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Amazonian Ecuador: An Ethnic Interface in Ecological, Social and Ideological Perspectives
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Cover: A Puyo Runa man of Canelos Quichua culture on his way to a swidden subsistence plot in the jungle. (Photograph taken by the Author).
Norman E. Whitten, Jr.

AMAZONIAN ECUADOR: AN ETHNIC INTERFACE
IN ECOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Copenhagen 1978

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The views expressed in IWGIA Documents are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the organization.

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CONTENTS

Introduction.................................................. 5
Nationalist Development and Surgent Ethnicity........ 7
A Framework for Study of Nationalization and
Surgent Ethnicity........................................... 11
Introduction to the Ethnic Interface of Eastern
Ecuador.......................................................... 14
Contemporary Native Languages and Cultures........... 17
  The Jungle Quichua........................................ 18
    Quechua-Quichua Languages............................ 19
    Jungle Quichua Culture................................ 21
    Puyo Runa Integrative Lifeways....................... 27
    Modern Organizations.................................... 32
  The "Jivaroans"............................................ 34
Other Indigenous Language and Culture
  Groupings with Small Populations....................... 37
    The Cofán.............................................. 39
    The Siona and Secoya.................................. 40
    The Huorani "Auca"..................................... 41
    The Zaparoans........................................... 44

Summary...................................................... 46
Historical Dimensions of the Ethnic Interface .......... 47
Contemporary Dimensions of the Ethnic Interface ...... 51
  Ecology.................................................. 51
  Social Organization..................................... 55
  Ideology................................................ 57
Ritual, Symbolism and Cosmology.......................... 61
Notes....................................................... 67
References Cited............................................. 69

Maps and Photographs by Norman E. Whitten, Jr.
MAP I: WESTERN SOUTH AMERICA
INTRODUCTION

¡el Ecuador ha sido, es, y será, el país amazónico!
"Ecuador has been, is, and will be, the Amazonian country!"
reads the national rallying cry frequently emblazoned on official stationary within the Republic of Ecuador.

Ostensibly, the slogan is a political one which no party would dare to ignore, let alone negate; it protests - and justifiably so - the loss of half of its Amazonian territory to its southern neighbor, Peru, during the early years of World War II. This slogan also validates the nationalist, developmental capitalist realpolitik of an Andean nation - which was, until recently, dependent upon coastal monocultural agribusiness - to incorporate the remaining Upper Amazonian territory within its sphere of burgeoning bureaucratic control with its new economic base of externally sponsored petroleum exploitation.

Incorporation of a territory, even by the gentlest means, is a violent, wrenching episode in national consolidation. This is especially the case when the process follows
a century of disruption of tropical forest peoples and perhaps equal disruption within the Andean-coastal sectors of the country seeking to develop a new Amazonian frontier and to transform that frontier into a tropical image of its changing self. People must be moved into the territory and induced or forced to work in such a manner as to convert energy into modern economic concerns. These concerns - for example, the development of goods which are clearly beneficial to the gross national product, whether or not they feed the new population - generate processes which inevitably involve ecosystem alteration or adjustment, a set of social-jural-political constraints and incentives for resource allocation, and presumably an ideology through which juropolitical action is justified, rationalized, and juxtaposed to still existing religious thought and evocation.

I noted in an earlier IWGIA publication (Whitten 1976a) and elsewhere (Whitten 1976b:22), "... the demographic shifts from Andes to lowlands brings the nationalizing population smack into the face of its rainforest inhabitants. This is a profoundly indigenous face,... if acknowledged in their richness and adaptable character, the native cultures of the Oriente (as the western Amazonian lowlands of eastern Ecuador are called in that nation) would contradict the ideology behind the revolutionary force of nationalistic consolidation." That document, and the book upon which it was based, presented an argument that ethnogenesis, or "surging ethnicity" as I now prefer to call it, was the direct, rational response of the Puyo Runa grouping of Canelos Quichua culture to nationalist sponsored ethnocidal policies. In this Document I sketch the indigenous face of the entire Oriente to emphasize the scope of cultural dynamics - ecological, economic, social, ideological - as they currently exist in a nationalizing context.

Throughout this work I eschew idle gropings to determine "tribal boundaries" and heed the lesson of futility
so well documented and argued by Morton Fried (1967, 1975, see also Godelier 1977), for his reasoning is underscored and brought into sharp relief by the ethnic interface of the contemporary Oriente. Among other things, the search for unified "tribes" with their presumptive rigid boundaries and presumed congruence of cultural features and linguistic homogeneity (see, e.g. Harner 1972) strengthens imperialistic imposition of internal colonial "order" (e.g. the "colonial tribe syndrome" described by Helms 1969) and denies pan-human adaptive processes to the rich, changing world of modern Amazonian cultural achievement and potential.

Let us first establish a set of generalizations about Ecuadorian nationalist development in terms which should fit other comparable situations, and then turn to the reality of contemporary Upper Amazonian peoples caught up in this process.

NATIONALIST DEVELOPMENT AND SURGENT ETHNICITY

Ecuador, the second smallest of South American countries, has moved from a basically agrarian economy to the status of "oil rich" nation within the past decade. It is a culturally plural country which once reflected a bifurcate economy (archaic versus modern) but is now integrated within a uniform, centralized, planned development system where the discrepancies between rich and poor are heightened by the very programs established to alleviate
them (see e.g. Whitten 1976a, Naranjo 1978, Hurtado 1973, 1977). Ecuador's ethnic groupings, including Afro-Ecuadorians in lowland and highland settings, tropical forest Indians in western and eastern rainforest, Andean Indians, and various groupings and categorical sets of "mixed racial groups" (as though any human group were anything other than mixed racially) variously tagged mestizo, cholo, longo, chazo, montuvio, zambo, mulato, claro, are especially apparent in their cultural diversity in the regions where resources currently sought after by foreign nations - oil, timber, land for agribusiness - are concentrated. To effect a national transformation in the interface between international industrial economic demands, and regional and local cultural ecological variety, Ecuadorian developers, governed by coherent, doctrinaire political nationalism, attempt to apply strategies of development which are based upon the ideology and designs of North American industrial techniques. These techniques, their infrastructural basis, and the consequent bureaucratic planning, control, and management are totally inadequate in the tropical forest ecosystems, arid coastal-monsoon ecosystem, and Andean ecosystems to which they are being applied.

In these regions people who are ethnically tagged as non-national (and non-nationalist) practice systems of ecosystem maintenance which are strikingly divergent from techniques recommended by specialists from industrial nations who train Ecuadorian planners. For example, in the rainforest tropical lowlands the complex of polycultural swidden horticulture of starchy crops, extensive use of manioc "beer", hunting strategies permeated with food taboos to regularize a supply of game animals and birds in a dispersed habitat, and concentrated exploitation of insect and larvae together with riparian resources such as fish, turtles and their eggs, caimans and their eggs, shrimp, crabs and other crustaceans, is fundamental to Amazonian and Northwest Ecuadorian eco-
systems. This system of "tropical forest cultural ecology" is usually viewed by planners as an undesirable remnant of an archaic past. Ridged field horticulture in sections of the monsoon, semi-arid coast, preservation of sections of the mangrove swamp for exploitation of shell fish in the rainforest coast, Andean indigenous forms of irrigation and crop rotation, vertical exploitation of different micro-ecologies (Murra 1975, Salomon 1977), and transhumance (Crespi 1968) in the Andean zones, are all often viewed as archaic systems stemming from the colonial era where ignorance of progressive developmental capitalism led to centuries of stagnation. Blacks, Indians, and all of the stereotypic mixtures of such reputedly inferior groupings, are seen as requiring national identity referents and a transformation of economy from one harmonious with a given ecosystem to one deriving from planned, uniform practices with a marketable product with specified monetary worth. In brief, developmental ideology insists that the worth of a people is bound up in the commercial worth of a region, and the concept of region itself is based on a concentration of marketable products (coffee region, sugar region, banana region). The idea that Ecuador constitutes one of the most complex, diverse set of contrasting ecosystems in the world is conjoined with the ideology of development where uniformity of economic process is seen as overcoming ecosystem parameters.

Ethnically "non-national" peoples, especially the Afro-American population of the Northwest rainforest-coastal zone of Ecuador-Colombia (Whitten 1965, 1974, Whitten and Friedemann 1976) and the indigenous populations of the Upper Amazon of Ecuador (Harner 1972, Philippe and Christine Descola, personal communications, Whitten 1976, Macdonald, in preparation, Vickers 1976, Robinson 1971, 1972), are generally excluded from direct participation in planning changes in their habitat. The nationalization effort of
Ecuador, like that of sister nations struggling in the grip of Euro-American dependency, has a clear ideological focus upon ethnic homogenization—the putative product of homogenization is now being called "el hombre ecuatoriano"—but this promise of "inclusion" as "Ecuadorian man" is invariably negated by a contradictory focus on white supremacy. The active process of exclusion of those considered to be non-mixed is applied by those who espouse an ideology of inclusion based on racial mixture, and the resulting contradiction is readily perceived by ethnically identifiable Afro-Ecuadorian and Indigenous-Ecuadorian peoples. Furthermore, the exclusion of ethnically identifiable "mixed" peoples by the white supremacy doctrine compounds the contradiction by providing internal dissension.

The rational reaction of indigenous, "mixed", and Afro-American peoples of contemporary Ecuador to nationalist penetration of their ecosystems, denigration of their cosmological principles, and exclusion of their well-organized knowledge, is to express resistance to ecosystem and social system alteration directly, through protest, and indirectly, through ceremonial enactment and symbolism. In the latter, expressive dimension, allusion to mythical allegories is made so that direct communication takes place within the excluded group; but, from the standpoint of the developers, puzzlingly non-national, cultist retentions of supposedly primitive lifeways are falsely perceived. The more the ecosystem is altered by ineffectual development strategies, and the more systems of social ranking and social stratification ostensibly reflect the national imagery, the more intensive and the more allusive become the counter-cultural reactions. The entire inter-ethnic system generates a set of cultural stand-offs wherein those people who know most about an ecosystem are the least likely to be consulted in planning developmental strategies within it.
A FRAMEWORK FOR STUDY OF NATIONALIZATION AND SURGENT ETHNICITY

The Peruvian anthropologist Stéfano Varese stressed the key concepts of power and ethnicity in his ground breaking IWGIA Document 8. To these features I wish to add ritual and cosmology-areas of seemingly obscure and opaque anthropological concern which both cultural materialists and structuralists (e.g. Harris 1974, 1975, Lévi-Strauss 1963, 1964) persist in pidgeon-holing as "masking superstructure." Power, according to the American anthropologist Dimen-Schein (1977:211) "is encoded in symbols, enacted in relationships, and grounded in things." Power structure, following Richard N. Adams (1975, see also Whitten 1977) is defined as the degree and nature of control, or influence, which one party or actor exerts over the relevant environment of another party or actor. In Ecuador, there is no question but that centralized control of the nation's basic and commercial resources is being facilitated by a rapidly expanding modern infrastructure of roads and air transportation, backed up by regional offices of planned development, schools, public services, and the like. But this control over resources not only extends to the actual, observable, material life (for example, the expansion of sugar cane production and tea production with their work schedules, pay schedules,
complement of stores and goods, transportation networks, dependency on fluctuating national and world demand, etc.) but also to the symbolic life of Ecuador's people. To illustrate, to work in a cane field is to be placed in a symbolic environment where upward mobility is nearly impossible, where one is categorically stereotyped as "poor," in need of development, in need of education, in need of more national governmental support to survive in the modernizing nation. It is to be placed in a symbolic position of personal dependency upon developmental ideology as well as in an economic position of personal dependency upon developmental activity.

