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NATIVE PEOPLES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Six Case Studies from Latin America

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Editor

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INTRODUCTION

Theodore Macdonald, Jr.

In February 1983 the Latin American Studies Association asked Cultural Survival to organize a symposium for that year's annual meeting. The theme was to be our choice. At that time the treatment of Indians by national governments and others throughout Latin America was at best insensitive, and notably tragic in Guatemala, Peru and Nicaragua. Nevertheless, Cultural Survival decided not to document or analyse such situations. This work is, of course, essential but to focus exclusively on abuses indirectly perpetuates the problem by viewing Indians as somehow passive. While such an attitude elicits national and international support, it does not reveal Indians as creative actors. Meanwhile Indian organizations and activism in general are becoming increasingly widespread in the Americas. As these groups assume greater responsibility for their lives and livelihoods, the likelihood of the future survival of their people increases. Cultural Survival tries to support field projects which promote or illustrate such adaptations. Consequently, we organized a symposium to review several projects directed toward one form of adaptation—economic self-determination. This is understood as an effort to obtain not only agricultural self-sufficiency but a broad, secure economic base which permits a degree of political and cultural autonomy as well. Several such projects are underway in various parts of Central and South America.

A symposium on economic self-determination would serve both direct and indirect ends. First, and obviously, the papers would document Indian initiatives in current Latin American economic development, something which had not yet been done. Second, and perhaps more important, the Mexico City meetings provided a unique opportunity to bring together individuals with years of accumulated experience but who rarely had either the time or the opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences with those undertaking similar work. Finally, the meetings permitted a preliminary review of several projects or related activities which Cultural Survival supported either directly or indirectly.

The symposium took advantage of each of the three opportunities. But to do so within the structure of a large international meeting, where time is strictly limited and never adequate, would have been impossible. Consequently, Dr. Roberto Cardoso de Oliveira of the Universidade de Brasilia, and Dr. Rudolfo Stavenhagen of the Colegio de Mexico generously gave time and energy to organize an additional, more lengthy meeting at the Colegio de Mexico. The participants were thus able to continue their discussions well beyond the normal limits of professional meetings.

Cultural Survival Projects—A General Overview

Cultural Survival serves as an advocate of the rights of ethnic minorities, but the organization does not focus exclusively on highly visible or well publicized violations of a specific group's human rights. To do so could neglect or obscure the fact that gross human rights violations usually are neither spontaneous nor isolated incidents. They are often the unfortunate

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terminus of a process which, in one form or another, affects most indigenous people in Latin America. This process is usually the expansion of the national society--the form and functioning of which is usually determined by a dominant, non-Indian elite--into the territory and social life of those who had been relatively isolated from such forces before. In such cases Indians usually lose their land and control over resource exploitation. They thus become progressively marginalized, socially and politically, and deprived economically. But as this process evolves groups pass through critical junctures, where choices and opportunities for local political and economic development could prevent them from falling into situations where they become victims of extreme violations. Cultural Survival tries to assist groups at critical phases in their relations with national societies.

Unfortunately many Indian groups are not allowed to determine the course of their own development. Many are objects of programs designed by outsiders--if they reject such impositions or refuse to participate in flawed programs, they are characterized as backward or shiftless. Others are simply thrust into radically new social and economic environments where they lack the appropriate educational, technical or political skills to survive as groups; they fall victim to permanent poverty, political marginality and cultural alienation. An alternative path is for Indians to take control over the direction and pace of change as it affects their lives. With this in mind, Cultural Survival supports projects which assist local groups as they design and implement strategies to confront their changing circumstances.

Projects are selected to demonstrate that Indian groups often become victims of changes because they are **excluded** from decision making, not because they are **incapable** of or **unwilling** to change. Change and cultural survival are not incompatible. Culture is a set of social mechanisms which permit a group, as a group, to maintain a sense of itself, to comprehend its situation, and to adapt to changing circumstances. This does not require the preservation of some romantic status quo, but rather the maintenance of those mechanisms which permit a group to adapt successfully to change. Such ideas are consistent with the aspirations and demands of Indians throughout Latin America who want neither their land nor themselves "frozen" from development. Most want some control and influence over the direction of change and the nature of its beneficiaries. When such goals are realized, Indians insist, they will become active elements of economically and socially plural societies.

Two general criteria guide project selection: 1) a project must benefit Indians as groups and not simply assist a single community or individual. Research and general field observations indicate that a healthy and secure adaptation to a national society follows only if a sense of community is maintained; and 2) a project must focus on a representative situation or problem, and thereby serve as an example for others. Specifically, Cultural Survival gives priority to three types of projects in Latin America--land demarcation and titling, development and strengthening of Indian organizations, and Indian economic initiatives and resource management.

The LASA Symposium

For the LASA symposium, projects dedicated to economic self-determination seemed to be an excellent theme; the case studies would provide opportunities for generalization and thus permit the subsequent development of guidelines for those concerned with similar work. So, Cultural Survival selected participants

who had worked extensively with particular Indian groups undergoing rapid changes in their economic lives, and who had developed unique responses. The groups--from Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, and Peru--had been living in relative isolation until major changes, each different, affected their lives. The cases thus offered opportunities to consider adaptation as well as economic initiatives.

However, none of the papers eventually prepared for the meetings, and subsequently published here, considered data and themes which related solely to economic initiatives. Nevertheless, the issues and themes discussed were surprisingly uniform. To a greater or lesser extent each paper focused on Indian political organization. This convergence was not serendipitous. All of the authors recognized that genuine economic self-determination does not occur without a strong political organization to promote and sustain it. The papers, therefore, do not diverge from the expressed goals of the symposium. On the contrary, they elevated the discussion of self-determination to a level which illustrates that political organization must precede economic self-determination. Economic self-determination does not occur in a political vacuum, rather it demands active and independent political actions by its promoters. The level of political organization of a particular group often determines its ability to achieve economic independence.

To illustrate, community participation in economic affairs can be understood as economic self-determination. However, as Maybury-Lewis' study of the Shavante Rice Project demonstrates the nature and form of such participation is often externally designed and subsequently imposed on the communities.

. . .the preoccupation with control of the Shavante emerged as the central theme of our investigation of the Project. The heads of the FUNAI posts feel that they ought to have some control over their Indian charges and tend to deal with them in a somewhat paternalistic, if not authoritarian manner. This is understandable, given that these officials are sent out to remote posts and expected to tutor entire communities of tough and independent minded Indians with little support, either moral or logistical, from Brasilia. Moreover, their superiors in FUNAI on occasion demand that the heads of posts be accountable for the Indians in "their" villages, so that the problem of control is a real and difficult one for them.

The Shavante of Central Brazil only participate, they do not exercise self-determination. Similarly, Uquillas' paper illustrates that, despite major achievements in land acquisition, Ecuadorian jungle Indian communities cannot hope for economic independence or even sustained yield agriculture, as long as their organizations simply respond to national development priorities. Only recently have they begun to exercise the power and develop the prestige of their own organizations.

Genuine economic self-determination generally follows the establishment of a particular set of political mechanisms. In this volume, the clearest examples of this come from the Panamanian Kuna Indians' Project UDIRBI (see Chapin) and the lowland Bolivian Indians' formation of CIDOB (see Riester). In each area the level of Indian organization is sharply contrastive: the Kuna have been well organized for centuries and have a legally protected territorial base, while those of eastern Bolivia did not unite until 1982 and only now are

working to secure land rights by demonstrating possession through different land use systems. The Kuna easily established a highly visible presence in Panama, attracted a wide variety of international support, and used both to design an innovative Kuna-controlled resource management project. By contrast, lowland Bolivian Indian economic self-determination is in its infancy. Nevertheless, the Bolivians recognized that their first efforts must focus on developing a strong organization and a sense of cooperation among the groups. The narratives which make up a large part of Riester's study clearly reveal the Indians' understanding that they must set the stage politically--i.e. organize themselves--before they can protect and manage their land and resources.

Recently, however, the term organization has become almost a catchword used by Indians to demonstrate their political awareness. Organization signifies some general good and serves to demonstrate a group's progress or sophistication. But Smith's paper illustrates that Indian organization in Peru (and the discussion can be applied to much of Latin America) takes a variety of forms, some of which would not provide or even promote the stable political and economic base essential for ethnic self-determination. Smith defines three polar extremes--the peasant union, the indianist movement and the ethnic federation. Most actual Indian organizations fall close to one of these ideal poles. The groups considered in the volume tend toward the "ethnic federation." Geography and cultural continuity are perhaps their dominant characteristics.

Geographically, ethnic federations "proliferated [in] precisely those areas which were peripheral to or outside of the integrative horizons which have swept the Andean region over the past several millenia and also outside the core areas of Spanish domination." (Smith p.18). They are, therefore, the groups most strongly affected by the recent expansion of national development frontiers, and thus most needing of strategies to defend their land resources.

While developing such strategies ethnic federations generally rely heavily on the group's unique cultural roots. Although new forms of political organization often emerge, the federations usually draw from and maintain a strong sense of cultural and social continuity, and therefore strive to preserve their autonomy. They generally show little interest in either broad ideological issues or particular national political parties. Authority is derived from the local communities and is mainly responsible to them. A strong sense of ethnic identity prevails.

In summary, the papers included here generally consider Indian groups at the edge of expanding national frontiers, relatively inexperienced in dealing with such forces, and characterized by a common form of political organization which draws from and reinforces their ethnic identity. Both their individual and their combined situations are unique but nonetheless representative of a common pattern of territorial intrusion and subsequent response. Moreover, none of the groups are on the verge of cultural or physical extinction. On the contrary, most are gaining strength without losing their unique sense of self. The cases thus satisfy the original goals of the symposium. They demonstrate successful efforts at self-determination, sustainable adaptation to changing circumstances, and cultural survival.

A SEARCH FOR UNITY WITHIN DIVERSITY

Peasant Unions, Ethnic Federations, and Indianist Movements in the Andean Republics

Richard Chase Smith

Introduction

Since the 1950s, a number of organizations have emerged in the Andean republics which claim to represent the aspirations of the region's indigenous population. This situation has grown more complex and certainly more confusing to an outside observer because of the growing antagonism among many of the organizations and their supporters. This has its basis in ideological, programmatic and strategic differences, and in a competition for political and economic support, which, in turn, easily lends itself to the manipulations of outside interests. To cut through this confusion and make sense of the diversity of claims and counter-claims, this paper analyses the different organizations which have emerged over the past three decades, suggests a typology for classifying them and addresses the problem of unity among the region's indigenous peoples.¹

Within each national context, organizations with different ideological positions and political interests compete with one another for a) legitimacy; b) members or bases among the indigenous population; and c) political and economic support from the state or from other sectors of the national society. These three elements are closely interwoven. For example, an organization's ability to command political and economic support is contingent on its legitimacy, which is derived in part from its capacity to demonstrate that it has a broad constituency of members or bases. At the same time, in order to attract a constituency, the organization must demonstrate to its prospective members its political efficacy and its ability to hustle political and economic support. When the legitimacy of an organization is in question, or if the competition is especially keen, a group may resort to direct manipulation or coercion of prospective members to improve its advantage. Inaccurate information is often disseminated by such an organization in order to create confusion and to mask its questionable methods and its ultimate purposes. Examples of this sort of behavior are especially evident in the case of the Amuesha Congress in Peru, where competing outside interests used a small faction of Amuesha in their struggle to gain control of the organization.

Within the international arena, the stakes include the important political and economic support of foundations and funding agencies, as well as that of governments and multi-lateral bodies such as the United Nations. Largely as a result of the 1977 U.N. NGO Conference on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples held in Geneva, the growing "Indian movement" in Latin America impinged on the European and to a lesser degree on the North American consciousness and caused a sensation not unlike that which must have followed Rousseau's discovery of the "noble savage" in the eighteenth century.

As leaders claiming to represent Indian peoples paraded in full costume from one European capital to another, support groups mushroomed around Europe. Within a very short time, both foundation and private money began to flow to these Indian leaders and to Indian organizations, with little or no critical evaluation of their legitimacy or of their programs for solving the problems of their peoples. As long as those speaking for the indigenous peoples spoke of the glorious Indian past ruined by European colonialism, possessed certain "Indian" racial features and wore feathers or a poncho, that seemed proof of their legitimacy. In some cases European romanticism, guilt and a desire to be in on the "action" played into the ambitions of unscrupulous individuals and political factions, weakening the efforts of community-based organizations in the rural areas of Latin America.

Recent events in Nicaragua have further confused many observers' perception of Indian issues and organizations. Beginning in 1981, when the Nicaraguan government repressed the Indian organization MISURASATA and later relocated many villages of Miskito Indians for security reasons, both the supporters of the Nicaraguan revolution and the supporters of the anti-revolution exacerbated the confusion by forcing the issues of indigenous people's rights into a narrow left-right framework. While the revolution spoke of the struggle between "imperialist" Indians and "revolutionary" Indians, the anti-revolution told the world about the struggle between "democratic" Indians and "communist" Indians. None of these labels serves to clarify the issues, nor do they reflect Indian reality in any but the most spurious way.

Whether the confusion in the national and international arena is innocent or intentional, it has the same effect: it allows specific interests, often antithetical to those of the local indigenous community, to take advantage of the situation, legitimize themselves and direct the movement towards their own ends. It is for this reason that I attempt here to clarify the issues and the organizations surrounding indigenous peoples in the Andean republics.

Themes of Analysis and the Typology

Representativity and Autonomy

The typology proposed here is established on the basis of three themes: representativity, autonomy and identity. Each theme serves as a lens through which the organizations are brought into focus and analyzed; each theme raises important questions about the organizational structure, the internal and external relations of power and the ideological underpinnings.

The theme of representativity highlights the question of the legitimacy of a leader's claim or that of an organization to speak on behalf of a particular segment of the population. What is the basis of that claim? What is the population whose representation is claimed? How are decisions made? How are leaders chosen? Is legitimacy grounded in traditional power relationships, or in ones borrowed from the colonial situation?

The theme of autonomy raises questions about the degree of control which the organization and its members have over the course which the organization takes. What is the constellation of interests surrounding the organization? How free is the organization of control by special interest groups, be they

church, state, political parties, landlords or politically ambitious individuals? These two themes will be discussed in more detail at the end of the paper.

Identity and the Ideology of Unity

The third theme, and that to which I now focus attention, is the question of identity. How do indigenous peoples of the Andean region identify themselves? How do the dominant non-Indian societies identify the indigenous populations? How are these two views of identity reconciled within the organizations analyzed here? These questions are crucial for understanding the current indigenous struggle in the Andean region.

All of the organizations under consideration here are founded on the principle that unity among those who have common problems and are politically weak is essential. A different view of the basis of that unity clearly distinguishes the different types of organizations; at the root of these distinctions lies a different interpretation of indigenous identity.

A key to understanding the question of indigenous identity is a recognition that their world is not homogenous. There are strata of indigenous identity deposited by comings and goings within a long and complex history, including several integrative horizons. The base strata, undoubtedly the oldest, is the underlying, complex pattern of local "tribal" identities which combine elements of language, social organization, territoriality and cultural peculiarity.

A distinction one must make at this level is that between the core area of the various Andean integrative horizons and those areas which remained peripheral over the past several millenia. This core area, the Central Andes, witnessed the rise and fall of a variety of states, empires and cultural traditions, each absorbing a different constellation of local "tribal" units into larger political structures (Hastings 1982, Salomon 1982, Rostworowski 1977). The greater the number of local groups which were assimilated, the more hierarchical and centralized these political structures seemed to be, and the greater was the pressure for cultural and linguistic homogenization. The development and consolidation of the Inca state over most of the Andean region just prior to the European invasion is the most recent example of these broad integrative horizons (Murra 1975, 1978). Today this core area corresponds roughly to those regions of the Andean highlands where Quechua and Aymara languages are spoken.

On the other hand, in those areas peripheral to the integrative horizons--the upper Amazon rain forest along the eastern slopes of the Andes the northern Andes of Colombia, the western slopes of the Ecuadorean Andes, and the Chaco region of Bolivia--the tribal units were never fully integrated into the Andean states. While cultural influences emanating from the Andes reached into most of these peripheral areas, the tribal units here remained strongly differentiated, with a tendency towards more egalitarian relations, at least within each group (Smith In Press). Today dozens of different ethno-linguistic groups continue to inhabit these peripheral zones (Chirif y Mora 1977).

Second, the Spanish invasion and occupation did not effect the whole of the Andean region in the same way. In the core area the Inca state structure was not dismantled completely; rather, the apex of the hierarchy was replaced by Spanish authorities and bureaucracy. The middle levels of the hierarchy,

the local and regional lords (*curaca*) were, in many cases, encouraged to continue exercising authority and were in turn used by the Spanish as a means of state control, recruiting local labor for Spanish enterprises and collecting tribute (Bonilla 1982, Spalding 1974). Depending on the patterns of Spanish settlement and exploration, a new pattern of core and peripheral areas emerged in the Andean highlands. Most of those areas outside of the Central Andes which had been peripheral to the last of the Andean states, with the exception of certain mining centers, remained peripheral to Spanish control and cultural influence. The Spanish imposed on their new colonies a uniform criteria for identifying their subjugated population: the concept of "indio" became the basis of a new identity (Bonfil 1971).

Third, and finally, the republican history of the region is one of attempted consolidation of *criollo* authority over the new republics recently carved out of the Spanish Empire (Cotler 1978). It was also an era in which production was responding increasingly to a growing capitalist world market for industrial raw materials. Capitalist modes of production were introduced, especially in the agrarian and mining sectors, and began expanding in the early part of the current century (Bonilla 1980). While the developments in agriculture and mining affected mainly the indigenous population, it did so in a very uneven way. In the core areas of agrarian development in the highlands, the non-Indian landlords expanded their land base and production at the expense of the indigenous communities, incorporating the dispossessed Indians into the hacienda system as laborers or as tenant farmers who, despite their precarious economic situation, clung to their native language and to the rudiments of community life (Piel 1976, Bonilla 1982, Smith 1982).

In other areas, Indian communities survived in various degrees of vigor and with their land base more or less intact. In regions contiguous to the most intensive capitalist development--the mining centers and the sugar and cotton estates--the indigenous populations were rapidly incorporated into a small but growing rural proletariat, removed from their community roots and in many cases from their culture of origin. As a part of the organization of protest movements against the detrimental effects of agrarian capitalism in the twentieth century, the identity of *campesino* was introduced among segments of the rural population (Alberti 1970, Craig 1969, Fioravanti 1974, Handleman 1975, Tullis 1970).

In the eastern forests the rubber boom around the turn of the twentieth century brought profound effects to those indigenous groups who were drawn into it. Besides the toll of lives lost, the fanatical drive to collect and market rubber led by many unscrupulous European companies produced massive movements of Indians, resulting in the detribalization of many and the cultural and linguistic homogenization of others (Hardenburg 1912, Fifer 1970). And yet, in the midst of these developments in the Andean highlands and the Amazonian lowlands, some indigenous groups still remained peripheral and managed to maintain a coherent cultural system with sharply delineated social and ethnic boundaries.

Out of this long history emerged three separate strands of identity--an ethnic or tribal identity, an identity as "Indio" and an identity as peasant (*campesino*). The first is the oldest, the most subtle and complex. In the areas peripheral to the early Andean states, to the Spanish colonial regime and to later capitalist expansion, this tribal identity, which recognizes discreet ethnic boundaries, is still vigorous. In the core Andean region, however,

tribal identities have largely been replaced with a dual identity: there is a local identity tied to one's place of origin and a broader identity as a speaker of Quechua or Aymara (Albo 1979, Baquerizo 1981, Heath 1969, Salomon 1982, Van Den Berghe and Primov 1977).

The second strand, "Indian" identity, derives from a colonial category roughly equivalent to "one who is dominated." As such, in the core areas of Spanish occupation, the term *indio* is both used and received with a sense of deprecation. It marks a hierarchical relation between one who is powerful and one who is powerless (Bonfil 1981, Mayer 1970, Smith 1982, Van Den Berghe 1977). *Indio*, unlike the tribal identity, is not a self-identification; rather it is a political and racial label imposed on the indigenous population, irrespective of tribal affiliation, by a foreign colonial power. Depending on a group's particular history, the label has been assimilated to one degree or another into the indigenous collective consciousness.

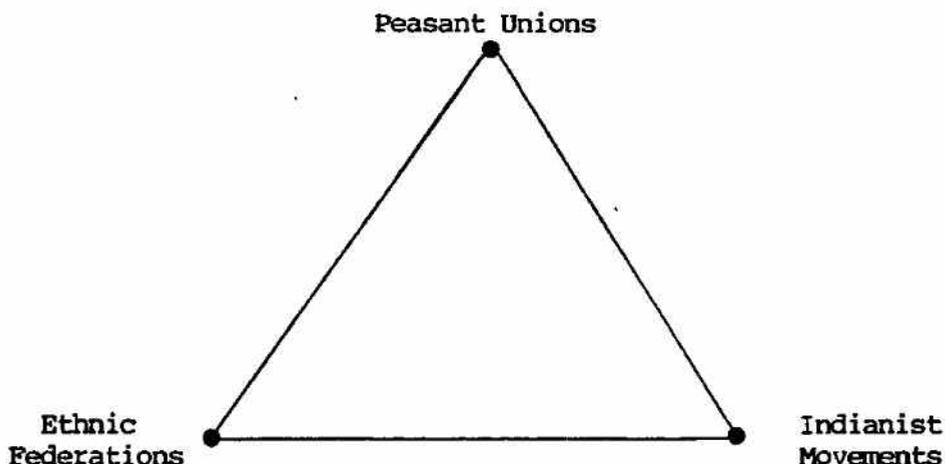
The third strand, the peasant or *campesino* identity, is a product of the expansion of the capitalist national and world market into areas with an indigenous population and the assertion of central control over rural populations by a state which represents the interests of the market system. While a great deal of social science energy has focused on the proper definition of peasant, in the political discourse of the Andean region he is an agricultural worker who produces for the market and owns, rents or otherwise secures the use of a small piece of land (Albo 1979, Cotler and Portocarrero 1969, Heath 1969, Whyte and Alberti 1976). Like *indio*, *campesino* is not a term of self-identity. It is a political label for a particular class of rural workers imparted to indigenous populations by outside forces. The degree to which it has been accepted and assimilated depends a great deal on the efficacy of the political action inspired by the *campesino* identity for a given group.

Given its particular history, an indigenous group may identify itself by any one of the strands or by a combination of them. A group which has remained peripheral to state and economic interests likely will identify itself in ethnic or tribal terms, and not at all in *indio* or *campesino* terms. On the other hand, tenants on a highland hacienda may identify themselves strongly as peasants, weakly as Quechua speakers and may shun an identity as *indio*. Others may keep all these strands in their repertoire and use each in a different context. No single strand serves as the basis of identity of all indigenous peoples at all times. The attempt to impose a single identity, I believe, is the key to much of the conflict among the groups claiming to represent indigenous peoples in Latin America.

A Typology for Organizations of Indigenous Peoples

Although many groups claim a similar goal of uniting rural populations to liberate them from the structures which oppress and marginalize them, there are important differences in their organizational structures, in their ideological perspectives and in their strategic and programmatic goals. Focusing on those organizations which claim to have a base among rural indigenous populations, I shall distinguish three fundamentally different types of organizations. Each is based on a different strand of indigenous identity and exalts that strand as the source of unity for its particular organization. I shall call the three types the "peasant union," the "ethnic federation" and the "indianist movement." The model which emerges is best described diagrammatically as a

triangle with the ideal types of organization at the three points and a continuum from one ideal type to another along each side.



While ideal types are easily defined, few, if any, actual organizations conform to all the characteristics outlined here. It is more accurate to describe actual cases as tending towards one ideal type or another. Most groups can be located along the continuum near one of the points. Others are more difficult to locate; they may be organizations which contain elements of two different types, or, as in the case of the Amuesha, they may be changing from one type to another as a result of a shift of political forces within or without the organization. I will now describe some of the characteristics of each type, moving chronologically from the first to appear, the peasant unions, to the most recent, the indianist movements.

Peasant Unions

History and Roots

The peasant union movement in the Andean region began in earnest during the decade of the 1950s, within a context of social and political mobilization which followed World War II. Handelman (1975) cites four factors which, since the turn of the century, laid the groundwork for that mobilization: 1) the expansion of mining activities, especially in the central departments of Peru and the southwestern provinces of Bolivia; 2) the expansion of the modern ranching sector, which aimed at producing wool for the export market; 3) the expansion of public education into rural areas; and 4) the expansion of mass communication into rural areas, especially the ubiquitous radio.

Cotler (1969) points to three aspects of this mobilization which are in many ways a direct result of the factors cited by Handelman: 1) a precipitous rise in rural Indian migration to urban areas and a subsequent creation of links between urban migrants and their rural communities of origin; 2) an expansion of middle-class occupations especially in education, the public sector and light industry, giving rise to new political ideologies which called for the organization of mass parties and for structural reform; 3) a radicalized left, especially among university groups, but including

increasingly greater numbers of migrants, each influenced by the rural oriented revolutions in China and Cuba.

Despite the political rhetoric of the peasant union leadership, the "peasantry," as broadly defined in political discourse, is by no means a homogenous group. The failure to recognize fundamental differences and to adequately deal with the diverse interests represented by such a broad peasantry has been the basic source of weakness within these movements. Perhaps the most important initial distinction in the Andean region is that between the indigenous peasant and the mestizo peasant. The difference is not a racial one, but rather a cultural one, based on social and economic criteria (Mayer 1970, Van Den Berghe and Primov 1977). The indigenous peasant, whose mother tongue is generally either Quechua or Aymara, is tied into a social community based on reciprocal kin relations (*allyu*) which is of pre-hispanic origin. His world view is closely tied to the social ecology of the territory in which he lives.

Up to the 1950s, throughout the Andean region there was an important distinction between those indigenous peasants who belonged to an indigenous community (i.e., corporate land holding entity with roots in the colonial period) and those who worked as tenants for a mestizo or criollo landowner in exchange for usufruct of a small parcel of hacienda land (Handelman 1975, Tullis 1970). In general, the community-based peasants were better educated, had more contact with the outside world and had more control over their land and labor than did the hacienda-based peasants. While oppression suffered by both groups of indigenous peasants was the result of the same colonial regime, each developed very different reasons for confronting their oppressors (Cotler and Portocarro 1969). The community-based peasants were concerned most with the return of community lands of which they had been dispossessed during the previous century of liberal legislation regarding Indian land rights (Smith 1982b). On the other hand, the *colonos*, or tenants, were concerned with improving the terms under which they obtained usufruct to hacienda lands--i.e., abolishing forced service to the hacienda owner and his family, reducing the required work load and in some cases gaining access to their own land (Heath 1969, Tullis 1970, Whyte and Alberti 1976).

The mestizo peasant, whose mother tongue is Spanish, is in the dominant position in his economic and social relations with the indigenous peasant. While an outsider to the *allyu*, the mestizo peasant maintains social links with both the subordinate indigenous peasant and the dominant criollo landlords through fictive ties of *compadrazco* (Kleymayer 1983, Mayer 1970, Van Den Berghe and Primov 1977).

