enemies.

The cycle of souls

Humans have their own spirits. Indeed, according to the Yanomami, each individual has a number of souls. A core soul forms from the father's sperm inside each foetus, and this core being lodges in the individual's chest, in his heart and blood. The throb of the heart and the rise and fall of the chest in breathing are signs that the human spirit is still there. At the same time each male child has a second soul born as a harpy eagle, while the 'reflections' of female children are weasels. The death of either of these animals inevitably causes the death of the human to which they are linked. Their hunting is thus proscribed. The core spirits are only weakly attached to young humans. They may be lured out of the body by forest beings, causing the human to weaken and die, unless the shamans are able to bring them back. Young children are closely tied to their parents, who have to observe strict taboos to ensure their children do not sicken. Many foods are prohibited to them and they must avoid sex for many months to avoid harm coming to their child. Only gradually does the child gain independence of the parents' spiritual guardianship. As the child's awareness grows, its spirit becomes more secure in its body.

But the approach of puberty brings another period of danger. Girls, in particular, are conceived as becoming highly charged with blood and attractive to vengeful forest spirits. As their first menses approach they are likened to clouds



Dugout canoes remain the principal mode of transport along Amazonia's vast network of rivers.

heavy with rain and many foods are prohibited to them. At menarche they are secluded from society and denied all but the blandest food, until, after having their hair shorn and being adorned with body paint, birds' feathers and cotton bandoliers, they are brought proudly back into the community to take their place in the adult world.

At death the core spirit becomes 'shifty'. Its attachment to the body weakens. It becomes discontented and moves gradually into the realm of the ghosts. The ghosts come to the dying human, they strum on the hammock strings in which he is lying. They lure the soul away. 'Come, come with us, you are my husband!', 'Come take my daughter!' they call out to the spirit. The core being prepares to leave. It takes down its arrows from the rafters. It makes itself a new liana hammock ready for the journey and leaves. The humans cry and call to the spirit to stay with them, stressing their kinship and shared life with the dying person. But the spirit leaves. Only the 'empty thing', the body, remains.



Smoking meat, probably wild pig. The Indians recognize the need to supplement their diet with animal protein, but at the same time are reluctant to eat too much meat. Hunter rarely eat their own prey, for fear that the animal's spirit will return to take revenge.

Shared lives

The lives of Amazonian Indians are ordered primarily by their ties with their kin. Their societies are intensely egalitarian. 'Chiefs', where they exist, have little power over others. Controls against misbehaviour are essentially informal, and are either negotiated between individuals or resolved by the consensus of the community. In some communities disputes are resolved through duelling, in which the miscreant and his challenger exchange an even number of blows. The leaders in Indian society are followed by others only so long as they are respected and their leadership is needed. On the contrary, children are brought up to be strongly individualist, to assert their own claims and feelings, to express openly their emotions and desires, and to defend themselves tenaciously and exact revenge for any and every infringement of their rights. Correspondingly, the Indians are imbued from their earliest years with a deep sense of the need to exchange and share. The primary and, in a sense only, immoral act in Amazonian life is selfishness. Personal property is very limited and goods move freely through the societies, creating a web of mutual obligations. All food is shared to all around the same hearth and meats are shared more widely to embrace all the community, thus ensuring a shared and adequate diet. To eat while others go hungry is to break your ties with society and invite contempt.

Long ago human beings did not have fire. They ate their food raw. It was Alligator who first had fire. He kept it hidden in his mouth.

He would go out collecting caterpillars with the Marbled Wood-quail People. In the forest, Alligator would light a fire and cook up his caterpillars. Then he would wrap the caterpillars again in fresh leaves and return to the village. When they exchanged food on return, Alligator passed on the uncooked caterpillars that the others gave him, while keeping the cooked ones for himself.

One day while the adults were out collecting caterpillars, Alligator's and Marbled Wood-quail's sons were playing. Little Marbled Wood-quail was scratching about on the floor and he found a cinder. When his father returned he showed it to him. So they knew that Alligator had fire. They

decided to have a festival to make Alligator laugh. . . . Everyone laughed and Alligator laughed too. His mouth opened right up and he gave a huge guffaw.

'Ha ha ha ha!' he laughed, and as he did so, Tree Creeper snatched the fire and flew off. . . . then Long-tailed Tyrant grabbed it. With the fire in his mouth, he flew right up high into the top of *coussapoa* tree.

'*Mai mai mai pio!*' sang Long-tailed Tyrant. The birds' tails had been burned by the fire. That is how fire got into that tree, which we use for making firesticks.

Frog cursed the animal ancestors who had stolen the fire.

'So keep this fire! You will sleep close to it for warmth but your children will die! You will burn your children in it when they die! You will grieve when this fire makes their eyes burst!' Frog and Alligator threw themselves into the river and remained in the cold.

Most Amazonian Indians have a very open and matter-of-fact approach to sex. Sex is understood as fundamental and integral to life, as perfectly normal while at the same time powerful, and therefore spiritually risky. Because of this element of risk, sex is proscribed to those being initiated into adulthood and as shamans, and to women and their husbands during menstruation. Husband and wife are also proscribed from having sex when their children are very young or ill.

Sex is considered as essentially a private matter, but privacy is viewed differently in Amazonian society. The dark of the communal hut may be considered seclusion enough for married couples, but in general most people prefer the greater privacy of the forests, where illicit liaisons are also consummated. While sex is a subject for jest and mockery, it is not a source of shame or fear. Most sex takes place in the context of marriage, but extra-marital affairs are also common and the subject of much gossip and ribaldry.

Making a living

The diffusion of power in Indian society is an important aspect of the Indians' adaptation to their environment. It means that large villages are unstable and frequently break up into smaller, widely separated communities. This reduces the pressure on the local environment which is crucial to the Indians' livelihoods.