Ritual must be based on "correspondence structures." According to structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss, and especially as interpreted by James Boon (1972), these are replicating sense perceptions from different domains of experience. When people "perceive," say, a comparable system of exploitation in their work-a-day lives, within their ritual activity, through their systems of social protest, and within the structure of family and community, we may speak of a "correspondence structure." Human beings build correspondence structure reflexively, or reflectively, in interaction with one another. Such interaction invariably has dual foci: 1) the commonality of interest based upon habitat, or environmental, exploitation, and 2) the commonality of interest based upon shared cultural knowledge. The former is materialist, the latter idealist; both necessitate somewhat different modes of analysis, but both combine through the fundamental concepts of transaction and context. Many anthropologists assume that correspondence structures are apparent only in "pristine tribal societies" and deny the possibility of reflective replication of cognitive patterning across domains in systems undergoing rapid change. If anthropologists deny such processes, no wonder that national developers ignore them altogether.
In his exhaustive, if highly abstract, treatise on power structure, Richard N. Adams makes a strong case for higher levels of coordination among disparate groupings emerging at one level, as centralization occurs at another. Fundamental to this process is what he calls "surgent" systems - those which are materially, socially and mentally in a process of restructuring themselves to cope with an unsatisfactory situation of anticipated dependency. I suggest that ritual expressions of various ethnically non-national people in the contemporary Ecuadorian Oriente - the subjects of our immediate concern - are in a process of surgent reorganization and that this surgent feature is expressed through their ritual enactment and forms of symbolic expression. In such circumstances, to return to the key notions of power and ethnicity, a domain of power and protest may be transformed back and forth from praxis to symbolic enactment, from day-to-day activity to stylized ritual enactment (see Whitten 1978 for an extended analysis of this process among the Canelos Quichua). Whether or not the theoretical underpinnings here are altogether sound, the generalizations which can be drawn from a combination of the literature on power and ritual are remarkably compatible with the data which we have now culled on the native peoples of the contemporary Ecuadorian Oriente as these data reflect the transactional reality of confrontation between utterly different systems. We turn now to this area of native viability.
INTRODUCTION TO THE ETHNIC INTERFACE OF EASTERN ECUADOR

Because the Oriente lies "east of the Andes," it is common to think of this Ecuadorian rainforest zone in terms of the vastness of Amazonian floodplains and interfluvial territories which rise only hundreds of feet above sea level. The truth is that the Oriente is about as "flat" as the Great Smokey mountains of the United States. In fact, the manifestations of the third Andean cordillera of Ecuador - which rises three to four thousand foot high - give us a defining feature of ethnic resurgence of native peoples, in historical and contemporary perspective (as we shall see). The Oriente, as the western fringe of the Upper Amazon, or the southern fringe of the Northwest Amazon, or a northern extension of the Peruvian Montaña (if one wishes to so marginalize it) is most assuredly not one thing - it is not an eastern extension of the Andes in any ecological sense, though it is part of the Andean escarpment in its geological formation.

Much of the Oriente is an interface zone, a domain lying between two forms or structures, and forming their common boundary. By placing the Oriente smack in the middle of a common South American Amazonian interface we strip away the marginal character spuriously attributed to it, and draw dynamics of ecological, social, and ideological processes into sharp relief. Basically, the structures making up the contemporary interface are derived from the sharp contrasts to be drawn between Andean and Amazonian ecologies, stratified bureaucratic and egalitarian social systems, and political nationalist and indigenous ideologies.

Any traveller beginning a descent of the eastern sierran cordillera, whether via high windswept páramo or by deep river cut between majestic Andean slopes, will experience a series of ecosystems which begins with the silent cloud
forest featuring the gentle sounds of burbling brooks and the occasional roar of a cataract or small waterfall. A bit farther eastward the burble and occasional torrent crescendo into a more continuous roar of falls and cataracts, accompanied all too often by the crash of landslides. Heavy rainfall brought about as moist Amazonian air currents stroke the cordilleran wall of the towering montaña creates a near vertical rainforest in many areas, from which waterfalls gush forth and through which deep riparian ravines are cut.

Farther eastward, but still west of the Oriente's eastern cordillera, in the currently most densely populated areas of the Oriente - Archidona, Tena, Puyo, Macas, Sucúa, Méndez, Gualuquiza - the Andean foothills are encompassed by Upper Amazonian rainforest-montane ecology. Travelling still eastward in one of the most rugged jungles in the world, it is first necessary to wind through a 3,000-4,000 foot high third cordillera by river pathway, or to ascend and again descend the local manifestation (e.g., Cutucú, Sigüín, Oglán) of this cordillera before continuing on to lower Amazonia. And as one reaches areas where the rivers become slower, deeper, and more navigable, Ecuador's contemporary border ends in the south and central Oriente and either Peru, or disputed territory, begins.

Culture history of the Oriente is still inchoate, but we can begin with some general points, moving toward greater specificity with regard to its contemporary inhabitants. Linguistic and archaeological evidence strongly suggest that the first inhabitants were westward moving tropical forest people who, in the words of Julian H. Steward (1948:507):

appearing to represent a series of migratory waves that had spent their force against the barrier of the Andes, where representatives of many widely distributed linguistic families... subsided into comparative isolation. No other area of South America has greater linguistic diversity.
Today we must revise this concept of westward colonization out of Amazonia to say that the bearers of native cultures of the Oriente represent successive waves of peoples probably spending their force against the inhabitants of the montaña (e.g., Lathrap 1970:176, Porras and Piana 1975:153-160), interdigitating with one another, and interacting dynamically to create monolingual and multilingual cultural systems. Some of these systems still exist, but many of them have been obliterated by disease, mission reduction, slave raiding, and the 19th century Amazonian rubber boom, to name only four prominent causes of destruction.

CONTEMPORARY NATIVE LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

The relationship between language and culture is complicated in any region, and this complication presents difficulties when we try to understand the lifeways of a people, their material adaptation to a given habitat and social environment, and their means of communicating. In the Oriente, as in the adjoining Northwest Amazon of Colombia, the complexity becomes especially intricate because we find material, social and ideological commonalities, bonds of kinship and affinity, and political alliances regularly crossing linguistic boundaries. The linguistic boundaries themselves form at the juncture between unrelated Native American languages currently existing in the Oriente - Quichua and Jivarohan being the most prominent, with Cofán, Siona, Secoya, Huaorani "Auca" and Zaparohan (Záparo-Zapa
and Andoa-Shimigae) consisting of small groupings of native speakers. Siona and Secoya are both Tucanoan language dialects associated with the Northwest Amazon. None of the other languages are firmly classified in relation to one another, and (with the possible exception of Quichua, which has been postulated to be related to Aymara of highland Bolivia and Peru - Orr and Longacre 1968), none of these languages are clearly related on linguistic grounds to any other South American language. Furthermore, the stereotype of Quichua as exclusively "of the Andes" and Jivaroan as exclusively "of the Jungle" is severely questioned by data from Ecuador. To understand the contemporary Oriente as an ethnic interface it is first necessary to consider the various linguistic-cultural groupings.

The Jungle Quichua

Approximately 25,000-35,000 native peoples of the Oriente currently speak Quichua, a dialect of Quechua, which is associated with the Andes and with the Incaic conquest of Ecuador. Because of the "Andean-Incaic" association the majority of Oriente native peoples have often been thought to represent recent migrations from the Sierra or evidence of "acculturation" of other peoples to Christianity (missionizing friars adopted the language). The Director of the National Institute of Anthropology and History of Ecuador, although presumably immersed in data and arguments to the contrary, completely omits these dynamic tropical forest peoples from his view of genuine indigenous (which he calls "polychrome") cultures (Crespo Toral 1978:544). Explanations of the existence of Quichua languages among Jungle peoples by slavish adherence to migration and mission reduction assertions are unsatisfactory (Whitten 1976a, Muysken 1974, 1975, 1976). At best, they assume large scale processes of
cultural and linguistic association and transmission for which we have no evidence in the central Oriente; at worst (and, unfortunately, the worst is most often the case from the academic halls of Quito to the practical decision making offices of regional towns in the Oriente) they deny the rich, ancient heritage of cultural adaptation to the Oriente's forest and river systems for the majority of her contemporary native people. (An illustrative example of such a denial has recently been given by the North American specialist in tropical forest cultures, Beckerman 1978:18). Let us very briefly review the subject of Quechua, of which Ecuadorian Quichua is a part.

Quechua-Quichua Languages

The Peruvian linguist Alfredo Torero (1965, 1972) and the North American linguist Gary Parker (1963, 1972) both made order of Quechua languages by dividing them into two major groups, which they reconstruct as separating from one another in either coastal or central Peru around 800 A.D. Both Torero and Parker postulate a southward movement of Quechua into the Cuzco area, at the time of separation. Seven centuries later, Quechua was expanded out of Cuzco by the Imperial Inca as a juro-political lingua franca and spread rapidly, by conquest, south into Andean Bolivia (where it did not previously exist) and northward into Ecuador (where it may have previously existed — Guevara 1972, Hartmann N.D.). It continued to spread north without conquest into Colombia and south into Argentina. Today it is the largest native American language in the New World with its more than eight million speakers.

In addition to the Incaic distribution as a lingua franca, and in addition to the Quechuan spread northward and southward beyond Incaic influence, there is evidence that Quechua was spreading in the tropical forests east of the
Andes prior to its introduction into the northern highlands by conquest. This expansion, we must stress, was independent of Incaic Imperialism (Steward 1968:509, Guevara 1972:17, Orr and Longacre 1968:546, Uriarte 1952:76-77, Muysken 1974, 1975, 1976).

The North American linguist Louisa Stark (1973), probably the best known of Ecuadorianist specialists on Quichua languages, challenges Parker's reconstruction and seeks to move the Proto-Quechua time and place to a Proto-Quichuan east Ecuadorian hearth at about 600 A.D. She proposes historical explanations regarding Ecuadorian Quichua which are based on her reworking of Parker's Proto-Quechua reconstructions, and offers a tentative, but startling, conclusion - that Quichua originally extruded out of the Ecuadorian Oriente and is to be correlated with certain types of ceramics excavated by P. Pedro I. Porras (the Cosanga Culture - Porras 1974, 1975, Porras and Piana 1975). But, the Dutch linguist Pieter Muysken (1976) who has studied Ecuadorian Quichua extensively and who has collaborated with Stark on an Ecuadorian Dictionary of Quichua dialects (Stark and Muysken 1978) states convincingly, "Stark's reconstruction seems to be an arbitrary way of first recombining and then decomposing terms" (Muysken 1976:26). He firmly and unequivocally rejects her Proto-Quechua and Proto-Quichua reconstruction on the grounds of both inadequate data base and faulty methodology (see also Hartmann, N.D.). This leaves us with the Torero and Parker reconstructions.