While most mestizo peasants, like indigenous peasants, occupy a marginal position within the overall economic and political structure of the Andean republics, they too have developed a particular set of special interests as a result of their position within the local social structure. Because the mestizo peasant has acquired certain privileges vis-a-vis the indigenous peasant and is in a position to benefit from some of the surplus production of the community-based peasants, he is reluctant to engage in broad based political movements which may threaten his local privileges, unless he is in a position to control such movements. The majority of the rural proletariat--whether full-time or part-time estate or production coop workers--are mestizo or of distant indigenous origin. Here again the rural proletariat have a different set of political and economic priorities, as well as particular

interests to protect. The inclusion of these different sectors of the rural population into a single union and the balancing of their different if not contradictory demands and interests is a very difficult task.

In the Andean region, union organizing began in different areas simultaneously and among different sectors of the peasantry. Members of urban-oriented groups, including both rural school teachers, university students and public sector technicians, became actively involved in organizing local peasant unions, usually under the auspices of a particular political party. On the north coast of Peru, the APRA party organized a union among the workers of the sugar plantations; later, in the mid-fifties, APRA supporters became involved in community-based land invasions in Cerro de Pasco. The two movements gave rise to the now defunct, APRA-dominated Federación Nacional de Campesinos del Peru (FENCAP) (Handelman 1975).

In the Cuzco area two different movements emerged. In La Convención valley, local unions of hacienda-based peasants enjoyed success in improving the labor-land usufruct terms of their members. When Trotskyist elements from Cuzco, under Hugo Blanco, led the unions in successful seizures of hacienda lands, the Peruvian state stepped in to defend the estate owners and to repress the unions (Blanco 1972, Craig 1969). Meanwhile in the higher elevations around Cuzco, community-based peasants began organizing to seize lands to which they had long laid claim. By 1956, regional federations of hacienda unions and communities of the Cuzco area formed the Confederación Campesina del Peru (CCP) under the leadership of the Partido Comunista del Peru (Moscow-line). The leadership of this confederation was disputed later by both Maoist and Trotskyist elements within the Peruvian left.

During the 1970s, the CCP, which had been tolerated only barely by the military and civilian regimes of the 60s, was challenged by the Velasco government through the establishment of a state-sponsored system of province-level Ligas Agrarias, department-level Federaciones Agrarias and the national-level Confederación Nacional Agraria (CNA). With state backing and some state resources the CNA began chipping away at the CCP turf by organizing the beneficiaries of the Agrarian Reform. However, a right wing shift in the military government coupled with an increasingly independent CNA leadership led the military government to suppress the CNA in 1978 (Cleaves and Scurrah 1980). In 1979, still smarting from the old Moscow-Maoist split within the Communist Party, the Moscow-line PCP-controlled Confederación General de Trabajadores del Peru (CGTP) spurned a CCP request to join as the peasant wing of the confederation and created its own Confederación General de Campesinos del Peru (CGCP). Today the CCP and the CNA show signs of cooperation, while the CGCP dwindles on the sideline.

In Bolivia, peasant unions first emerged in the Cochabamba valley among Quechua speaking tenants and workers of the area's haciendas (Albo 1979, Patch 1963). The movement soon spread to the Aymara speaking tenants of the Yungas region, an area similar to La Convención valley. While there is still some discussion as to how and by whom peasant unions were introduced into different areas of Bolivia, it seems clear that the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR), once it came to power in the "revolution" of 1952, played an important role in the proliferation of unionism through its alliance with the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, the Agrarian Reform program and the Federated Union of Bolivian Mineworkers.

Throughout the twelve years that the MNR was in power (1952-64), the peasant union movement was closely controlled by the state through the official party. The link between the two became so close that in many areas local MNR party organization and peasant unions were synonymous (Heath 1969). According to an analysis made by the current peasant leadership in Bolivia: "peasant unionism [during the MNR government] became an instrument for manipulating [the peasants] to be used by the political faction in power. They wanted to turn us from servants of production into servants of their politics" (CSUTCB 1983).

Under the military governments which followed, state control of peasant unionism was secured through the Military-Peasant Pact. Under this "agreement," the state installed the leadership of the Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CNTCB) and kept them on the state payroll. After years of resistance, an independent peasant union federation emerged during the democratic opening between 1978 and 1980 to replace the previous state controlled CNTCB. In 1979, the Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB) joined the Central Obrero Boliviano (COB) as the sole representative organ of peasant unionism in Bolivia (CSUTCB 1983, Albo 1979).

Organizational Structure

The model that was used to develop the local unions of hacienda tenants by the early organizers was by and large borrowed from urban and mineworker unions. Individual tenants of a single hacienda joined together to establish a local *sindicato*. They would meet in a General Assembly to discuss important issues and strategies and to elect a directorate consisting of a Secretary General as a head of the union, and a long list of other secretaries in charge of specialized activities. The directorate, usually in the person of the Secretary General, would represent the union to the state offices, to the broader based regional organizations and often to the political party in control of the regional movement (Health 1969a).

In the case of the indigenous communities, the traditional political structure of the community fulfilled the role of the *sindicato*. In the General Assemblies of the community, issues would be discussed and delegates named to represent the community at the regional federations. By the late 1950s, local tenants' unions and indigenous communities began federating, at times in the same organization and at other times in separate organizations. Simultaneously, national level confederations were established which attempted to integrate tenants' unions, community federations and unions of wage-earning workers.

As Saloman (1982) and others have pointed out, peasant mobilization became a two- and in some cases a three-tiered endeavor. Political theory and rhetoric to the contrary, there is often a very wide cultural and political gap between the local level unions and communities--the base organizations of indigenous peasants--and the leadership of the departmental and national level federations. The affairs of the local organizations are largely in the hands of their members, who generally speak an Andean language and practice Andean patterns of production and consumption. These organizations tend to be more democratic, in the broad participatory sense of the term; decisions and actions tend to reflect the consensus of the members. The over-riding concerns of the local unions and communities reflect the concrete problems which they face. Popular support of the local organization and the larger federations depends to

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a large degree on their political efficacy, i.e., their capacity to produce results. At this organization level, there is little interest in party politics and ideological issues.

On the other hand, all too often urban mestizo or criollo organizers, without roots in the indigenous bases but with the right party connections, dominate the upper levels of federation and confederation organization. Handelman (1975:133) offers the most common justification and defense of this situation when he says:

The leaders of the individual village unions soon realize that these functions, particularly the articulation of interests to the state, could be carried out more effectively through regional federations of community sindicatos. However, these *comunidad* officials lacked the political sophistication and the organizational ability needed to form provincial or departmental federations. Hence, urban sympathizers took the lead in this area.

Along with the urban sympathizers comes cultural baggage which often includes the colonial legacy of racism and paternalism towards rural and indigenous peoples (Smith 1982a). Another aspect of that cultural baggage is a pattern of political behavior characteristic of national criollo politics. Thus within the upper tier of the union movement, power and authority tend to be more centralized in a charismatic leadership, which in turn is dependent on bonds of loyalty from subordinates. Decision making is therefore less democratic; participation in the process is greatly restricted. There is usually a great concern for ideological issues and for the intricacies of party politics.

The influence and hegemony of urban party activists is exercised on these upper tiers in both subtle and direct ways. From the viewpoint of the parties, control of the upper tier leadership where power and decision making is concentrated is tantamount to control of the entire movement. It is rare indeed for peasants of grass roots origin who are not members of the controlling party to rise into positions of power in the upper tier of the organization.

Diagram 1

National Level Peasant Unions of the Andean Republics

Ecuador	Federación Ecuatoriana de Indios (FEI) Federación Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (FENOC) ECUARUNARI
Peru	Confederación Campesina del Peru (CCP) Confederación Nacional Agraria (CNA) Central General de Campesinos del Peru (CGCP)
Bolivia	Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinas de Bolivia (CSUTCB)

Ideology, Peasant Unity, and Criollo Politics

Ideologically, these upper echelons of union leadership and their party sponsors generally have a broadly defined "class" orientation. Though by no means are all unions in the hands of Marxist parties or sympathizers, the formation of all unions is based on the premise that Indians, peasants, colonos and rural workers, as broadly defined rural proletariat, have common class interests. That is, their situation as an economically poor and exploited, politically marginal, rural population is the basis of their unity. In turn, their unity as a class is of a higher order than other, possibly competing, grounds for unity, such as ethnicity, and is thus the correct path toward improving their situation.

Furthermore, the organization of peasant unions is not viewed as an isolated phenomena; rather it is seen as an integral part of a broader political and social mobilization of other exploited sectors of society, with a party apparatus at the vanguard of the movement. Thus, attempts have been made, with different degrees of success, in all the Andean countries to integrate the peasant unions with blue and white collar workers' unions.

Ideological difficulties within the union leadership and among parties vying for hegemony over the union movement focus on two issues. The first is strategic and usually is expressed as an opposition between those who favor radical measures to achieve union goals and those who favor a more gradual process. The second difference is more subtle: it concerns the nature of the society which the movement leadership hopes to create. Again, the difference is between those who favor radical structural changes in society and those who prefer to gradually reform the existing one. These differences have led to numerous splits within political parties, especially those on the left, which manifest themselves in factionalism within a federation or confederation and rivalries between parallel federations.

Until quite recently, the leadership of the peasant union movements has ignored or suppressed both the Indian strand of identity and the issues raised by it, and the ethnic strand of identity and its corresponding revindications. Following the tenets of traditional Marxist interpretations, the leadership has scorned both strands of identity, relegating them to archaic manifestations of a primitive and feudalistic past. Both indigenous and ethnic revindications and those who raise them often are viewed with suspicion by union and party leadership as divisive elements in the long struggle to construct, among all rural peoples, a homogenous class consciousness based on the peasant strand of identity. These attitudes reflect a certain dogmatism on the left as well as an historical weakness within traditional Marxist theory and praxis which continues to be debated today with considerable passion (Bollinger and Lund 1982, Diaz Polanco 1982, Gomez Quinones 1982, Varese 1982).

A theme of criticism now being leveled against this position by the indianist movements, the ethnic federations and others (Santana 1981) is that criollo- and mestizo-dominated political parties have used the peasant union movement as means to integrate indigenous societies into the national political and economic structures and to assimilate them into the national class culture and identity. According to these critics, such policies of integration and assimilation, like the Indian policies of the criollo-dominated regimes which have traditionally protected the interests of the landlords and the capitalist

class, negate the pluri-national character of Andean society and deny the right to de-colonization and self-determination to the areas' indigenous peoples.

In recent years, perhaps due in part to pressure from the ethnic federations and the indianist movements, some peasant union movements, most notably in Bolivia, have begun considering the ethnic and Indian question. The important role played by the Tupac Katari Movement in the creation of an Aymara, Quechua and other indigenous-nationalist consciousness within the new CSUTCB is reflected in a recent statement denouncing the forces of integration and homogenization and calling on the CSUTCB "to become an increasingly more faithful and unified expression of [cultural] diversity" (CSUTCB 1983: 70). In Ecuador, the appearance and limited success of the Ecuarrunari movement appears to be a similar expression of concern for the assimilative character of the peasant union movement (Salamon 1982, Santana 1981). In Peru, two events, the Ecuentro de Nacionalidades and the Congreso de Nacionalidades, sponsored by the Cuzco Peasant Federation and by the CCP, gave indications that ethnic issues at last were reaching the agenda of the peasant union movement (SUR 1981).

Ethnic Federations

History and Roots

During the 1960s, two unique organizations appeared which were to serve as models for a proliferation of such organizations during the 1970s. The first, the Shuar Federation, was founded in 1964 as an association of Shuar communities located in the Sucúa region in southeastern Ecuador (Salazar 1977). The second, the Congress of Amuesha Communities, was established in 1969 by all of the then existing Amuesha communities located in Peru's central jungle (Congreso 1980).

Both of these original organizations, and most of the subsequent ones, coalesced under rather similar circumstances. The increasingly more militant mobilization of Indians and peasants in the Andean regions during the 1950s produced, among others, two important results: ever louder demands for agrarian reform, especially in view of the reforms instituted after the Bolivian and Cuban revolutions; and a rising tide of migration of rural landless to the urban centers. The response of the reform minded segments of the elites in Peru and Ecuador was to look to the eastern forests as a politically expedient, if economically costly solution. Agrarian reform policies of the 1960s attempted to redirect the highland migration towards the forest, billed as a vast emptiness and a future bread basket, in order to avoid making any fundamental changes in land tenure patterns in the highlands. Vast sums of money were spent during the decade to build penetration roads into the forest and to establish centers for colonization.

Along with the drive to integrate the lowlands into the effectively controlled territory and the national market economy came an increased interest in the integration of the lowland native populations into the national society. In many areas, religious missions were enjoined by the state to undertake this task. The Summer Institute of Linguistics, through its mission work and its program of bilingual education, along with several Catholic missionary orders played an important role in this endeavor.

While this background explains something about why these indigenous groups were mobilized, it does not explain why a particular form, the ethnic federation, came into existence. The rise of ethnic federations in the highland areas of Colombia, around the Cauca valley, for example, demonstrates that this type of organization is not limited to the forested lowlands. But why did ethnic federations not also proliferate in the highlands of Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador? The difference, I believe, has to do with the way ethnic identity has survived and is currently perceived by the peoples in question. The areas where the ethnic federation has proliferated are precisely those areas which were peripheral to or outside of the integrative horizons which have swept the Andean region over the past several millenia, and also outside of the core areas of Spanish domination. Thus, while Andean peoples of the core areas have emerged with a fuzzy sense of ethnicity which is perceived through a strong sense of hierarchy and class, those indigenous groups living outside of the Andean sphere have survived with a strong sense of their particular ethnic identity and of their ethnic boundaries (Smith 1982, Stocks 1981). We are dealing here with discrete groups, ranging in size from a hundred to one hundred thousand, for whom ethnic issues are still a primary factor in their discourse with the national society.

The issues of land and ethnic identity coalesced the ethnic federations. In each case, a particular group felt its collective land base and identity threatened by both state policies of colonization and integration and by the expanding capitalist market economy. Virtually every ethnic federation began as a meeting of headmen or representatives of different settlements of a particular ethnic group who were looking for common strategies to defend their land and their nationality (Chirif 1974, Salazar 1977, Smith 1969).

In most cases, these organizational meetings were sparked by non-Indian field workers representing urban-based institutions with a wide range of political and ideological orientations. Both Protestant and Catholic missionaries of varying political hues and for many different reasons also encouraged the formation of ethnic federations. Notably absent in the early years of this process were the political parties and the peasant unions. More recently in Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, indigenous members of the stronger federations have become active in spreading the model to groups without organized federations.

Organizational Structure

These initial meetings of village delegates have evolved in different ways, depending to some degree on the level of acculturation, the extent of the group's incorporation into the market economy and the particular cultural traits of each nationality. The organizations which have emerged, while they call themselves by a variety of terms--Council, Congress, Central or Federation--share many common structural features. The organization is usually an alliance of corporate land holding groups with either formal or informal guidelines for cooperation on political, economic and social projects.²

A general assembly of delegates from each community meets at least once a year to make the major decisions about the programmatic goals of the organization and to name a directorate to act on its behalf. Decision making tends to be a lengthy process, during which many different opinions are expressed. Participation in the process is open and active. The meetings are usually conducted in the native language.

In rare cases, like the Amuesha, the organization, from its inception, incorporates all the communities of the ethnic group. However, it is more common for an ethnic federation to represent only a portion of the communities of a group. In cases of a widely dispersed population like the Ashaninka (Campa) of Peru, regional organizations may arise representing the communities of a given area (for example, the Campa Congress of the Pichis Valley, the Central Ashaninka of the Tambo River, the Ashaninka Federation of Satipo and the Ashaninka Organization of the Rio Ene). This situation may generate some rivalry between the regional organizations over claims to legitimacy and cause confusion for outside observers. In some cases, rival outside interests, for example, Catholic vs. Protestant missionaries, or rival peasant unions, or the governing party and the opposition party may foster competing ethnic federations, as is the case among the Ashaninka, and the Aguaruna. Or, as in the case of the Shuar, many regional organizations may form an intermediary level of a larger ethnic federation.

The first half of the 1970s witnessed a great proliferation of ethnic federations in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. Only recently has this model of organization been introduced into the Oriente of Bolivia. During the latter half of that decade, higher order federations began to emerge in all three republics. In both Colombia and Ecuador, regional federations were established to integrate the local ethnic federations. In Colombia the Consejo Regional Indígena model has been successfully implemented in several areas. Within the past few years national level federations made up of the regional federations were established in both countries; in Colombia, the Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia (ONIC) and in Ecuador, the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana (CONFENIAE) (ONIC 1983, CONFENIAE 1983). In Peru, lowland ethnic federations organized at the national level the Asociación Inter-Etnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDSESP) without the intermediary regional organizations (AIDSESP 1982-83).

The Ethnic Agenda

While indigenous groups in the peripheral areas of the Andean republics have been threatened for many decades, the more recent policies of national integration through road building and agrarian reform through colonization pushed many groups to the brink of crisis. Although aggression against the ethnic basis of the indigenous groups was many-sided--evangelization, education, forced incorporation into the market economy--it was the open assault on their land base which brought the issue of survival into clear focus. The struggle for ethnic survival was expressed in a struggle to defend a dwindling land base. It was this dual struggle which was the original *raison d'être* of the ethnic federations.

However, as these organizations mature and as the land issue finds partial resolution in the issuance of land titles, many federations have begun to focus their attention on broader questions of future economic, political and social development of the group and on programs aimed at strengthening the ethnic identity and cohesion of the group. Many federations now are attempting to resolve the concrete problems of their member communities, particularly those relating to production, consumption, marketing, education, health, legal status, culture and language. In cases like the Shuar, the Aguaruna and, until recently, the Amuesha, the federations nurture broader programs for the autonomous development of the ethnic group.

Diagram 2

Ethnic Federations of the Andean Republics

- Ecuador National--Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana (CONFENIAE)
- Regional--Federación de Centros Shuar
 Unión de Nativos de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana (UNAE)
 Federación Jatun Comuna Aguarico
 Federación de Organizaciones Indígenas del Napo (FOIN)
 Organización de Pueblos Indígenas del Pastaza (OPIP)
 Asociación Independiente de Pueblos Shuar del Ecuador (AIPSE)
 Federación de Organizaciones Campesinas Indígenas del Napo (FOCIN)
 Organización Indígena de Comunidades Cofán, Siona, Secoya del Ecuador (OICCSSE)
 Asociación de Indígenas Evangélicas del Napo (AIEN)
- Peru National--Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDSESP)
- Regional--Consejo Aguaruna y Huambisa
 Organización Aguaruna del Alto Mayo (OAM)
 Federación de Comunidades Nativas Chayahuita
 Federación Kichuaruna-Wangurina
 Federación de Comunidades Nativas Cocamilla
 Federación de Comunidades Nativas del Ucayali
 Federación de Comunidades Nativas Yanesha (FECONAYA)
 Congreso Campa del Rio Pichis
 Federación de Comunidades Nativas Campa (FECONACA)
 Central de Comunidades Nativas del Rio Tambo
 Organización Ashaninka del Rio Ene
 Federación de Comunidades del Rio Madre de Dios
- Bolivia National--Comité de Pueblos y Comunidades Indígenas del Oriente Boliviano (CIDOB)
- Regional--Comunidad de Caipepe
 Central Intercomunal de Lomerío
 Central Intercomunal de Guarayos
 Comunidades Ayoréode
 Comunidad Guaraní de Sucre

By and large, for the ethnic federations there is both little interest in and little understanding of the ideological issues which concern the peasant unions and the indianist movements. This is coupled with their distrust of political parties and, in most cases, of the peasant unions as well. The Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (CRIC) is a notable exception to this rule, as it has attempted from its beginning to integrate ethnic issues with class issues. While CRIC, like the other ethnic federations, covets its independence from party hegemony, it has shown more willingness to collaborate with the peasant unions.

The ethnic federation, as an organizational alternative, continues to grow in number and in strength in the Andean republics. In Ecuador, as the Shuar Federation prepares to celebrate its twentieth anniversary, there are currently eight regional ethnic federations. In Peru, while the Amuesha continue with their organization after fifteen years, twelve other local ethnic federations have come into existence and continue to function. In Bolivia, recent attempts to establish ethnic federations in the Oriente have met with growing success. Indian policy and land policy in these three republics have been influenced positively over the past twenty years by the federations.

The success of the ethnic federation model is by no means uniform. Some groups have consolidated their organizations while keeping effective control at the community level; others have not. An important test of their success is to see how they can broaden their outreach while still keeping control over their organizations. The case of the Amuesha demonstrates some of the internal and external pressures to which these organizations are subject at the local level. To date, the regional and national level federations have managed to avoid the two-tier structure of the peasant unions. Leadership is in the hands of the indigenous base members and, to a remarkable degree, free of manipulation by outside political, economic and religious interests. The issues raised at the national level continue to reflect the local communities' own perception of their situation. It is for these reasons that the ethnic federations have earned a large measure of legitimacy, both among their own people and among their adversaries.

Indianist Movements

The Historical Context

During the latter half of the 1970s, a number of groups appeared in Bolivia and Peru which, despite certain apparent differences, shared common structural features and offered similar platforms. These groups, with close ties to the new urban migrants and to certain intellectual currents emanating from the developed world, focused attention on the colonial situation of European domination of Indian peoples and offered, as a basis of Indian liberation, a new ideology—"Indianidad." I call these groups indianist movements.

While the emergence of these indianist movements was certainly influenced by the social and political mobilization of rural peasants during the 1950s and 1960s, there were several other factors at play. One of the distant, yet crucial roots was the Black Liberation movement which swept the Caribbean, USA and parts of Africa during those same decades. These movements focused on the colonial domination of "white" societies over black peoples and the resulting racial discrimination against blacks as a major cause of the marginalized situation of the extra-African black populations. One of the major currents of this movement sought to politicize the concept of "blackness" by exalting its positive features ("black is beautiful") as the cohesive element of the liberation movement (Curtin 1974, Fanon 1965, Mintz 1974).

A second important influence was the mobilization of Indian peoples in North America, especially in the USA, which attempted to foster an Indian consciousness, following many of the guidelines established by the black power movements. While this movement, especially the American Indian Movement (AIM)

which stood at its forefront, did enjoy some political successes, it was not able to affect such profound political and cultural changes on either its own constituency or on its adversaries, as did the black movement. Yet, an often vague notion of Indian consciousness was launched and caused ripples internationally, especially in intellectual circles.

Third, in recent years (especially 1965-1975 in the USA and 1970-present in Europe) there has been a wave of popular protest against the alienation and materialism of modern industrial society. Out of this protest grew a search for alternatives, often millenarian utopias, which embody all those human and moral characteristics said to have been sacrificed by modern industrial development. The theories of "Indianess" promoted by the Indian consciousness movement in North America and in Europe, and increasingly in Latin America, satisfy that search for many protesters, and in so doing, gain a kind of international legitimacy (Necker 1983).

Finally, within the Andean region, and especially in Peru and Bolivia, three decades of rural migration to the cities, programs of rural education and improved economic conditions in the countryside resulting from the agrarian reforms produced, among others, two important results: 1) the rural migrants came under increased pressure, especially as the mass media came within their reach, to assimilate into the urban market economy, and thus into the often fuzzy "national culture" and identity of their respective countries; and 2) new social contradictions arose within the "Indian masses," especially between rural Indians and urban Indians, and more specifically between a series of new sub-classes. The sub-class which played a decisive role in the rise of the indianist movements was the university trained intelligentsia, many of whom by the 1970s, had lost their roots in the countryside and found themselves facing an acute identity crisis (Albo 1979, Salomon 1982, Varese 1982). Elements of this alienated intelligentsia, aware of both the black and Indian consciousness movements elsewhere, realized the potential for politicizing their colonial identity as Indians and using it as a symbol of unity and liberation.

Indian Unity and Participation

Perhaps the most successful of the indianist movements, at least in terms of attracting international attention, gaining Indian sympathy and surviving beyond a year or two, is MITKA of Bolivia. It can trace its roots to the urban-based Aymara organizations founded in the late 1960s--MINKA, Movimiento Universitario Julian Apaza and the Movimiento Tupac Katari--all concerned with the issues of Aymara cultural identity (Albo 1979, Anon. 1981, Barre 1983, Lanaud 1982, Tumiri 1978). By 1975, the latter gave birth clandestinely to a peasant union, the Confederación Sindical Tupac Katari (CSTK), which by 1977 had become the largest independent peasant union in the department of La Paz. With the political opening of 1978, two political parties, raising the banner of Aymara revindications, grew out of the CSTK: the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Katari (MRTK), which combined Aymara revindications with a more traditional leftist peasant oriented platform; and the Movimiento Indio Tupac Katari (MITKA) which stressed its "indianness" and its independence from "white" dominated parties. At its height in 1980, the two factions of MITKA received a combined total of 32,875 votes or 2.5% of the total vote (Lavaud 1982). Since then a combination of political events in Bolivia and factionalism within MITKA over ideological points, have greatly weakened the organization.

In 1977, a Lima based group calling itself the Movimiento Indio Peruano (MIP) made itself known through a series of publications and public events (Carnero 1977a, MIP 1977). While it is now difficult to ascertain the social composition of its membership, it seems to have included both mestizo and rural migrants associated with one of Lima's largest universities, together with some cultural associations of rural migrants based in the slums around Lima. A dispute between the two principal spokesmen, both university professors, over the use of international funds while sponsoring the Primer Congreso de Movimientos Indios de Sud América in early 1980, brought the movement to a close (Consejo 1980, Sur 1980). Elements of MIP have continued to promote its ideology of indianness through their involvement with the Consejo Indio de Sud América (CISA), formed in the Primer Congreso of 1980, and through the recently created Lima-based Movimiento Indio Tupac Amaru (MITA) (Barre 1983, CISA 1982, IWGIA 1980).

The indianist movements appeal to the Indian strand of identity, subsuming both the ethnic and the peasant identities within their indianist net. It is on the basis of revindicating Indian identity that they are trying to build a mass movement. So far, most observers agree that they have enjoyed little success. While MITKA was able to attract over 30,000 votes in the 1980 elections, enough to entitle them to representation in the National Congress, they have not been able to capitalize on that sympathy to coalesce a movement with broad "Indian" participation (Lavaud 1982).

The indianist movements are not organizations of rural based indigenous populations. They are not federations with roots in the rural indigenous communities. Their limited constituency comes from the former peasant populations which have migrated to the cities, where economic and cultural pressures have weakened their ties to the countryside and their linguistic and localist identity. These indianist movements, despite their ecumenical Indian appeal, have managed to incorporate only speakers of Quechua and Aymara, the majority languages of the Andean highlands.