For the Indians rely entirely on the jungle and their gardens for their welfare. It is a vigorous life made easy by their astonishing familiarity with their environment. The poor leached soils of the tropical forest cannot sustain permanent agriculture. Indian agriculture is accordingly undemanding on the soils. Gardens are cleared with axes in old-growth forest and, after being allowed to dry in the sun, the felled timber is burned. Most nutrients are lost in the burn and the rains, but the ashes give a temporary fertility to the soil. Yams, sweet potatoes, bananas, plantains, cocoyams and cassava form the staples and are the main crops among the sixty or so species that the Indians cultivate. Such crops have been selected because they are undemanding and grow easily in the nitrogen-poor soils, providing the Indians with a dependable source of calories. But the nitrogen-poverty of the soils is reflected in the protein content of the crops, which is also very low. Consequently the Indians rely on hunting, fishing and gathering to provide the protein and mineral supplements essential to a balanced diet.

The fact that both kinds of foods are essential to a proper diet is fully recognized by the Yanomami, who have two separate words for hunger: *ohi* – hunger pure and simple, and – *naiki* – hunger for protein. While satisfying *ohi* is just a matter of gardening, satisfying *naiki* is a challenge and an adventure. The Indians are superlative hunters.

The Indians hunt traditionally with longbows, using arrows made from canes grown in their gardens. In some areas blowpipes are the main weapon. All hunting is carried out by men, mostly alone or in pairs. Game is tracked, stalked and shot with great stealth and cunning, the hunter relying on his agility and ability to read the spoor and interpret animal noises to lead him to his prey. Hunters can recognize the calls of virtually all animal species and can mimic their calls to attract them. They can identify the tracks of all the larger game and, by carefully reading the ground, can even tell how long ago animals passed by, at what speed and with what probable goal. Most game consists of larger birds, monkeys and rodents, like agouti and paca. Larger animals like tapir, peccaries (wild pigs) and deer are hunted collectively or with dogs.

Some Indian societies are closely associated with the rivers. Fishing may be important to their lives and the villages are often large and stable, and agriculture well developed. Other communities live in the uplands and in forests between the major rivers. For them making a living is a more mobile affair, with long periods when they abandon their gardens and trek in the forests, setting up temporary shelters well away from their normal hunting grounds.

Apart from hunted game the forest provides the Indians with a wealth of other products: honey, fruits, crustaceans, edible caterpillars and other small animals like frogs, which are collected by hand, often by women. Besides this the forest provides rope, thatch, all building materials, dyes and poisons, which in turn are used for hunting and fishing. The Indians also use the forest as a source for the drugs which they use to penetrate into the realm of the spirits.

Yet the Indians' life is an easy one. To carry out all their chores – hunt, gather, garden, fish, collect firewood, cook and accomplish other domestic tasks – they work little more than forty hours a week. The rest of their time is their leisure, which they devote to raising their children, to gossip and discourse, to ritual and sleeping. It is a way of living with nature that westerners find hard to understand.

As the Amarakaeri of eastern Peru explain:

We Indians were born, work, live and die in the basin of the Madre de Dios river of Peru. It is our land – the only thing we have, with its plants, animals and small farms: an environment we understand and use well.

We are not like those from outside who want to clear everything away, destroying the richness and leaving the forest ruined forever. We respect the forest; we make it produce for us.

Many people ask why we want so much land. They think we do not work all of it. But we work it differently from them, conserving it so that it will continue to produce for our children and our grandchildren. Although some people want to take it from us, they destroy and abandon it, moving on elsewhere. But we cannot do that; we were born in our woodlands. Without them we will die.

In contrast to other parts of the Peruvian jungle, Madre de Dios is still relatively sparsely populated. The woodlands are extensive, the soils poor,



Indians display tremendous skill in deploying their traditional weapons, managing with ease to spear fish using longbows and arrows. They sometimes also paralyse or asphyxiate the fish by putting drugs derived from forest plants in the water.

so we work differently from those in other areas with greater populations, less woodland and more fertile soils. Our systems do not work without large expanses of land.

VICTIMS

When westerners first came to Brazil there were as many as ten million Indians living in Amazonia, more than half of whom were in Brazil. Today in Brazilian Amazonia only some 200,000 of these people remain. Sailing down the Amazon

from the Peruvian highlands, in their half-crazed search for gold, the first Spanish explorers noted that the banks of the Amazon were almost continuously populated. As archaeologists have now revealed, here, along the fish-rich river, lived complex and hierarchical societies, with expressive earthenware pottery, rich fruit groves and tanks of domesticated turtles. Yet today the banks of the Amazon are scarcely inhabited by Indians, as they have been swept away by enslavement and disease.

Brazil took its name from the word *brasile*, which the country's first visitors from the Old World gave to the wood that they felled to produce a dye for the fashionable courtiers of Europe. From the start the traders were reliant on the labour of the Indians to move the great

logs to the coasts. As one observed, 'The only profit that these poor people derive from so much effort might be some miserable shirt or the linings from some clothing of little value. . . . After they have carried the logs to the ships during several journeys, you see their shoulders all bruised and torn by the weight of the wood – which is well known to be heavy and massive. This is hardly surprising, since they are naked and carry these loads so far.'

'King sugar'

As it had begun so it continued. The assault began in earnest in the seventeenth century with the growing demand for labour in the sugar plantations on the Brazilian coast. Slaving expeditions, rowed upriver by Indian slaves, fell on the small communities to take their able-bodied members down to the coast. The assaults were frequently assisted by missionaries, who were engaged in a process of forcing Indians to abandon their forest villages and dwell in centralized *reducciones* under close mission control.