To gain some reasonable base line for the understanding of Jungle Quichua peoples and the relationship of language, society and culture within their areas, and with regard to their Jivarow, Huarani "Auca", Zaparoan, Siona-Secoya and Cofán neighbors, two complementary positions must be considered. First, Incaic Quechua entered or re-entered the Ecuadorian Sierra as a lingua franca. Second, Quichua was
probably spreading in the Ecuadorian Oriente prior to the Incaic conquest of the Sierra. Until further evidence is brought forth to combine the phenomena of Quichua spread in the Andes and adjacent lowlands we must keep them analytically separate.

The Jungle Quichua are of the tropical forest of Ecuador and no nationalist or academic twisting of facts or creation of fantasies can alter that fact. Quichua is their language. Obfuscation of this fundamental point leads to confusion; the projection of this confusion onto the peoples themselves is a common mechanism of cultural denigration in contemporary Ecuador. Because of this I have belabored some obvious points here. Before understanding the possible relationships between language and culture among the contemporary Jungle Quichua, let us complete our description of cultural variety, and then examine Jivaroan cultures, for the lifeways and histories of Jivaroan and Lowland Quichua peoples are intimately interrelated. Within this description I will illustrate the adaptive integration of one grouping of one Jungle Quichua culture, once again to strike out against the erroneous and damaging stereotype of non-distinctiveness of the Jungle Quichua.

**Jungle Quichua Culture**

Two jungle Quichua cultures - the Canelos Quichua and the Quijos Quichua - have received considerable attention by scholars from many nations. The former inhabit the area of the Oriente ranging from Puyo over the Sigüin Cordillera to the headwaters of the Bobonaza River, and through the area between the Bobonaza and Curaray river areas into Peru. The Canelos Quichua are so named because of the importance of the mission site of Canelos. Like other Quichua speakers, the Canelos Quichua refer to themselves simply as Runa, person, indigenous person, and to their language as runa shimi, human speech. Whitten (1976a) sees the Canelos
Quichua as having a basis in a merger of Achuara Jivaraoan and Zaparoan peoples, the culture being spread by Quichua speakers. He notes that:

Travellers, explorers, and missionaries in this zone seem repeatedly to encounter Canelos Quichua forming out of Zaparoan and Jivaraoan intermarriages and alliances, with a mediating Quichua language borne by people in contact with distant sources of valued goods. In the colonial era these goods consisted especially of steel tools (Oberem 1974, Naranjo 1974)... We simply do not know what the bases for the expansion of Canelos Quichua culture within, or prior to, the colonial era were, though re-expansion within the past 100 years can be documented (Whitten 1976a:8).

The Canelos Quichua seem to be representatives of culture bearers from the east and southeast, probably from the areas drained by the Curaray, Corrientes, Tigre, Pastaza, Marañón, and Huallaga rivers. The contemporary Canelos Quichua represent a rich, dynamic, expanding culture which is today territorially specific, although outwardly ramifying into other culture areas. Many people within the area are bilingual in Achuara Jivaraoan, some in Untsuri Shuara Jivaraoan and Zaparoan, with a few monolingual Achuara, Untsuri Shuara and perhaps Zaparoan (Zaparoan-Zapa and/or Andoa-Shimigae) speakers, as well.

By apparently sharp contrast with the Canelos Quichua, the Quijos Quichua are seen to have a montaña hearth, located somewhere between the contemporary areas of the Quijos valley and Archidona (Oberem 1971, Porras 1974). We have almost no evidence for the original language of the Quijos (Loukotka 1968:249), and the name is not known in indigenous languages today. They have moved eastward at various times as tropical forest Indians were pushed back, enslaved, or obliterated by disease (see, e.g., Oberem 1971). Contemporary native peoples
living in and around Tena and probably those of the Upper Napo feeder rivers such as the Ansuj and Jatun Yacu, represent the contemporary Quijos Quichua, who also refer to themselves as Runa. Quijos Quichua culture ranging eastward from Araujo begins to blend with that of the Canelos Quichua, especially at such sites as Chapaná and Villano.

Many other Quichua speakers live north of the Napo River, from Archidona to the site of Loreto, and extend down the Napo River to Iquitos, Peru. Carolyn Orr and Betsy Wrisley (1965) identify their dialect ("Limoncocha") as separate from that of the Canelos Quichua (the "Bobonaza dialect") and that of the Quijos (the "Tena dialect"), but we do not know what the specific cultural characteristics of these people may be, in relationship to other Oriente native cultures. In the Aguaro basin, and in Southern Colombia, Jungle Quichua speakers are called Ingano.

All of the jungle Quichua share certain characteristics. They manifest great horticultural sophistication, integrating their knowledge of palm, manioc (cassava, yuca), plantain, taro, sweet potato, beans, maize and peanut cultivation of vegetable carbohydrates and proteins with skillful hunting and fishing techniques for animal protein. Chicha, a gruel-like drink made from mildly fermented manioc mash, is the mediating force between vegetable carbohydrates and proteins, for the fermentation processes, together with fungi which are sometimes added, provide supplemental protein through bacterial and chemical actions. The Jungle Quichua integrate their subsistence base with their social organization and cosmology in rich sets of postulates and propositions which indicate a thorough knowledge of Upper Amazonian ecology and systematics. In addition to this, the Canelos Quichua maintain a tradition of Upper Amazonian ceramics which contain in their multicolor decoration a set of symbols and metaphors expressing pivotal aspects of their enduring structures and adaptive versatility.
Dressed in western clothes this Jungle Quichua woman cuts a stem of manioc to replant in her two hectare swidden subsistence plot.
"Progress," "Development," and "Civilization," all involve destruction of the rainforest in contemporary Amazonian Ecuador. Here, near Puyo, virgin forest which would have been used for subsistence agriculture is leveled to create an access road for colonists and their cash crops. If successful in their conquest of the forest, the colonists will eventually be replaced by agribusiness corporations.
On the whole, the Jungle Quichua peoples maintain an adaptive balance between new developments in Andean penetration of the Oriente, and their ecosystem as removed from, although altered by, such developments. To understand Jungle Quichua culture and adaptation, one must be familiar with the systematics and dynamics of the ecosystem in a given area, and with the plans, strategies, and activities of Ecuadorian (sierran and coastal) and foreign administrators, business men, and colonists in these same areas.

For example, visitors to the Oriente frequently contrast the native peoples they see in a town such as Puyo or Tena with those they might meet, say, on the Upper Conambo River. In the former setting a man dressed in contemporary western clothes - often new polyester shirt and flared pants, with rubber boots or shoes, accompanied by his wife in a simple dress, with or without shoes - gives an appearance of "near assimilation" to the couple. When one learns that the couple is spending the night in the local church, the notion of a people dependent on Christian missions, and therefore no longer "native" can develop readily. After three days hard trek to the Upper Conambo, a visitor would encounter a couple in a large oval house with thatched roof and with no sides, material paraphernalia including blowguns, baskets, feathered headdresses, multicolor decorated and black pottery ware, and the like, and conclude that here indeed there still exists bona fide indigenous culture. Our traveller might be surprised to learn that he had encountered the same couple in the two separate sites.

The striking contrasts between urban and remote jungle life which are characteristic especially of the Puyo Runa grouping of Canelos Quichua culture are manifest through a dichotomy expressed as alli runa and sacha runa, good (Christian) Indian and jungle (knowledgeable and competent) person. I discussed this dichotomy and its implication in IWGIA Document 23. The dichotomy notwithstanding, or perhaps because of its viability, the Canelos Quichua maintain a
remarkably integrated system by which they oppose disruptive intrusions and accommodate themselves to their own opposition and resistance. Let us elaborate here, to illustrate dynamics which are probably manifest in other indigenous cultures of the Oriente. I focus deliberately on the native peoples near urban Puyo to underscore the phenomena of inner integrity and versatility of a native people within the ethnic inter-face.

**Puyo Runa Integrative Lifeways**

The subsistence base of the Puyo Runa is integrated with their social organization through a cosmology expressed in beliefs stressing continuity through descent, alliance through marriage. Horticulture of manioc exemplifies the fundamental male-female division of labor; men clear land, women plant manioc, considered a "woman's crop." Women are responsible for harvesting but may receive help from men; making chicha is strictly woman's work. Women also maintain the Upper Amazonian tradition of making decorated pottery for use in storing and serving chicha, and blackened pottery for a variety of cooking and serving uses. Embedded in the pottery making tradition is the symbolism which communicates and evokes the fundamental integration of ecosystem knowledge, personal experience, familial integrity, and ideology.

Basic to their ideology is a learning process through which knowledge and vision are integrated. The Puyo Runa refer to knowledge as specific information they may acquire from any source. For example, the fact that manioc yield decreases after two plantings, that caterpillars pupate into moths, or that governmental officials seldom listen to Indians when discussing the Upper Amazonian ecosystem are all grouped as retrievable pieces of useful information. Vision comes primarily from dreams, and the Canelos Quichua seek to understand their dream mechanisms. It is important to awaken after dreaming, to sift the jumble of images into an
Nationalist and pseudo scholarly stereotypes notwithstanding, Puyo Runa women continue to manufacture fine ceramics within their enduring tradition near the very outskirts of urban Puyo, the most dynamic town in eastern Ecuador, where aluminum ware is readily available.
analysable symbol system relating past knowledge to present observed behavior. A flash of insight in which one realizes the relation of dream content to previous knowledge also provides vision.

The Puyo Runa believe in a biosphere of spirits; the master ones are Amasanga, forest spirit, Nunghui, pottery clay-garden soil spirit, and Sungui, water spirit. The spirit world is the visionary world. To enter this world, huanduj, the powerful Datura (Solanacea Brugmansia species) hallucinogen is used. This propels the taker directly into the spirit world where continuous series of visual and sensory episodes are experienced for six to twelve hours. The return to the waking, human world, is characterized by simultaneous interaction within normal surroundings and continuing hallucinations for one to three days. During this period the seeker sees both human world and spirit world; the former endures as the latter fades away.

To attain another level of vision, shamans employ ayahuasca, soul vine (Banisteriopsis species), to allow them to travel between the human and spirit worlds. Ayahuasca is thought to induce a dream-like reality which mediates the human domain of dream vision and the spirit domain of Datura vision. Through the knowledge-vision dynamic, embedded in a continuous learning process, ancient custom and knowledge are transmitted.