Diagram 3

Indianist Movements of the Andean Republics

Ecuador	Movimiento Indígena de Ecuador (MODELINDE)
Peru	Movimiento Indio Peruano (defunct) Movimiento Indio Tupac Amaru (MITA) Movimiento Indio Kollasuyo (MIK) Organización Común Runa Movimiento Indio Pedro Vilca Apaza (MIPVA)
Bolivia	Movimiento Indio Tupac Katari I (MITKA I) Movimiento Indio Tupac Katari II (MITKA II)
Regional	Consejo Indio de Sud América (CISA) I Lima Consejo Indio de Sud América (CISA) II La Paz

The internal organization of the movements has never been outlined clearly in their publications. Observers agree that there is little in the way of a representative structure which incorporates base organizations or individual members into the decision making process. Rather, it seems to be the rule that the indianist movement is centered on a charismatic figure whose charisma, more than his ideology, attracts a following of individuals and legitimizes the hegemony which he and his close associates exercise over the followers.³ Like traditional criollo- and mestizo-based political parties, the indianist movements tend to be more autocratic and authoritarian, with power and representivity residing in a strong central figure rather than in delegates or a general assembly. For this reason, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the political ambitions of these central figures from the interests of the indianist movement (Reynaga 1980).

The Ideology of Indianidad

Like the leftist political parties, indianist movements show tremendous concern for spelling out an ideological position. In both cases, this focus on the theoretical side of the Indian/peasant struggle in all likelihood reflects the predominance of university oriented "elites" within the leadership. To continue the comparison further, in both cases concern for ideology has had two consequences: 1) it has fostered a tendency to dogmatism and factionalism resulting from ideological differences (CISA 1983, Consejo 1980, Lavaud 1982, Reynaga 1980); and 2) it has relegated concern for and action on the concrete problems of real people to a very low priority.

However, the ideological content of the indianist movement is different from that of the leftist parties and peasant unions. It is based on the concept of indianidad, which purports the existence of a pan-Indian identity and civilization which is the basis of unity of all Indian peoples. The ideology of Indianidad is based on three fundamental tenets: 1) Indian peoples lived in a near perfect state of moral, social and ecological harmony before the European invasion. This harmony was destroyed by the Europeans and now must be restored. 2) In order to regain that lost harmony, Indian peoples must return to the institutions of their past as the basis of a new political and economic order. For the South American area, the indianist movements offer a model they call Tawantinsuyo, which incorporates organizational elements said to have existed under the Inca state. 3) The left-right political confrontation in Latin America is seen as a struggle within an already alienated European civilization, and Indian peoples are enjoined to remain neutral. Because the principal contradiction concerning Indian peoples is that between Indians and "whites" or Europeans, and not between antagonistic social classes, the Indian must direct his energy towards liberating himself from non-Indian domination, non-Indian institutions and non-Indian culture (Carnero 1977a, 1977b, 1978, CISA 1982, Reinaga 1978, Stavenhagen 1983, SUR 1980, Tumiri 1978).⁴

Given this ideological stance, it should come as no surprise that the question of alliances with other organized sectors of the population should have become so divisive for the indianist movements. Dogmatic adherence to the anti-European tenets of the ideology have led some movements, notably MITKA, ex-MIP and the recent Movimiento Indio Pedro Vilca Apaza (MIPVA) to decry as traitorous any collaboration with peasant unions, which are accused of being dominated by European (criollo) political models and ideology.⁵

But this presents a serious problem for the indianist movements, since it is the peasant unions which represent the largest numbers of rural Quechua and Aymara speakers and the ethnic federations which represent the largest portion of other Indians. Rather than join in efforts to build broad based popular movements to struggle for Indian as well as ethnic and peasant revindications, the indianist movements seem to be focusing their efforts on consolidating their party-like structure with an eye on competing for a share of the power within the current political framework.

There can be no doubt that, in its general sense, the new political message of indianidad and its appeal to an Indian nationality are important. The notion that Indian peoples, as victims of European colonialism, have the right to recuperate their history and control over their future is a potentially powerful message which could have political repercussions throughout the Andean region.

But I see two serious problems in the way that message is being broadcast. In the first place, it is being carried by new indianist movements which look and behave very much like traditional Latin American political parties with all of their intrinsic weaknesses: the importance of a caudillo figure, centralization of power, authoritarianism, elitism and an overriding concern for ideological positions to the detriment of real people and their problems.

Second, the indianist movements promote themselves, especially within the international forum, as the only legitimate representatives of Indian peoples. At this stage of their development, the indianist movements cannot make such a broad claim legitimately, for, as I have shown, they are not representative in either an organizational or in a political sense of a broad spectrum of Indian peoples. These claims, received enthusiastically in many European capitals, have been the source of a great deal of confusion regarding Indian organizations in Latin America.

The Typology

A Review of the Distinctive and Common Features

According to the typology established at the beginning of this paper, there are three types of organizations which claim to represent indigenous peoples in the Andean republics: the peasant unions, the ethnic federations, and the indianist movements. As an ideal type, each is linked to the other two by a continuum of distinctive and shared features. Diagrammatically, this was represented as a triangle, with the ideal types at the points and the continuum along the sides.

The preceding analysis was guided by three themes spelled out in the introduction: identity and the ideology of unity, representivity and autonomy. The distinctive and common features of the ideal types are extrapolated from the concrete experiences described in the text and organized into three broad areas corresponding to these analytical themes. There is a certain degree of generalization involved in this process; the reader is reminded that not all organizations conform to all the features analyzed here. Some will fall in between ideal types and exhibit features of both.

Identity as the Basis of Unity

All three types of organizations are founded on the principle that unity among those who have a common problem and are politically weak is essential. A different view of the basis of that unity distinguishes the three types in a fundamental way from the very outset. Each type of organization uses a different strand of indigenous identity as its unifying focus. The peasant union appeals to the peasant identity to unify rural workers, including indigenous peasants, especially highland Quechua and Aymara speakers. The ethnic federation appeals to the ethnic or tribal identity as the source of unity among members of particular indigenous nationalities, especially those of the lowland areas and northern Andes. Finally, the indianist movements appeal to an Indian identity to unify all indigenous peoples as victims of European colonialism. While this last appeal is made quite broadly, it has gained sympathy, mainly among a small segment of urban migrants of recent Quechua and Aymara origin.

In the case of the peasant unions and the indianist movements, the appeal to a certain identity comes with an ideological orientation which attempts to explain why that particular identity is the correct one for building a broad based and long term struggle for liberation. The peasant orientation is part of a class based analysis of social problems which contends that the fundamental contradiction of modern society (Andean in this case) is that between the exploiters--the capitalist class and those who serve their interests--and the exploited--principally rural and urban workers. Indigenous peasants are called upon to unite with other exploited sectors in a struggle against the system which exploits them.

The indianist orientation is part of an analysis which views the situation of indigenous peoples as the result of European colonialism and continued domination, and posits the fundamental social cleavage as that between the Europeans or whites who dominate and the Indians who are dominated. Indians are urged to reject their European masters and their models, and to unite to construct a future based on "indian" criteria and models. The nuances of these ideological orientations are of great concern to the leadership of both types or organizations.

The strand of identity underlying the ethnic federations is not part of a larger political-ideological parcel. For people who continue to be part of a vigorous ethnic tradition, their group identity has its ideological roots in the integration of a millenarian history and cosmology, a special relationship with a well-defined territory and a particular concept of social relations. Thus, the group's need for ideological explanations is, to a large degree, satisfied by their own culture. The ethnic federations, in many ways like the local peasant unions, and probably for the same reasons, are concerned with concrete problems and their solutions.

Representivity: The Base vs. the Top

The representivity and, in the final analysis, the legitimacy of any organization is closely linked to three aspects of the organizational structure: 1) the underlying model for organizing a disperse population for effective political action; 2) the degree to which the base membership participates in the decision making or to which decisions made reflect the

consensus of the membership; and 3) the nature of the relationship between the leadership and the bases. The three types of organizations differ in these respects.

The peasant unions have a two-tier structure with a national level organization and leadership at the top which grew out of many small local level organizations at the bottom. In general, the peasant union has become dominated by the top strata, which is rarely derived from the rural indigenous segments of the peasantry. The ethnic federation is a community based organization located in rural areas. The new national level federations built on networks of local federations are still precarious and not yet very strong. Indianist movements have developed almost exclusively at the top--at the national level--among potential leaders who are now searching for a following.

The lower tier of the peasant unions and the ethnic federations shares a similar model of organization: in both cases, larger and broader based federations are built out of alliances of smaller organizations based in the countryside. In the case of the peasant unions, these base organizations are indigenous communities, cooperatives and local peasant sindicatos. The base of the ethnic federation is the indigenous community. In both cases these base organizations are essentially participatory in nature, with important decisions made by the local general assembly. The local leadership is named by the general assembly and changed periodically.

On the other hand, the indianist movement is an association of individuals who are attracted to a charismatic leader. Decision-making power resides almost exclusively in the leader, though his close associates may also be consulted. The leader, by virtue of his charisma and his position as founder of the movement, represents the indianist movement to the public. There is a tendency to be both autocratic in decision making and authoritarian in enforcing the decisions. The top strata of the peasant unions share many of these attributes, as indeed do virtually all political parties.

The problem of a cultural, political and identity gap between the top strata and the bases plagues the peasant union movement. Even where peasants rise through the hierarchy and gain leadership positions, the structural pressures on them to conform their political behavior and concerns to the dominant model are all too often overwhelming. It is quite often difficult to distinguish whose interests are being served by the unions' top strata.

This is a potential problem for the ethnic federations as they move into a new phase of national level development. Thus far the national leadership, while they have their roots and their identities in the base communities, are nonetheless derived from an educated elite who have learned to deal with the national society, the urban setting and to some degree with criollo politics. It remains to be seen if the bases can maintain their control over this leadership, and how the leadership will respond to the pressures of the urban setting to abuse their privileged position.

For the indianist movements this problem is more theoretical than real. Because these movements developed at the top strata, one can only wonder, if and when a base is established, how this leadership which now monopolizes power within the movements will respond to pressures from the base.

Autonomy: The Question of Control

The issue of organizational autonomy must be understood within the context of the colonial situation which continues to dominate indigenous peoples in the Andean republics. While the results of this colonial experience are perhaps more clearly manifest in the economic realm, they are equally significant in the psychological-political realm. Out of a diversity of cultures, identities and political units, the Spanish colonial regime imposed a single new political category of being: *indio*, the colonized people. Through five hundred years of continued use, this term has come to mean, like the term "nigger" in the USA, a category of low-level human beings who are subservient, dependent and *incapaz*.⁶

As part of a long-term policy of political control over the indigenous masses, the colonial elite eroded the Indian's confidence in his own capacity for autonomy; he created in the Indian a psychological as well as an economic dependence on the colonial master. It is this aspect of the colonial experience which Fanon decried in Africa and the Caribbean, and which currently gives shape to the indianist movement ideologies in the Americas.

Thus the issue of autonomy is doubly complex: one must deal not only with a wide range of outside "Euro-centered" interests and views filtered through layers of racism, paternalism and the capacity to dominate, but also a wide diversity of indigenous interests and views filtered through different historical experiences and different degrees of resulting dependency on the dominant society. Because a thorough analysis of this complex situation clearly goes beyond the scope of this paper, I will use this opportunity to suggest outlines for such an analysis and some of the questions which should be asked.

Initially, one must deal with the Indian and the non-Indian side of the question separately before reintegrating them into a complex related whole. The first task, then, might be to sort out and analyze the wide range of exogenous interests which surround each of the three types of indigenous organizations. While the typology suggested in this paper helps to clarify the kinds of organizations which represent indigenous peoples, one cannot understand the trajectories of specific organizations without adding to the equation the aims and interests of the outside forces which push and pull them in one direction or another.

Diagram 4 shows, according to my evaluation, the principle kinds of outside interests which tend to be involved with each type of organization. It will be noted that political parties and the state are the major outside factors in the peasant unions. The Catholic and Protestant church and the alliance of private support groups, funding agencies and academics are the principle interests involved with the ethnic federations. And finally, international support groups and academics play a principle role in the indianist movements.

In analyzing the role of these support groups, it is important to ask from the outset, what are the particular interests of each in focusing attention on the indigenous organizations? Is there a sectarian political interest, a sectarian religious interest or an economic interest? Are the interests personal or altruistic? What view does the outside interest have of the role of indigenous peoples within the state framework, within the national society and within the national market economy? What kinds of goals do they emphasize

for the indigenous organizations? Is the relationship based on a respect for the autonomy of the indigenous organization, on paternalism or on a desire for hegemony over the organization?

It is also important to look at the relationship between the outside interest and the indigenous organization over time. Has the relationship led to greater autonomy or to greater dependency of the organization? Here it is helpful to distinguish three kinds of outside interests: 1) those which were active in the founding of the indigenous organization; 2) those which were attracted to the organization once it became politically successful; and 3) the state.

Of the first type, it is important to ask why they were interested in founding an indigenous organization, what sort of role they played and to what extent they continue to dominate the organization. Of the second, one must ask why they became attracted to the organization. Did its political success pose a threat or provide opportunities, in either case making the organization a candidate for cooptation or outright take over? And finally, rather than view the state as a monolith, it would be useful to look at the relationship of the different sectors of the state. Have they encouraged the growth of autonomous organizations or attempted through legislation, cooptation or repression to control them?

The other half of this analysis is the indigenous point of view on autonomy. While the experience is quite diverse, I will attempt a few generalizations. The ethnic federations, and a few of the peasant unions, while conscious of the issue of autonomy, view it from a more pragmatic standpoint. They engage in a continuous give-and-take with the outside interests in order to achieve specific and concrete objectives. The majority of the peasant unions are so dominated by the upper-tier leadership who, in turn, are so compromised with either political party or state interests that autonomy has become a potentially subversive question within the organization.

The indianist movements have ideologized the question of autonomy to the point that they refuse to make any alliances with outside groups which may be "tinged" by non-Indian domination. Yet, the indianist movements are dependent on both European funding and to some extent on European (certainly non-Indian) intellectual training and ideas.

Some of the questions I would direct to the indigenous organizations include the following: Are the members of the base organizations aware of the issue of autonomy, and is it raised as an issue within the organization? Are the base members aware of the outside interests monopolized by the leadership? If so, how does the leadership use its relationship with outside groups: to increase the political efficacy of the organization? or to enhance their own personal power? One must raise the possibility that the relationship is symbiotic in the best of circumstances or mutually exploitive in the worst, and that both parties may further their particular interests through such a relationship.

Clearly there are underlying cultural patterns operating on individual ethnic groups which influence their capacity for autonomous action. The Jivaroan-speaking peoples--the Shuar of Ecuador and the Aguaruna of Peru are outstanding examples for their insistence on autonomy and their capacity to make it operational. At the other extreme, the Shipibo and the Amuesha of Peru

have had greater difficulty in defending their organizational autonomy. Comparisons between these two extremes would add greatly to our understanding of the current political process occurring among indigenous peoples in Latin America.

Diagram 4

Schematic Presentation of External Interest Groups Influencing Each Type of Organization: in Order of Relative Importance

1. Peasant Unions
 - political parties (Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, various on the Left) and national and international support organizations and funding sources linked to political parties
 - the state (administration, military & bureaucracy)
 - Catholic Church
 - private funding agencies (USA & Europe)
 - intellectuals (national and international)

2. Ethnic Federations
 - Catholic Church
 - individual missionaries
 - entire missions
 - church sponsored support/research organizations
 - church based funding sources (USA & Europe often with local counterpart)
 - Protestant Churches
 - individual missionaries
 - entire missions (SIL, New Tribes, South American Mission)
 - church based funding sources (USA and Europe often with local counterpart)
 - local support/research organizations
 - private funding sources (USA & Europe)
 - intellectuals (national & international)
 - the state (governing parties, military & bureaucracy)
 - indianist movements
 - peasant unions/political parties
 - international support organizations

3. Indianist Movements
 - international support organizations
 - intellectuals (national & extra-national)
 - private funding sources
 - church-related funding sources
 - the state (governing parties, military & bureaucracy)

As decolonization slowly progresses among indigenous peoples in Latin America, where economic, political and psychological dependency are used as tools in the domination of the indigenous sectors of society, the goal of autonomy must always remain clear. Both a restoration of the confidence in the indigenous peoples' capacity for autonomy and the creation of new institutional means to build autonomy must underlie the struggle for liberation and the organizations which carry out that struggle.

Conclusion: Unity Within Diversity

As I pointed out at the beginning, one of the keys for understanding the indigenous response to a long colonial history is diversity. The solutions proposed by the indigenous peoples in the Andean republics and the organizations which have emerged to seek those solutions are as diverse as the identities and the cultures which produce them. The peasant orientation, the Indian orientation and the ethnic orientation, each an interpretation of current reality based on different historical experiences, all contribute to our understanding of the struggle by indigenous peoples in the Americas to regain control over their lives.

In the first place, indigenous peoples belong to diverse nationalities which were involuntarily incorporated into modern state structures that not only do not represent their interests, but whose ideology of one nation- one state threatens to obliterate them as distinct ethnic groups. In the second place, indigenous peoples were subjugated by a colonial regime which elevated the European invaders and their "Euro-centered" descendents to a dominant position and relegated the invaded peoples to a subordinate and dependent category. And third, indigenous peoples are further victimized by an economic system which incorporates them as meagerly paid laborers and producers of cheap raw materials and food permits the dominant groups to further consolidate their economic and political power.

The challenge, then, is to build political unity within such diversity. This in turn begs the difficult question of building alliances. Here again I would suggest as a basis for evaluating the prospects for alliances: raising the issues of representivity (Do the prospective allies have roots in either rural or urban communities of indigenous peoples?); autonomy (Do the prospective allies speak for themselves or do they speak for other non-indigenous interests?); and finally, identity (Do the prospective allies respect the inherent differences of history, culture and identity which distinguish them?).

The ethnic federations are currently gaining valuable experience in this field. Regional and national level federations are being built on alliances among local federations, each of whom may represent a different cultural, linguistic and historical experience. Out of this local diversity, they are building effective political organs which are capable of speaking with a single voice when appropriate. They are learning to negotiate points of unity—common strategies for common problems—in a context of respect for underlying differences.

In general, both the indianist movements and the peasant unions (or at least the upper-tier leadership) insist that unity can only spring from homogeneity.⁷ Each, reflecting underlying patterns of criollo-university politics, insists on a single identity as the focus of unity and on a single ideological *linea correcta* as the basis of political action. An extreme position reflecting this bias claims that ethnic diversity—the strand of identity underlying the ethnic federations—was created and continues to be used by modern capitalist imperialism as a means to divide the popular masses (Dias Polanco 1982, Dunbar Ortiz 1983). Other positions akin to the peasant unions accuse the indianist movements of taking a "racist" position because of their "discrimination" against white (i.e., non-Indian) ideas and organizations (SUR 1980). Indeed, some indianist movements, principally MITKA I and MIPVA,

have refused to deal with peasant unions because of their ties with European-derived ideologies and criollo-dominated political parties. In both cases the dogmatism of their views and their concern for gaining hegemony over the movement not only negates the underlying diversity, but negates political unity as well.

There is no question that the indigenous peoples of the Andean republic must seek alliances among themselves and with others in order to bring about a transformation of the current political and economic structures which oppress them in many ways. But dogmatism and hegemonic control--both forces of homogeneity--must be put aside if broader bases of unity are to be found. And out of that unity hopefully will arise new structures which affirm diversity as a fundamental human attribute and which will permit greater autonomous development of the indigenous and non-indigenous peoples alike.

FOOTNOTES

1. The author lived in the eastern slopes of the central Peruvian Andes for twelve years and during that time worked closely with the Amuesha and Campa peoples and their organizations, both those representing indigenous peoples and those supporting indigenous peoples. The author would like to express his appreciation for Cultural Survival, Inc. (Cambridge, Massachusetts), the Department of Anthropology (Harvard University) and the Inter-American Foundation for making the completion of this research and work possible.
2. There are some exceptions to this rule, like FOIN (Federación de Organizaciones Indígenas del Napo), which includes as base groups cooperatives and associations of indigenous workers.
3. Charisma is not the only quality which may attract a following to such a leader. It may also be the leader's monopoly on contacts with funding sources or with sources of political support. It may also be that the leader is simply astute in the ways and means of criollo political behavior. In this case both charisma and a monopoly on powerful contacts may play a role in attracting a following.
4. For a critical analysis of the ideology of Indianidad, see Necker 1983.
5. This was apparently one of the roots of the split between the CISA-Lima (Palomino and Tumiri) faction and the CISA-La Paz (Lima and Turpo) faction, which occurred during the meeting of CISA held in Tiahuanaco, Bolivia, in March 1983.
6. The Spanish term *incapaz*, commonly used by non-Indians to describe Indians, neatly sums up the situation of domination in which the Indian lives. *Incapaz* conveys a double meaning: in an informal sense, it means that the Indian is inherently lacking in ability or power to accomplish any task; in a formal sense, it means that the Indian lacks the legal capacity to carry out certain civil functions or rights accorded to others. It is consistent with this vision of the Indian that most Latin American states have attempted to define the Indian as a minor before the law and thus deny him the full rights accorded to other members of the national community.
7. It should be noted that the exception appears to be CUSTCB of Bolivia, which is now talking of the importance of diversity. The test will be to see how they make their vision of diversity operational for their organization.

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UDIRBI: AN INDIGENOUS PROJECT IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Mac Chapin

Throughout the tropical world the assault on the forests appears uncontrollable. Population growth, large-scale national development schemes, expanding agriculture, ranching for the export market, and the resulting concentration of land ownership which forces peasants to the frontier--all threaten the forests. Unless this process is checked, it soon will destroy the world's last remaining rain forests. While there are still some 900 million hectares of moist tropical forest in the world, a 1981 United Nations satellite study indicates that it is disappearing at a rate of 7.3 million hectares a year. Other, more pessimistic estimates put the yearly loss as high as 20 million hectares.

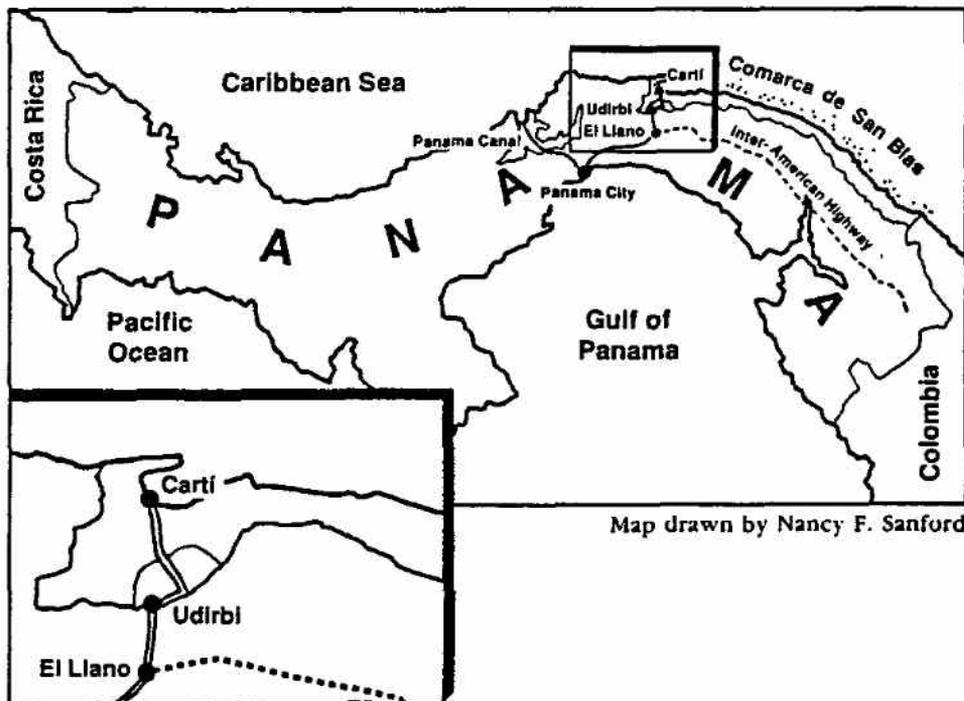
Although predictions of the rate at which this devastation is occurring may differ, there is widespread agreement that the tropical rain forests are in grave danger. Environmentalists unanimously lament the impending extinction of numerous species of plants and animals. The U.S. Government's recent **Global 2000 Report** estimates that one million of those species could be extinct at the end of the century. Usually of less concern, however, is the fate of indigenous peoples who live in these forests and depend on them for their livelihood. When their habitat disappears, so does their way of life. Standing virtually defenseless in the path of this implacable advance, tribal societies throughout the world are rapidly disappearing.

An exception to this dismal pattern of devastation is the Kuna Indians of Panama, who are presently involved in a unique effort to protect their natural resources and, consequently, their autonomy as a tribe. They call it Project Udirbi. Working with scientists from a variety of national and international organizations, they are setting up a forest park and wildlife refuge on the southern border of their reservation, the Comarca of San Blas. The park, which encompasses an area of some 20 square kilometers, is located approximately two hours from Panama City along a recently-constructed road which is the first to penetrate the reservation (see map). When completed, the park will contain facilities for receiving scientists and "scientific tourists," for whom a series of nature trails, observation posts, and research sub-stations are being developed. For the Kuna, however, it will also serve as a vital buffer against incursions by non-Kuna farmers and cattle ranchers, who are moving steadily toward the virgin forests of San Blas.

This paper gives a brief sketch of the Kuna, indicates why they would undertake such an enterprise and charts the gradual development of this unique project. In recent years, a number of environmentalists have begun to explore--with a certain measure of desperation--the possibility of enlisting the assistance of indigenous groups in conservation activities. While Project Udirbi's particular mix of environmental scientists, development agents, and Kuna Indians cannot serve as a model for application in different parts of the globe, it will be closely watched over the next few years, and valuable lessons will be learned.

The Kuna

Three small Kuna settlements are located in Colombia, inland from the Gulf of Uraba. Most Kuna Indians, however, live in Panama. Approximately 1,500 Kuna live in the Bayano mountain region along the Chepo River Basin (see map), and another small enclave is dispersed in several tiny villages nestled in the area of the Chucunaque and Tuira Rivers to the southeast. However, the largest group of Kuna, more than 30,000 people, makes its home in the San Blas reservation (comarca) which extends approximately 200 kilometers from Mandinga to the west along to the village of Armila, close to the Colombian border.



In 1925, on the heels of an armed uprising by the Kuna against Panamanian national guardsmen stationed in the region, the government of Panama signed a treaty forbidding non-Kunas from owning land in San Blas. In the 1930s, the Comarca of San Blas was established. The only outsiders now living there are a few school teachers, Colombian traders, and religious missionaries. No all-weather road connects San Blas to the rest of Panama, and the only means of entering the region is either by launch from the Atlantic-coast city of Colon or by small plane from Panama City or Colon.

The Comarca encloses a thick band of jungle extending from the ridge of the Continental Divide down to the Atlantic coast, and thence seaward a mile or so to include some 360 tiny coral islands. Although no precise climatic data are available, San Blas is broadly classed as humid tropical rainforest with a mean annual temperature of approximately 80 degrees Fahrenheit and an average yearly rainfall of more than 100 inches (Stout 1947:13). There is a dry season from January through March, during which strong winds from the north prevail, and a shorter, less predictable dry stretch from September to November. These seasonal fluctuations in rainfall, however, have no marked effect on the vegetation, and the region is characterized by a full growth of tropical rainforest.