By 1650, the Vice General of the Portuguese colony of Maranhão claimed that in the first decades since their arrival in the area the Portuguese had killed almost two million Indians, destroyed 'in their violent labour, exhausting discoveries, and unjust wars'. By the turn of the century the lower rivers were almost completely depopulated and it was necessary to go two months upriver, as far as the lands of the Omagua Indians near the present day Colombian border, to find any slaves. Although the sugar mills were eventually supplied with labour from Africa, slaving continued in Amazonia until the mid-nineteenth century. It boomed anew during the rubber era, when the discovery of the process of vulcanizing rubber turned the soft latex derived from the region's wild rubber trees into a valuable commodity, for which the industrial market in the north had an unquenchable demand.



Early explorers were overwhelmed by the richness and profusion of the rainforest, as can be seen from engravings such as this illustration to von Spix and Martius's *Travels in Brazil in the years 1817–24*.

For a time, the Amazon experienced unprecedented affluence – for a few. Dependent on the local Indians as a work force to tap the latex from the widely dispersed trees in the forests, the rubber traders resorted to every form of trickery and violence to ensure a supply of the precious fluid. Although actual slavery was well documented during the era, the more usual practice entailed a system of debt-peonage, still common in parts of Amazonia, whereby the Indian became trapped by his debts into working for a single *patrão*, who made his living, often a good one, from his position as entrepreneur.

A new El Dorado

The systematic exploitation of the Amazon region by outside interests continues today with all the power of modern technology. In the mid-1960s Brazil's military government opened up the country to foreign investment by offering tempting fiscal incentives to overseas capital. By 1966 the government itself, emboldened by the initial success of its much-vaunted 'Economic Miracle', began a massive investment in the region under the title of 'Operation Amazon', which in turn developed into the 'National Integration Plan' of the 1970s.

Vast road networks were slashed across the face of the forest, making the area accessible to big business and opening the lands to an invasion of ranchers, land speculators and impoverished settlers, while bringing disease and death to the region's remaining Indians. Entire tribes were blasted into extinction by the shock of contact, with single epidemics carrying off up to 30% of the population. It is estimated that one tribe a year has been lost in Brazil since the turn of the century. Settlers, fleeing landlessness and poverty, have flooded up these roads in their thousands, urged on by government slogans and offers of free land. Amazonia, a 'land without men for men without land', has become a great dumping ground for 'surplus people'.

The government has hailed the resettlement as a land reform. But land reform is just what it is not. In Brazil 70% of the rural population lacks land title, while 0.7% of farms occupy 43% of the land area. It is this concentration of land in the hands of the few, coupled with the mechanized farming of non-forested lands to produce cash crops for export, that has created land hunger. Rather than face the politically unsavoury task of redistributing non-forest lands, the government has opted for colonizing the rainforests.

The results have been ecological devastation on an enormous scale. In the state of Rondônia, where this process has been accelerated by World Bank funding, the 1960 population of 10,000 people, mainly Indians, boomed to over 1 million by 1985. Forest loss accelerated correspondingly, from 1,200 square kilometres in 1975 to over 16,000 by 1985. According to one estimate an area of rainforest the size of Great Britain would have been destroyed by 1990. Tragically, only 7% of the newly established settlements have proved successful.

The expectation that fertile soils underlie the lush forests has proved ill-founded. Quite unlike temperate ecosystems, where the soil is a major store of fertility, in tropical forests most plant nutrients are locked up in the living system. The nutrients are recycled from fallen bough and leaf direct to root and stem. Rapid decomposition in the hot, wet conditions quickly breaks down the fallen debris, and a web of fungal hyphae draws the released nutrients straight into the



The Indians are superlative hunters, yet never kill more than they need. Whether as hunters, gatherers or agriculturalists, they demonstrate an understanding of their environment which allows them to exploit it without damaging it.



Amazed by the Indians' nakedness and their lack of civilization, westerners have always tended to impose their own stereotypes on them, viewing them as noble savages, untamed cannibals, or lost souls ripe for conversion.

shallow mat of roots. Remove the trees and the nutrients store is removed too, exposing a weak and vulnerable soil to the combined forces of torrential rain and tropical sun. The results are disappointing for the farmer, and disastrous for the soils. Deprived of its protective cover, the land becomes waste – huge expanses of coarse scrub, unusable grassland and lateritic hardpan.

Despite these disappointments, Amazonia remains for many an El Dorado concealing fabulous wealth – a vast reserve of natural resources to be exploited to promote Brazil's dizzy process of industrialization and pay off the country's US\$120 billion debt. Already over two-thirds of Brazil's booming population live in the coastal cities, most in conditions of appalling squalor and deprivation – only forty years ago the figure was less than a quarter. The 'development' of Brazil's industrial base is now predicated on using Amazonia's natural wealth to secure the country's place in the international market.

In eastern Amazonia a government programme of regional development, costing some US\$62 billion, is forging ahead, the aim being to turn an area the size of Britain and France combined into a giant agro-industrial park – the so-called Greater Carajas Programme. Iron ore from one of the world's largest mines, part-funded by the World Bank and the European community, trundles east down a 500-mile-long railway to a specially created port near the mouth of the Amazon. There the ore is exported to Europe at concessionary rates, negotiated when the loans were agreed to, 'to ensure the competitiveness of the European Steel Industry'.

Cheap steel has its price. The loans from the European Community and World Bank have also ensured the destruction of the region's Indians and forests. The fiscal incentives and tax holidays that are part of the Carajas development's economic logic have stimulated a number of Brazilian companies to set up pig-iron smelters all along the railway. With the cheap iron ore and transport provided by the mine, the smelters will make an easy untaxable profit for ten years, fuelled by charcoal cut from the local forests. According to the Forest Institute of Rio de Janeiro University, within seven years the smelters will consume 10% of Brazil's Amazonian forests.