The ceramic tradition, carried on and transmitted only by women, reflects this synthesis of knowledge and vision. Girls and young married women learn basic techniques of hand building, painting, and firing from their own or their husbands' mothers, but one's decorative style develops as she gains more knowledge and vision of her world. Once or twice during her lifetime, a woman may seek a deeper vision of the spirit universe by taking Datura.

Puyo Runa ceramics are used continuously in daily life. Upon waking, a woman stokes up the smouldering fire, procures
water from a nearby stream, and boils it quickly. She takes a handful of freshly fermented manioc mash from her tinaja, puts it in the mucahua and mixes it with hot water. Still mixing she walks to her husband and serves him the tangy, yeasty drink. He softly blows on it, then drinks. As they drink chicha in these pre-dawn hours, men and women engage in animated discussion, telling what they "saw" just before wakening and seeking to separate and integrate observations drawn from their encounters of the day before with the night’s dream resortment. Mythic images of forest, soil, and water spirits are evoked by the designs on the bowls from which they drink. By reference to these images they reaffirm their own strength and purpose, resolving yesterday’s problems and reaching today’s decisions.

As the day wears on the Puyo Runa continue to serve and to drink chicha within their houses, on their jungle plots, or in the forest. Although calabashes and aluminum bowls are readily available, the Puyo Runa still prefer to use their hand made ceramics to serve and store chicha.

Men making long jungle treks or canoe trips carry one or two delicate mucahuas with them. Women choose particular mucahuas to serve chicha to guests. The more important the guest, the finer the piece of serving ware. Today, in areas where national and foreign intrusion is intense, a woman may deny that she uses ceramic serving ware if she regards a visitor as a potential threat to household or clan integrity.

Once or twice a year the Puyo Runa hold ceremonies which symbolize the relationship of their enduring culture to a changing world. Prior to such ceremonies women make an impressive array of ceramics, often taking over the entire household in their production. During this period men are away on a special hunt to obtain tapir, peccary, deer, monkey, fowl and catfish which they smoke in the forest and then bring home.

Preparations complete, a three day ceremony begins with men beating drums, signalling the thunder of forest
A Puyo Runa woman created a ceramic image of petroleum exploration by making an oil boss - here a gringo is portrayed, mouth wide open shouting orders, base ball cap on his head. At the same time, the woman symbolizes continuity of her people by forming and painting the body to represent a striped squash, ancient food of the sister and lover of the moon. (Canelos Quichua culture).
spirit Amasanga. Women dance as Nunghui and pour gallons of chicha into the mouths of participants, intentionally spilling much of it on the drinkers. Continuous drumming plus a deluge of chicha call forth imagery of the encompassing power of water spirit Sungui whose presence is evoked to express resistance to further destruction of the Upper Amazonian ecology. As the ceremony moves toward a crescendo, women serve more chicha from ceramic figurines representing fish, symbolic of Sungui’s domain, and from ceramic reptiles, symbolic of Amasanga, Sungui, and Nunghui.

Ceramic images of recent environmental intrusion are also brought forth, examples of which include a hard hat, shaped like those worn by petroleum company workers but adorned with an ancient reptilian design, and a juke box complete with the name of the colonists’ weekend saloon. As men and women drink chicha from these ceramic representations of a changing world, they sing the pre-dawn song of the paspanchu bird, which, to them, means, "evil is coming but I am ready to meet it." Men dance with women while playing this song on their flutes, women sing out songs coming to them from spirits, distant people, and souls of deceased relatives and ancestors. By simultaneously confronting the new with the ancient, the Puyo Runa seek to maintain their sense of order in a radically changing environment, and to communicate the nature of this order among themselves.

Modern Organizations

To return from this brief presentation of Puyo Runa integration to the Jungle Quichua at large, modern organizations familiar to national officials, and to international agencies, have also sprung from indigenous cultural processes. Just south of Puyo there is a large area (as yet apparently unmeasured - originally estimated at 1,700 hectares, now perhaps as large as 3,200 hectares) organized as the Comuna
San Jacinto del Pindo, and subdivided into native units called **llacta** which have nuclei in modern hamlets, called **caseríos**. In the Tena-Archidona area there are also **comunas**, but small ones which are nearly coterminous with the **caserío** system. In addition there is the relatively new **Federación Indígena** (POIN), with headquarters in Tena. Cooperatives and **comunas** exist throughout Jungle Quichua territory, sometimes with the support of Catholic, Protestant, or secular help, sometimes without such help, sometimes in spite of excessive Catholic and Protestant pressures to develop an utterly undesirable organization, and sometimes in the face of juro-political maneuvers to destroy them, as reported in IWGIA Document 23. In all cases for which we have information, particular Jungle Quichua organizations are clearly recognizable transformations of indigenous social systems which maintain internal structural integrity while adapting to vicissitudes of an outer world. Cultural adaptation itself, of course, must be understood in terms of real contingencies and constraints on social life and the ecosystem, not in terms of "assimilating" natives yearning after a new social and political order.

Because so much erroneous speculation has characterized nationalist anthropological, governmental, and evangelical pronouncements in recent years, we must again belabor the point here that Jungle Quichua lifeways are intricately and intimately bound to subsistence existence within the vast nationally unknown and misunderstood Upper Amazonian-montane rainforest complex, which includes relationships with other indigenous peoples. To understand such a system we must complete our sketch of linguistic and cultural groupings.
The "Jivaroans"

The ten to fifteen thousand Jivaroans currently existing in the Oriente are mostly people self-identifying as Untsuri Shuara (or Shuar), "numerous people" or Muraiya Shuara (or Shuar), "hill people." The term "Jivaró" has no meaning in Shuara language, and it is rejected as a pejorative ethnic designation imposed by nationals and foreigners. The other existing Shuara peoples of the Oriente are the Achuara Shuara (or Achuar, or Shuar), who are often referred to as Achual in Peru. The name may be derived from the Achu ("Buriti" palm, a Mauritia Sp) palm tree with which Achuara associate themselves in certain origin myths. These Ecuadorian Shuara (Unsuri Shuara and Achuara) share their language and cultural characteristics with the contemporary Huambisa Shuara, Aguaruna, Achual and Maina of Peru, and their culture but perhaps not their language with the Peruvian Candoshi (Shapra and Murato).

Although often thought to be strictly eastern people, living far from contemporary towns in low, swampy jungle areas, the Jivaroan peoples, as a whole, probably represent interrelated cultures that once extended from the Upper Amazon across the montaña, through the Andes and perhaps to the Gulf of Guayaquil (Karsten 1935, Jijón y Caamaño 1951). In the southern Ecuadorian Andes the Palta and Malacata may have spoken Jivaroan (Steward 1948:617-618). Farther north, the Cañari may have spoken a related language. Between the Sierra and the Oriente the Bracamoro and the Huamboya may have provided the Jivaroan language bridge cementing the region of trade and war from Andes to Upper Amazonia prior to the Incaic invasion. With the Incaic conquest (and the Spanish conquest hard on its heels) in the Sierra, Jivaroan and other languages were replaced by Quichua (Murra 1946:808-812); as I have argued elsewhere (Whitten 1976a), this lingua
franca of the Andes stimulated the spread of Quichua in the Oriente. By spread I do not mean replacement in the Oriente, but merely that peoples formerly using Jivarayan or other languages as a lingua franca with highland traders were forced either to use Quichua, or to have more intensive relationships with people who were spreading Quichua, or both.

Contemporary Ecuadorian Shuara peoples have been discussed by the anthropologist Michael J. Harner (1972) as consisting of the Macabeos, Frontier Jívaro, Interior Jívaro and the Achuara. The Macabeos are people long inhabiting the town and immediate environs of Macas who know Jivarayan language but have evolved their own set of beliefs about "wild Jívaros" of the interior which they often repeat to "explorers," travellers, writers, and anthropologists. The Frontier Jívaro are true bearers of Untsuri Shuara culture who live between the eastern slopes of the Cordillera de Cutucú and the western rim of the Upano valley. They have been in long, sustained contact with non-native settlers and the Macabeos. The Interior Jívaro are the Untsuri Shuara of the east side of the Cordillera de Cutucú who, until recent times, were isolated from direct contact with any cultures other than their eastern native neighbors (Achuara, Huambisa, Candosshi see, e.g., Varese 1972) with whom they traded for goods which they then exchanged with the Frontier Jívaro.

The Achuara are seen as a separate "tribe" by Harner - a people with clearcut language and cultural differences - with whom the Untsuri Shuara waged war, and from whom they took heads to make the famous tsantsa, shrunken heads. The contemporary Achuara range widely in the Oriente, in some areas intermarrying with the Canelos Quichua, in some areas with Untsuri Shuara, and in some with the Peruvian Maina and Huambisa. Many of them are bilingual in Quichua, and some in Candosshi. In addition to this, some Candosshi use Achuara as a trade language when dealing with the Achuara and perhaps
with the Untsuri Shuara. 

When immediate ecological factors of a given habitat are taken into consideration we can say that the various Shuara peoples have the same subsistence base as that of the Jungle Quichua. Their ceramic tradition, especially that of the Untsuri Shuara, is distinct, and Untsuri Shuara resemblances to Canelos Quichua multicolor decorated ceramics occur only as a result of intermarriage of a Shuara man and Canelos Quichua woman. Almost all decorated ware sold today in the Sierra as "Jivaro pottery" comes from the Canelos Quichua. The Achuara specialize in the manufacture of blowguns and curare dart poison, and trade these goods with the Untsuri Shuara, the Canelos Quichua, and with some of the Quijos Quichua, as well. The relationships between the spirit worlds of the Jivaroan peoples and the Jungle Quichua peoples is complex and varies from area to area. At a general level, however, we can say that there is great similarity in elements, but that the specifics of beliefs and practices configure differently (see Harner 1972, Whitten 1976a, Macdonald N.D.).

Jivaroans far from towns, missions, or trade sites recently lived in dispersed "neighborhoods" with each large oval house representing a microcosm of social life; today most Shuara and Achuara settlements have adopted caserío existence (Descola and Descola, personal communication). Summing up the changes in Untsuri Shuara culture as he observed them between 1967 and 1969 Harner (1972:211) wrote:

While the traditional culture and society of the Jívaro are on the wane, their existence as a population certainly is not. Modern medical treatment and drugs provided primarily by missionaries have significantly contributed to a decline in mortality rates, especially among infants, and the estimated 7,830 Untsuri Shuarë (Untsuri Shuara) of 1956-57 have now grown to a
population for which estimates in 1969 ranged in the neighborhood of 15,000 persons. It is clear that the Jívaro have "turned the corner" demographically, and... the prognosis would seem to be for a sustained growth.

The Untsuri Shuaras are also making their dynamic presence felt in the rural Upano valley frontier zone, where they have turned heavily to cattle ranching, and in urbanizing Sucúa, which has become the site of the Federación Provincial de Centros Shuaros de Morona-Santiago. This Federation has recently received world-wide recognition in the form of publicity through articles and a recent film, The Sound of Rushing Water, for it is the largest, most effectively organized indigenous association in South America. Salazar (1977), in IWGIA Document 28, focuses directly on the Federation, so I will not elaborate here.