From east to west, the topography of the mainland becomes more mountainous. Toward the Colombian border, the mountains of the Central Divide run down to encroach on the coastline. The western end of San Blas, by contrast, is generally flat and extends far inland until it eventually rises into the mountains of the Bayano region, along the northern slope of which stretches the Udirbi forest park.

The population of San Blas is spread out among more than 50 small islands and 12 mainland villages. The majority of these communities are tightly packed mazes of thatched houses, and range in size from less than 100 inhabitants to more than 5,000. The island communities always lie within half a mile of the coast, thus facilitating access to agricultural land, fresh water, firewood, and building materials. Likewise, all of the San Blas mainland villages are located so as to permit regular exploitation of both land and marine resources, with the exception of three communities situated more than an hour's walk inland at the western end of the reserve.

Most Kuna farms are located along the rivers or near the coast. Here their cultivators practice a mix of slash-and-burn and plantation agriculture, extending their activities into the jungle only two or three kilometers thus facilitating transportation back and forth to the communities. The principal cultivated crops are bananas (many varieties), plantains, sweet manioc, yams, taro, corn, red rice, coconuts, squash, sugar cane, bread fruit, chili peppers, and peach palm. There are also numerous fruits, including oranges, lemons, mango, guava, guanabana, guayaba, anon, cashew, mamey, zapote, and papaya. Of these, the most important subsistence crops are bananas and manioc, both of which are cultivated with slash-and-burn technology, and coconuts, which are grown in plantations and constitute the only substantial cash crop in San Blas (see Stier 1979 for a description of Kuna agriculture).

Most protein consumed by the Kuna comes from the sea, and it is rare not to find fish included in the daily menu. The few San Blas Kuna who own guns occasionally shoot peccaries, tapirs, iguanas, monkeys, agoutis, pacas, curassows, guans, toucans, and parrots, but hunting is not a major source of food.

Two systems of landholding prevail. For individual plots, when a man clears a stretch of virgin jungle for a farm, that land is recognized as his property and may even be passed on to his children, following a pattern of bilateral inheritance (Howe 1974:40-41). Generally, these plots are scattered widely across diverse ecological zones either along the coast or a short distance inland. This gives most Kuna households access to a large variety of resources for domestic use. A slight variation on this general pattern is found on small islands planted with coconuts. Here, several siblings often retain collective ownership. Harvest rights are apportioned to each sibling for an agreed-upon number of months in serial fashion, and the property remains intact as a production unit (Ibid).

The second form of landholding consists of communal farms owned either by the entire community or by cooperative associations called *sociedades*. These farms are usually planted with cash crops or with those crops consumed during ritual festivals. In the case of cash crops such as coconuts, the families involved act like shareholders, dividing equally the fruits of their labor among themselves. Neither communal nor individually-held land is registered through the Panamanian legal system, and therefore no written titles exist.

Village political organization is embodied in an institution called the "gathering" (onmakket), or, as it is generally termed in Spanish, the *congreso*. The gatherings, held nightly in most Kuna communities, are presided over by a governing body consisting of at least three chiefs, a handful of "interpreters" for the chiefs, and a varied collection of village elders, ritual specialists, and politically active younger men with a strong voice in community affairs. These men--guardians of tradition, village business, and the tenor of moral conduct--meet in a centrally located "gathering house" to perform or listen to chants dealing with mythological themes or recent historical events, or to discuss village matters.

The gathering assembly is the "heart" of Kuna society (Howe 1980:10), for it integrates the community as a unit and, at the same time, renders decisions on all issues of importance. The Kuna stress that all of the ritual specialties represented in the gatherings are organically integrated; the chants and speeches of village leaders often spin elaborate metaphors which characterize the "ideal" Kuna community (Howe 1974:235-238, 1977). The remarkable cohesion thus created within Kuna villages, as well as in the entire tribe in times of crisis, is their strongest weapon in the fight to maintain autonomy in the face of the steady advancement of outsiders.

The most striking feature of Kuna society is that it has survived. After centuries of contact, often violent, with Europeans, the Kuna have managed to wander into the 20th century with their cultural and political autonomy intact, which singles them out as members of a small and ever-dwindling minority among Latin American Indian groups. Their native language continues in strong force, although many of the men speak Spanish or English, and the younger children in most villages now learn Spanish in government schools. Traditional political organization and ritual, although they have been modified considerably in recent years, remain powerful and cohesive elements in Kuna society. Cooperative labor is still pervasive in Kuna society. Beyond this, the Kuna consider themselves members of a unique ethnic group and value their cultural identity highly.

At the same time, however, a closer look at the contemporary Kuna brings into focus a picture of massive change. Pressures from inside and outside Kuna society have been increasing rapidly over the past several decades and are now opening inroads into the insular existence the Kuna have led for centuries. While the particular pattern of change varies widely from community to community, the process is present everywhere and has made an indelible imprint on the entire San Blas population. To return to the old ways would be impossible. The problem is not, therefore, that change will occur, but rather the form it will take and the degree to which the Kuna can ensure that it coincides with their interests (see Holloman 1969; Stier 1979; Howe 1974; Chapin 1983).

To confront inevitable change and increased contact with the outside, the Kuna have modified their traditional political institutions to more effectively control potential threats to their sovereignty over the San Blas region. This was the stimulus for the Udirbi project.

The Threat to Kuna Autonomy

The Kuna have only recently come to take up residence on the open coast of San Blas, having moved from the protective cover of the jungle, village by village, during the course of the last 150 or so years. When the Spaniards made their appearance in the early 16th century, all Kuna villages were situated inland and the bulk of the population was spread out across the isthmus as far as the Pacific coast (Torres de Arauz 1972, 1980; Howe 1974:12-13; Stier 1979). To this day, rivers and settlements throughout the Darien bear Kuna names, although they have long since been abandoned by the Kuna. Kuna communities were thriving in the mountainous Bayano area, and the Kuna most likely controlled much of the zone extending north to the Atlantic coast as far as Acla.

When the Spaniards established themselves at the spot which today is Panama City and began scouring the Pacific side of the isthmus for gold, many of the Indians were driven into the thick humid forests of the north, attempting to escape epidemics of recently introduced diseases, conscription into the mines, and outright extermination by the white intruders. The Kuna's initial appearance on the Atlantic coast was no doubt spurred by the trade goods offered by pirates and traders who operated in the region during the 17th and 18th centuries and found refuge in the small coral reefs and labyrinthine mangrove estuaries (Joyce 1933:xi-lxvii; Stout 1947:51-54). By the middle of the 19th century, when the era of piracy had passed, the Kuna started transferring their villages to the islands, which were largely free of the insects and diseases which abound on the mainland.

At present, the San Blas reservation stretches in a thin band along the Atlantic coast, averaging less than 20 kilometers in width. The area inhabited by the Kuna is restricted to the islands and the coastal strip; farms become more and more distant and sparse as one travels into the foothills. The jungle leading up the northern slopes of the Central Divide is virgin territory dominated by the full growth of rainforest vegetation with a more or less continuous cover of heavy mist running along the tufted green furrows marking the numerous irregular valleys that disappear into the alluvial plains of the coast. It is a buffer zone inhabited solely by wild animals and occasional Bayano Kuna who travel across the divide to hunt. This geographical isolation, so important to the Kuna's ability to maintain their cultural and political autonomy, is presently threatened.

All of the Indians of Panama have lost land since the arrival of the Spaniards. The Guaymi of western Panama, victims of encroachment for hundreds of years, are presently locked in a set of interrelated battles with multinational and local political interests in an attempt to recuperate a portion of their lost territory and have it officially recognized as a comarca (CEASPA 1983; Young 1971; Gjording 1981). The Embera, whose territory stretches along the Darien Gap into the Choco region of Colombia, have been threatened only recently, when the construction of the Panamerican Highway in the mid-1970s increased to a dizzying speed the pace of colonization and logging. All that saves this region's remaining forest from becoming an extensive cattle pasture is the safety zone that has been thrown up to keep hoof and mouth disease from spreading up into Mexico and the United States from South America. Caught between powerful forces of change and special interests which tend to view the native inhabitants much as they do trees and animals, the Embera are trying, like the Guaymi, to secure a reservation for themselves.

The Kuna, on the other hand, were granted their reservation in the 1930s, and have not been overrun by multinationals, large cattle ranchers, peasants searching for new lands, or lumbering interests. The Comarca of San Blas is still intact, largely because it is geographically remote and inaccessible, and the Kuna are the sole owners.

By the 1960s, however, the Kuna had become faintly aware of the advance of alien machetes. While travelling in small planes from Panama City into the western corner of San Blas, many Kuna noted scattered patches of cattle pasture on the southern side of the Central Divide approaching the thick forest which marked the downslope of the Comarca. As the years passed, the grasslands grew in size and number and began to merge, all the time moving closer to the border of the reservation.

Visible encroachment was compounded by the Panamanian government's discussion of a road which would link the coast of San Blas to the rest of Panama. Although there had been talk of the road since the 1950s, it was not until the early 1970s that a preliminary trail was cut across the Divide from a place called Cerro Azul (near Chepo) to Mandinga, a flat, swampy stretch of land adjacent to the Gulf of San Blas. At that time, the people of the Carti region, who stood to be most directly affected by the road, were extremely ambivalent about the project.

On the one hand, they saw the advantages of cheaper and more reliable transportation to and from Panama City. During the early 1970s, more and more Kuna youths were travelling to Panama to study and work. In addition, there was an increasing dependence on commercial goods. Transportation costs were also on the rise and the existing means of transportation--small planes and infrequent launches out of Colon--were unable to carry the volume of goods demanded by the Kuna population. The road was seen as a way to solve this problem.

On the other hand, the Kuna were fearful that a road would open up the reservation to all manner of noxious cultural and economic penetration. There was heated discussion, especially among the older, more traditional Kuna, about the dangers of drugs, theft, prostitution, and a host of other contaminating vices that would, they believed, surely find their way into the Comarca if the flow of traffic could not be controlled. Beyond this was the matter of tourism, which has been a double-edged sword for the Kuna in recent years.

The Kuna are a major tourist attraction in Panama. The traditional mola blouses of the women are known and prized art objects throughout the world. Beginning in the 1960s, and escalating considerably during the 1970s, tourists came into the Carti region in small planes and, later, large cruise ships carrying over 500 passengers. In recent years, however, visitors have been carefully managed by tour guides who find it in their best interest not to offend the Kuna. Foreigners are herded about the islands in orderly fashion, spending little time and often large amounts of money buying molas and carved wooden dolls, and taking photographs. Those who spend the night in San Blas are housed in small hotels, all of which are owned and run by Kuna, and their activities are easily supervised.

Some Kuna feared that with the road, the flood of tourists would be unchecked. Women in scanty bikinis would run about corrupting the morals of the youth, and powerful hotel companies would muscle their way into San Blas,

taking a good share of the tourist trade out of Kuna hands. Concern over control of the tourist trade was substantiated by an incident which occurred at the same time that the road was being discussed. In the mid-1970s, the Instituto Panameño de Turismo (IPAT), with backing from the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB), attempted to force a reported \$50 million hotel project on the people of Carti. The hotel itself, which was to be built on an artificial reef and (in at least one projection) would have space to house as many as 1166 tourists, was to be complemented with an airport capable of receiving international flights by Fall 1979. For months, Panama's newspapers announced the numerous benefits to be reaped by the Kuna and repeated that the entire Kuna Nation was strongly in favor of the project. The Kuna, however, rose up in unison and threatened violence if the feasibility team set foot in San Blas. The entire enterprise was abandoned. This victory, which had the immediate effect of keeping the tourist business in Kuna hands, gave the Kuna a sense of their political strength, which had been growing during the 1970s.

The second reason the Kuna opposed the road was the fear that it would open the Comarca both to land-hungry peasants from the interior provinces of Panama and to wealthy landowners with political leverage. In the early 1970s, the Kuna had no means of blocking such incursions; cattle farmers already had broken through the legal limits of the reservation along the lower valleys northwest of Chepo. An all-weather road would open the gates to an even more massive encroachment by Panamanian farmers.

By the late 1970s, however, things had changed considerably in San Blas, causing the Kuna's scales to tip sharply in favor of the road project. Population pressures in the Comarca and increasing economic dependence on Panama had provoked a substantially greater flow of people and goods to and from the islands, while transportation costs had risen sharply. But the critical factor in this change of attitude was the development of a palpable political power base within the Comarca. This gave the Kuna far greater confidence in their ability to control some of the negative consequences of the road. Earlier, they had been powerless to confront, much less contain, the forces poised on their border. They now had, for the first time since Panama's independence in 1903: (1) their own *intendente* (roughly translated as governor); (2) Kuna representatives to the National Legislative Assembly, who had been elected to represent the three political sectors of San Blas; and (3) special status in the eyes of Panama's government leaders for the Kuna General Congress (composed of representatives from each San Blas community and presided over by three supreme chiefs (*caciques*)). Working together, the *intendente*, the three representatives, and the General Congress had evolved into an effective negotiating force at the national level. Their power had been demonstrated in the successful fight with IPAT over the hotel project. After that, the Kuna continued to have considerable success in other negotiations with the Panamanian government. Consequently, the Kuna felt confident of their ability to control or, at least, to limit and direct the course of events within the reservation. With this new sense of security, they began to see how the road could be turned to their advantage. It would establish a needed link, and allow the Kuna to colonize the border area without being isolated from the rest of San Blas. Previously, all farming was done within a short distance of the coastal villages, and the Kuna seldom ventured into the thick band of virgin forest stretching south from the outermost farms to the border of the Comarca. They had been unwilling to settle this area because it was so inaccessible; any settlers would be cut off from the regular contact they now enjoy with neighboring villages. The road would permit such contact.

Kuna colonization is essential because distant territory is difficult to defend. While the entire reservation is protected legally from incursion by non-Kuna farmers, there is considerable opposition to this law from those large and small farmers who have moved recently into the border zone from the Pacific side of the isthmus. Panama's political leaders have strong ethnic and cultural roots in the interior provinces and identify closely with farmers settling in the El Llano area. Furthermore, peasant groups have been gaining in strength over the past decade, and their pleas for more land are beginning to be heard and heeded. Their claims to the land are supported, at least tacitly, by the concept of the "social use" of land now current in Panama. This idea holds that land not being used for agriculture may be claimed by those willing to clear and exploit it. As no one farms the vast stretches of forest extending deep into the Kuna reservation, many Panamanians consider it their natural right to move in and take over.

The Kuna are aware of this attitude, and are convinced that if they do not settle the area along the reservation border, they will be unable to stem the flow of immigrants. While the government has backed the Kuna in several minor disputes with squatters, they feel that its sympathies lie with the non-Kuna farmers and are certain that the government will not continue supporting their right to the Comarca unless they put its land to some use.

The Udirbi Colony

To secure the Comarca's border, the Kuna are taking steps to establish a colony at the very spot where the road breaks into the reservation. The first efforts were led single-handedly by a Kuna youth, Guillermo Archibald, who had gained experience in agronomy at the agricultural school at Mandinga, a now defunct joint venture of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Peace Corps. Guillermo travelled into the mountains, often alone, and spent long periods trying to establish a Kuna presence through farming. In the summer of 1975, he took a group of volunteers from the Kuna Youth Movement (Movimiento de la Juventud Kuna) and several key Kuna political leaders into the area where, at a spot called Udirbi (named after a palm tree that grows in the area), they began to farm the land on a small scale. The following year they were given financial support by the Union de Trabajadores Kunas (UTK), an organization made up of salaried Kuna working throughout Panama. The UTK subsequently became the managerial and financial force behind the project, and was given official support by the Kuna General Congress. By the late 1970s, Udirbi was recognized as a Comarca-wide undertaking.

But to the dismay of the enthusiastic staff at Udirbi, agricultural activities met numerous obstacles and by 1981, there was little to show for their labors. Working during summer months, occasional groups of young Kuna volunteers from Panama City and a small body of paid employees had cleared slightly more than 30 hectares for crops and pasture. About half of this had reverted to fallow, and limited attempts to establish coffee and other bush or tree crops failed. A small herd of cattle is still kept near the settlement, but a chicken project had to be abandoned because of the high cost of commercial feed. In short, nothing they tried seemed to work.

At this point, a fortuitous event occurred. The El Llano-Carti road, which was being financed under a loan from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), came under the scrutiny of the Inspector General of the State Department, who ordered a study of the social and environmental

consequences of the road. This study served to inform AID of Kuna attitudes and actions at Udirbi and raised the issue of land use in an ecologically fragile area of virgin rain forest. Shortly thereafter, a meeting between the Kuna and AID officials was arranged. After a long and animated discussion, the Kuna put forward their position and asked for assistance. Thus, in early 1981, forestry technicians from a Central American regional research and training facility in Turrialba, Costa Rica (Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE)), on invitation by AID, surveyed the Udirbi region. Their assessment supported the Kuna's hard-learned lessons: the climate and soils of the region were unsuitable for agriculture and, particularly, livestock. Rainfall in the area is high and constant, with, at best, no more than a month or two of "dry" season during February and March. Every several years there is no appreciable break in the rains, making the burning phase of swidden agriculture impossible. The topography of the region is severe, marked by precipitous hill slopes. And a thin, extremely fragile cap of topsoil covers what appear to be predominantly yellow and red clays. The Kuna had already seen that their traditional farming practices, transplanted from the coast of San Blas, would not function in Udirbi, and the CATIE technicians could suggest no alternative farming technology for the region. They were convinced that it should be left as primary forest.

This assessment was supported by observations close to Udirbi. Subsistence agriculture and livestock raising along the Panamanian side of the El Llano-Carti road has already caused considerable environmental devastation, and offered a picture of what would happen if development were uncontrolled. For the first ten or so kilometers inland from El Llano, land bordering the road has been stripped clean of vegetation, extending a kilometer or more on both sides. Cattle pasture predominates, interspersed with small subsistence plots. Pasture expansion, which is proceeding at an ever-increasing rate, has the following dynamic. First, small peasant farmers move into the region and clear forest for their farm plots. However, subsistence crops are merely a prelude to cattle ranching, which is the ultimate goal of the settlers. After one or two croppings, secondary growth stubble appears and is then cleared for cattle pasture. Finally, most settlers sell their "improved" pasture to large landowners, and move deeper into the forest to continue the process. The forest is progressively encroached upon and scraped clean.

A drive along the El Llano-Carti road reveals the stark contrast between the stripped land on the Panamanian side and the thick, unbroken forest inside the Kuna reservation. During the dry season, the cattle pastures are brown and eroded, with clear blue sky overhead, while the jungle remains moist and tufted with mist and low-hanging clouds. Frequently, the meteorological border conforms precisely with the vegetational frontier, standing dramatically like a before/after set of photographs. Every year, forest clearing becomes more extensive on the Panamanian side, as increasing numbers of landless peasants stream out of the overpopulated interior provinces of Veraguas, Herrera, Cocolé, Los Santos, and Chiriquí. The Panamanian government does nothing to stop this destructive process; in fact, colonization is promoted by politicians as "expansion of the agricultural frontier."

The CATIE visit convinced the Kuna of the ultimate destructiveness of this policy. The technicians' scientific explanations made it clear why traditional subsistence agriculture had failed so thoroughly at Udirbi. However, while the idea of leaving the forest untouched seemed like ecologically sound advice, there still remained the matter of demonstrating to the Panamanian government

that the area was in some manner being utilized. CATIE technicians noted that the region was biologically rich and vitually unstudied. Because of its accessibility--two hours from Panama City by car--they broached the idea of creating a forest park and wildlife refuge with facilities for "scientific tourism." The Panama-based Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) was subsequently approached by the Kuna for technical and financial assistance. The Smithsonian has considerable experience in this area. For years it has managed the well-known Barro Colorado Island in the Panama Canal's Gatun Lake as a biological reserve and scientific research station. Before long, enthusiasm for the development of a Kuna park began to grow among both the Kuna and the scientists.

In mid-1982, a \$45,000 grant was secured from the AID to carry out preliminary studies of the Udirbi region and train Kuna at CATIE headquarters in Turrialba, Costa Rica. Consequently, three Kuna involved in the technical direction of the project received four month training courses in Costa Rica (two concentrated on forest park management and planning, the third in agroforestry). CATIE technicians also gave several short courses to Kuna working on the project in Panama.

During this time, the Kuna, working closely with CATIE staff, developed a comprehensive project design which they submitted to the Inter-American Foundation. CATIE provided much of the technical assistance in forest park planning and management. The Kuna, however, managed the organizational aspects of the project, defined the objectives, and then controlled all arrangements for project personnel. Thus, although the proposal was a collaborative effort, the Kuna made a large and significant contribution to the project's design, particularly after the Kuna project director, Guillermo Archibald, returned from his three-month course in park management at CATIE.

How is it that the Kuna so readily accepted the idea of setting up a forest park, rather than seeking ways to exploit its resources, however limited these might be? Normally, one of the most difficult tasks of environmentalists in Latin America is to convince farmers that certain forest areas are best left alone. Unless direct economic benefits can be demonstrated, ecological arguments about watershed protection, erosion control, and the like are seldom persuasive.

The Kuna, however, are not experiencing extreme pressure on agricultural land along the alluvial coastal plain. So there is no need to expand into the foothill slopes of the Continental Divide. Moreover, the Kuna have never farmed the mountain area, and therefore are not giving anything up. Also, the small group at Udirbi had been trying to make a go of it with a wide variety of crops, with miserable results.

Beyond these practical experiences, Kuna culture already contained the concept of a "botanical park." Areas of virgin jungle are common on the mainland adjacent to nearly all Kuna communities, often on land which is well-suited for agriculture. According to the Kuna, these untouched zones are the domains of potentially malevolent spirits who are prone to rise up in anger and attack entire communities if their homes are disturbed. No farming is allowed within the boundary of the spirit domain, and certain of the larger trees may not be chopped down. The Kuna believe that the spirits string their clothes lines in the branches of these trees and become justifiably furious when they are felled. To do so risks a spirit attack of epidemic proportions. These

"spirit sanctuaries" are true botanical parks, which may be used by medicine men to gather herbs (Chapin 1983:62-103).

In early 1983, the Kuna, working through the Unión de Trabajadores Kunas (UTK), successfully presented the Inter-American Foundation with an ambitious proposal for the development of what has come to be known as the Research Project for the Management of the Primitive Areas of Kuna Yala (Proyecto de Estudio para el Manejo de Areas Silvestres de Kuna Yala (PEMASKY). With the Inter-American Foundation, co-contributors to the three year project are CATIE, the Tropical Science Center (Costa Rica), STRI, AID, the Panamanian Agency of Renewable Natural Resources (RENARE), various U.S. Armed Forces bases in the Canal area, and World Wildlife Fund. During this period, the Kuna themselves will be contributing close to \$150,000 in cash and in kind to project activities. The entire program has a budget of close to \$1 million.

PEMASKY was formally launched during the last months of 1983. Since then project staff have been involved in planning activities, negotiating contracts with participating agencies, and coordinating preliminary studies of the region. PEMASKY's staff divide their time among an office in Panama City, Udirbi, and the San Blas islands. Guillermo Archibald, the Technical Director, and Brian Houseal, an American contracted by the Kuna from CATIE to help with planning and management aspects of the park, supervise a "planning team" of five young Kuna professionals, plus a Panamanian biologist with the Smithsonian who will work half-time on the park.

During the first two years of the project, scientists from STRI, CATIE, and the Tropical Science Center will undertake a series of studies: inventories of the flora and fauna of the region, land use capability mapping, forestry inventories, aerial photography and topographical surveys for demarcation of the border. Some of these are already underway, in collaboration with Udirbi staff.

These studies will serve as preliminary planning tools upon which the core facilities at Udirbi will be designed and built. At present, the colony consists of two crude buildings fashioned from a mixture of native materials and sheets of cast-off corrugated iron. By the end of 1984, these rustic facilities will be improved to accomodate scientists willing to rough it to pursue their research. More permanent and comfortable facilities to house 40-50 visitors and Kuna park personnel will soon follow. They will be built on a high knoll at the original Udirbi site, with a clear—and very striking—view down across the foothills and the coastal plains to the bay of Carti, more than 20 kilometers distant. Houseal, who is also a landscape architect, is working closely with the park's Kuna architect to develop a design for the new buildings which will combine cultural sensitivity with the needs of visiting scientists and tourists.

Udirbi Park itself, which will encompass an area of approximately 20 square kilometers, will be left completely virgin except for nature trails and observation sites and, eventually, several sub-stations for scientific research. While the initial focus of the project is on the immediate area surrounding the road, plans will be developed later to demarcate the entire reservation border, a distance of more than 250 kilometers. Kuna forest rangers are being trained to maintain the park and patrol the demarcated border.

While the Kuna are energetically moving forward with these activities, they are planning each step of the way cautiously and meticulously. In May 1984, a group of ten Kuna—including two caciques and members of the project staff—spent a week in Costa Rica, which has perhaps the most highly developed park system in Latin America and consequently offers an excellent array of models ranging from semi-luxurious to no-frills functional.

The purpose of this visit was to assess the various facilities for tourists and scientists, and discuss alternative strategies for the installations the Kuna will eventually build at Udirbi. Interestingly, the Kuna were particularly impressed by the Monte Verde forest reserve, which is managed by another unique ethnic group, the Quakers. The Kuna were quick to note a number of structural similarities they could easily identify with: the Monte Verde park covers a mountain ridge, sits in a cloud forest and serves as protection for the Quakers' cattle farms which stretch out below. This corresponds to the location of Udirbi along the crest of the Continental Divide, with the Kuna farms in the foothills and the alluvial plains near the coast. Furthermore, the Monte Verde Quakers produce a variety of handicrafts for tourists, as do the Kuna. During this trip, the Kuna moved about like discriminating shoppers, picking and choosing ideas they considered appropriate for their region and culture, all the time making comparisons and searching for elements that might fit in to the Udirbi park.

Conclusion

The Udirbi enterprise is unique in its conception, scope, and design. What began almost a decade earlier as a spontaneous yet vaguely conceived indigenous effort to protect the reservation from invasion has become a full-fledged and complex campaign aided by prestigious national and international allies. Although the scientists and the Kuna start from radically dissimilar world views and consequently have become involved in the park for very different reasons, both groups are discovering that they converge on a single goal: preservation of the virgin forest along the crest of the Continental Divide. For scientists, the Udirbi park offers a large expanse of previously unstudied land with a tremendous variety of unique flora and fauna, including as many as 80 species in danger of extinction. The Kuna, by contrast, view the park as a means of protecting their homeland, including its natural forest cover, which constitutes their livelihood and symbolizes their identity as a people. In the end, both groups are well served by the collaborative effort at Udirbi.

However, the most noteworthy aspect of the park is that it is being managed and directed by the Kuna themselves. While they fully realize that much of the technical assistance must be imported, they have no intention of allowing outsiders to dominate the project. Project staff see their dependence on non-Kuna technicians as temporary. Thus, they work closely with all visiting scientists and technicians in order to learn the skills necessary to run the park by themselves.