Images of nature

The Indians are not victims solely of economic forces over which they have no control. They are also subject to the stereotypes and images imposed from outside. For if on the one hand westerners have appeared merciless in their exploitation of the Indians and their lands, they have also been amazed on the other hand by their nakedness and the absence of what they consider the essentials of civilization – as the French missionaries said, '*sans dieu, sans loi, sans roi*'. They have thus invested the Indians with their fantasies. The Indians have become a canvas on which westerners work out their notions of human nature – cannibals and devil-worshippers to some, nature's innocents and noble savages to others.

The process started with the first contact between the two worlds. As Christopher Columbus wrote to his king on first seeing Indians:

They are very well built with fine bodies and handsome faces. Their hair is coarse almost like that of a horse's tail. . . . They are the colour of Canary Islanders (neither white nor black). . . . They love their neighbours as

themselves and their way of speaking is the sweetest in the world, always gentle and smiling. . . . They are so affectionate and have so little greed and are in all ways so amenable . . . that there is in my opinion no better people and no better land in all the world.

For many, however, the Indians' nakedness and lack of civilization was at once an affront and challenge. Here were lost souls, peoples who had never heard of Christ, who had to be redeemed both with the Christian message and the learning of a superior civilization. As a Capuchin missionary wrote earlier this century:

The missionary knows how to accomplish at the same time the duties imposed on him as a priest, the legacy of Christ among the unbelievers, and as a colonist, the legacy of Government among savages. These duties mutually aid and complement each other, for to christianise without colonising or colonise without christianising is to plough in the sand or build castles in the air.

Many missionaries today have rejected this approach, and, in the words of the Jesuit Barrolomeu Melia realize that:

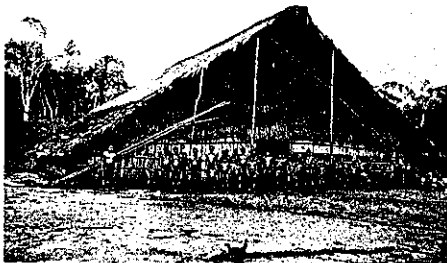
all they have done to help the Indian will have no other effect than to lay the ground for an invasion by neo-colonial peoples who will try to get rid of the Indians, either by eliminating them or by reducing them to marginal status. The map of the Americas is dotted with cities founded as missions in native territories where today the Indian is a stranger and a beggar.

With the help of a new theology of liberation many missionaries have now become some of the most effective champions of Indian rights. Yet fundamentalistic sects who see themselves as 'Commandos for Christ' continue to pursue isolated tribes who flee contact with the outside world, describing their goal as 'reaching the lost until we have reached the last'. Such missionaries genuinely believe that the Indians are doomed to perdition, that shamanism is devil worship, and that at death the Indians will be cast into eternal fires. They can be found in all corners of Amazonia today, relentlessly drilling Indians to reject Satan and choose eternal life.

Such negative images tie in well with those others who see the Indians as 'obstacles to progress', to be pushed aside to make way for development. Yet another stereotype, more subtly pernicious, has also proved a great stumbling block for the Indians. This is the image which sees the Indians as already perfect beings, innocent and childlike in the ways of the outside world, who must be preserved uncontaminated and protected from all contact. For such people, the Indians' desire for western goods – for fishhooks and machetes, clothes and transistor radios – is a sign of their fall from grace.

FIGHTING FOR A FUTURE

In fact, however, the Indians have never been passive in the face of change. They have resisted both the invasion of their lands and the violation of their rights, and have sought to accommodate themselves to the culture of the newcomers. In Brazil, the Indians were until 1988 denied the rights of full citizenship. They were



The *maloca*, or communal hut, is the focus of the Indians' life. Built with materials from the jungle, *malocas* are abandoned every few years, when the Indians move to another part of their lands and allow the jungle to reclaim their former dwelling.

considered legal minors, 'relatively incapable before the law'. As they were wards of the state, their own organizations were not recognized and the government negotiated on their behalf. Since this has effectively meant that they have been denied the legal and political means to redress their grievances, many Indians have continued to use arms to defend themselves.

A typical case concerns the northern Kayapo (Txukarramae) Indians of the Xingu river, whom the government wanted to relocate in the 1970s to an 'Indian Park' south of their lands. The Indians resisted the move and instead sought to defend their own land against encroaching cattle ranchers. In an Amazonian version of the wild west, the Txukarramae repeatedly attacked the ranches, killing over thirteen cowhands over a fifteen-year period and successfully preventing the takeover of their territory. Their leader during this period learned much of the western world, becoming the subject of a number of films. The lessons he learned of how to use the media to manipulate public opinion were to serve him well.

Frustrated by the continuing failure of the government Indian agency to provide them with legal protection, in March 1984 the Indians decided on a course of direct confrontation with the government. Taking care to make the media aware of what was going on, they took hostage the non-Indian director of the Xingu Indian 'Park' along with five other members of the government's National Indian Foundation. The Indians refused to release their hostages until their legal rights were properly recognized.

Tension mounted to fever pitch as the military flooded the area with soldiers, while journalists and film crews converged for a replay of 'Wounded Knee'. The headlines warned of an impending act of 'genocide', and in the full glare of publicity the government was forced to give way: the Indians got their land.

Four years later, the same Indians raised the stakes, directly confronting plans to build a huge pair of dams that would have flooded them off their lands. The government plans were in fact nationwide, and included the building of 136 dams, 60 of which would flood Indian lands. When the plans were leaked to the public, it was learned that the Brazilian government was attempting to secure World Bank financing for this programme. The news provoked an international outcry from concerned human rights and environmental organizations such as Survival International and the Environment Defense Fund.