Other Indigenous Language and Culture Groupings with Small Populations

The combination of Jívaroan and Jungle Quichua peoples of the Oriente gives us the vast majority - between 35,000 and 45,000 peoples - of native cultural bearers existing in the mid-1970s. Unlike these two expanding populations, the rest of the Oriente's native peoples are at best holding a steady population, and in some cases may be declining. Our discussion will be relatively brief in regard to each of the following peoples, ranging more or less from north to south: Cofán, Siona, Secoya, Huaorani "Auca", Zaparoan; we will also mention other groups which may or may not have contemporary representatives in the Oriente.
A helicopter pad and temporary tents of petroleum exploration crews lie deep within the "Auca Reserve." This is one of hundreds of such pads dotting the territory in 1972, along the lines of which wide swaths of jungle were cut and dynamite charges set off every kilometer.

A petroleum exploration base on the Bobonaza River, 1972.
The Cofán

The Cofán number but 200-250 individuals in the Oriente, with perhaps 250-300 more in Colombia (Fugler and Wallace 1971 citing SIL linguist Borman, Robinson 1971). Their recent homeland was centered on the Upper Aguarico River, where they lived in small villages and from which sites they ranged widely, including hunting trips westward into the Andes. Their language is currently regarded as unrelated to any other native American language, on linguistic grounds. Culturally, however, they share many characteristics with Siona and Secoya, discussed below, and intermarry with these people as well.

In 1970 Cofán territory was treated to cataclysmic change when the Texaco-Gulf consortium established its base camp at Santa Cecilia. Planes and helicopters bearing foreign and national explorers with their tents, guns, dynamite, motors, canned food and the like descended. Within months oil bases with new airstrips, more planes and helicopters, and then oil drilling equipment followed, after which came rigs and then a road and 315 mile pipeline cutting the Cofán territory into ribbons of nationalized infrastructure. Ecuador capitalized on the external exploitation of petroleum to send waves of colonists and businessmen into the territory. While Quito planners and developers and SIL linguists talked of protecting the Cofán, and of creating a park for them so that they could be exploited more effectively for tourism, the colonists were flown into their territory and proceeded to take over the native gardens. Given the devastation of Cofán culture and territory (see, e.g., the film Sky Chief), it is nothing short of remarkable that anything exists today of the Cofán. But apparently they are still coping with the disaster, and eking out an existence which now involves new strategies and alliances, none of which have been described, as far as I am aware (see Robinson 1971 for more information).
The Siona and Secoya

These peoples number about 300 in Ecuador; they are often lumped together with the Cofán as "cushmas" because of their common tunics. They share the Aguarico Valley with the native Cofán, and today with Jungle Quichua colonists, non-Indian colonists, business men, and oil crews. Their language is of the Western Tucanoan family, once referred to as Encabellado or Piojé. Also within this language are the Tetete, an isolated group who seem to have separated from the Secoya earlier in the century (Vickers 1972:2, Robinson 1971).

The Siona were settled in their area of the Aguarico prior to the recent immigration of Secoya from the Santa María and Angusilla rivers of Peru, and their population still outnumbers that of the Secoya (Vickers, personal communication). Like the Cofán, the Siona and the Secoya balance subsistence life between relatively settled swidden horticulture fairly near their nucleated riverine villages and semi-nomadic hunting, fishing, and turtle egg gathering quests. Against a peaceful, careful, productive exploitation of their natural habitat, with coordinate social system and cosmological structure (Vickers 1972, 1975a, 1975b) is pitted the new force of national conquest of the ecosphere featuring from 10,000 to 15,000 colonists, on the one hand, and the petroleum industry with its new towns and modern camps, on the other. Although not as cataclysmic in immediate effect, perhaps, as the Cofán case, the entire Aguarico area of these few native peoples must be seen as a new system of poorly planned destruction, with no one taking responsibility for the fate of the indigenous peoples.
The Huaorani "Auca"

Unfortunately, it is impossible to consider these native peoples without reference to North American Evangelical drama. On January 3, 1956, five North American evangelical missionaries piloted by Nate Saint flew into "Auca" (the word is a somewhat pejorative multivocalic Quichua term meaning non-Quichua speaking, jungle oriented, native people) territory, where they were speared to death on January 8. Thus began a saga of Christian dialogue with the Evangelists on the side of the Lord, and the Auca representing His antithesis, the Devil. This dialogue developed into a well-publicized, highly financed campaign to convert the devil of Ecuador's forests, and, inter alia, to make the Evangelical missionaries self- and government-appointed guardians of the Huaorani people.

The so-called "Auca" call their language waodâdi apâdekâ, people's speech (Peeke 1973:3); their self-identifying "people" term is usually written Huarani in Ecuador. They are also known as Aushiri from the Quichua Ahuashiri, Awishiri or Tahuashiri, "ridge people," and as Sabela or Ssabella, an extinct South American language known by 30 words (Tessman 1930, Peeke 1973:3). Other names for these people (and, perhaps, for others) include place names designating various rivers in the territory between the Curaray and Napo rivers which was protected by Huaorani spears from the time of the Amazonian rubber boom to the coming of the Evangelists. Peeke (1973:4) is careful to note:

Confusion of Auca with Awishiri possibly stems from the local use of both terms to refer to any hostile group. A short Awishiri (Auschiri, Auishiris, Abijiras, Avigiras, Auxiras, Ahiinesshi, Ahiuisiri, Avixiras) word list provided by Tessman (1930:486) shows clear Záparo affiliation, which the Ssabela
word list does not. Thus, while some later compilers (cf. Steward and Métraux 1948:629) have correctly included Awishiri as Zaparoan, there is no basis for the assumption that Ssabela, too, is Zaparoan...

This point is given an ethnohistoric underscoring by Marcelo F. Naranjo's (1974, 1976) exhaustive ethnohistorical search for ethnic correspondences. Naranjo also makes a case for certain "Encabellados" - Siona and Secoya, as noted above - to have been lumped together by evangelizing Catholic friars with Zaparoans under certain circumstances, again cautioning us about equating ethnic labels, and language groupings. We return to this point below, when discussing the Zaparoans.

To even approach the literature of peoples between the Curaray and Napo River two gross generalizations must be firmly understood. The first of these is that Zaparoan speaking peoples once inhabited the territory (probably with other peoples, speaking other languages, such as Tupian (see, e.g., Oberem 1967-68)) but they were decimated by a combination of slavery, mission reduction, and especially by disease. The second is that the Huaorani, also ravaged by the Amazonian rubber boom (Bravo 1920:124) began to expand out of the Upper Tiputini River area around 1920-30, moving into the Zaparoan inhabited sites, and enforcing rights of usufruct at certain territorial boundary markers at, or near, the current sites of Misahuallí, Ahuano, Coca, Tiputini, Cononaco, Shiripuno, Curaray, Villano, and Chapana. First, and continuing, mission Evangelical efforts were made by the Josephine order at Curaray, but the Huaorani-Evangelical world dialogue began during the 1950s when numerous Protestant missions attempted to establish stable contact with the Huaorani. From the end of World War II to the present most of the reports on these people come from mission writers (e.g., Elliot 1957, 1961, Wallis 1960, 1973, Spiller 1974, 1:262). The first permanent Protestant mission was established
when Brethren Missionaries, MAF, and SIL established a base at Tihuene following the drama of the spearing episode, and the equally dramatic return of the wife of one missionary, and sister of another, to sustain the Evangelical movement.

The contemporary Huaorani number about 500 people and we can consider them in terms of three crude divisions: those living with, or within the clear sphere of influence, of Evangelical missionaries at Tihuene; those farther east who maintain a hostile relationship with this group; and those who have left the missionary's control zone to establish contact on their own terms with native and non-native people. Those farthest from the mission sphere are characterized (to western eyes) by their near complete lack of clothing; major adornment of these people seems to rest with their large ear plugs and small feathered headpieces. Their black pottery tradition is similar to that of the Quijos Quichua living in the vicinity of Archidona. It contrasts in form, design and texture with Canelos Quichua-Jivaroan black ware. Their material culture, and ecological adaptation, is otherwise similar to that of the Jungle Quichua and Jivaroan peoples.

The Huaorani are the only jungle peoples of Ecuador to exist on a reserve, the boundaries of which were established in 1968 by agreement between North American Evangelists and the Ecuadorian government, and violated apparently without Evangelical protest by the oil exploration companies beginning in 1970. Today Huaorani contact with indigenous and non-indigenous outsiders is fairly frequent in some areas, and varied; in other areas it is still nonexistent, for there are still groups who protect rights of usufruct to their jungle-riverine domain. Recent rumors of armed clashes between the Ecuadorian military and the Huaorani in the Cononaco area stress killings on both sides. The nature of "incorporation" of the Huaorani into the nation is not at all clear, and perhaps the concept of unit ("tribal") incorporation of the Huaorani is wholly fallacious.
Some individual Huaorani have been flown to the United States to testify in Madison Square Garden at Billy Graham fund raising campaigns and other "block busting" fund raising campaigns throughout the United States (apparently billed as "Rachel Saint and her Auca murderers" - Bledsoe 1972:127). A dozen or so Huaorani today live in a poliomyelitis crippled condition allegedly resulting from their protection from vaccine which would have been made available to them had access not been blocked by Evangelical judgment (Bledsoe 1972:151). Multilingualism of some (more often women than men) in diverse languages (including Quichua, Zaparoan, Spanish, and English) currently exists and the greater number of women able to negotiate with "outsiders" gives the false impression of a "matriarchal" society divided into female-led tribes.

More than any other native people of the Oriente, the contemporary Huaorani exist not only as a people facing new cataclysmic change in their territory, but also as a people known primarily by false and distorted myths which present their culture through the eyes of those seeking to convert it, and subvert it.

The Zaparoans

The number of people speaking a Zaparoan language in the contemporary Oriente is difficult to state. Known speakers are said to number as few as seven (Stark 1976:1) although I am certain that the actual speakers, most if not all of whom are bilingual in Jungle Quichua, Huaorani, and perhaps Jivaroan, is larger. (The Descolas, personal communication, emphatically confirm my certainty). Within contemporary Ecuador Záparo and Andoa (also known as Shimigae, from the Quichua "Gae" or "Gayes speech") constitute the two principal, known, dialects of what was once a very large language family extending from the Río Marañon to the Napo
(Steward and Métraux 1948, Loukotka 1968, Sweet 1969, Naranjo 1974, Costales 1975, Stark 1976). Other contemporary dialects in Peru are Iquitos and Arabela, the latter of whom may travel into eastern Ecuador, at times. The Zaparoan language, like Cofán, Huaorani, and Jivarooan, is not known to be related to any other native American language family, on linguistic grounds. Zaparoan speakers apparently suffered massive (60-100 percent, depending on the particular group and location) annihilation due to disease, missionary reduction, and enslavement during the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries (Sweet 1969, Naranjo 1974) and survivors began to live in settlements on affluents of the major rivers, sharing, or competing for, their hunting, fishing, and swidden horticulture territory with Achuara and perhaps Huaorani. More decimation through disease occurred around 1930 (Macdonald, personal communication). This decimation, probably accelerated by a Dominican effort to conglomerate them at Chapana, facilitated Huaorani expansion into their area (Macdonald, personal communication). Today culture bearers of former Zaparoans are manifest in Canelos Quichua (especially Andoa-Shimigae), Quijos Quichua (especially Záparo) and perhaps in Huaorani lifeways. There are no known "Zaparoan settlements" in Ecuador, but there are peoples within clan segments of contemporary Canelos Quichua who impart knowledge of Zaparoan language to their offspring. Because of their desire to keep the sites of such transmission from the outside world, however, it seems appropriate to respect their wishes.