This attitude, so typically Kuna, was graphically illustrated in May 1983, when the Udirbi park was discussed at length during a Kuna General Congress on the island of Tupile, in the Carti region. While assembled village leaders gave their unanimous support to the park, the matter of the initial presence of so many foreigners soon arose. At this point, one of the chiefs came to his

feet and said that he foresaw no problem, for the tradition of accepting knowledge from foreigners already existed in Kuna culture. In the beginning, he said, when Tat Ipe (the Sun) and his siblings came to the Earth, they were confronted by all manner of unruly spirits which were spreading disease and pestilence with abandon. Since none of the inhabitants at that time knew how to control the illness-causing spirits, the brothers set about learning medicines and chants to combat them. Some of these they learned from the Great Father through the medium of dreams. Others, however, learned directly from the dangerous spirits themselves. Tat Ipe and his brothers customarily approached them in friendly fashion with gifts of tobacco, chile peppers, and barbasco (fish poison), receiving in return secret knowledge that would enable them to successfully combat the spirits and bring them under control (see Chapin 1983:71-74).

"In this same tradition," he concluded, "at Udirbi we Kuna are learning the secrets of the foreigners so that we can arm ourselves to protect San Blas." His argument, based as it was on the bedrock of Kuna mythology, was greeted with a bemused ripple of approval throughout the congress hall.

Of course, the Udirbi park cannot yet be held up as a "success story." With preliminary studies being undertaken, it is still in the planning stages and project staff have been laboring with barely a year of solid financial and technical support. However, the general lines for the park have been defined, the threat from peasant farmers and cattle ranchers is rapidly being defused, and all parties involved with the park are working steadily and enthusiastically. The Kuna nation has put its collective energy behind the project with both words and substantive action; volunteer labor has appeared in quantities that far outstrip earlier hopes, and as more and more activities are successfully carried out, the momentum grows.

Udirbi Park, with its singular mix of scientific and ethnic interests, will be watched carefully over the next few years. Whether it will be entirely successful, or whether similar collaborative arrangements can be made in other parts of the world are questions that still await answers. However, one principle is already clear: the well-being of the indigenous peoples now living in the remaining tropical forests will ultimately be a far more important consideration in determining success than the concerns of environmental scientists or enlightened government policy makers. If the Kuna were not convinced that Udirbi Park is beneficial to their interests, it never would have been born.

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CIDOB'S ROLE IN THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE EASTERN BOLIVIAN INDIANS

Jürgen Riester

Introduction

Until 1976, no organization focused exclusively on the problems of eastern Bolivian Indians. Some Catholic priests, on their own, worked to improve the situation of particular groups of Indians, but issues concerning those of the entire region never were raised. Nor did the popular organizations which represented peasants, workers, or miners seriously consider organizing Indian peoples as unique social and cultural formations. At best they regarded Indian groups as relics, as traces of archaic lifestyles, and therefore hoped to incorporate them into one or another political party or into labor unions such as the Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB-- Sole Federated Union of Bolivian Rural Workers). However, neither the organizers nor their statements reached the majority of eastern Bolivia's Indians, who live isolated from urban centers. For most Indians life continued largely unchanged; where previously the landlord dominated their lives, that role was assumed by white merchants and traders who lived either in Indian communities or in the nearby towns and regional markets.

This situation changed in September 1982, when the Committee of Indian Peoples and Communities of the Bolivian Oriente (CIDOB) was voted into existence, thereby formally incorporating the indigenous communities of Chiquitanos, Guarayos and Ava-Chiriguanos. Managed by these communities, CIDOB works on concrete problems, renewing confidence and opening new chapters in a history which until recently has been a sad one for the Indians of the Oriente. Now, for the first time there are real possibilities for the Indians' socio-economic development, while still permitting the continuation of their unique values (see Cardoso de Oliveira 1980; Colombres 1982). For example, in Lomerío de Ñuflo de Chávez (northeast of the department of Santa Cruz) they formed an agricultural production center which, in 1984, will utilize more than 700 hectares. And there are now programs for animal husbandry, marketing, legal training and accounting.

This paper first reviews the general situation of the Indian in eastern Bolivia and then shifts to a series of personal narratives which chronicle the evolution of CIDOB. These are followed by a brief description of CIDOB's structure and organization.

The Bolivian Oriente: A Brief Ethnographic and Historical Overview

The Bolivian Oriente (eastern lowlands) is the home of more than 40 ethnic groups distributed mainly in 3 departments--Santa Cruz, Beni, and Pando. Current estimates of the Oriente's Indian population are in the range of 130,000 people.

In the department of Santa Cruz, in the areas east of Chuquisaca and east of Tarija, where most of the Indian population of the Oriente resides, the estimated population is 85,000. Here dwell the Ayoréode (pop.2,500-3,000/Zamuco language), the Chiquitanos (pop.35,000/Chiquito language), the Chiriguauno - Ava and Izoceño (pop.40,000/Guaraní language), the Guarayos (pop. 7,000/Guaraní language) and the Mataco (pop.1,500/Mataco-Macan language). Each of these ethnic groups has had a turbulent history of contact with the national society.

The Chiquitanos

The Chiquitanos' territory has remained relatively unchanged since the beginning of contact with the national society. The initial change took place in 1691, when the Chiquitanos were relocated into the area they presently occupy through *reducciones*, Indian villages created by Jesuit missionaries. When the Spanish crown subsequently took charge of the property after 1767, the Chiquitanos, never trained to administer the property, were seized forcibly and used either as cheap wage laborers or slaves on government agricultural estates. Similar patterns characterized the early Republican era, except that private estates replaced those of the crown. Beginning in the 1880s, thousands of Chiquitanos disappeared when they were forced, through a system of debt-peonage to individual rubber merchants, into the forests to tap rubber trees. Later, many lost their lives in the Chaco War with Paraguay (1932-35).

The 1953 Agrarian Reform Laws enacted after the Bolivian revolution of 1952 did little to improve the Indians' miserable economic condition. While, for the most part, the *patrones* [non-Indian "bosses" of an Indian population] disappeared from the Chiquitania, the Chiquitanos' dependence on market oriented production increased. Their living conditions are among the worst in the nation and infant mortality is the highest in Bolivia (Bordecruz 1979). Those few socio-economic development projects which exist in the region are, in general, dominated by economic concerns, with few educational and other training programs. Although there is no indigenous participation in the planning, elaboration, execution, and evaluation of the projects, their failure is explained away by such common statements as: "Those campesinos are lazy and don't know how to work."

The Chiriguanos¹

The Chiriguanos' recent history has been a long struggle for cultural and territorial independence. Their last violent but unsuccessful uprising, a messianic one, occurred at the end of the 19th century while they were being stripped of their lands and forced to move into a *reducción*. During the Republican Era (post-1825), Bolivian national frontiers were extended into the Oriente. In recent years, petroleum exploitation and colonization have increased the pressure on the Chiriguanos. Both factors were used to reduce their officially recognized territory and the extensive traditional habitat they utilized.

Despite the loss of much of their land, the group developed a survival strategy based on isolating themselves from efforts to convert them to campesinos. The Chiriguano thus maintain their traditional organizations, culture and fundamental ethnic identity. This permits their persistence as a people and, more importantly, is the basis for their autonomous development within the context of Bolivian national society. Chiriguano unity has been preserved throughout their changing history, even increasing as a result of contact with the national society. The experience, repeated annually, of seeking wage labor from large landowners during the sugar cane harvest, and similar relations with the "white" society, have encouraged the Chiriguano to support their own values, and to organize their lives independently within their own patrón-free territory. Thus, unlike other Indian groups, the Chiriguano control much of their social and even economic involvement with the larger society, while preserving their cultural identity and traditional social structure. To illustrate:

1) The Chiriguano have a clear understanding of the relationships produced by economic dependence (for example, they understand the nature of their involvement as wage laborers in the sugar cane harvest).

2) Their defense mechanisms, developed over centuries, fall back on and reinforce their autochthonous socio-cultural values.

3) The Chiriguano's awareness that the tactic of retreating is no longer sufficient illustrates a positive outlook for the future. They now know, and evaluate regularly, the fact that the larger society's socio-economic forces have moved so fast in recent years, and possess such force and future expansive power, that they threaten to engulf their group. The Chiriguano see the development of their economic potential and the improvement of their education as their only way to confront this situation.

The Guarayo²

The Guarayo inhabit the northeast sector of the department of Santa Cruz, an area set up for them in 1835 by Catholic missionaries, principally Italian, German and Austrian Franciscans. On numerous occasions the Guarayo attempted to return to their forest homeland, with little success. By the late 19th century, however, they were actively looking for residence on the missions, seeking protection from the rubber traders who captured thousands of Indians throughout the Amazon Basin and forced them to work in the forest, tapping rubber trees. In 1939, the Guarayo missions were secularized and the Catholic priests relinquished their power to the state. The protection provided by the church—with its pros and cons—ended, and the Guarayo suddenly were forced to confront the national society. Although the Guarayo have made modest advances recently, the anthropologist Nordenskiöld correctly wrote that, the Guarayos' missions were "golden cages; golden in that they provided physical survival, cages in that they offered protection through the missionaries and thus prevented any preparation of the Indians for contact with the national society" A few years later the missions collapsed economically, forcing many Guarayo to migrate to the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. Today their ethnic consciousness is limited largely to the boundaries of their particular villages.

The Ayoréode³

The Ayoréode were only in sporadic contact with Bolivian national society until 1948. From then until 1975, the majority of the group lived in or near North American Fundamentalist Protestant missions in Bolivia and Paraguay, where they were known as the Mora. In Bolivia the Ayoréode are one of the smallest Indian groups; Cordecruz (1982) estimates that approximately 2,000 Ayoréode reside in Bolivia. Combined population estimates for both Bolivia and Paraguay are 5,000.

Traditionally the Ayoréode were nomads of the arid Gran Chaco, feared warriors known for their bravery. The Ayoréode of today are the rather sad result of an acculturation directed by fundamentalist missionaries: many are toothless, clothed in rags, filled with parasites, and housed where garbage encroaches on everything. Landless, with few economic alternatives, they work as woodcutters in the forest. Ethnic identity at the present time is accorded far less importance than individual progress, although some individuals have expressed a desire to revitalize their cultural identity.

Aspects of the Bolivian Oriente Indian's Legal Situation

Bolivian Indians are in much the same position under the law as other citizens. Only in certain cases is there a degree of special protection, based on their presumed ignorance of much of the law. For example, the Bolivian Penal Code (1972) accepts isolation from the national society as a reason to diminish the Indian's responsibility for certain offenses (Title II, Chap IV, art. 17). This legislation removes Indians of the lowland forests from punishment for certain offences and also permits differences in the severity of punishment "when the agent is an Indian lacking education and his ignorance of the law can be proven" (Ibid art. 40). No body of legislation clearly or specifically recognizes the legitimacy of the unique Indian legal systems which prevail within their territories, as these traditional codes relate to indigenous organizational structure, culture and economy.

Even such revolutionary legislation as the 1953 Agrarian Reform Laws (Ley 03464--Ley de Propiedad Agraria) focused almost exclusively on the situation of the highland peasants, effectively ignoring the problem of the Indians of the Oriente. Since these laws were conceived and promulgated basically with reference to the Quechua and Aymara Indians of the Andean region, considered as peasants or agricultural laborers, they focused on problems of land tenure and labor relations in the Altiplano. The laws had little impact on the Indians of the eastern lowlands because they failed to consider the dispersed Indian communities of this region and thus did not consider their need for extensive lands for swidden horticulture and hunting. In fact, the law opened opportunities for the establishment of the large cattle ranching estates and lumbering concessions which now threaten the existence of Oriente Indian communities as they become hemmed in by the large estates whose owners continually push Indians into less productive areas and then exploit them as a cheap source of labor in the production of sugar cane, cotton, lumber and cattle.

However, this legislation does state that "those jungle-dwelling groups of the tropical and subtropical lowlands who are in a 'savage' condition [estado salvaje] and have a primitive level of organization [una organización

primativa] remain under the protection of the state" (Title IX, Chap. III, art. 129). The state, however, will "assist duly authorized private institutions which undertake the responsibility for incorporating forest dwellers into national life" and provide them with "sufficient lands to resettle the newly congregated families (reducciones) and turn them into independent farmers" (Ibid). The law also states that "collectively owned property is inalienable. Those institutions in charge of tropical forest, reducciones will remain always under the control of the government" and "without injury to the traditional forms of land ownership in the tropical forest, those organizations . . . will promote systems of cooperative labor" (Ibid, Title IX, Chap. III, art. 130).

In general, the Bolivian legal system not only does not promote the autonomous development of Indian groups but specifically accepts the tutelage of private institutions and protection by the state. There are no legal mechanisms which permit or encourage the independent development of Indian communities. The legislation, nevertheless, includes certain articles which have permitted the reinvindication of Indian lands. One of them defines the Indian community as one which "is composed of campesino families who, calling themselves Indians and living as aggregates, are owners of an area legally recognized as community land, either by virtue of title granted by the colonial government or the Republic, or through traditional occupation" (Bolivia 1953 Title IX, Chap. I, art. 123c). Some communities have been able to defend their lands by invoking this decree. In the same manner, some have been able to get their traditional authority structure recognized (for example, the captaincy (capitanía) of the Chiriguano - Izoceño). Law No. 03732 (March 1954) also protects Indian community land, stating that "those Indian lands which, since 10th January 1900 had been turned into private rural land holdings, provided this situation can be proven, are declared to be restored to the communities, without indemnification." There is, therefore, a legal opening for independent efforts at local organization and development.

Bolivian Indians and National Life

After the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) party took power in 1952, the Bolivian government tried to incorporate Indians into the national political life. It did so through a general grant of universal suffrage extended to the entire population, not through any particular program which favored ethnic groups. At the same time the government also worked to channel Indian political activities, and thus win their votes. For example, shortly before an election politicians often passed out bottles of liquor, inviting people to join them for a drink and then indicating where to mark the ballots. After the elections, the politicians disappeared from the countryside. Subsequent political groups or parties usually have maintained the same approach towards Indians. Even the most isolated Indians of eastern Bolivia thus recognize that no one really considered including them within the national political arena. So, by and large, Indians indiscriminately reject all political parties and politicians, including those which genuinely seek to support them. Even these parties, however, often lack an understanding or appreciation of the uniqueness of Indian groups. Consequently, one often hears Indians make statements such as:

We can't expect anything from politicians, they just want to use us once again, as they've done so many times before. Our fathers died in the Chaco War, our sons in guerilla warfare.

. . . What do we gain from politics? Nothing! Our politics is not done by sitting at a table and talking, rather by swinging an axe, pushing a shovel or clearing farm land.

Past experience has left most Oriente Indian groups with a negative image of political patronage which will be difficult for parties to erase. Likewise, since labor unions usually are linked to national political parties, the majority of the Indians also refuse to affiliate themselves with such groups, saying that they do not represent the Indians and that they pursue interests unrelated to their concerns.

The experience of the labor unions in the Izozog region clearly demonstrates this problem. Encouraged by progressive Catholic priests to join labor unions, the Izozeños suddenly confronted an alien political world. The union leaders spoke of national and international solidarity when collaboration was weak to nonexistent in the region. The language used by the unions was highly politicized, incomprehensible to most Indians. At no time did the unions suggest Indian self-determination, so all union work collapsed like a house of cards the moment the organizers left Indian territory. The idea of affiliating with a labor union still has not taken root in Indian communities. Nor are union organizers and their outside supporters listening to the Indians. Political discussions usually take place without regard for the Indians or consideration of their uniqueness.

The failure of unions in the Oriente is not, as many have argued, due to a lack of time needed to introduce the idea of unionism. Indigenous communities did not respond enthusiastically to labor organizers simply because they saw the labor unions as yet another form of paternalism, another route by which others would try to take control over the Indians' lives without respecting their culture and without taking into consideration their particular socio-economic situation. The Indians expressed such ideas clearly in one of their meetings when they stated that they first want to analyze the national situation and then make contact with appropriate popular organizations, but stressed that the decision regarding any affiliation would remain in the hands of the Indians.

In contrast to political parties and labor unions, CIDOB is concerned primarily with Indian self-determination and with efforts to obtain adequate land, work, education, and health care. The organization has proposed to the Bolivian nation a multi-ethnic state in which socio-cultural differences would be respected and would be permitted to contribute to the enrichment of the nation. In this sense CIDOB's position in Bolivia is valid for Indian groups in neighboring nations as well.

Aspects of the Formation of CIDOB

The activities which eventually led to the formation of CIDOB began in September 1978, at a meeting organized by anthropologists from APCOB (Apoyo para las Comunidades Indígenas del Oriente Boliviano), who brought together for the first time Chiriguanos, Ayoréode and observers from other groups. Not surprisingly, they mainly discussed such concrete and immediate needs as the Ayoréode's housing problems and their need to obtain basic medicines. While the Ayoréode proposed, vaguely, the idea of forming a federation of Ayoréode workers, the need for more broad organization was not considered. Most

Ayoréodes' sole objective was to obtain money from foreign aid agencies for their specific group, and in several cases only for their particular family.

At this meeting some Ayoréode seemed to accept that their "subhuman existence" was somehow normal and that their living conditions could not be improved. Although this attitude exists among many oppressed peoples, others can show them that there are alternatives to the status quo. In eastern Bolivia the Chiriguano, an indigenous group whose social organization is still strong, gave the Ayoréode just such a push. Moreover, the meeting convinced the Chiriguano that the Ayoréode were not barbarians or even enemies of the Chiriguano. On the contrary, they realized that the economic, health and education situation of the Ayoréode was not noticeably different from their own.

The Chiriguano later saw the need to help the Ayoréode organize at a local level. In February 1981, they invited the Ayoréode to visit the region of the Izoceño-Chiriguano. In August of the same year the Izoceños visited the Ayoréode communities of Zapocó and Jinca. These meetings were followed by another in February 1982 in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. However, at this time problems had arisen within the incipient Ayoréode organization. The group was divided as whether or not to continue their alliance with the Chiriguano. Many Ayoréode had organized only to obtain funding from foreign assistance agencies, aid which they saw as a gift rather than as a means to promote their economic and socio-cultural self-determination. At the meeting some suggested that for Ayoréode should go one way and the Chiriguano another. Nevertheless, shortly after that meeting, the Chiriguano decided to extend their organizational activities to other eastern Bolivian groups — the Chiriguano-Ava, the Guarayo, Chiquitano, and the Mataco.

In addition to the meetings initiated in the Oriente, Chiriguano leaders attended meetings in other countries. They participated in a preliminary meeting in Lima where they discussed strategies for use in a large Amazonian Pact meeting to be held in Puerto Ayacucho, Venezuela, which the Bolivian Indians also attended. The Indians from other nations already had seen the need to unite at a local level; they had formed groups, cooperatives, federations and associations through which they developed common strategies and presented alternatives before a wide group of Indians. The Bolivian participants in the international meetings returned to their communities enthusiastic about creating genuine Indian organizations which would not be dominated by outsiders claiming to be the Indians' ideological leaders and taking the responsibility of organizing them.

In September 1982, the Indians called a meeting in Santa Cruz. More than 80 leaders participated, representing some 80,000 people. During three days of discussion of concrete problems facing Indians (i.e. land rights, education, health and wage labor), it was decided to form an Indian confederation. This was to be a one-year experiment to see if the new organization could survive. Chiriguanos were elected as president and vice president, since they already had years of experience. From 1982 until September 1983, they set up committees to defend their communal land, formed cooperatives, established centers for marketing and planted community gardens.

For the first time in the recent history of eastern Bolivia, Indians were developing their own pan-ethnic organization, one in which non-Indians were observers with neither voice nor vote. The Indians were fully conscious of

this, and those who formed CIDOB in 1982 also took on the task of revitalizing their respective local organizations. They understood "revitalization" as working on those economic and socio-cultural activities which reinforce their organizations, allowing them to demonstrate their ability to take their peoples' future into their own hands. They quickly reestablished a sense of confidence within their communities and local organizations, and proved highly sophisticated when forced to confront internal or external problems.

Despite this progress, the governing board of CIDOB soon saw the need to expand and allow other Indian groups to participate. They knew from experience that organizing is most effective when undertaken from within. CIDOB did not want to give too much authority or responsibility to any one ethnic group. Almost all of the Indian communities by this time had experimented with local self-organization. But all of the Indian groups were not equally aware of their common or individual problems, so some of these efforts failed because they incorporated concepts or organizational models which did not correspond to the Indians' personal lives or moved into areas where the particular Indians had no experience. Some communities lacked people whose vision extended beyond their own community; many could not see how they might break out of the cloistered existence produced by imposed, national socio-economic conditions. However, it was clear to those Indians who participated in the second meeting that they needed to develop their plans as a group, i.e. as indigenous peoples with common concerns. So at its second meeting in September 1983, new leaders were elected. After this 5 day meeting, a new board presented a clear program. This meeting drew the attention of government officials as well as those from the Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia, all of whom were present at the closing session.

During the meeting the Indians decided that nothing should prevent them from participating in labor unions, since the unions deal with problems shared by most indigenous groups. Nevertheless, they stated, Indian organizations confront more extensive problems, ones which affect their population as a whole. One aspect of these problems is economic, but social and cultural factors are equally important. In the past, labor unions in Indian territory failed because the structure and concerns were imposed from the outside. Now Indians could keep themselves informed independently of the plans and activities of the different peasant organizations and establish a dialogue or affiliate with them when they decided it was appropriate. As members of an Indian organization, they could present their position firmly and confidently to peasant organizations and could even become forces of new strength within them. The Indians who seek such links will become members of those labor unions which genuinely represent and defend their interests. CIDOB outlined several requirements for any participation:

1) Labor unions must accept the ethnic dimension of society, not look down on it.

2) "Culturalist" myopia should not be attributed to those concerned with the ethnic character of an organization. [ed note: "Culturalist" is a term used pejoratively to label those organizations which focus solely on the ideological and historic uniqueness of Indian groups and fail to acknowledge that they share a common social and economic condition with other segments of society who should be their logical allies]

3) Unions must accept the unique socio-economic and cultural values of the various ethnic groups (together the majority of the population) and allow this variety to contribute to the enrichment of the nation.

4) Labor unions must be free of any party and church influence since this would not permit their free and democratic development.

This paper has, thus far, outlined the difficult initial route traveled by Indian organizations from 1978 to 1982, the year in which CIDOB was established. The remainder of the paper considers critical aspects of that evolution by giving voice to the actors, with brief introductory statements by the author.

The Indian's Analysis--Statements from CIDOB's First General Meeting

The Struggle for Land

Indians state that what they have is not just a piece of land, but a territory which is worth fighting for, even dying for, since the only guarantee for group survival lies in the land itself. Nothing is of greater value to them than a secure land base; it is the future for their children. To own land and to live on it is a common goal of most of the Indians of the Bolivian Oriente. For some groups this struggle is not recent; it has paralleled the growth of Bolivia. Yet even the nomadic groups with a far different understanding of land tenure now see the need for securing title to their territory. The following statements, by a Chiriguano, illustrate how more experienced Indians can aid the less experienced.

Izoceño: It is our responsibility to see that our land is secured. I hope that you, my young brothers, will try to fight for your property and then work that land. The land is not meant to be left resting; we have to till it, otherwise we may lose it. To improve our land we are now trying to fence 170 hectares of it. It will be a place for our children. We are now debating over who should contribute the 40,000 pesos to secure the land title. Part of the money will come from the pockets of the Izoceños, but APCOB is contributing too. This is a great help.

Our grandparents couldn't undertake their struggle for land in this way; they suffered more than we do. The ricos [rich] kept them like animals. Each had a dueño [master] and he would make them work like donkeys. Our grandfathers searched for justice and security for our land but there was no place for them to go. They didn't know Spanish, and they didn't know anyone. There was no official who could help them. Even so, they once got together 10 leaders and headed for La Paz. But, when they came back, nothing! Just the same, they later pulled together 17 more men who went to La Paz again. Three people died in these trips.

These lands of the Izozog were obtained at a high price; for us the Izozog is worth more than gold. When the land of the Izozog was measured recently, the whites realized that they too had to have title to their land. So they offered 5 head of cattle to the capitán in exchange for some

land. But the capitán refused because he wanted his people's children to live in peace. You must secure the land and not sell it; then you should fence it with wire and posts. Later we will see if there is enough timber on it to set up a sawmill.

Who's benefitting now from all the work we did with the Ayoréode in Jinca and Zapocó? I think all of us are. I think that if all of us work together to truck the lumber and sell it, it will show our friends that they are being a great help to us [ed. note: APCOB helped them obtain the truck].

We have to demonstrate our right to the land to secure it. Otherwise, the señores near here will cut a road into it and they'll be the ones who exploit the wood. We're often in a big rush to do whatever they suggest because we really need the money. But you ought to ask, should we sell part of the land? Is, by some chance, Zapoco land meant to last only 5 years? No sirs! You are struggling for your children, so that they may live in peace. The ricos say that you struggle just as your grandfathers did, without realizing that you don't need the land. They say, "Cows don't need to own land, they don't own anything! Why should you want land?"

We Indians Are Approaching Each Other

It was difficult for Indians to approach each other. Even when there was a desire to bring together the different groups, many still lacked the organizational skills to bring it about. In eastern Bolivia the push to make it happen came from non-Indians who were familiar with the Indians' situation, but who did not press a particular political line.

Izocéño: In the past, whenever we met the Ayoréode, either we would kill them or they would kill us. Our grandfathers and grandmothers told us that we used to be a single group but later split up. Some went far into the bush. But Izocéños stayed together and maintained our past, that's why our organizations are more advanced than the other groups. As a group we settled in a place where there was work. So we were able to organize quickly. The Ayoréode haven't been so lucky. Although we are Izocéño Indians, we have won the respect of the "educated ones"--the white men and the bosses--because we are united.

I often see other communities who pay no attention or respect to their capitanes. But not us. People from far off know us and now come to see how we live. The Ayoréode also have several communities, and they need to unite them to make their work go well. Today the Izozog gives its hands in greeting to the Ayoréode and in particular to the people from Zapocó who have come to shake our hands. Today we are not enemies.

Ayoréode: I think that in former times our grandfathers were enemies. But that's not the case any more. Before, we really didn't know each other and there was a lot of fighting. Now the Izocéño people are our equals.

We haven't come here just for the ride or just to get to know you. We want to see how you live and how you work so that we can follow your example. What impresses me is the unity that exists in each community.

Izoño: Our communities were reestablished after the Chaco War [1932-1935], with the help of Bonifacio Barrientos and his brother Casiano Barrientos of the Izozog. Before that, we were a forgotten people. Many of us were taken prisoner during the Chaco War. We didn't know what was going on, so many of those who were taken prisoner never returned from Paraguay, and others settled in Argentina. Casiano wound up in Paraguay, but he returned to his land, even though Paraguayan authorities offered him land so that he could have stayed there to live. Unfortunately, on returning home, some people were suspicious and picked him up, saying he was a traitor to his native land. He was assassinated by one of them. This left only don Bonifacio Barrientos, with 400 men, to resettle on the Parapetí River and to form new communities.

He and other capitanes travelled around during all the land negotiations of that time. They finally went to La Paz to present the issue of the Izozog land to the national government, which sent a commission to see if what they were saying was true. Two months later the commission returned from the communities, saying that indeed their claims were true. That is how our fathers were able to get the land where we now live.