Press attention focused on the campaign to halt these loans after two Indians travelled to Washington to urge the World Bank not to finance the flooding of their lands. On their return to Brazil they found themselves charged under Brazil's 'law of foreigners' with 'denigrating the image of Brazil abroad'. In October 1988, the trial of one of the Kayapo, Kube'i, caused a national uproar when he arrived at the court house in traditional dress with 400 other Indians. The Kayapo were prevented from entering the court by the military police, while the judge refused to allow Kube'i into the courtroom until the Kayapo leader 'dressed in shirt and pants', for he considered the leader's attire 'a sign of disrespect' to the court. The judge did, however, uphold a decision to submit the two Kayapo leaders to psychological, anthropological and psychiatric tests 'to determine their level of acculturation and whether they were aware that they were committing a crime against Brazil'.

In defiance of this legislative farce, the other Kayapo leader, Bepkororoti Paiakan, travelled round Europe and Canada, visiting bankers and ministers of overseas development to put his case and to invite them to a meeting in February 1989 to listen to the Amazon people's voice. The meeting, which took place in the town of Altamira in the last week of February, secured global attention.

Hundreds of Indians representing some twenty different Amazonian Indian peoples assembled to demand the halting of dam projects that flood their lands. They demanded the right to be consulted about plans that will affect their futures and were joined by international environmental organizations that called for an end to the global financing of unsustainable development in Amazonia.

A quiet revolution

These spectacular methods of direct confrontation have attracted most international attention to the Indians' struggle. The Indians have purposefully exploited the sensationalism of the press and cannily played on western images of the Indians as plumed and naked defenders of nature. Yet over the last twenty years Amazonia has experienced a quieter but no less formidable development of Indian power.

The experiment can be traced back to Ecuador in the 1960s, where Shuar Indians faced with the gradual break-up of their lands on the agricultural frontier began to organize to confront the invasion. The Indians created a 'Federation of Shuar Centres' and embarked on a vigorous programme to gain land security and promote community development. Within twenty years land title had been gained for the majority of Shuar communities; they established their own radio station broadcasting in their own language and developed bilingual and bicultural education programmes. Primary health care programmes administered by the Indians were developed with state assistance.

The Shuar experience has been repeated with numerous variations all over Amazonia. Clusters of communities along the same river valleys have come together to form local cultural associations. Regionally they have grouped their new community-based organizations into federations, and national confederations. The majority of Amazonian Indian communities are now linked to these kinds of institutions.

Through their national-level confederation, they have even allied themselves internationally, so that today Amazonian Indians from Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia are internationally coordinated through their own secretariat. Indians regularly travel to the United Nations and the World Bank to negotiate for a recognition of their rights. They are involved in discussion with UN agencies on plans to halt tropical deforestation. Some of these institutions are now so well organized and respected that western governments are directly financing their work from their overseas development budgets.

Green alliances

The tragedy of Amazonia is that ever since 1500 it has been denied the chance of developing according to its own logic. Instead it has been subjected to forces from outside the forest, even outside the continent, controlled by people who know almost nothing about the region and care even less for the area's inhabitants. The

Indians have a different vision of the future. They look to a development based on the community, secure on its own lands. There, they believe, the ancient knowledge that they have drawn out of the forest over centuries can create a future based on a respect for human needs and nature's rhythm.

By westerners' standards, used as we are to permanent agriculture on the rich and stable soils of temperate climates, the Indians' extensive use of land appears wasteful, even profligate. But, as successive students of the region have pointed out, there are no 'western standards' for the successful occupation of Amazonia. All modern attempts to develop the Amazon have proved to be economic failures, ignorant of the weakness of the soils (to which the Indians' economies are so skilfully attuned), and based on political systems that have concentrated wealth outside the region rather than sharing it among those who have worked the land.

The Indian movement is now entering a crucial second phase. The Indian's successful and continued resistance to outside planning has proved the value of their newly achieved unity, and they are now aware that they need to go further, to align their struggle with other movements and create the basis for a genuine alternative. Inside the region they have found unexpected allies in the rubber tappers. After a century of enmity, Indians and tappers in Brazil have united in an Alliance of Forest Peoples to confront those who would fell the forests. While the

Indians have fought successfully for a new place in the Brazilian constitution, which now gives them the status of full citizenship and provides stronger guarantees to their lands, the rubber tappers have called for the creation of 'extractive reserves'. Some of these have now been created. Within them, freed from the debt-slavery they have endured for so long, the tappers aim to develop a new future based on the collection of forest products by rural cooperatives.

Outside the region, the Indians have sought links with the non-governmental movements of the north. Human rights organizations in Europe and the United States have been effectively supporting the Indian cause since the 1970s. The Indians' novel organizations also received critical financial support from voluntary development agencies right through the 1980s. Now, in the 1990s, the Indians are strengthening their alliance with the western environmental movement. With the environmentalists' support they hope to project their vision of what 'development' really means for them. As the Indians note:

Development can only occur when the people it affects participate in the design of proposed policies, and the model which is implemented thereby corresponds to the local peoples' aspirations. Development can be guaranteed only when the foundations are laid for the sustained wellbeing of the region; only continued poverty can be guaranteed when the policies lead to the pillage and destruction of local resources by those coming from outside. The indigenous people of the Amazon have always lived there: the Amazon is our home. We know its secrets well, both what it can offer us and what its limits are. For us, there can be no life if our forests are destroyed. We want to continue living in our homelands.

Opposite A Kampa girl wearing the traditional *kushma*.

Pages 32-3 Kampa children dwarfed by the giant buttresses of a felled rainforest tree.



A *maloca* in its clearing. Indians clear small areas of the forest for their dwellings and 'gardens', but always move on before the land is exhausted.