The decline of perhaps 100,000 or more Zaparoan language-culture bearers to a piddling number in the Oriente, and that part of the Oriente that is now in Peru, bears awful testimony to the results of western contact, and cautions us about being too optimistic about contemporary cultures facing similar pressures.
Summary

The Oriente is characterized by the current existence of two very large, distinct, language families: Jungle Quichua and Jivaroan. The former are separated into Canelos Quichua culture and Quijos Quichua culture; the latter into Shuara and Achuar. The Canelos Quichua intermarry with Jivaros, and all Jungle Quichua and Jivaros share many aspects of their respective lifeways; their languages, however, are not related. In addition to these peoples, Cofán, Siona-Secoya, Huaorani "Auca" and Zaparoan constitute separate language families, three of which are not known to be related to each other or to any other existing language, on linguistic grounds. Culturally, however, Cofán and Siona-Secoya are very similar, and the peoples intermarry. Huaorani "Auca" life and exposure to national and international dynamics range from complete isolation, for some, to total influence of the Evangelical mission, for others. Zaparoan speakers are rare, and in some cases "hidden" within Canelos Quichua clans with bilingual representatives.

Obviously, if Ecuador "has been, is, and will be, the Amazonian country", its Oriente's people cannot be ignored. The clash of cultures, as I argue elsewhere, "exists at all levels of ecology, society, and ideology, and establishes its own system of articulation to national cultures, one juxtaposed upon that created by continuous (in the case which I was writing, Canelos Quichua) adjustment to the outer world" (Whitten 1976a:28). I also wrote, and continue to assert after six additional field trips to the Oriente between 1973 and 1978, "in cases such as that presented by the rapid expansion of the Puyo Runa, where cultural integrity and social integration are maintained by people in the process of rapid change and population expansion, the validity of policies which assert a unified "national culture" for all peoples
within consolidated (nation)-state boundaries is doubly challenged" (Whitten 1976a:27).

Let us continue to explore the ramifications of the ethnic interface of the Oriente, using the concepts of power and ethnicity, before returning to symbolism, ritual, and knowledge, in our concluding section. It is critical to understand the recent history of the Oriente if we are to understand the adaptive viability and versatility of ancient custom within a context of real, cataclysmic, change.

HISTORICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE ETHNIC INTERFACE

Technological invention sometimes spawns terrible social malignancies of political-economic growth which spread through an ecosystem in such a way as to permanently alter, cripple, and kill it. European mercantilism with its gold extraction based on refined shipping and communication was one such system: perhaps 90%-96% of the native American population was destroyed due to its impact in the 16th century (see, e.g., Dobyns 1966, Sweet 1969, 1975, Crosby 1972, Wilbert 1972, Denevan 1976). The African slave trade feeding insatiable demands for new cash crops was another such malignancy, the effects of which need not be elaborated here. Lesser known, but equally savage in its effects on Amazonia, was the Amazonian rubber boom.

When Goodyear invented vulcanization in 1839 world demand for rubber soared. Amazonia was, at that time, the center of wild rubber and those who sought to control the
outflow of latex had but to control the territories and harness labor to tap the wild trees. Native peoples and mestizo colonists were cajoled, tricked and eventually enslaved into service. By the late 1800s the boom was at its peak. Although rubber seeds had been exported from Brazil and were growing in greenhouses in England to be transplanted far from their disease vectors on plantations in Asia and Africa (Collier 1968) the elaborate system of collection, centralization, and shipment of the latex outward from inner Amazonia to the United States and Europe was expanding exponentially.

The caucheros (from the extinct east Ecuadorian Omagua term cahuchu - Collier 1968:42), as the rubber searchers were called, developed a system of reciprocal raiding and terrorism as they attempted to control a jungle zone and maintain a captive labor force to exploit wild latex. "Constant thefts of Indians by one "cauchero" from another led to reprisals more bloody and murderous than anything the Indian had ever wrought upon his fellow Indian. The primary aim of rubber-getting, which could only be obtained from the labor of the Indian, was often lost sight of in these desperate conflicts" (Casement 1912:10). Rubber was the product to be sold on the world markets. But on the tributaries of the Upper Amazon the native peoples were the immediate prize and the target of the rubber boom social malignancy. "The object of the "civilized" intruders, in the first instance, was not to annihilate the Indians, but to "conquistar," i.e., to subjugate them, and put them to what was termed civilized, or at any rate profitable, occupation to their subduers" (Casement 1912:10).

International activity within the borders of a sovereign state inevitably sets up national processes of consolidation of international boundaries. The expansion of the rubber boom not only wreaked havoc upon native peoples of Upper Amazonia, it also stimulated the Andean-coastal based governments of Ecuador and Peru to renew waning interest in their tropical lowlands. The Oriente is so placed as to require enormous
energy to extract and transport products to sources of demand. Goods must either flow upward over montaña and Sierra (and downward again to the coast), or eastward over waterfalls, rapids, and cataracts to the navigable rivers of the Amazon basin. The rubber boom consolidated the network of river transportation and a little later the Panama Canal provided the necessary connecting link for Andean countries through their western Pacific ports.

Ecuador's national strategy of infrastructural territorial and resource consolidation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was to create linkages to both eastern and western waterways, and to provide access from coast and Oriente to Sierran cities and towns (Linke 1960: 112-117, Hegen 1966: 60-62, Garces 1942, Whitten 1965:29). With stepped up national, secular interest in the Oriente, various Catholic missions also reestablished sporadic contact with native peoples in many areas (see, e.g., Whitten 1976a for a discussion of the impact on Canelos Quichua culture). From the late 1800s through the 1920s native peoples of the Upper Amazon experienced war and atrocity; they were pitted against one another and removed from their territories. Many fled to the few refuge zones beyond control of the rubber Barons and their guerrilla enslavement squads. From such refuge zones - Cutucú sierra for the Untsuri Shuara, the Upper Conambo-Corrientes-Bobonaza-Pindo-Copotaza river system and territory for the Canelos Quichua and Achuara, the Nushiño-Tzapino-Tihueno-Curaray-Challua and Tiputini-Tivacuna drainages for the Huaorani, the Cononaco river area for eastern Huaorani, the Upper Aguarico for Cofán and Siona-Secoya - the contemporary native cultural-linguistic systems of the Oriente appear to radiate.

But the refuge zones too were soon penetrated, this time by petroleum exploration of the late 1920s. Royal Dutch Shell Oil corporation began exploration around 1920 and in 1928 began the construction of the Baños-Puyo road (see, e.g., Galarza 1972). By the late 1930s the Oriente was characterized
by wide flung oil exploration, and, in some areas, a large intrusion of well-to-do non-Ecuadorians and a flood of poor nationals. As oil exploration, the establishment of plantations (many based on foreign capital), and mission activity expanded, World War II erupted, and in July, 1941, Peru invaded Ecuador. Following the routes of the caucheros, the Peruvian army thrust up the various Oriente rivers. The result of the invasion was the loss of half of the Oriente to Peru, that critical half including all of the easily navigable area of the major rivers.

This sketch of a few historical episodes over a mere half century is given to caution severely the reader who may think that native peoples of the Oriente are just now encountering "civilization". Quite the contrary is the case. Native peoples of the moist tropics of east lowland Ecuador have witnessed repeatedly and convincingly the destructive might of western civilization on the frontier territories. Through knowledge, creativity, and perseverance some have survived, while witnessing the disappearance of other native cultures. All credit for such survival belongs to the native peoples.
CONTEMPORARY DIMENSIONS OF THE ETHNIC INTERFACE

It should be quite clear that culture and language of native Oriente peoples cannot be discussed without reference to cataclysmic forces of an outer world. Examples of the Cofán, Siona-Secoya, Huaorani "Auca" and Zaparoans are particularly if dramatically revealing in that regard. We turn now to the ethnic interface itself, the total frontier ecosystem embracing its native peoples and national colonists with a set of paradoxes brought about by a new political economy within which lie the swelling misunderstandings of a new social malignancy. This interface exists at three analytically distinct, though obviously interpenetrating and mutually reinforcing, levels: ecology, social organization, ideology.

Ecology

Native cultures of the Oriente are characterized by what ecologist David Harris (1971, 1972:249) calls "permanent settlement swidden cultivation." This form of swidden cultivation utilizes the Oriente's lush natural vegetation to release the nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash through decay of leaves, stems, vines, and wood, to planted crops, while allowing other forest areas to restore themselves in a cyclical fallow. Differentiation between soil and growth made by western agronomists familiar with temperate zones or arid regions resolves in indigenous swiddens of the moist tropics as the growing matter itself is utilized to provide the soil nutrients. All indigenous peoples of the Oriente manage a complex ecosystem which might be seen to descend
from the nitrogen fixation by lightning in the canopy through
the nitrogen capturing epiphytes and other jungle plants
through steady release into the mulch-soil of the newly
"cleared" chagra. The mature chagra contains three vertical
layers of polycultural crops, replicating in microcosm the
forest ecosystem with continuous canopy above to break and
diffuse rainfall, filter sunlight, and provide an undersoil
root lattice to retard leaching of vital nutrients. Eventual-
ly, the forest is allowed to return as fallow.

Writing about such swidden systems, the authority David
R. Harris (1972:247) states unequivocally:

... contrary to the common assumption that swidden
is an inefficient method of cultivation, it can
be shown that such systems are often highly pro-
ductive. Western observers of contemporary swidden
cultivators in the tropics have tended to judge
the system from the standpoint of their own
European tradition of fixed- and clean-field farm-
ing and to condemn it as unproductive and waste-
ful of forest resources. It is an unproductive
system per unit area of land cultivated, but in
terms of yields per unit of labour expended its
productivity can equal or even exceed that of
some types of permanent, fixed-field agriculture.
Provided that no land shortage threatens the
maintenance of an optimum cycle of cultivation
and falling, swidden plots can yield as much
or more than comparable field under continuous
cultivation (emphasis added).