After the Chaco War there was still a lot of killing throughout the Izozog. Bonifacio was involved in it himself, but by God's will he survived. Later things quieted down and a school was started in the Izozog. But till now we haven't seen the results in our children; none of them are teachers yet. This is why we are saying that something must be wrong. We must continue to fight until we find some way of improving our children's lives. Our capitán wants to see some improvement for our people. Since I work closely with him, I've seen the great concern he has for his people. Also, people speak of unity, but that's something we really haven't achieved yet.

The people at APCOB have shown a lot of interest in helping us to resolve our problems. I remember the meeting we had in 1978, in the Don Bosco School in the city of Santa Cruz. We were a small group. There, I saw for the first time that we were shaking hands with those who had been our enemies. This organization, APCOB, has helped bring an end to our hostilities. Now we are brothers. In that meeting, representatives of several ethnic groups from the region participated, as well as 14 observers who came from Paraguay. Since then, we've been able to hold meetings in all the communities in the Izozog, where we can see the plans and strategies of each and look for solutions to their problems.

I once participated in an international meeting in Australia. I went, accompanied by my brother, to the 3rd General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous People. Although indigenous people from 27 countries participated in the meeting, I couldn't really understand why I participated in that large event. I heard ideas presented there by representatives of each country, and could see that they were educated people, professionals and people like that. They weren't like us, although they too called themselves indigenous peoples. When it was my turn to speak, I forgot what I was going to say. I just felt like crying as I said to myself, who am I? Then I thanked God and all those people, because it was due to them that I was able to be there representing the Indians of the Bolivian Oriente. That was a big step for me, because I was able to get to know things I hadn't known before.

After that, I participated in another meeting in Paraguay, through the help of the Swiss Red Cross. There, too, I saw that the Indians' only defense is to be organized and united, whether it be through corporate status (*personería jurídica*) or statutes pertaining particularly to Indians (*estatuto propio del indígena*). After that, we had a meeting in the Izozog, in which a representative of the indigenous group formed as a response to the Amazonian Pact participated. At that time, he invited us to attend a meeting in Lima. I went, and at that meeting I learned how the organization which he belonged to [AIDSESEP - see Smith in this volume] worked. Taking advantage of that trip we were able to visit our Peruvian brothers who live alongside the tributaries of the Marañón River, close to the Ecuadorian border. This helped me to understand the differences and similarities between us.

I have learned from all this that the best advice I can give to my *compañeros* is to organize themselves. For example, in this meeting we have gathered together 4 different language groups, Izoceños, Guarayo, Ayoréode and Chiquitano, and other brothers of ours who have come from the province of Luis Calvo de Tarija. We are thankful for their presence, because this is the only way we can form a stronger group.

We are not the only ones who are organizing; some of our other *compañeros*, the Mataco, are doing so, too, but couldn't participate with us. We regret their absence. We know that the authorities listen only to the loudest voice and that it will be ours. In some places there are brothers of ours who still live under the control of their *patrón*. To free ourselves from these *patrones* we are forming this organization [CIDOB]. But we aren't doing it for political reasons. Our life is not in politics; we live from working in our fields.

We Must Meet

Izoceño: Since the first meeting in Jinca we have seen some clear results. In the Izozog, the same people who before were slaves of the *ricos* of Charagua now have self-respect. This is the result of work, not of fighting. None of the men who lived at the expense of the poor now enter the Izozog. Now, no trucks enter the Izozog. Also, the authorities who want to impose a tax on arms can't do this now because we are united. If it happens to you, the Ayoréode, we are prepared to help you. We are poor, but like ants we will rise up together. And if they won't listen to us here, we'll have to go to them.

Ayoréode: I was there with Victor Vaca and others at the first meeting in the Izozog in 1978. I have never forgotten all that was said, everything that was agreed upon, and all the results of the meeting. During the meeting all the Ayoréode were in agreement with what both groups had decided.

We Must Unite

Meetings are important, but they are only the first step. Indians must actually unite. Unity for the Indian isn't rhetoric but rather a sphere of concrete action. This involves analyzing the past, when there was no unity among them, and when they were in a weaker position in dealing with any problem.

Izocoño: We need to unite Ayoréode and Chiriguano to support each other and exchange ideas. Before, whenever we saw each other, there was sure to be a fight. We were out to kill each other. Now, we get together to resolve our problems and to find a new way for ourselves.

Something is happening between the Ayoréode and us, a thing which has never happened before. A relationship has developed which couldn't have been brought about through the efforts of Bolivian authorities; the relationship between us is supportive. There has never been this sort of unity, even among those of us in the Izozog. We weren't united, each community had its capitán but there wasn't any overall unity. One farm, a single ranch and a single capitán is nothing to a person who has money. I will never be able to find the right words to thank our friends at APCOB for what they are doing, because it is through them that we have come to communicate with each other and establish a set of relationships. We never used to have any contact with the other Chiriguanos either. But when APCOB arrived, we began to get together and unite, just as we now come together to visit all of you.

Maybe we'll learn some things from your experiences which can be useful to us back home. In the same way, you may find experiences of ours that can apply to your situation. Our leaders have come especially to see things, not just to learn, but to get to know you as well. You have visited our land; it's very difficult land to work and cultivate. There is little rain; it is very dry and sandy. So we have to work hard to farm it. The capitanes have come to see your rich land. It isn't as difficult to work here. You can support your people here.

Once United We Can Organize Ourselves

After the Indians have come together they can begin to organize themselves. Their analysis of the need for self-organization is clear. What stands out is the Indians' renewed sense of self-confidence.

Izocoño: If we organize, anything will be possible. Once we're united there is nothing that can't be done. You must remind yourselves, my brothers, that the ricos don't want us to work for ourselves; they want us to work for them. So the rich men are opposed to our organizations, our communities. They don't want us to have chaco [subsistence plots], or to be independent, so that we'll have to spend our whole lives working for them, and so that they can live at our expense. You Ayoréode also began to seek wage labor recently and found that sort of life to be hard. But it is to avoid this that we have arms to work with, and a head to think with. The most important thing is that we be united, Chiriguano and Ayoréode.

Many times we have been instruments of labor for those señores; many times we campesinos have been steps for the big landowners to climb on. But I am proud and convinced, both by what I see happening and because I am an Izoceno, that we shall reach our goals. I am a campesino and I am proud to be one. I will fight and we all will fight to obtain the things most urgently needed by all the communities of the Izozog.

We have to defend ourselves from people who want us to work for them and want us to forget about ourselves. So, we must think of this relationship between the Izocoño and Ayoréode not just as something short-term, but as

something which is to last a long time. If it suits you, we could work together here in a cooperative or, if you'd like, we could exchange different products which would be useful to all of us.

We Have to Improve Our Level of Organization

Indians are not hypocrites and they are not ashamed to state that much work remains to be done before the desired level of organization can be reached.

Izocoño: Nobody here wants to hear about cooperatives. Some say, "I like hunting and I don't need to work in a cooperative." We are united in the meetings but not yet in our work. There is a community cooperative, but not all of us are members. In Tamachindi they formed one too, but it was a failure. Why? It's because of a lack of unity, that is our biggest fault. Now we have a consumer's cooperative. Barely one-half of us contribute or work to support it; the rest are uninvolved. But all of us buy things there. Every day you come to the cooperative saying, "Do you have sugar? Sell me some rice." When you want to buy something you have money, but when it comes to paying the quota for the cooperatives, nobody has any money. We have to consider how our children are going to live.

In the Izozog, we also have an agricultural cooperative. Though it is difficult to manage, we do it to try to insure that our children learn more about it. We're preparing our people and our community for a better future. Our parents didn't know how to read and didn't know how to speak Spanish. But they did their best so that we would do a little better than they did, and that is why we can live as we do now. Our obligation to our children is to see to it that their possibilities are a little greater than ours. In this way, we will improve ourselves and so will our children. Little by little we will overcome our problems.

We Must Defend Our People

The threat of disunity comes not only from the outside; within the ethnic groups themselves there are people who question Indian self-organization. People who work for the patrones and against the ethnic group are often fearlessly denounced. Oddly, the ones who speak out most loudly against this are often ex-labor contractors who demand the termination of this shameless form of work which exploits the Indians.

Izozeño: There are contratistas [labor contractors] among you Ayoréode who eventually are going to be pleased with your progress. I, too, used to be a contratista. I recruited a lot of people and took them to the sugarcane harvest. But I see now that moving people about like that isn't any good. I saw that to help our people progress, I had to stop contracting labor. It made me ashamed. Only the patrones win; they are the ones who benefit. Now it's an Ayoréode who will show up with his truck to cut timber. So we have to be aware of this, organize ourselves and work together in Zapoco and Jinca.

There is plenty of support for those who work and are organized. But if there is no organization, we can't expect any assistance. If we go to look for work in Santa Cruz we will end up having to beg. Anyone who doesn't have skills and can't work has to beg on the street. There are

many Izocéños like this; they work and work, yet are finally overcome by vices. It always ends up ruining them.

We Must Work Our Own Land

As an alternative, the Indians propose local agriculture projects and rational use of forest resources. They also believe the problem of marketing is best left in the hands of the campesinos themselves.

Izozeño: There are many Bolivians who, because of their attitude toward the government, are in self-imposed exile all over the world. But that doesn't do us any good. We must stay here and cultivate our lands. The land of Zapocó and Jinca is fertile and will respond to cultivation.

You all saw what our chaco is like. It takes a lot of work to prepare an area which you can fence in. First, you have to burn the brush, then make a fence and then dig some 5 kms. of irrigation ditches. If you don't know how to irrigate, you are sure to lose the crop. What you need to do here is to clear the trees, burn the undergrowth and plant rice. You should get a good crop; you people have a wealth of resources. There is also wood that is being destroyed, wood that is worth gold and silver. You are wasting it. That wood could be useful for the Izozog and for everyone. You have plenty of wood. Narrow lathes alone are worth 10\$b per meter. And there's joco and squash that nobody's eating. Pigs also would be profitable for you; a fattened pig can be worth up to 1,500\$b. We have trucks that can be at your service. Work and you can get ready 1.00 Kg/sack of rice. The truck usually leaves here empty, but if there is rice or corn you can easily take it out and sell it. There's no longer any need for us to look toward Santa Cruz for employment. We can make good money here farming or cutting wood. Everything our lands yield to us is good for making a living.

Alliances Are Necessary Both at a National and International Level

Izocéño: Indians from other countries are coming here and helping us. We meet and we identify the needs of each community. These brothers have united and organized themselves and are recognized by their governments as organized people. Indians have gotten together in Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and Colombia. Now the government should recognize us and take us into account, but not as políticos. Our chacos are our politics.

The meeting in Peru dealt with such concerns in our lives--our lands, our chaco, and other questions of how we can improve our lives day by day. This is important because now we are starting to adopt the white man's customs and to eat what they eat. We are no longer the same as our parents. Our parents didn't use clothes, they just used a small poncho. Now we go around completely dressed, like the white man.

I have to say I felt unprepared for the meeting in Peru. I don't speak Spanish very well, so when I am in large meetings, I never feel as well-prepared as the other participants. But I am always prepared to learn about things which can help us to help ourselves. I think that is what APCOB has been trying to do for us.

The meeting in Peru also gave us the opportunity to compare 3 countries--Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru. I thought of how I see our people in Paraguay from here. I spoke about the way things used to be. I now want to consider Peru in this same way. When the meeting was over, I went to houses in their communities. I ate with them. We spoke together and I learned many things--where they were from, how they lived and what they had begun to do. Our friends are ready to help us when we need it, not so that we may each help only ourselves, and not so that we will become rich men, but so that we may live more or less decently. I say this because it is what our old leader Bonifacio Barrientos said. He could have been rich if he had thought like the Aireyu, but he thought instead of all his brothers and their children who were suffering and decided to stay with them, to forward their cause.

The ways of the white man have come to us, and have become part of our ways. That's why we are now trying to find the best route for our people to follow. Some people say to me, "I see you're going to go to Peru again, just to travel around. You don't really know why you travel." But I don't go just so that you can stay behind and figure things out for yourselves. That's not the way it is at all. These things we need require experience and training.

I don't know what your impressions were when we first made contact with people at APCOB. Our feeling was that we didn't want to accept them because we had never considered them to be friends. Since they were white, we didn't think they were going to help us. Rather, we thought that they would try to take advantage of us. But from what we can see since they approached us, we have benefitted as a people. I don't know if you have all reached this same conclusion. If we stop and think, we can analyze the efforts they are making. I ask myself "Who am I? What am I doing here in this distant place?" They were the ones who made it possible for me to meet and get to know our brothers from other countries, brothers who have the same needs we do. I am poor, but I am able to make this visit. No other people, neither the authorities nor presidents, do such things. Up to now, nobody has done what we are witnessing here; we are uniting.

With this organization supporting us, the upper and lower Izozog have united as you have seen for yourselves. For us it is something more; it is one more step we are taking; we'll see what happens next. All of the Izozog is organizing and people are uniting. We have meetings, we have a work plan and our capitanes meet every month. We are doing a lot of work and we are progressing.

But We Don't Have to Wait for Help

We campesinos must work hard for our children, for our people. We must see that help doesn't have to come from rich people. Sometimes it's very difficult and sometimes you have to be very lucky for help to come. It would be much better for our help to come from each other; we campesinos should help each other out.

I have worked hard organizing in my community. I have been hungry and tired, but in the end we have something to show for our work. Those fruits are most beautiful when they come from the community. But when we organize, there will always be criticism coming from the ricos. In fact,

when we organized, they went so far as to call us communists. It isn't true. But that's obviously a criticism directed at us with other underlying motivations. It's just that they want us always to be working for them. So they don't like it when we organize to work for the good of our people.

FOOTNOTES

1. For additional ethnographic data see Nordenskiöld 1912; Riester et al. 1980; Riester 1976, 1979, 1984.
2. For additional ethnographic data see Stoetzel 1980, 1984.
3. For additional ethnographic data see Fischerman 1976; Bernard-Muñoz 1977; Kelm 1983.

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Appendix-1

CIDOB -- Structure and Organization

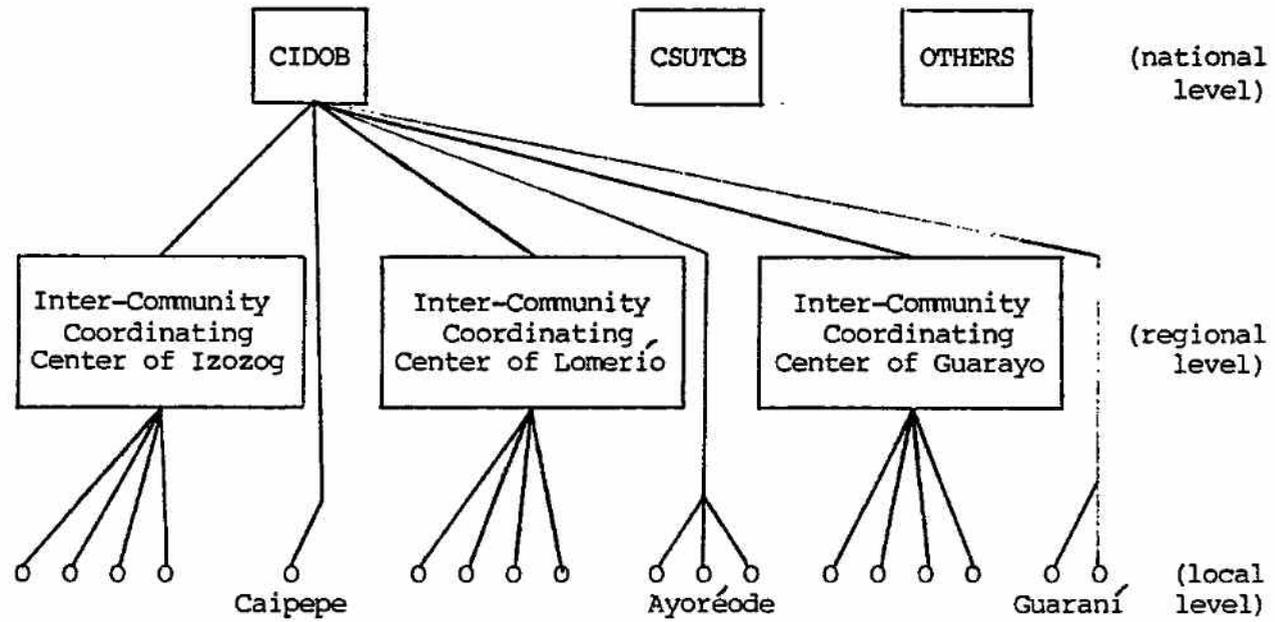
From 29 September until 2 October 1983, CIDOB held its second general meeting. At that time the delegates divided themselves into 4 committees-- economic, labor, education and health--with each ethnic group represented on all committees. The conclusions were discussed and ratified at the October 1 general assembly.

I. The aims of the CIDOB are to:

- defend the basic rights of the communities
- guarantee rights to land
- participate in the present-day society
- obtain recognition for Indian organizations and Indian culture in general
- integrate with other Indian groups from other Bolivian departments
- coordinate with the Indian organizations of the Amazonian Pact
- coordinate with other national level campesino organizations
- participate in the elaboration of development policy

II. The organizational structure of CIDOB is as follows

1. The various ethnic groups are represented by a coordinating center, each of which has a representative in CIDOB.
2. The groups without coordinating centers communicate directly with CIDOB.
3. All interchange is funneled through these channels.
4. Schematic drawing:



III. Program priorities

1. The defense of the land

The land is ours in our own right, as it is the source of our livelihood and because it constitutes the most vital element of our existence. We must ratify the resolutions of our first meeting (September 1982, Santa Cruz) and restate our claim to land through our own organization, which is the reflection of our unity.

2. The defense of forest resources

The forests are our dearest possession, and they presently are being destroyed by people from outside of our communities. For this reason we must demonstrate claim to them, in order to permit the communities to control their exploitation and guarantee that this use is both rational and for the benefit of our communities, for society in general.

3. Defense of fish and wildlife resources

During 1982, large numbers of birds and animals were exported from our forests, placing in danger of extinction more than 20 species. These animals of the forest are often the source of our diet, so we must register our claim to defend what is ours.

IV. Initial Activities

1. Coordination of CIDOB with the Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia (CSUTCB) for the defense of our land at a national level.

2. Aid in the creation of a national legal office through which CIDOB, the CSUTCB and some support groups will participate. This office will work to resolve the legal problems faced by communities of the Bolivian Oriente and will undertake such activities as:

- speeding up, in La Paz, the processing of Agrarian issues;
- proposing changes in the Agrarian Reform laws, to bring them into line with the realities of the Bolivian Oriente;
- taking the steps necessary to obtain corporate juridical status (personería jurídica) for the communities;
- obtaining agricultural and forest concessions for the communities;
- assuring participation of the communities in matters relating to the payment of taxes collected for natural resource exploitation;
- creating registry offices (registro civil) managed by local people;
- continuing any proceedings initiated in 1983;
- working to establish new steps concerning the assignation and expansion of land held jointly or collectively; and
- providing permanent help in general legal matters.



BRAZILIAN INDIANIST POLICY: SOME LESSONS FROM THE SHAVANTE PROJECT¹

David Maybury-Lewis

Shavante Relations with the Outside World

The Shavante are probably the most famous Indians in Brazil. They have been moving away from the frontiers of settlement since the early nineteenth century, but in the 1930s, the frontier finally caught up with them in their land close to the geographic center of Brazil. The Shavante fought to defend their territory, thus acquiring a warrior reputation which only briefly served to hold off the invaders. By the 1950s, individual Shavante communities were one by one making peace with the Brazilians [2]. The inauguration of the nation's new capital at Brasilia and the consequent building of roads towards the west made Shavante country more accessible than ever before. The region was flooded with settlers as it began to develop into the rice bowl of Central Brazil. Meanwhile, the Shavante were forced to take refuge in villages protected by the tutelage of missionaries or the Indian Service (FUNAI). The Shavante now found themselves engaged in a bitter struggle for the defense of such lands as were left to them.

Settlers rapidly established themselves on lands denied to the Indians and began to legalize their rights to them. The authorities cooperated by granting *de jure* rights to settlers who had established *de facto* occupation of Indian lands. For decades the Federal Government made, altered and rescinded statutes concerning the extent of Shavante land without taking any action either to demarcate or to guarantee it (see Maybury-Lewis 1983a), while the state government of Mato Grosso was granting legal title to settlers who had entered Shavante territory. By the end of 1978, the situation in the region was very tense. The Shavante were demanding that a proper allocation of land be demarcated for them and were being supported in these demands by local officials of FUNAI and the burgeoning pro-Indian movement in Brazil. They were opposed by the local ranchers and by the authorities of the state of Mato Grosso, who claimed that FUNAI was trying to turn the entire state of Mato Grosso into an Indian reservation. This was hyperbole, even by settler standards, when one considers that Mato Grosso was so large (larger than Bolivia or Colombia and only slightly smaller than Peru) that it has now been divided into two states. Meanwhile, the leadership of FUNAI in Brasilia temporised by promising action to resolve the problem but taking none.

It was at this time that delegations of Shavante leaders began to appear frequently in Brasilia, demanding interviews with the President of the Republic, the Minister of the Interior, the President of FUNAI and anybody else who could do something about the land problem. It was also during these years that the Shavante were improving their own political sophistication. They had now learned how to mobilize Federal Deputies and the President of FUNAI and anybody else who could do something about the land problem. They had now learned how to mobilize Federal Deputies and representatives of the Pro-Indian Commissions in support of their cause. They had also learned how to take their case to the press and to the television stations. This stood them in good stead in the famous confrontation that took place in May 1980. It was then

that 31 Shavante leaders demanded an audience with the President of FUNAI in Brasilia. When he refused to receive them they crowded into his office anyway, accompanied by journalists and seven opposition members of congress. In an angry altercation, they insisted that the President of FUNAI treat them with proper courtesy, since they were after all Indians come to speak to their own agency of the government; that he do something about guaranteeing their lands and that he root out the corruption in the FUNAI itself. They pointed out that FUNAI officials who worked to benefit the Indians were often harassed or dismissed, yet nothing was done about those who were dishonest or who worked against the Indian interest.

The Shavante "take over" of FUNAI's offices made headlines and created a crisis within FUNAI itself. The agency responded in its customary fashion. It persuaded the Shavante to return home by promising to deal with the matter and then dismissed or transferred FUNAI officials in Mato Grosso who were thought to be too pro-Shavante. This prompted mass resignations from FUNAI and calls from pro-Indian commissions in Brazil, as well as from foreign organizations such as Cultural Survival, for the government to fulfill its responsibility to protect Indian rights. Eventually the government did act. The president of FUNAI was replaced. Shavante lands were guaranteed and a massive development project was confirmed to enable the Shavante to engage in extensive rice cultivation for the market.

My wife and I carried out research among the Shavante in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when they still lived by hunting and gathering and had only a vague idea of the outside forces which were about to affect their lives so dramatically. Some Shavante communities were already beginning to feel settler pressure, but the tendency we noted (Maybury-Lewis 1967:52) for the Shavante to curtail their nomadic wanderings and spend more time in their base villages was due less to this and more to the trade goods which could be obtained from mission stations and posts of the Indian service. We returned to Shavante country in October, 1982, nearly twenty years after our original work. We knew about the events which I have summarized above and wanted to find out how they had affected the life that the Shavante led in their own communities.

We could now reach the Shavante by road, instead of being flown in by the Air Force or making interminable journeys by river and on foot to reach their villages. It was an eerie experience to approach the community of Pimentel Barbosa, whose inhabitants we had known so well a generation earlier. The village had of course been relocated, and we had difficulty finding it. We could not ask directions, for the few homesteads in the region were empty, abandoned by settlers who had for once lost their bet that they would never be turned off Indian land. It is impossible to describe our emotions when we finally reached a bluff from which we could look down and see the village beneath us. There were the thatched huts set out like beehives in a semi-circle on the open savannah. We were neither so naive nor so romantic as to imagine that the maintenance of the traditional village style meant that little had changed among the Shavante; yet it was the clearest and most striking expression of Shavante culture and its remarkable powers of survival that one could have wished for. Our subsequent observations confirmed this resilience of Shavante culture, even as we were documenting the changes which had taken place in their way of life. I cannot, unfortunately, explore this topic here. Instead, I shall give some preliminary conclusions (from a study which is not yet complete) concerning the Shavante Project as an example of Brazilian Indianist policy.

The Shavante Project

The Shavante Project is undoubtedly the most ambitious development project which has been undertaken in recent years by FUNAI on behalf of any single group of Indians. It was launched in 1978 which was, as we have seen, a time of tension between the Shavante and their neighbors. A group of FUNAI officials working in the Shavante area championed a project which would guarantee Shavante lands and at the same time enable the Shavante to enter the regional economy as producers of rice. A sympathetic President of FUNAI signed the Project into existence on August 31, 1978 probably in the hope that it would resolve the "Shavante problem" and help to make the Indians acceptable neighbors to local ranchers. But the ranchers fought back, the President of FUNAI was replaced by another less sympathetic to the Project, and there followed the period of uncertainty and tension which I have already described. It should therefore be borne in mind that although the Project was officially launched in 1978, it was not operating with any certainty of continuation until about three years later. Our field observations of the Project were therefore made after its first year of untroubled operation.

The FUNAI officials who championed the Project saw it as a way to counter the usual settler argument that Indians have no (or at most secondary) rights to land because they do not use it productively. They wished through the project to demonstrate that Indians, even those with such a brief history of intensive contact with the outside world as the Shavante had had, were capable of using land as productively as anybody else, if they were given access to credit and technical assistance. These same officials saw the Project as a bold experiment. It would be one of the few instances where Indians were helped to enter the outside economy at more than the lowest level of peonage.

There are at present about 4000 Shavante living in more than twenty communities scattered over a wide swath of southeastern Mato Grosso. These groups have different histories and experiences of contact with Brazilian society and some of them had engaged in cash cropping before the start of the Project. This was especially true of those communities under the tutelage of the Salesian Missions and the village of Areões which was attached to a post of the Indian Service. In these areas the Salesians and the Indian Service respectively had made efforts to settle and assist groups of Shavante who were already in sharp conflict with the neighboring Brazilians at the end of the 1950s.

The Project was intended to benefit all Shavante and was signed into effect in eight separate documents for the eight different regions in which the Shavante communities are situated. The five most easterly regions, inhabited by 60% of the Shavante, are administered by FUNAI. The three most westerly ones, containing the other 40% of the population, are administered by the Salesians, who run the Project in the villages under their tutelage.

On our return to the field we selected three regions for study: Pimental Barbosa, the farthest east and the one with the least contact with the outside world; Areões, where the FUNAI has made its most intensive development effort, and São Marcos, the largest Shavante community in existence today, where the Salesians have made their most intensive development effort. The aims of the Project are identical in all regions--namely, to develop rice cultivation for the market in Shavante communities, while providing them simultaneously with

education and medical assistance. It is the implementation--and therefore the effects--of the Project which vary from place to place.