THE KAMPA

The Kampa are one of the great Arawak-speaking nations of the Amazon, whose members were once scattered from Florida and the islands of the Caribbean in the north to the lowlands of Bolivia in the south.

Some archaeologists believe that the centre for the Arawak peoples' dispersal lay in the Amazon floodplain, where the rich alluvial soils established from thousands of years of erosion in the Andes provided a fertile base on which their numbers built up. Powerful migrations of Arawak peoples, it is thought, swept up the major Amazon tributaries, south to the Chaco, north to the watershed of the Orinoco and so down into the Caribbean basin and west to the Amazon's very headwaters. Their progress is marked today by the appliqué pottery found in the sites of their once-populous settlements.

It is here, near the sources of the Amazon, that the Kampa live today. Numbering about 45,000 in all, they inhabit some 12,000 square miles (about 30,000 square kilometres) of mainly upland forests and savannahs in the foothills of the Andes. Most of the Kampa in fact live in Peru, the majority of them in the so-called *ceja de la selva* – 'the eyebrow of the jungle' – where steep Andean streams and rivers sweep down to the lower-lying and hotter Amazonian forests below. Being so close to the Andes, the Kampa have been strongly influenced by the beliefs and ways of their highland Indian neighbours. Most obviously they have adopted the *kushma*, a cotton garment woven on a backstrap loom, which distinguishes them from other Amazonian peoples, most of whom never saw the need for clothing before contact with whites. Kampa is not the name by which these people refer to themselves, but was apparently applied to them by Indian neighbours who thought them 'disshveelled'. In Peru they call themselves 'Ashaninca' and consider the term 'Kampa' to be impolite. In Brazil, however, where some 300 of them live along the Amonia river on the Peruvian border, the name Kampa continues to be used.



An Indian boy among Inca ruins in Pampaconas, Peru, photographed in 1911. Most of the Kampa still live in Peru, where they have been strongly influenced by their highland Indian neighbours.

Despite their complex religious beliefs which show such strong Andean influences, the Kampa's economy, like that of most Amazonian peoples, is based on shifting cultivation with cassava as the staple crop. Cassava is planted from cuttings of the stems thrust into the weak, acidic soils in clumps of two or three together. Except for weeding, the crop demands no further attention until harvest, the starchy tubers becoming large enough to unearth after between ten months and a year. Since the tubers contain cyanide-bearing compounds, the risk of pests is also minimal, although ants and wild pigs take their share, but the crop does demand very careful processing to make it edible. After having their tough, very poisonous and inedible skins peeled off, the tubers must be macerated and pulverized, either by hand on graters or by allowing them to soak first and then mashing them with poles. The mash must then be pressed to squeeze out as much of the cyanide as possible. The juice, which often contains a very fine starch, is only edible if boiled for a very long time to vaporize the poison. The mash, on the other hand, must be sifted to separate out the largest fibres, and the coarse flour which remains must be cooked over a high heat to drive off the remaining

cyanide. Toasted in great vessels while stirred with a paddle, the flour yields manioc, which can keep, despite the humidity of the Amazon, for many months. Baked on flat griddles, now made mainly of iron, the flour yields a coarse unleavened cake that is the daily bread over most of Amazonia. Just how a poisonous root which requires complex processing to be edible came to be the staple crop for half a continent remains one of the Amazon's mysteries.

The Kampa first appear in history in 1635, when Franciscan missionaries pushed east of the Andes into the Amazon headwaters in search of further fields for conversion. But after less than ninety years and serious epidemics the Kampa had had enough. They rose up against the Spanish, burning the missions and killing the priests. Rubber provided the next reason for intrusions on to their lands. Not only were the lowland forests of western Amazonia particularly rich in the wild rubber trees, but the valleys inhabited by the Kampa provided a natural export route across the high Andes and down to the Pacific. Thus, while many of the lower-living Kampa were subjected to the exploitation and violence associated with rubber extraction, those in the hills fought a one-sided battle against the Peruvian armed forces to prevent the takeover of their lands. Since that time the Kampa have been obliged to share their lands with the whites. The violence escalated for a short but terrible period at the end of the rubber boom, in about 1912, when the price of rubber fell dramatically as the market was flooded with rubber grown on plantations in the Far East. Slaving intensified, causing terrible suffering to those subjected to the raids. As one chronicler recorded:

To realise these slave-drives, the rubber gatherers use big canoes . . . full of savages, all well-armed with modern shotguns and with big supplies for the expedition, and under the orders of some chief already half-civilized, in other words corrupt and bad, without a soul and destitute of any humanitarian feeling . . . when night extends its dark and tenebrous coat and when the poor savages are given to their sweet dreams ignorant of their fate, the [raiders] approach, encircling from all sides the hut or huts, and at a signal fall on their poor victims full of fright and horror and cut the breathing in their throats and the blood in the veins. The terrifying picture that develops in the middle of obscurity and confusion is impossible for the pen to describe. Cries of indignation, expressed as if by wild animals, pleadings, lamentations, tears. Once this terrifying massacre is finished, the assailants take the children and women by force, they rape the latter, tie them up like beasts and lead them precipitously to the canoes while hitting them all the while. And then they sell these poor human captives as if they were animals.

The 300 Kampa of Brazil are one isolated group who survived this period of desolation. Their lands were finally demarcated by the Brazilian government's Indian agency in 1985. During the 1960s and 1970s, the Kampa maintained their links with the Brazilian economy by selling mahogany and cedar from their forests to timber merchants in the local towns and wage labouring in Cruzeiro do Sul. However, with the help of pro-Indian activists, they are now engaged in a successful enterprise to revive their communities' economies by selling other forest products to the regional centres. Despite centuries of exploitation and interference the Kampa have held on to their religion, identity, customs and pride.