Storage of principal foods - especially manioc - consists of
either leaving the root crops in the ground until they are
needed, or making a fermented gruel ("chicha") which is stored
in large pottery jars within which the protein and vitamin
content is enhanced through bacterial and fungal action.
Hunting for game and fishing provides animal protein which is
supplemented by turtle and turtle egg gathering, the raising of native ducks, and now chickens, as well. A multitude of fruits, nuts, roots, insects, insect larvae, crustacea, and snails provide a broad dietary spectrum for indigenous cultures with the requisite repertoire of knowledge of forest and riverine resources.

To understand the growing and spreading social malignancy of the contemporary ethnic interface it is essential to grasp the fundamental point that the native peoples of the Oriente, all of them - Jungle Quichua, Jivaroan, Cofán, Siona, Secoya, Huaorani "Auca", Záparoan - know and practice with technological expertise the swidden horticulture essential to human and vegetative life in their moist tropical zone. The common, general stereotype that some Oriente natives "know nothing" of agriculture is categorically false, and it is equally false that their agricultural knowledge is recently acquired, crude and primitive. This ancient, productive system (see especially Lathrap 1970) which scientists are beginning to realize needs to be studied in its own terms to understand its contribution to botanical science and resource management (e.g., Conklin 1957, Harris 1972, Berlin 1973, 1976) is viewed as something to be destroyed by contemporary "developers" of the Oriente. Destruction stems from the planning ideology consisting of two points of political-economic propaganda: (a) there is no shortage of land for colonization of the Oriente; (b) land of the Oriente must be brought under technological "control" by enforcement of a system of continuous cultivation of cash crops. Strategic application of this propaganda generates critical conflicts within the ethnic interface.

The easiest way to understand these conflicts is to contrast the successful strategies of continuous cultivation of cash crops (especially sugar and tea) with the swidden system production of basic food crops (especially palm, manioc, plantain, taro, yam, sweet potato, peanuts, maiz). The former
is dependent on large scale capitalization and intensive, cheap, continuous labor, the latter on no capitalization and intensive, sporadic labor. The strategy favored by national development schemes in the Oriente is clearly favoring those large-scale (sometimes absentee) farmers of sugar and tea, many of whom are backed by foreign capital, and all of whom rely on cheap labor. Most non-native colonists are caught between a system of debt peonage to plantations, on the one hand, and the need to learn swidden techniques (from native people) to grow food crops, while confined to nonswidden, fixed plot governmental grants, on the other hand.

Another conflict is generated because land shortage is severe near the loci of national infrastructure - the major towns from which radiate roads and smaller towns serving plantations - just beyond which cluster the colonist settlements. Since colonists depend on infrastructural support they are forced into a system of land shortage; without large capital backing they must work as peones for plantations or sell their land to larger scale, more highly capitalized, interests. Their own opportunities as colonists, then, in areas where they are dependent upon infrastructural support, hinges on the strategy of land and labor acquisition of plantation interests. In the absence of infrastructural support, they must learn and apply swidden techniques to raise necessary foodstuffs. These techniques derive from the knowledge and experience of native peoples. More often than not, colonists are forced into a system of land shortage, made dependent upon plantation strategies, and taught the myth that there is abundant land if the indigenous swidden system can be brought under nationalist control.

A mechanism of such control is currently seen in the explosive expansion of cattle ranching. The most common technique is to use indigenous labor to completely destroy the forest; thereafter Cuban grass is planted. This high grass is about 90% water and therefore must be consumed in enormous
amounts by the cattle to gain their basic nutrition. The devastation of the forest in the cattle-raising areas (which extend straight across the zone east of the Andean mountains and west of the Oriente's cordillera) is depressing in its heat, smell of urine and manure, and ubiquitous bott flies which lay their eggs and grow their larvae in human as well as cattle hosts. Where once the night sounds were dominated by tropical whippoorwill cries, hoots of owls, the peeping and croaks of frogs and toads, and where sharp ears could pick up the sounds of nocturnal animal activity, raucous bull bellows and cow responses jab the air. Where once gentle flute music combined with predawn small bird life, the same bellowing greets the day.

Control of the relevant environment of indigenous (and non-indigenous) peoples through cattle raising has banking as its major mechanism. Loans are made to people, and land is the most common collateral. Dependence upon loans, and upon the mechanisms of the enforcement of regular payment, strengthens asymmetric social ties to mission bases and development agencies. An entire IWGIA Document should, in my opinion, be devoted to this phenomenon alone.

Social Organization

The social organization of indigenous peoples of the Oriente manages a system of resource allocation bound up with social categories of descent and affinity and a division of labor by sex. Fundamental to all social systems which have been described are basic concepts of symmetrical, delayed reciprocity both within ethnic boundaries (e.g., those boundaries established by various combinations of language, custom, marriage, territoriality, trade, and political alliances) and between such boundaries (e.g., dyadic relation-
ships between individuals which cut across recognized divisions and do not bind others of their respective language, custom, marriage, territorial, trade or political alliance. Such symmetrical reciprocity includes exchange of goods for goods, help received for help given, refuge for refuge, information for information, and underscores various sorts of marriage systems. It also includes a system of exchange of retort for tort, including, at times, revenge sought through collective or individual juro-political action both within and beyond other extant boundaries (see Harner 1972, Whitten 1976a, Macdonald, in preparation, for illustrative material).

Currently juxtaposed to this system, depressing it but not replacing it, is an elaborate set of social relationships which are based on a system of differential power and wealth extant at national, provincial, and local levels. These power relationships stem from bureaucratic position and from personal wealth and social standing. The society of non-native peoples is intricately tied to concepts of asymmetric-al reciprocity, patronage, and the promise of socioeconomic and ethnic mobility (see, e.g., Casagrande 1974, Whitten 1965, 1976a, 1976b, Naranjo 1978). Embracing these contrastive systems, depressing the first (native) and accelerating the positions of inequality of the latter (national) is a turn toward national internal colonialism (van den Berghe 1967, Robinson 1972, Whitten 1975, 1976b, van den Berghe and Primov 1977) where a sharp distinction is made between those classed as "Indian" and those classed (at least potentially) as "non-Indian" (blanco, cholo, mestizo). For the former, governmental strategies stress vague concepts of "civilization" and the end to "margination"; for the latter a major national concern is given to productive, economic future, albeit one of poverty, and often of malnutrition, to "produce" a higher gross regional and national product.
Ideology

Native cultures of the Oriente are rich and varied in their respective world views and cosmologies. Whether or not overt signs of stereotypic "indigenousness" (face and body painting, use of feather headdresses, use of ear, nasal or lip inserted decoration) is present, all of the cultures discussed seem to share concepts of ionosphere, biosphere and lithosphere dynamics through celestial, rainforest, riverine, earth and underearth metaphors of sentience. (Compare, for example, cosmology as set forth by Harner 1972; Whitten 1976a, 1978; Macdonald, N.D., and Vickers 1975b, 1976.) All of these cultures combine vision and knowledge to live in a compatible relationship with their known and unknown habitat, and seek to transcend their immediate work-a-day environment through experiences which integrate dreams, hallucinogenic vision, and trance. Mythology, design, ritual performance and shamanism configure in various ways within and between the native cultures, and each configuration has much which is unique, and perhaps is, at the same time, part of a larger transcultural, metalinguistic and metacosmological transformation system which is as yet not understood. In all ways, though, the native peoples of the Oriente manifest a cultural adaptation to the rainforest, and to the hydrospheric system of natural power which controls it. They continuously create a symbolic template and transformational structure of humanity (e.g., Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972, 1976, Vickers 1976, Whitten 1978) which is strikingly antithetical, in its richness and in its adaptive capacity, to temperate zone and Andean-based concepts of the moist tropics.

In stark contrast to the indigenous ideologies of the Oriente lies the contemporary working philosophy of nationalist reclamation of "land" - seen within Ecuador as an unexploited natural resource, encompassed by unwanted forest.
Political nationalism in Ecuador is backed up by nationalist politics under the aegis of military rule (though this is now presumably changing) and supported by the capital of foreign oil, tea, and timber exploitation.

Central to such public ideology is a double image—or dual sets of contradictory imagery. On the one hand, there is the public imagery of bureaucratized efficiency in administration reflecting the ideal of a mestizo society with emerging open class system. This ideal is contradicted, on the other hand, by the equally apparent, and equally public (if not propagandized) imagery of personalized transaction within bureaucracies. Personalized transactions are facilitated by a web of sinecures where favoritism and clientage are direct reflections of continued class closure and an ideology of white supremacy (see Whitten 1976a, 1976b, Whitten and Friedemann 1976, Naranjo 1978). There are tendencies toward openness in the class-ethnic hierarchy and contrary tendencies toward a stratified, paternalist, ethnic-class system. In the latter, whites are on top and Indians and blacks are on the bottom, with those classed as mixed moving upward through "whitening" processes of presumptive genetic and cultural "progress" (see, e.g., Stutzman 1974) within a dual economy where the upper limits of the lower sector is the best that can be hoped for. The contradiction is partially buffered in contemporary Upper Amazonian Ecuador by blaming the native peoples for their own reputed plight, and holding up the opposite of their lifeways as a goal for all non-indigenous peoples. But attainment of the goal of being non-indigenous places one smack into the contradiction. The ideology is at best transparent, and this very transparency may contribute to the materialist, exploitative ethos by which immigrating colonists justify the denigration of native cultures and peoples.

The contrast, within national bureaucracies affecting the Oriente, between public image formally projected (open
society with efficient bureaucracy reflecting achievement-based class divisions) and the public image maintained through actual transactions (a web of sinecures with radiating favoritism and clientage) combine with pernicious, pervasive ethnic pluralism based on concepts and applications of wealth, power, family background, regional background and phenotype. The contrast generates an irreconcilable set of internal contradictions through which the ecological and social organizational interface must often be expressed. The resolution of contradictions through Ecuadorian society are currently being worked out within the realpolitik of that nation; and to speculate on the direction of resolution or further conflict is beyond the scope of this Document. But, today, regardless of formal public image, or the inadvertently projected image of internal dynamics, all national agencies and organizations direct their attention toward maintenance of a basic antithesis between themselves, as "developed," "progressive," "civilized," or "white," and peoples who are of the rainforest-riparian-swidden zone, and therefore viewed as "undeveloped" "backward," "uncivilized," or "Indian."

The indigenous cultural adaptations to biosphere and hydrosphere dynamics are all in a deep sense antithetical to the nationally espoused ideology of "development" and the emergence of national "cultural politics (policy)" (see, e.g., Whitten 1976a, Cisneros 1978) with its locus in processes of urbanization and urbanism (see, e.g., Whitten 1975, 1976a). Yet they are as inescapably part of the contemporary Oriente, as their very nationalist denial, or nationalist assertion that they (native cultures) are disappearing. The reality of Jungle Quichua and Jivaroon cultural surgency and population expansion in the face of planned and unplanned ethnocide, for example, and their adaptability in seeking new forms of exploitation of an altered biosphere, while at the same time preserving pivotal aspects of their habitat and environment, bear continuing testimony to the contribution which they may make to nationalization of their respective territories, on
their own terms. Herein lies the base of the paradox of the Oriente as an ethnic interface: nationalization itself, in many areas, is intimately related to the competence of native peoples to devise new success strategies which link the inescapable parameters of rainforest existence with the threatening presence of national infrastructure. But the continuing, dogmatic, nationalist denial of ultimate cognitive dependence on certain indigenous concepts and sets of knowledge creates the pinnacle of contradiction within the current interface. Although the contradiction is recognized by international scholarship (e.g., articles in Wagley 1974) there is no evidence whatsoever of such awareness diffusing into the Oriente.