In Pimentel Barbosa, one of the most remote and least acculturated of the Shavante villages, the Project seemed a thing apart from the everyday life of the community. The FUNAI has provided tractors and machinery for extensive rice cultivation, but the land used for this is 60 km away from the village, on the outskirts of Matinha, the nearest Brazilian town. Whether the rice fields are located there to establish Shavante territory (as some said) or because that is the best rice land (as others insisted) or because the young Shavante enjoy easy access to Matinha (as the missionaries suggested), the fact remains that they are well away from the village they serve. The villagers complained about this and about the lack of transport to ferry them to and fro, but did not consider relocating either the fields or their community. Instead, they sent off the young men's age grade to work in the rice fields and the rest of them went about their business in their village on the savannah.

The physical separation of the rice plantation was matched by the lack of penetration of other aspects of the Project into the life of the community. The FUNAI official in charge of the post had been appointed in the days when the official policy of the Brazilian government agency was to organize Indians to produce and to make a sufficient profit on their production to pay for the costs of the assistance they received from FUNAI. This Chief of Post was therefore a skilled mechanic and agricultural extension worker but he did not know what he was supposed to do for an entire community of Indians. As a result, he spent most of his time repairing the aged vehicle which was the post's sole means of communication with the outside world and, when he could get it to work, driving himself and as many Shavante as he could squeeze in to do errands in the local towns. These were journeys involving at least one day and often more away from the post and considerable expenditures of gasoline.

FUNAI supplied a nurse and a reasonably well-stocked dispensary for the village, and a school teacher who provided the most elementary instruction for small children. Pimentel Barbosa also owned a small herd of cattle, which were looked after by Brazilian cowboys, whom the Shavante paid out of the proceeds of the Project.

The contrast between Pimentel Barbosa and Areões was striking. At Areões, where FUNAI had been making a special effort even before the start of the project, we found a community oriented towards production. It is true that the semicircular form of the village had been maintained, but with few exceptions the houses were now rectangular ones built in the local Brazilian style, not conical in the traditional Shavante manner. Furthermore, this village had a permanent air. The houses were hemmed in by their own fruit trees, pig sties, chicken coops and above all, refuse. The problems of hygiene and refuse disposal when settling previously nomadic people are serious: FUNAI piped clean water into Areões, but the refuse problem still lingers. Meanwhile, the village forms part of a complex of buildings housing FUNAI personnel, the whole dominated by the sheds for the tractors and rice huskers and the huge storage barns.

The FUNAI official in charge was a remarkable man of inexhaustible energy. From before dawn till long after dusk he supervised the machinery and the Shavante, both those who worked the machines and those who were simply driven out daily on trucks and tractors to work as field hands. Areões had the usual

dispensary, but its school also contrasted with that of Pimental Barbosa. Here were a number of school teachers giving instruction throughout the day to classes which ranged from elementary to secondary levels.

The Areões enterprise was considered so dynamic and successful that it had, at the time of our visit, attracted another Shavante community to come and participate in it. A group of Shavante who had fought both with the Brazilians and with their fellow Shavante away to the west, came trekking over and constructed their traditional semi-circular village of conical thatched huts a few kilometers away from Areões proper. Tractors and work details from Areões were being sent out to help them get started on their own rice fields.

Our third sample community was São Marcos, where the Salesians had established a mission for the Shavante twenty years previously. I could not help being struck by the physical changes in the mission itself since I had last seen it in 1964. The solid stone mission buildings now dominated the entire community, which was no small feat since they preside over a small town, containing close to 700 Shavante. Here the Shavante were even closer to the mission than they were to the FUNAI at Areões. The village contained so many houses of all types, that it was hard to see whether it was laid out in a semi-circle. I discovered, however, that the rough double circle of huts did in fact have an opening; but the opening did not face towards the source of water, as is the case in traditional Shavante villages. It faced instead towards the Mission and specifically towards the mission chapel. From that direction came also the voice of the Mission loudspeaker, with a regular stream of homilies and instructions.

The Mission itself contained store rooms, guest rooms, classrooms, offices and places for a host of other functions, as well as living quarters for its staff of priests, lay brothers, nuns and service personnel. There was something manorial about the organization of this large community of people established in this remote region to care for the souls and bodies of the Shavante.

The first thing which strikes the observer is that a Mission like São Marcos disposes of considerably more material resources than the best of the FUNAI posts, e.g., Areões. At Areões they had superior rice processing machinery, but the resources of São Marcos were more lavish in every other category. They had more vehicles, they had better medical facilities (which qualified as a small hospital, rather than as a mere dispensary), they had more and better educated staff, and, above all, they could provide a more thorough schooling. They also provided more indoctrination.

In fact, the preoccupation with control of the Shavante emerged as the central theme of our investigation of the Project. The heads of the FUNAI posts feel that they ought to have some control over their Indian charges and tend to deal with them in a somewhat paternalistic, if not authoritarian manner. This is understandable, given that these officials are sent out to remote posts and expected to tutor entire communities of tough and independent minded Indians with little support, either moral or logistical, from Brasilia. Moreover, their superiors in FUNAI on occasion demand that the heads of posts be accountable for the Indians in "their" villages, so that the problem of control is a real and difficult one for them.

The Salesians by contrast set out consciously and systematically to establish control over the Indians. They would argue that benign authoritarianism is in the best interest of all concerned. They organize themselves that way in their own community and see no reason why the Indians should not be brought into it on similar terms. The control is established by infiltrating all areas of Indian life. They use the resources at their disposal to reward those who will collaborate with the mission and ignore those who do not. They bolster the authority of young mission educated men and help them eventually to oust the traditional chiefs. They segregate the boys and girls of the community in boarding schools under missionary supervision in order to counteract the heathen authority of their parents. Eventually, if they are successful as they have been in São Marcos, they shape a community dominated by the Mission and its routines, with a huge illuminated cross erected in the center of the village, at the foot of which the mature men meet for their nightly discussion. In effect, they transform the Indian society into a huge boarding school, with the missionaries as teachers and prefects. From this boarding school there is no graduation. One can only leave--which means leaving one's community as well--or be expelled. Indeed, occasional groups of disgruntled Shavante do weary of missionary tutelage and go off and set up separate villages. When this happens, the missionaries claim that the dissidents left because they were feuding with their fellow Shavante. It is true that there always was considerable feuding in Shavante villages (see Maybury-Lewis 1967:165-213) and that villages still split up for internal political reasons. On the rare occasions when a dissident group moves away from a FUNAI post, this is usually due to Shavante politics. Yet groups of Shavante do leave mission posts not because they are fighting with their fellows, but because they are no longer willing to tolerate the mission's direction of every aspect of their lives.

These preliminary observations of the Project in action lead to the following conclusions. It is certainly achieving its goal of enabling the Shavante to produce impressive rice harvests. Some of this rice is consumed by the Indians and is now the staple basis of their diet. This has banished the threat of starvation which menaced the Shavante a few years ago as they battled for control of their lands, although the rice-based diet is having adverse effects on their health. Much of the rice harvest is sold and this provides the Shavante with a cash income. Both the FUNAI officials and Salesian missionaries insist that the funds are controlled by the Shavante themselves. They also maintain that the Shavante are being trained to take over the running of the Project itself.

It is clear that the Shavante have been involved virtually overnight in a kind of large scale farming which is highly sophisticated. It requires knowledge of agriculture, machine maintenance, work organization and marketing which they simply do not possess. The Shavante cannot make all the financial decisions for the Project as yet and it is not clear at what point they will assume full control of its income. There is therefore little chance that they will be able to take over the operation of the project in the foreseeable future. The education and vocational training provided by the FUNAI is at present insufficient to produce the skills necessary to administer such a complex operation, but they are unlikely to relinquish control of their communities and to allow the Shavante to run their own economies and their own lives.

Except in a few remote villages, such as Pimentel Barbosa, the lives of the Shavante are now so intertwined with the Project that they would find it difficult to do without it. The result is that they have been brought into a system of dependency--on government funds and on project administrators. They are therefore extremely vulnerable and they know it. A major topic of conversation among the Shavante and a topic on which outsiders are regularly questioned is whether FUNAI plans to continue the Project.

Yet this vulnerability has not so far produced any general determination among the Shavante to try and take over the operation of the Project themselves. On the contrary, their reactions are commonly quite different. Young Shavante (particularly young Shavante men) aspire to learn skills which will gain them employment through the Project, as machinists, drivers, teachers or nurses. Shavante leaders think of how to pressure the government not just to continue the Project but to increase its level of funding. The only Shavante we met who had thought seriously about what to do outside the framework of the Project were those who planned to leave their communities altogether and to seek work elsewhere. This is nowadays a realistic possibility and the Indians know of plenty of fellow Shavante who have done it. The most famous and successful Shavante in the outside world is Mario Juruna, who left the mission villages to work as a peon to learn the White Man's ways and years later was elected as Deputy to the Federal Congress (Maybury-Lewis 1983b). But there are many others who have travelled, even been educated in Brazilian schools and made lives for themselves away from their villages.

Travel and the cultivation of patronage in the wider Brazilian society are important aspects of present day Shavante adaptation. Shavante have become great travellers, not only to Brasilia, which is close enough for them to visit frequently, but also to the richer states of Brazil such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Because of their fame as a tribe, they can often find Brazilian patrons who are willing to adopt them. The fruits of such patronage range from gifts such as cassette tape recorders to education in schools in the south for an occasional child to the provision of a major item such as an electric generator for the Shavante client's home village.

Their relative success in getting what they need from either the government or from private sources throughout Brazil has reinforced the Shavante enthusiasm for foraging. They still go out hunting and gathering in the traditional style, looking for game and for the wild products of the region they inhabit; but the most important and exciting gathering in which they now engage takes place on their trips to Brazilian cities.

Meanwhile, Shavante leaders have extraordinary confidence in their ability to pressure FUNAI into maintaining the Project. They complain perpetually about the inadequacy of the resources made available to them--how there are not enough trucks, not enough gasoline for them, and so on-- and they deal with this by putting constant pressure on FUNAI. Local FUNAI officials are literally besieged by importunate Shavante who frequently get something of what they came for. Some Shavante communities have even eaten or sold their entire rice harvest without keeping any seed rice for planting and then successfully demanded seed rice the following year from FUNAI. If Shavante leaders do not get satisfaction from FUNAI at the local level, they console themselves with the thought that they can always put pressure on Brasilia. After all, did they not do so before and was the Colonel in charge of FUNAI not dismissed as a result?

The Shavante and Brazilian Indianist Policy

To understand how a relatively small Indian nation can have, or can believe it has such influence in a country the size of Brazil, it is necessary to see the Shavante Project in the context of Brazilian Indianist policy. Since the days of the legendary Marshall Rondon, who founded the nation's Indian service, Brazil has had extremely enlightened legislation regarding its Indian populations, but the laws have been more honored in the breach than in the observance. The task of the Indian Protection Service, as it was originally called, was to "pacify" Indian tribes and to induce them to settle down and live in peace with their Brazilian neighbors, while at the same time protecting their right to maintain their own customs. The "pacifications" were the romantic and spectacular exploits which earned the service its publicity. Protecting the pacified tribes proved to be more difficult. Settlers would move in on their land and the Indian service could do little to prevent this. It could occasionally take action against the backwoodsmen who sought their fortune at the frontier, but it was powerless against big ranchers and city-based speculators, especially when the latter were supported in government circles by ministers who considered them to be the spearheads of national development. As for Indian customs, it was the rare Indian Service official who did not treat them with scorn. The very language used by government agents and missionaries alike expressed their attitude towards their task. The Indians were "savages" who had first to be "pacified" and then to be "civilized." Indeed, throughout the interior of Brazil the linguistic distinction made in Portuguese to distinguish Indians from non-Indians is to refer to them as *indios* and *civilizados*.

At best the Indian Protection Service could prevent the Indians from being massacred, but it never succeeded in having their lands either demarcated or guaranteed. At worst it was a corrupt agency that misappropriated funds that were destined for the Indians and collaborated with those who were out to exploit and expropriate them. Finally, the scandals within the service reached such proportions that the agency was disbanded and replaced by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI). But FUNAI's mandate has been equally ambiguous and its ability to carry out a coherent policy equally suspect.

According to Brazil's own *Estatuto do Indio*, which was signed into law in 1973, the Indians are to be integrated into Brazilian society, but the term *integration* is given a specific and technical meaning. It refers to a status which can be achieved either by an Indian group or an Indian individual within a multi-ethnic society (see Maybury-Lewis 1981:2). In other words, it refers to the prospect of Indians taking their place as Indians in the multi-ethnic Brazil of the future. The government has, however, chosen systematically to insist that the Indians should be integrated in a different way, by abandoning their Indianness and being absorbed into the mainstream of Brazilian culture and society. This view is reinforced by the preoccupation of recent Brazilian administrations with development and especially with the development of the interior. That is why the Minister of the Interior in 1976 urged that he wanted to put an end to "ethnic cysts" (i.e., Indian cultures) which acted as a brake on development, and that he confidently expected this to happen and that there would be no more Indians in Brazil by the end of the century (Comissão 1979:11). Soon afterwards the government proposed to accelerate the time-table and do away with the Indians immediately by "emancipating" them and thus abolishing the category of Indian altogether in Brazilian law. The government argued that this would remove the burden of discrimination and tutelage under

which the Indians labored; but it was immediately pointed out, not the least by the Indians themselves, that it would only remove such protections as Indians still enjoyed, whereas the discriminations against them were likely to be exacerbated. The national and international outcry which greeted this proposal persuaded the government to shelve it; but the administration did not shelve its developmental policies (see Comissão 1979 and Cultural Survival 1979).

FUNAI is thus constantly urged not to stand in the way of development, and the defense of Indian interests is all too often stigmatised as doing just that. This left FUNAI with the dilemma of how to work for the Indians without opposing the various interests which claimed to be furthering development. At one time they tried to solve it through the notorious policy of the *renda indigena*, or Indian income. FUNAI was to use Indian lands and where possible Indian labor to maximize production in the most economically rational fashion. The income derived from these activities was to pay for the FUNAI itself and what was left over would be ploughed back into FUNAI's businesses. In this way FUNAI would direct Indian societies as if they were a series of business enterprises, which would eventually repay the investments made in them by the government, put themselves on a sound financial footing and, of course, contribute to the economic development of the nation. Fortunately, this new policy of making Indians work to support a bureaucracy which was not answerable to them and which could dispose of the profit of their labors was never put into effect systematically. The opposition to it was so widespread that it too has been shelved.

The opposition to this, as to other measures which would have had disastrous consequences for the Indians, did not come entirely from outside of FUNAI. Dedicated and knowledgable Indianists within FUNAI itself also opposed them. The agency is thus caught in a web of contradictions: between Brazilian law and government policy; between Indian interests and government developmentalism; between the demands of the Indians and their allies (in the Pro-Indian Commissions, the national and international press) and the pressures of the ranchers and businessman who claim to be developing the frontier; and last, but not least, between its own pro-Indian employees and its bureaucrats who are willing to carry out any policy at all, even if it is all detrimental to the Indians.

It is not surprising then that FUNAI has had no consistent policy in recent years. It is an agency which is forever walking a tightrope. Sometimes it sponsors imaginative projects in Indian areas, only to abandon them later under political pressure. At other times it presses for measures which are clearly contrary to Indian interests, but then shelves those too, when the resultant outcry proves too much of an embarrassment to the government. In the meantime it tries as hard as it can to keep the lid on the Indian problem. The government expects the head of FUNAI to keep Indian affairs as far as possible out of the news and to prevent them from becoming serious political issues.

Senior officials of FUNAI therefore continue to use the traditional method of dealing with Indians who appear in Brasília to demand the redress of grievances. They normally promise to look into the matter, if only the Indians will return home and "go back to work." Meanwhile, they distribute gifts to encourage them to return. Such gifts may be items such as clothes or tape-recorders, but they may also take the form of arranging for an individual to get medical treatment or a new pair of spectacles. When the system works it has the double advantage that the Indians do not go home without anything to

show for their travels and that they are dissuaded from importuning other officials in Brasilia who may start to wonder why FUNAI cannot "deal with its Indians." At the same time it postpones the necessity to take action on the specific complaint. Such postponements are frequently indefinite, as Indians have come to learn. Repeated visits to Brasilia may not resolve the problem of the Indian plaintiff, but they are often the only form of action he knows how to take, and they do bring him some material rewards for his effort.

It is against this background that one can understand how the Shavante got their Project. They were persistent. They had relatively easy access to Brasilia so that they could come back again and again. They were exceedingly forceful in presenting their case and they were politically astute enough to rally influential elements of Brazilian opinion behind them, so that they could not simply "be dealt with" by military police. They had strong support within FUNAI itself, so that a course of action (the Project) had been outlined as a possible solution to their problems by people with experience in Indian affairs. Last but not least, they were famous, so that eventually the benefits to the government of guaranteeing their lands and confirming the Project outweighed the costs of antagonizing the ranchers of southeastern Mato Grosso (3). The Shavante Project thus became the showpiece of all FUNAI's activities.

The Shavante Project represents a radically different policy from that which was held up for so long as an example in official Brazilian Indianist circles. It was until recently the National Park on the Xingu River which was usually mentioned by those who wished to point to a success story in Brazil's treatment of its Indians. There, a comparatively large refuge area had been maintained in the heart of the nation and Indian tribes, retreating before the frontier, had found their way into it. The administrators of the Park strove valiantly, if not always successfully, to prevent the huge area from being invaded (4). At the same time, they saw it as their task to protect the park as a place where Indians could go on living their traditional lives uninfluenced by the outside world. The Xingu therefore represented a policy which treated Indians as quaint relics of the nation's past who were to be insulated from its present and to have no place as Indians in its future (see Viveiros de Castro 1979).

The Shavante Project has the merit of trying to create the means for an Indian people to participate in the future of their region without being forced in exchange to give up their communities and their culture. Yet, it has serious defects as a model for Brazilian Indianist policy.

The Project is so complex and so expensive that its effect is to make the Shavante more dependent than ever on outside agencies, and particularly on the government. The consequences of government cuts in or withdrawal from the program would thus be severe. Such an eventuality is always possible, given the inconsistencies of Brazilian government policies toward the Indians, and it is even more probable at the moment, in view of Brazil's desperate financial crisis. Yet even if the government could afford it, there would still be problems with the Project.

It is not self-sustaining and there are no provisions to make it so in the foreseeable future. At the same time, it cannot serve as a model for projects in other areas, since FUNAI does not have the resources to sponsor more than one or two projects. The Project is thus unsatisfactory in local terms, since it does not train the Shavante to be self sufficient. It is also

unsatisfactory in national terms, because it invests a disproportionate share of FUNAI's resources for the benefit of the Shavante and to the detriment of other Indian peoples for whom there is little or nothing left over. The Project thus confirms the truth of the old Brazilian saying: "Quem não chora, não mama" (If you don't cry, you don't suckle) and sends a clear message to Indian peoples throughout Brazil that they too should cry as loudly as the Shavante, if they want to be treated as well. The Project could therefore contribute to a rising chorus of demands, as Brazil's Indian peoples become better organized, which FUNAI could not satisfy, even if it wished to.

The Shavante Project is thus a paradox. It is the most sustained effort yet made by FUNAI to get away from Brazil's traditional Indianist policy of ineffectual protection and to replace it with an active strategy for helping Indians to take their place in a multi-ethnic nation. Yet the failings of the Project derive from the fact that, in some important respects it does not break with the past. It was designed and implemented in a spirit of paternalistic expediency and its very prominence underscores the fact that Brazil has yet to develop a coherent and viable policy for dealing with all of its Indians.

FOOTNOTES

[1] In Portuguese Shavante is sometimes spelled Chavante, but is nowadays conventionally rendered as Xavante. I maintain here the spelling I have used in my publications over the years, since I first adopted it before any conventional spelling had been agreed upon.

The data on which this paper is based are derived from reports in the Brazilian press, research in the files of FUNAI (the Brazilian Indian Service) and our own field notes from 1982.

[2] There is an extensive literature on this period when the Shavante were rediscovered by the outside world, most of it consisting of breathless tales of exploration, emphasizing the bravery of those who ventured into Shavante territory. Summaries of this literature can be found in Souza 1953, Maybury-Lewis 1965 and 1967, and in Ravagnani 1977.

[3] The government's calculation of the slight political cost was confirmed in the elections of 1982, when it won the state of Mato Grosso and did not especially suffer at the polls in the Shavante regions. It did of course receive the majority of the Shavante votes, but I doubt whether that possibility ever entered into the administration's calculations!

[4] In fact, the park was not only invaded by frontiersmen, but also by the government itself, which used it for paratroop training and also built one of the transamazon network roads through it, with destructive consequences for the local Indian population.

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Introduction

This paper reviews changing patterns of Indian land rights and natural resource management in the Ecuadorian Amazon, or Oriente. Recent rapid demographic growth of the Indian populations in the area has increased both population density and interethnic interaction and thus significantly affected land and resource use. However, other, more important changes in land tenure and resource management are the result of external forces and programs aimed directly at altering traditional Indian life and inducing them to adopt new cultural patterns. Here the State is the predominant influence.

For years, government policy toward the Amazonian region has been to fully integrate it with the rest of the country (see Vickers 1972, 1983; Macdonald 1981; Whitten 1981; Uquillas 1979, in press). As indirect allies of the state and in pursuit of their own goals, missionaries and multinational and national corporations have also sought to convert Indians into either Christians, citizens of the nation state, or an available source of cheap labor. Other outside influences include large numbers of entrepreneurs and colonists who, responding to official policies and to a variety of other interests, have invaded territories in search of gold, spices, wood, customers for manufactured goods, and, more recently, land (Descola 1981a, 1981b; Taylor 1981; Barral 1978; Hiraoka and Yamamoto 1980). These forces have stimulated changes in technology, settlement patterns, social organization, mobility, territoriality and natural resource use. New technology was introduced in the 16th century with the arrival of the conquistadores and missionaries. However, major innovations, largely through the adoption of metal tools and various other utensils, sharply increased in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the "rubber boom" affected much of the Amazon Basin. In recent decades a large number of new products have been incorporated into Indian life, including chainsaws, outboard motors, radios and sewing machines. These products are now common not only among the more acculturated Indians like the Shuar and Quichua, but also among groups which have had little contact with outsiders, such as the Achuar (Descola 1981a, 1981b), Siona-Secoya (Vickers 1972, 1980, 1983) and Huaorani (Yost 1981).

The settlement pattern of many ethnic groups of the Amazon region has recently evolved from small, dispersed and isolated settlements into more concentrated populations, called *comunas*, centers, or simply villages, which frequently form around a landing strip or a plaza/soccer field. In some cases these population centers are established as modern versions of the "missionary posts," or *reducciones*, initiated and encouraged by Catholic and Protestant missions. In other cases they have emerged from Indian initiatives; Indians now seek to locate themselves close to communication routes or, in any case, locations more accessible to markets and other aspects of national life.

Important changes are also occurring at the level of social organization and political mobilization. The Amazonian natives are transcending informal family and community organizations to form associations (generally at the level of the ethnic group but also at the provincial and regional level) which now include most of the Amazonian Indians in Ecuador. Since about 1960, native people have begun to mobilize politically and have seen the value of group collaboration in negotiating with dominant national powers. Organizations like the Shuar Federation and the Independent Association of Shuar Peoples of Ecuador (AIPSE), formed under the influence of the Salesian Mission and Evangelical Missionary Union respectively, were pioneers in this field.

The Shuar Federation is now one of the strongest indigenous organizations of Latin America, uniting more than 150 centros (or communities) and representing close to 20,000 Shuar and Achuar people. The Federation has mobilized much of the Shuar population and has successfully influenced various government policies and actions through either direct pressure or negotiations. provincial authorities. Among the most significant assertions of cultural autonomy obtained have been: (1) the official recognition of the Federation by the State; (2) the creation and subsequent official acceptance of a unique system of bilingual education (Shuar-Spanish) through radio schools with programs for primary and secondary education; (3) the formation of Shuar topographic teams empowered by the Ecuadorian Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization (IERAC, the entity responsible for the legalization of land tenancy) to survey Shuar community lands, using their own personnel and technical advice from outside volunteers; (4) the formation of native health promoters and; (5) sources of credit, particularly from private European institutions, for the development of cattle ranching programs and other forms of economic development (Federación de Centros Shuar 1976, Salazar 1981).

Other significant associations are the Federation of Indian Organizations of the Napo (FOIN), the Organization of Indian Campesinos of the Napo (FOCIN), the Union of Indian Nations of the Ecuadorian Amazon (UNAE), Jatun Comuna Aguarico, the Union of Evangelical Natives (AIEN), the Organization of Indian Peoples of the Pastaza (OPIP), and the Organization of Cofán-Siona-Secoya Indian Communities (OICSSE). These organizations, often modelled on the Shuar Federation, have also worked to achieve cultural autonomy as corporate ethnic groups. This mobilization has recently been elevated by the creation of a pan-ethnic regional organization, the Confederation of Indian Nations of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE). CONFENIAE has become significant not only as a higher level of organization, but also because it illustrates a concern for developing a social and political awareness among the Amazonian natives, through which they are able to understand that they are not merely minorities in the national sociopolitical scheme but groups of people with different cultures and specific territories, who want their group rights to be recognized by the other segments of national society.

Of these claims, the most common reinvidications of all Amazonian groups are the right to land and its resources, rights that have been violated in the past and continue to be threatened by the rapid advance of colonization. The changes relating to land rights and natural resource use are discussed in detail below, drawing on examples which illustrate some of the projects now being carried out in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

The Struggle for Land

Frontier Expansion

Ecuador's Amazonian region has witnessed a series of relatively continuous efforts by representatives of the dominant society to take control of the region and exploit its resources. Uquillas (in press) has indicated that a convergence of interests among missionaries, entrepreneurs and colonists has produced an ever widening frontier, which encroaches on indigenous people and their land. From the late 16th century up to the early 19th century, Spanish missionaries and *encomenderos* tried to congregate Indians in mission posts (*reducciones* or *villas*) in order to indoctrinate them, collect tribute for the crown and Church and exploit their labor. Though some colonists travelled to the Amazonian region in search of gold and cinnamon, most came in response to missionary calls to settle the region with Christians from other, more densely populated areas of what is now Ecuador. None of these incursions successfully established dominant colonies. By the late 19th century, the Indians had still not succumbed to the Whites and they retained control over most of their territories.

In the 20th century, however, colonists from the Sierra (Andean highlands) began to settle in the Pastaza river basin and the Upano valley along the Palora-Arapicos-Macas trail. These migrants, who came mainly from the provinces of Chimborazo and Tungurahua, were primarily homesteaders and dedicated themselves to either subsistence farming, commercial production of sugar cane or cattle raising. In addition, from about 1920 to 1940, the discovery of gold and the growing activity of the Salesian Mission in the southern part of the region attracted substantial numbers of colonists to mission posts in Mendez, Limon and Gualaquiza (JNP 1976:11-12). Nonetheless, the earlier rubber boom (roughly 1870 to 1912) directly and dramatically affected the indigenous people of the Amazonian region. Indians all over the region were dislocated from their homes and suffered innumerable abuses at the hands of rubber gatherers. For example, it has been reported that a Sr. Londono, from Puerto Asis, Colombia, took more than 100 Quichua families from the Tena area to the San Miguel river and forced them to search for rubber (Barral 1978:16).