THE MARUBO

The valley of the Javari river, which flows north along the Brazilian border with Peru to join the Amazon at the town of Benjamin Constant, remains one of the most remote and unfrequented areas of the Amazon basin. Isolated groups of Indians, who spurn contact with the outside world, still live in the dense lowland forests along the banks of the narrow winding rivers that cross the region. Some of these groups remain completely uncontacted, and thus unidentified, by outsiders.

The Marubo, who today number only some 600 people, live on the southern edge of this region, spread out in twenty small communities in the upper courses of rivers which drain north down to the Javari and the Amazon. Traditionally they live in large, cone-shaped communal dwellings, usually set near the summit of one of the many low hills that undulate across the area.

Like most Amazonian groups, the Marubo do not have chiefs vested with much authority over others, but the communities do coalesce around the personality of leaders who strengthen their positions by securing loyalties through ties of marriage and trade. It is a complex social system that they have to manipulate to achieve this elusive power.

The Marubo all trace their origins back to nine mythological heroes, each of whom gave his name to the clans of descendants who came after him. Marriages are arranged only between different clans, which in turn are each divided into two parts. For according to the Marubo system, parents and children are defined in different sections of society, a woman's children being in the same section as her parents, just as she is in the same section as her grandchildren. A Marubo child thus grows up with a strong sense of belonging in the society, his identity being not only in the hearth group of his immediate parents, but also in his clan and section.

During collective rituals, the Marubo recount lengthy myths which recall the past, establishing the ancestry of the clans and their separate identities. The myths are sung out, line by line, by an older member of the community and repeated in chorus by all the others gathered there. As among the Yanomami Indians, a major occasion for these gatherings of neighbouring villages is to consume the ground-up ashes of the bones of previously cremated dead relatives. The Marubo are also well known for their shamans and for their complex medicinal lore, which involves the use of a very wide variety of forest plants, herbs, resins, barks and roots.

Although the Marubo do not appear identifiably in the historical records until the turn of this century, it is unlikely that they avoided all contact with white civilization until then. Jesuit missions, sent downriver from the headwaters of the Amazon by the Spanish in Peru, were established near to the Javari valley in the mid-seventeenth century, while Carmelite missions, associated with slave raids, penetrated upriver from the mouth of the Amazon shortly after, partly with the aim of securing as much as possible of the Amazon basin for the Portuguese crown.

It seems probable that the Marubo were once among a number of people who were lumped together variously as Mayoruna or Maxoruna by explorers of the

Pages 112-113 Early morning mist shrouds the village after a heavy night's rain. The Marubo traditionally live in large, cone-shaped communal dwellings.

Pages 114-115 Wooden houses raised on stilts protect their inhabitants from unwelcome visitors such as snakes, spiders, burrowing fleas and biting flies.

period. Yet, once the search for slaves abated, there was little to attract whites into the area. Occasional expeditions to collect sarsaparilla, Brazil nuts and other exotic forest products limited contacts between the Indians and outsiders to the more accessible reaches of the lower rivers. Groups like the Marubo, isolated in the headwaters above the rapids, were apparently little affected.

However, the rubber boom of the late nineteenth century brought the area firmly into the Brazilian economy, and the profit to be gained from the precious latex overcame such physical obstacles. Rubber barons operating off the Amazon established a network of trails, workshops and trading posts all across the Amazon headwaters, and the Javari area was not excluded. All the Indian communities of the area suffered severely during this period. Many Marubo became directly involved in the rubber trade, locked into debt by the traders. The trade had the effect of breaking up the traditional communities. Every family lived alone to collect each day the latex bled from the trees. Economic ties between the Indian tappers and the traders, to whom they lived in debt, took precedence over the social and religious ties of the traditional community. Yet as the rubber economy declined these binding obligations weakened, until by 1938 contact was finally broken off when the trade collapsed.

The depredations of the rubber era had reduced the Marubo to near extinction, but under an inspiring leader, whose memory is today revered by the Marubo, the Indians reorganized. They re-established themselves in several large settlements and their numbers began to rise again. By the early 1960s there were some 300 individuals and since then their numbers have increased rapidly, reaching 400 by the mid-1970s and rising to just over 600 today.

Sustained contact with the world of the whites was re-established by fundamentalist missionaries in the early 1960s, who now maintain a mission among the Marubo serviced by air from Eirunepe, on the Jurua river to the south. In the early 1970s the whole Marubo area was temporarily overrun by oil prospectors from the Brazilian state oil company and in the mid-1970s, as part of a programme to 'integrate' and 'develop' Amazonia, plans were laid to concentrate and resettle the Marubo, along with other Indian groups from the region, into a small area. The programme, which luckily lapsed before being effectively applied, was justified 'in order to resolve the land problem', the aim being to move the Indians off the greater part of their territory before granting them land rights.

The future of the Marubo, along with other groups of the Javari, depends above all on whether they gain security on their lands. Since the early 1980s it has been proposed that these lands, with those of the numerous other Indian groups of the Javari valley, should be encompassed in a single 'Indian Park'. However, successive moves to establish this area in law by genuinely concerned local officials of the government Indian agency, urged on by church and pro-Indian activists, have been frustrated at higher levels of government. The main problems that the Indians now face in gaining security on their lands are strategic. Oil and gas finds, on the Urucu river east of the area in Brazil and west of the area in Peru, have rekindled industry's hopes of finding oil in the area. At the same time the government still has plans to build a major highway from the Amazon river south into Acre, pushing right through the area of the proposed 'Indian Park'.



Indians on the Rio Javari, an illustration from the French explorer Francis de Castelnau's account of his expedition to South America in 1852. The Javari river valley remains one of the most remote and unfrequented areas of the Amazon basin.