As the United States imports more and more Polynesian poi to be used for baby food, and experiments with manioc to feed part of its population, Ecuadorian nationalists deplore the drinking of manioc chicha (which is essentially like poi) and even talk of destroying all chicha storage containers to stamp out the life sustaining stored gruel. As failure after failure of introduced plants is noted, nationalists nonetheless forge on with their deprecation of manioc, plantain and palm cultivation, even as poor and well-to-do colonists call for more and more of these essential foodstuffs. As native peoples demonstrate their superior nutritional base, propaganda mounts that they suffer brain damage through inadequate nutrition; and as their horticultural system is written about and discussed in the world's centers of tropical ecology, nationalist planners envision its ultimate destruction.

The pinnacle contradiction is swelling in contemporary east Ecuador and analysis and comprehension of its basic paradox is not a mere intellectual exercise. Ecological, social and ideological ramifications of the contradiction based on the paradox which permeates all levels and facets of the interface of ethnic relationships is already triggering ecosystem destruction, human degradation, and ethnic,
cultural, and biological annihilation.

RITUAL, SYMBOLISM AND COSMOLOGY

We have explored dimensions of power and ethnicity with their ecological, social and ideological ramifications in contemporary Amazonian Ecuador, focusing on adaptive versatility of her native peoples and their plight in the face of severe disruption. To complete the sketch of Amazonian Ecuador's indigenous face we must move from ideology to the more allusive, symbolic, dimensions of human culture. According to the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973: 216-217) in one of his many pioneering studies:

... cognitive and... expressive symbols or symbol-systems have... at least one thing in common: they are extrinsic sources of information in terms of which human life can be patterned - extrapersonal mechanisms for the perception, understanding, judgment, and manipulation of the world, Culture patterns - religious, philosophical, aesthetic, scientific, ideological - are "programs"; they provide a template or blueprint for the organization of social and psychological processes...

The reason such symbolic templates are necessary is that... human behavior is inherently extremely plastic. Not strictly but only very broadly controlled by genetic programs or models - intrinsic sources of information - such
behavior must, if it is to have any effective form at all, be controlled to a significant extent by extrinsic ones (emphasis added).

Control over the relevant environment, remember, is the way to power in the terminology which we have been using. The extrinsic symbolic template to which Geertz alludes must have referential bases. The nationalist bureaucratic system cannot provide a symbolic template for adaptation to the tropical forest ecosystem for it is internally contradictory, excludes indigenous participation, and denies indigenous adaptability.

Christian evangelism is also a highly improbable symbolic template by which to give extrinsic significance to indigenous thought and lifeways in modern Ecuador. The religion is presented by so many contradictory, combative, and incompatible perspectives - Salesian, Dominican, Josephine Catholic, Evangelical protestant, Episcopalian, with Italian, French, German, Spanish, United States, Canadian, Ecuadorian and Colombian variants - as to inspire indigenous scepticism as to a coherent set of evocative postulates by which knowledge and visionary experience can be organized. Moreover, and more to the point, Christianity relies on sets of premises alien to indigenous thought and divorced from the force of ecological animism which permeates it.

It is in the sphere of ecological animism, or spiritism, that we uncover the anchoring, referential basis for Geertz' extrinsic symbolic template in the contemporary ethnic interface of Amazonian Ecuador. Simply put, as the Colombian anthropologist Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff (1972, 1976) has been insisting for over a decade, and which analysts of the great art styles of the New World continuously uncover (Lathrap 1970, Cordy-Collins 1977, Linares 1977) the ecological system of Amazonia itself provides a generative system for metaphoric predication or symbolic expression. This does not mean, in any sense, that native Americans of the moist
tropics - Amazonia in this case - are to be viewed as adaptive biota stagnating in lush forests. Quite the contrary is implied and we must make this as explicit as is possible to a western readership. Christianity has exerted a powerful force upon the western world, and it is still less than 2,000 years old. Among other things, bloody crusades, atrocities against "heathens," the African slave trade and the "spirit" of the social malignancy of modern capitalism have in one manner or another garnered strength from its teachings of peace among "men" and "conversion" to its doctrines of those who think differently.

Native peoples of the New World developed their own cosmological premises for perhaps 30,000 years prior to exposure to doctrines of western salvation; for perhaps 10,000 years or more native American cosmological systems were worked through by indigenous philosophers, shamans, and questing individuals within the rainforest setting which provides the densest set of intricate observable ecological dynamics in the entire world. And for perhaps 4000 or more years (Lathrap 1970) these symbolic templates have developed in fine detail to the tropical forest cultural ecology of strategic use of riparian-swidden-selvan resources. Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff is eloquent with regard to these matters. Let us quote from his 1975 Huxley Memorial Lecture delivered in England:

... Aboriginal cosmologies and myth structures, together with the ritual behaviour derived from them, represent in all respects a set of ecological principles... (which) ... formulate a system of social and economic rules that have a highly adaptive value in the continuous endeavour to maintain a viable equilibrium between the resources of the environment and the demands of society (Reichel-Dolmatoff (1976: 308).

Amazonian cultures, he argues, present us with abstract
philosophies and ecological theory. I certainly agree with this perspective, as do others. But evidence from the contemporary Orient suggests that "equilibrium" of native cultures, implying stagnation in the ethnic interface (though Reichel never intended the concept equilibrium to be so used), is an inappropriate concept. Dynamic, creative, innovative preservation of an ecosystem as it is threatened increasingly by national bureaucratic, international resource extractive, and Christian evangelical maneuvers toward control of land and people, is certainly a thrust of indigenous cosmology. Its very saturation with animated concepts stressing the dynamics of inner essences and their intricate relationships which are subsumed by master images of spirit power (see Whitten 1978) allows individuals and groups to communicate effectively within their known biosphere and to cope with contradictions in the ethnic interface. It also allows individuals and groups to reflect deeply on their common beliefs and knowledge, and thereby to transcend the boundaries of their biosphere and their interface situation when the need arises.

Herein, then, we find the extrinsic source of information about which Geertz writes. The cosmological systems of Amazonian peoples must be understood by reference to the intricate, complex web of natural and cultural relationships—the ecology—which provides such a vivid referential basis for human thought, reflection, and religious experience, even within the ethnic interface. We find no masking superstructure here, perhaps to the dismay of more doctrinaire Marxists. Rather, we find a revealing cosmological logic providing the impetus for control of power itself, and by which social protest may be ordered and enacted. This does not mean that native peoples so spiritually motivated by ecological imagery and cognitively guided by ecological knowledge are incapable of working within the confines of modern bureaucracies (whether of the rational, efficiency model or that of the web of sinecures). Quite the opposite, once again, is implied.
This does not mean, to continue our negative list, that native peoples so motivated and guided cannot fulfill evangelical roles as carriers of new religious messages, for they most certainly can and do so act upon occasion. By now the message must be clear: to understand more about Amazonian systems - ecological, social, ideological - we must listen to the native peoples of Amazonia. Their voices must not continue to go unheeded, disregarded, rejected and ridiculed as has usually been the case except through the technical writing of a few anthropologists. To heed these voices implies a deep philosophical, epistemological, and scientific concern with, and commitment to, another cosmology. Just as Buddhist and Hindi religions have made a great impact upon some of the world's foremost thinkers, philosophers, scholars, scientists, and statesmen, themselves alien to South or South-East Asian lifeways, so too could Amazonian religions, and their native American spokesmen there and in other regions, make inroads on the social malignancy currently devouring the core of the world's great ecosystems. Malignancy can overwhelm the healthiest of biological systems, and a social malignancy may be seen as having the same proclivity. The "remedy," to carry through the metaphor, cannot be found without continuing attention to the actual system in which it exists. That system, we have argued above, is not only one of the natural order, but a profoundly human one generating a deep cultural order predicated on control of observed and postulated dynamics.

Terrible problems confront national colonists and indigenous cultures alike in the contemporary Ecuadorian Oriente due to the infrastructure of dependency underlying (and perhaps under cutting?) modern Ecuador. These dependency processes generate degradation of the Upper Amazonian biosphere and exacerbate the asymmetric power system and ethnic prejudices and misunderstandings of national exploitation. The problem is embedded in the western system of resource
exploitation (e.g., Commoner 1976) and it is entirely possible that the solution is also so embedded that it will be consumed by western expansion before it is revealed to its "consumers."

The knowledge and vision of 10,000 years or more of cultural adaptation to the riparian-selvan, and eventually swidden, habitat is required by those currently contributing to Amazonian "development," for so-called "progressive development" today is destroying nature and culture alike. Again, we return to the theme of listening to the native people. This is more difficult than it seems, because it means attention to their symbols and their referents as set out in their languages, enacted in their ritual, and given form through their lifeways.

There is but one way to "decode" and "reveal" ecological principles embedded in native cosmology (for we must come back to these principles if the biosphere of Amazonia is not to be obliterated), and to apply them to contemporary life. Native peoples of Amazonia must be brought into the process of planning, on their own terms, and with total respect for their underlying premises (see Corry 1978 for a similar argument). This means that planners must go to them, in many cases, and invest the time necessary to learn systemically what the cosmos of Amazonia in its ideological, social and ecological dimensions really "means." There are some glimmers that this may be happening today in parts of the Ecuadorian Oriente, particularly with a few developers and missionaries face to face with Jungle Quichua and Jivaroan peoples over extended periods of time. But the contemporary ethnic interface is also generating standoffs and contradictions in myriad ways. This Document is designed to heighten the awareness of analytical possibilities within an ethnic interface situation, and to point to the indigenous power source of biosphere knowledge as a logical alternative to developmentalism leading to destruction, degradation and annihilation.
NOTES

Although I am critical of aspects of developmental ideology, strategy, and practice in a country which is not my own, I wish to record here that I do so in great respect for its people, indigenous and non-indigenous, and register my commentary with some force because of the history of the United States with regard to its exploitative destruction of its native peoples. The Andean countries of South America, and their current deep involvement with their Amazonian territories in situations where petroleum exploitation is dominated by foreign capitalist concerns, offer the world a possibility for a new solution to problems of human misery and misunderstanding. By documenting the current viability of native American peoples within a modern Republic, as these peoples may contribute positively, productively, and creatively to the solution of the social malignancy currently bound to development, I offer my Ecuadorian hosts and sponsors, and those to whom they are responsible, the critical judgment of serious research, not a carping criticism.

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