More recently oil has been the impetus for the development of the central and northern areas of Ecuador's Amazonian region. Initial oil exploration was conducted by the Leonard Exploration Corporation and the Royal Dutch Shell Company from 1937 to 1952. More recent exploration and production, beginning in the mid 1960s, was carried out by a Texaco-Gulf consortium as well as other companies. Oil exploration and production produced an economic boom and a wave of migration. While migrants are attracted by the opportunity to participate in oil exploration and exploitation, more come to occupy land, clear the forest, and establish agricultural and ranching sites. Rapid expansion of the agricultural frontier has been facilitated by the large road network built to service oil related installations, particularly in the northeastern areas.

In just a few decades the colonist population has skyrocketed. By 1974, 21 percent (or 43,320 persons) of the Amazonian region's total population were migrants (INEC 1974). Preliminary 1982 census figures (INEC 1982) indicate that the region's population increased by about 48 percent between 1974 and 1982, reaching approximately 260,000 inhabitants. Most of this growth has taken place in the province of Napo where the bulk of oil production occurs at

the present time. From 1974 to 1976, the province's population increased from 62,186 to 85,700. The 1982 census figures could show about 150,000 inhabitants for the region.

Since 1968, rapid colonization has posed a direct threat to native ethnic groups of the Amazonian region and in many instances has forced the Indians out of their ancestral lands. This is particularly true for some Shuar and Quichua groups which have been displaced gradually from their territories in the Andean foothills to more distant places in the Aguarico, Napo and Morona river basins.

In the past, when explorers, missionaries or colonists advanced onto ancestral lands, Indians frequently responded with passive resistance. On occasion, however, their reaction was violent, as illustrated by the rebellion of the Quijos under the direction of Jumandi in 1578 (Oberem 1980) and the Shuar uprising led by Quirrube in 1599 (Harner 1973). In both cases, Indians rebelled against the external domination by administrators of the Spanish monarchy and the Catholic missionaries. In recent times there have also been isolated episodes in which Shuar and Canelos-Quichua communities have used either violence or threats of violence to drive out colonos from lands which the Indians claim. But in the last two decades a new strategy has been adopted. Different native ethnic groups, especially the most numerous and organized, have begun to use the political system to request and, frequently, to demand that their traditionally occupied lands be legally granted to them, preferably with community titles.

Present Land Distribution

In spite of certain errors and limitations which will be detailed shortly, the Ecuadorian government has responded favorably to Indian land claims. From 1964 until mid-1982, of a total of 874,741 hectares legally titled in the Amazon region, Indian communities received 345,677 or approximately 40%, with 4,343 families benefitting (Table 1). Most of the families were Shuar from the province of Morona-Santiago or Quichuas from Napo. The rest were settlers and companies engaged in agriculture or animal husbandry.

The main problem is that this official response is belated and seldom in accordance with Indian interests. State policy tends to favor colonization, the expansion of the agricultural frontier and development of cattle ranching (Salazar 1981, Macdonald 1981, Uquillas, in press). Clearly, the settlers have an advantage over the natives given: 1) their greater knowledge of the national society and the structures which order it; and 2) their ability to manipulate these elements. The net result of this disparity is that while many Indian community lands have yet to be surveyed, settlers and agroindustrial companies have been given title to the best lands, both in terms of location and soils. A brief survey of IERAC's list of beneficiaries and their locations reveals that, even before the most recent influx of colonists, settlers dominated those areas with easy access to urban centers and roads, and occupied lands with the most fertile soils, such as those in the area of Shushufindi (IERAC 1978). Likewise, large cattle ranching companies and tea and African palm-producing companies obtained title to lands with the best soils.

Table 1. Land Adjudications in the Amazon Region, Ecuador
1964-1982

	Hectares	%	Number of Families	%
Amazon Region	874,741	100.0	17,181	100.0
Colonos and Companies	529,064	60.5	12,838	74.7
Indigenous Communities	345,677	39.5	4,343	25.3

Source: Elaborated by the author from data in IERAC (n. d.).

The Process of Titling Indian Lands

Officially, all lands have to be surveyed prior to legal titling, but IERAC officials have stated that their institution has neither the personnel nor the funding to respond to the existing demand for land titles existing in the Ecuadorian Amazon. By mid-1983, there were close to 200,000 hectares demarcated which still lacked legal title, and an equal amount of land claims were not even demarcated. Some Indians, particularly those Quichua-speakers of Napo who belong to UNAE, have begun to demarcate their own lands in an effort to enforce traditional land claims—or at least stimulate response by IERAC. The Shuar Federation has obtained support in surveying from foreign organizations such as the US Peace Corps and subsequently have exerted pressure through statements in the national and international media to obtain title. Unfortunately, the results of these efforts has been limited.

Another serious and much more complex problem is the criteria used for adjudicating both family and communal lands. Decisions are sometimes arbitrary and usually reflect the needs of colonos more than Indians, i.e. there is a strong tendency to favor those involved in intensive agriculture and market-oriented production rather than those practicing subsistence farming. The norm has been to demarcate lots of 40 to 50 hectares per family; only recently has IERAC begun to give larger lots to native communities, recognizing that they often require larger average holdings per family. Nevertheless, there is still considerable resistance to the argument that many indigenous communities require an average holding of greater than 80-100 hectares per family. It is even more difficult to convince many public officials that, instead of calculating averages per family, decisions regarding the extent of Indian lands should reflect completely different standards.

The Native Land Demarcation Project

The Native Land Demarcation Project, elaborated through the initiative of the National Institute of Colonization of the Ecuadorian Amazon Region (INCRAE) and Cultural Survival, developed a unique methodology for determining what constitutes "sufficient" lands for the physical and cultural survival,

development, and self-determination of several Ecuadorian Amazonian native ethnic groups. Officially the project is under the direction of the National Advisory Commission on Indian Affairs, created through ministerial decree 354 (September 1980), and includes representatives from INCRAE, IERAC, the Office of Campesino Development, the National Forestry Program, and the Legal Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. The project also included direct participation by the affected Amazon indigenous communities and has received support from groups and individuals concerned with the situation of Amazonian Indians.

The project has worked to identify the critical factors which must be taken into account when demarcating and, later, titling areas adequate for the Siona-Secoya, Cofán, and Huaorani Indians, groups which, due to their small size, were considered to be the most threatened by the advance of colonization. The methodology involved several phases:

1. The commission first studied the available literature and conducted research in the region to determine areas of traditional occupation, present day settlement patterns and principal social and cultural transformations occurring among the native groups. This phase drew heavily on the existing studies and subsequent field research conducted for the project by Drs. William Vickers and James Yost, working among the Siona-Secoya and Huaorani respectively. These anthropologists previously had stressed the need to confront the land problem using culturally appropriate criteria and the participation of trained personnel (see Vickers 1976; Yost 1978, 1979).

The Siona-Secoya, who belong to the Western Tucanoan linguistic group, traditionally occupied an area of about 82 thousand km² in what is presently part of Ecuador, Colombia and Peru (Vickers 1979). At the end of 1982, they numbered 414 persons, distributed in small settlements most of which were near the Shushufindi River, with a small group located in the lake region which forms the headwaters of the Cuyabeno River, in the northeast sector of the Ecuadorian Amazon. For approximately 10 years, the Siona-Secoya had been establishing permanent settlements along the Shushufindi, Eno and Aguarico rivers. Prior to that, they lived in widely dispersed settlements in the area between the Cuyabeno lakes and the confluence of the Cuyabeno and Aguarico rivers. The recent relocation of the Siona-Secoya was the result of pressure and suggestions from the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), whose missionaries and linguists had been working with this group for several years.

In a similar situation, after generations of exerting territorial domination over an area of approximately 20,000 km² on the southern side of the Napo river, most Huaorani have been concentrated in settlements near the headwaters of the Curaray in the last 25 years, both by personal choice and due to the efforts of the SIL. The present Huaorani population is approximately 800 people, most of whom form about a dozen settlements distributed between the Nushino and Mandaruyacu (tributaries of the Curaray). Several other, small isolated groups reside in areas alongside the Shiripuno, Yasuni, and Cononaco rivers.

2. The commission then analyzed the value which each ethnic group assigns to different natural resources and considered current use patterns of these resources. In the case of both the Siona-Secoya and the Huaorani, there was a very high dependence on the tropical forest; their economy, social structure and value system were bound to the jungle habitat.

3. Finally, the commission considered the differential impact of those external and internal factors which affect the Amazon in general, particularly the policies which guide such government activities as agrarian reform, hydrocarbon exploitation, and forestry and soil resource management. Briefly, the study demonstrated that such policies have caused the three, previously isolated, Indian communities to suffer increasingly intense pressures on their lands and life style. Consequently, the commission in charge of the project emphasized the need to guarantee the physical and cultural continuity of the three ethnic groups, not only for the present generation but for future ones as well. They were also concerned to avoid violent changes because each group was already being transformed by its internal dynamics and the external events, such as the exploitation of petroleum and the spontaneous influx of colonos. To meet such needs, the commission stressed the Indians' right to obtain titles to adequate extensions of land in traditionally occupied areas.

Policy makers were highly influential in determining the project's outcome. The initial objectives--to determine the most pressing problems affecting the indigenous people of the Amazonian region and to secure for them sufficient extensions of land, according to their own criteria or parameters--were approved wholeheartedly by the directors of all the participating institutions. When an ad-hoc commission was established to undertake the field work, the delegates learned first hand the plight of the ethnic groups and, in the process of interacting with social scientists and indigenous people, became concerned to resolve the Indian's problems. Their individual reports illustrated the needs and aspirations of the native people and, in general, argued in favor of granting each community a fairly extensive territory, including, in some cases, extra land as buffer zones (see Uquillas 1982). When the field reports were completed, they were formally presented to the Minister of Agriculture and heads of participating institutions at a meeting which included the members of the commission who carried out the fieldwork and representatives of the indigenous communities affected by the study.

This meeting marked the beginning of an arduous task in which words had to be translated into action and the findings and recommendations of the project had to be delivered to the decision makers in such a way that they would not only be persuaded in theory but also moved to take subsequent action. The author spent nearly two years defending the objectives of the study and arguing for the feasibility of the recommended solutions. In the final stages of the project, the native land issue was decided by the directors of the various national institutions due to the project's broad political implications (the only exception was the participation of the author, who acted as the commission's secretary). At the beginning, the project was heavily influenced by the people who inspired it--Indians aided by technical participants (four anthropologists, a sociologist, three biologists and an engineer-agronomist). In the final stages, high ranking officials from participating public institutions, most of whom were agricultural technicians with political considerations high in their minds, determined the outcome.

In 1982, the commission approved an area of approximately 66,570 hectares for the Huaorani and declared another large area as a reserve to connect the titled land with the Yasuni National Park. This park covers some 679,730 hectares within which small groups of Huaorani are settled. The commission also approved the extension of Siona-Secoya communal territory to include both sides of the Aguarico river, an area exceeding 15,000 hectares, bordering the Cuyabeno Faunal Reserve (which also contains a settlement of Siona-Secoya).

On April 29, 1983, IERAC and INCRAE delegated the author to coordinate the formal granting of title to Huaorani lands. Together with the Indians, an event was organized in which the President of the Republic, the Minister of Agriculture and other high national authorities participated. A noteworthy aspect of this event was the fact that the officials' talks emphasized that lands were not being given to the Indians; these lands, they stated, have belonged to the Indians for centuries. The groups therefore were to receive official documents to legalize these rights. The Minister of Agriculture said that, with the granting of land titles, the President was rectifying what the Constitution and laws of the nation dictated regarding the Indians' right to land. The President of Ecuador, in turn, stated:

Today we are granting the Huaorani titles to the lands they have occupied for thousands of years. It does not mean that only after this date you will be proprietors of the 67,000 hectares with title and of the 250,000 hectares that we will keep as a reserve for your descendants. It means that from now on you will be protected by law because you will receive a document which will serve you to stop colonos from coming to your land; so that you continue holding the land for yourselves, for your children, grandchildren and their descendants; so that in this territory what has occurred in previous centuries in the Ecuadorian Coast, Sierra and Oriente may not happen again.
(translated from Spanish by the author)

The adjudication of titles to the Siona-Secoya was complicated by the presence of two settlements of colonos in the area recommended for the natives. Clearly, any effort to remove the colonos would be difficult and time consuming. As a result, the Siona-Secoya decided to allow colonists to remain in the occupied area and to pressure jointly so that IERAC will carry out formal titling as quickly as possible. Once legalization of the Siona-Secoya's land has been completed, the most critical problems of the small ethnic groups will have been resolved. The pressing land issues of the more numerous Shuar and Quichua will be handled through their respective organizations.

To summarize, the indigenous struggle for land achieved official recognition for extensive areas of their traditional lands. As of mid-1982, only 40% of the land adjudicated went to indigenous communities; that percentage, however, rose significantly after titles were given to the Huaorani and other communities in 1983. The Advisory Commission on Indigenous Affairs has thus helped to solve specific land problems and aided in the development of a methodology which can be used to resolve similar problems in the future.

Patterns of Natural Resource Use

Though the current Indian efforts have been directed toward legalizing forest land claims, there exists a growing concern for the economic potential of that rain forest. Such concerns are now no longer limited to subsistence needs but include access to a series of basic services (health, education, transportation) and other aspects of national life. Regional economic growth, however, has spurred various threats to the Amazonian ecosystem. On the one hand, the relation of the native population to its physical surroundings is changing, and on the other, petroleum exploitation and colonization are expanding, both in a seemingly uncontrollable manner.

In an attempt to clarify questions concerning appropriate policies for the Ecuadorian Amazon, in 1982 the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, through INCRAE and the National Program of Agrarian Regionalization (PRONAREG), signed an agreement with the French Overseas Office of Technical and Scientific Research (ORSTOM) to carry out regional studies on ecology and natural resource management. The central objective of this project is to obtain detailed information on renewable natural resources, their use and management possibilities. Since the project is still in its early stages, this review of the research must be considered as only an introduction to a complex theme.

The Ecuadorian Amazon Ecosystem

Briefly, the Ecuadorian Amazon ecosystem is characterized by: 1) very irregular topography due to the presence of vestiges of a third cordillera of the Andes; 2) high levels of rainfall, ranging from 2,000 to 5,500 mm; 3) jungle vegetation and; 4) average temperatures above 23 degrees centigrade at locations below 600m in altitude. Like many Amazonian ecosystems, the Ecuadorian Amazonian area functions as a closed circuit where maintenance of soil fertility depends on the natural organic cycle of the forest (Tosi 1980:20, Sourdat and Custode 1980:20); the area is thus very vulnerable to external changes. The success or failure of forest resource utilization depends on the ability to manipulate the organic cycle, by taking advantage of one part of its fertility without destabilizing the whole (Wright 1977:1).

In the Amazon in general, about 98% of the soils in the areas below 600m altitude belong to the "interfluvial ecotype" (terra firme), characterized by soils poor in mineral content and therefore of very low fertility; barely 2% correspond to the riverine ecotype (varzea), i.e., enriched by alluvial deposition (Descola 1981b:2-3). Although there are no available data on the exact proportions of each ecotype in the Ecuadorian Amazon, it is estimated that approximately one million hectares contain soils which are among the best in the humid tropics, since they are derived from rough textured, recent volcanic ash, with a high reserve of nutritious elements (Wright 1977:13). Close to 10% of the soils of the region are considered to be relatively good, and, with their physical and chemical characteristics, could sustain intensive production (Sourdat and Custode 1980:11).

Traditional Subsistence System

The traditional subsistence system, common to most native cultures of the Amazon, is characterized by hunting, fishing, gathering and shifting cultivation. For centuries, Amazonian Indians have lived in harmony with their physical surroundings, drawing on floral and faunal resources of the forest for most of their protein and cultivating soils of limited fertility to produce carbohydrates (Vickers 1979, Yost 1978). This harmony reflects the native's adaptation to the constraints of the tropical forest rather than conscious environmental conservation. One of the conditions for this balanced man-forest-soil relationship seems to have been a low population density (dispersed settlements over extensive areas); shifting cultivation and residence; and the relatively low demand for items not essential for subsistence.

While many communities of Ecuadorian Amazon Indians depend on subsistence activities, it is the Huaorani and, to a lesser extent, the Siona-Secoya, who are still distinguished by an almost exclusive dependence on resources extracted from the jungle. Shifting cultivation is based on slash and burn

(sometimes, instead of burning the vegetation, it simply is left to decompose) and on the rotation of plots (chacras) which after one or two harvests are left fallow for periods of 15-20 years. Once a plot has been selected, the woods are felled: at the end of the dry season it is burned and planted. In general, plantains, corn, yucca (cassava), peanuts and sweet potato are planted in combination with other products. Each family generally has two or three chacras in various stages of production. The chacra is generally left to fallow after it has been fully harvested and will not be cultivated again until the forest has regenerated and the soil has recuperated the lost nutrients (for additional details see Vickers 1979; Yost 1978; Casanova 1975; Nicholaides et al. 1982).

Another important element of this traditional system, mentioned by the majority of researchers of the Ecuadorian Amazon, is not only the abandoning of a plot after its fertility has diminished, but the abandoning of an entire area once its potential of usable resources has been reduced. The Huaorani, Siona-Secoya and Achuar Indians resettle, when they determine that the game, fish and harvest in an occupied area has lowered to critical levels, allowing the old ones to recuperate (Vickers 1979; Yost 1978; Descola 1981b; Wright 1977). Thus, the Indians' traditional system includes not only shifting cultivation, but also shifting residence.

Although the traditional economic system is ecologically appropriate, it depends on conditions which are very difficult to maintain; (1) low population density with dispersed settlements, (2) periodic resettling of the communities, (3) shifting cultivation, (4) appropriate technology, and (5) relatively low need for goods beyond those of subsistence.

Transition to a Market Economy

The desire to acquire money, be it to buy medicine, clothes or anything else, has caused even the Huaorani to over-exploit certain forest resources which have commercial value. They are hunting more animals to provide the neighboring Quichua Indians with smoked meat and trapping other animals to sell the skins to national or foreign tourists. They are also cutting down palm trees which provide fibers for hammocks which are sold to tourists. Similarly, the Siona-Secoya need cash when they find it necessary to travel to local government offices and agencies. To finance such travel, the community requires that members turn over a percentage of the total income obtained from the sale of wood from communal lands, thereby increasing total deforestation.

Present Trends and Future Possibilities for Indian Economic Development

More than two decades ago, native population such as the Shuar, Quichua, and Achuar entered a period of rapid transformation in their production systems. This was due to the combined pressure on the land by colonos and government policy which, favoring the concession of titles and credit to those who would convert the forest into pasture, gradually transformed many shifting cultivators to sedentary farmers and livestock raisers (Shuar Federation 1976; Taylor 1971; Descola 1981a; Macdonald 1981). Consequently, many Indians no longer use the land exclusively for subsistence. Instead, they produce surpluses sell in order to purchase consumer goods ranging from food to tape recorders to outboard motors for their canoes. Fortunately, most Indian lands cannot be sold because they belong to the community. IERAC adapted a policy of giving global, i.e. communal, titles at the request of indigenous

organizations, which realized that native lands received through individual title were passing into the hands of colonos through sale, barter and other forms of expropriation, usually quite unfavorable to the Indians.

For other groups, economic change is still in its early stages. The Siona-Secoya began to sell standing timber to colonos who took charge of the felling, transport and marketing. Now, the Siona-Secoya have obtained chainsaws and outboard motors which allow them to exploit forest resources on their own and sell it directly in the closest market. Furthermore, under the influence of missionaries and colonos, they have started to raise chickens, pigs and cows. In 1982, the Siona-Secoya had 50 head of cattle, and they hoped to increase their production. They asked the Ministry of Agriculture for a loan of one million sucres (about US \$25,000 at the time) to plant more pasture lands and increase the herd. In spite of its policy of encouraging cattle raising, the ministry, prior to making a decision, requested reports from various concerned parties, including INCRAE. INCRAE's opinion was that, before supporting relatively large schemes, the government should promote small projects which would permit Indians to improve their existing pasture lands and herds, since their yield is low. Of all the Amazonian ethnic groups in Ecuador, only the Huaorani have not demonstrated an interest in raising livestock.

The conversion of forest to pasture is a phenomenon that affects all of Amazonia (Hecht 1982, Hiraoka and Yamamoto 1980). This transition from shifting cultivation to market-oriented production is apparently a unidirectional flow. However, conversion of forest to pasture is ill advised because there is a risk that in the long run it may lead to grave ecological consequences. In the first place, forest conversion alters the ecology. The felling of trees to plant pastures ruptures the closed circuit of the Amazonian ecosystems; the organic cycle needed to maintain the relative fertility of the soil is destroyed. It is estimated that by clearing forest for agricultural production, around 500 tons/hectare of biomass is being exchanged for less than 20 (Hecht 1982:6). The conversion of forest to pasture also creates ecological modifications that produce, among other things, an increased susceptibility of plants and animals to disease; compaction of the soil; depletion of nutrients; asphyxia of roots and microorganisms; and erosion (Sourdat and Custode 1978, Hiraoka and Yamamoto 1980:441-443).

Second, cattle raising is apparently not an economically viable form of sustained development. Besides damaging the soils essential for all agricultural production and animal husbandry, cattle yield per hectare is low and its costs are high (Tosi 1980:17). Cattle raising in tropical lowlands has been questioned in many areas because it represents a net energy loss and a very inefficient method of producing food calories, especially when compared with the production of cereals [Cultural Survival Quarterly 6(2) 1982].

Alternative Management Approaches

Uncontrolled exploitation of the moist tropics is leading to destruction of the forest and degradation of the soils. Many experts argue that this not only limits the options for survival and economic development of the Amazonian natives, but has global implications. There is, thus, an urgent need to develop alternative approaches to the management of non-renewable resources, methods which permit the continuance of the essential organic cycle and can provide not only subsistence but also a surplus to satisfy other needs.

People throughout the Amazon are looking for alternative forms of production. Natives and colonos are doing it in their own way, empirically, as part of their daily routine, while researchers from various disciplines are testing models for solving some of the management problems mentioned here. Among the more important alternatives are: (1) forest management systems and (2) diversified farming or combined agriculture and forestry systems (agroforestry).

One of the forest management systems proposed specifically for the Ecuadorian Amazon and for lands that have been determined to be more appropriate for forest rather than for agricultural use (about 80 percent of the total) offers two different options: a) community forest production in medium and large sized land areas, and b) individual production in small family sized plots (see Tosi 1980:36-44). Community level production is suggested for Indian lands, generally held communally, such as those presently occupied by the Huaorani, Cofán and Shuar. This system would require extensions from 1,000 to 5,000 hectares and the labor of 25 to 100 adults. By contrast, individual production is suggested both for Indian and colono families who hold private lots of at least 30 hectares. Tosi argues that in a natural state light gaps in the forest canopy tend to regenerate vegetation rapidly with a high level of productivity. Therefore, he recommends that small forest openings or light gaps be created artificially to practice shifting agriculture and carry out a selective use, development and marketing of forest products through a system of reforestation based on natural regeneration.

There are various forms of diversified farming systems but a common characteristic of all of them is that they are recommended for areas which have better than average soils, that is for lands relatively utilizable for intensive agricultural production. For native and colono lands with fairly good soils, Tosi (1980:44-46) proposes planting crops with short rotation periods in plots between 7.5 and 10 hectares per family. Seasonal crops should be rotated every year and permanent crops every five years. This, he states, would be an economically viable system over a sustained period of time. This model has not been tested, however, in the region.

"Yurimaguas technology" is another model proposed for Amazon soils with characteristics similar to those of the Peruvian region which gave it the name. This model maintains that it is possible to obtain sustained agricultural production in Amazonia, combining slash and burn agriculture with fertilization and strict technological supervision to maintain the fertility of the soil. As alternatives adequate for soils with gradual slopes, it recommends mixed agroforestry-pasture systems combined with leguminous systems (see Sanchez et al. 1982; Nicholaidis et al. 1982). The most frequent criticism of this model is that neither chemical fertilization nor technical supervision are available to most farmers in the region.

Finally, another model of combined agriculture and forestry has been tested for various years in the Napo Province of Ecuador by technicians of the National Institute for Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Research (INIAP) and of the University of Florida, Gainesville. This model, which is still at the experimental stage and not yet implemented at the farm level, differs from "Yurimaguas technology," in that it maintains that the problems of soil deterioration and low income, so common in areas of the Amazon that have experienced a rapid population increase, could be resolved if the recently deforested areas are (1) planted with multiple crops, preferably using native

and local species, (2) reforested with leguminous firewood-producing trees and (3) if hogs and tropical sheep were raised in plots which, using a system of rotation, would be left fallow periodically. According to the principal exponent of this model:

One promising solution is that of intensifying the production of small livestock and firewood in the fallow period. The leguminous foragers and firewood producing leguminous trees increase the organic matter, nitrogen, available phosphorous and aeration of the soil; furthermore, they control its erosion and leaching. Hogs and tropical sheep and domestic fowl improve the fertility of the soil, depositing organic matter, stimulating the leguminous *Rhizobium* symbiosis and they contribute fecal microorganisms, which mineralize the residues from the crops. Also, the pigs and tropical sheep can provide better income to small producers and greater quantities of animal proteins at a lower cost without using cereals to feed them (Bishop 1980:2).

Conclusion

The main goal of the Ecuadorian Indians in recent times has been to establish possession over their land. Extensive lands with legal titles are deemed essential for the survival, development and self-determination of the native ethnic groups. Although much of the land is secured, the rapid advance of colonization and the expansion of the agricultural frontier urgently require the demarcation and adjudication of the remaining areas occupied by indigenous people.

On the other hand, traditional systems of forest use, which consist of hunting, gathering and shifting cultivation, have been transforming as a result of external as well as internal factors. Among these factors are: greater population density, formation of nucleated settlements and the need to legalize the possession of the land to obtain credit. As a result, there is a growing tendency to exploit intensively the tropical forest, beginning with cash crops and, eventually, converting crop land to pastures for raising cattle. Cattle raising, however, is considered neither ecologically nor economically appropriate for the region. It is ecologically unsuitable because it destroys the organic cycle of the forest and impoverishes the soil. Economically, it is unsuitable because it does not generate employment. Its yield per hectare is low, its cost high and it wastes energy that could be more efficiently used in the production of vegetable foods.

The tendency to convert the forest to pasture creates a contradiction between two objectives: 1) physical and cultural survival and; 2) economic development. The struggle for land and the victories obtained thus far by the Amazonian Indians of Ecuador will lose their value if the resources of that land are used irrationally and the ecosystems are destroyed. For an adequate use of the resources it is necessary to leave large extensions of forest in their natural form. In those places already under cultivation there is a need to create conditions which maintain the fertility of the soil. At present, various production alternatives are being studied to help the people of the Amazonian region to obtain not only the resources basic to their subsistence, but also additional benefits on a sustainable basis.

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