THE YANOMAMI

The Yanomami are one of the last great Indian nations of Amazonia to remain relatively isolated from the outside world. Numbering some 21,000 in all, they inhabit the remote southern slopes of the Guiana highlands on the border between Brazil and Venezuela. It is an area of wild and majestic scenery.

In places high sandstone mesas thrust clear of the rolling hills to reveal their weathered crowns. The hills themselves, which rise to over a 1000 metres on the watersheds, are clothed in a dense cover of lush, cool rainforest. In this steep country, dissected by small streams and plunging rivers, the Indians travel mainly on foot along a network of scarcely visible paths that link the widely scattered communities.

Since the middle of the last century the Yanomami have experienced a major demographic expansion, moving out from the hills on the watershed between the headwaters of the Orinoco and the Amazon's northern tributaries. They now live in about 360 villages spread out over a huge area of over 75,000 square miles (about 190,000 square kilometres) – an area the size of Nebraska. This expansion has brought them down near to the major rivers, where some Yanomami have adopted cassava as a staple and learned to make canoes.

The Yanomami have long been famous as a warrior people. They are notable for using remarkably long bows and arrows, and their reputation among the neighbouring tribes for bravery is matched only by the respect accorded their shamans. The Yanomami have evoked strong reactions from all who have lived with them.

Rapids and major waterfalls on all the rivers draining the Yanomami's homeland kept them in almost complete isolation from the outside world until the 1950s. The isolation was shattered with the arrival of light aircraft which allowed missionaries to set up stations throughout their territory, and since then the tempo of change has escalated inexorably.

In the 1960s Brazilian diamond prospectors began pushing through the Yanomami's eastern territories, bringing in venereal diseases, tuberculosis and racist exploitation. Repeated contacts with the outside world brought in shattering new epidemics. Outbreaks of measles swept away up to 20% of the Yanomami in some villages and the Yanomami's numbers started to decline.

In 1973, the assault on the Yanomami homeland intensified with the building of the BR-210 Perimetral Highway across the lowland forests in the south of their territory. Despite protests by concerned anthropologists and priests, Brazil's military government thrust the road through the Indians' lands without taking any measures to protect them from the consequences. Repeated epidemics reduced the population of some villages by up to 90%. The survivors adopted a pathetic existence of roadside nomadism, begging for food and goods from passing vehicles. Inevitably, venereal diseases spread to the demoralized Indians during these lay-by encounters.

The radar mapping of Amazonia also revealed the likelihood of rich mineral deposits in the Yanomami's heartland, exciting the avarice of would-be miners. In the mid-1970s a cassiterite find brought some 3000 miners into the very centre



The Yanomami remained almost completely isolated from the outside world until the 1950s. Similarities in face and body decoration, among other things, indicate however that there have for a long time been contacts between different Indian peoples. This Bororo man, photographed earlier this century, wears a string belt and feather decorations in his ears that are very similar to those worn by the Yanomami.

of the Yanomami area. More epidemics ensued, and conflicts, caused by miners taking Yanomami women and food, led to several deaths.

The government forced the miners to withdraw and, under pressure from concerned academics and the Catholic church, set about securing land for the Indians. However, the government's solution, to create twenty-one small and isolated reserves allowing non-Indian settlement and mining in the intervening areas, caused an international outcry.

While the Brazilian government vacillated, pressure from the miners escalated. Illegal prospectors moving through the Yanomami area found stream beds rich in alluvial gold. Numbers of illegal miners in the Yanomami area gradually increased, until by the late 1980s there were some 40,000 miners and camp-followers on the Indians' land. Deaths from epidemics soared, leading to the loss of about a sixth of the Brazilian Yanomami's total numbers. Mercury spills from the mines polluted the rivers and poisoned fish and drinking water. Conflict between Indians and miners led to numerous killings and revenge deaths. Miners took to shooting Indians indiscriminately, even to the point of blasting hiding Yanomami children out of the trees.

Intense international campaigns in support of Yanomami demands to remove the miners and secure their territory as a single continuous 'Indian Park' have eventually begun to have an effect. In 1989 a Yanomami leader, Davi Kobenawa, was presented the Global 500 award by the United Nations for his defence of his peoples' lands and their environment. Yet the mining invasion was then at its very height. In receiving his award, Davi said:

I am not against gold prospectors. I am against gold prospecting, because it makes holes and ruins the river and the river channels. The Yanomami do not do that, cut the ground, cut the trees, burn the forest. We are not enemies of nature because we live out there in the jungle. It takes care of our health. Omao, our ancestral hero, gave us the land to live on, not to sell. Whites sell and go to another place. Indians do not do that. . . . Now the fish are suffering, the rivers are being destroyed. Even the Whites are suffering up there. Indian and White, poor White and rich White. Because the sickness is not afraid, it kills anybody – the rich, the brave, the big ones. My land is the last land to be invaded, it is the last invasion. After the Indian suffers, the White will suffer too. And then the war will come among you . . .

In early 1991, the Brazilian President made a renewed promise to secure the Yanomami's land as a single large area. If this promise is made effective the Yanomami may be set on a road to recovery. Those on the other side of the border, whose lands have not suffered an invasion on the same scale, have also begun to ask for title to their land and there are signs that the Venezuelan government may accede to their demand. The Indians are organizing into cooperatives producing honey and vegetables for the local markets. Although there is no place yet for optimism, there are glimmers of hope that the Yanomami are through the worst. Even so, international support for their struggle will be crucial for a long while yet.

Pages 160-3 Children of the forest. Growing up in the security of the *maloca*, where they play together in complete freedom and are affectionately indulged by the adults, Yanomami children display enormous confidence and spirit.

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