

ABYA YALA NEWS

JOURNAL OF THE SOUTH AND
MESO AMERICAN INDIAN
RIGHTS CENTER (SAIC)



VOLUME 10, NUMBER 3, SUMMER 1997

PRICE \$4.00

Indian City

**Indigenous Survival in the
Latin American Megacity**



Linking Indian Peoples of the Americas



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Corrections:

The Volume 10 Number 2 cover photo was credited to Aguirre/Switkes. It should have been credited to **Maya Miller**. Also, the source material for "Wichí: Fighting for Survival in Argentina" should have been listed as **Survival for Tribal Peoples**, 11-15 Emerald Street, London WC1N 3QL, United Kingdom; Phone: 0171-242-1441; Fax 0171-242-1771; Email: survival@gn.apc.org

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Subscriptions:

Abya Yala News (ISSN 1071-3182) is published quarterly in English and Spanish. It is available for an annual US\$25 personal membership, US\$15 low-income subscription, US\$25 for Indigenous/social justice non-profits, US\$40 institutions. For Canada and Mexico add US\$5, for all other international memberships, add US\$10. Your donations help us send the journal free in Spanish to Indigenous organizations in the South.

We welcome submissions of articles, letters, photographs and relevant information. Letters and articles may be edited for length. If you have access to a computer, please send your article on paper and on a Mac-compatible 3 1/2 inch disk. Send all correspondence to:

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We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their generous assistance to Abya Yala News:

Billy R. Trice Jr, Alison Hammond, Stefano Varese, Glenn Switkes, Marcia Campos, Adriana Ballen. Special thanks to Vickie Ward and Judith Stronach, Armstrong Wiggins.

Organizations: Survival International, CHIRAPAQ, DoCip (Switzerland), Rainforest Action Network (USA), Center for Mapuche Documentation & Study, KPFA, FIPI, Mexico.

Publications: NAORP (UC Davis, USA), Presencia Literaria (Bolivia), Revista Ceacatl (Mexico), NACLA (USA), Hoy (La Paz), La Jornada (Mexico).

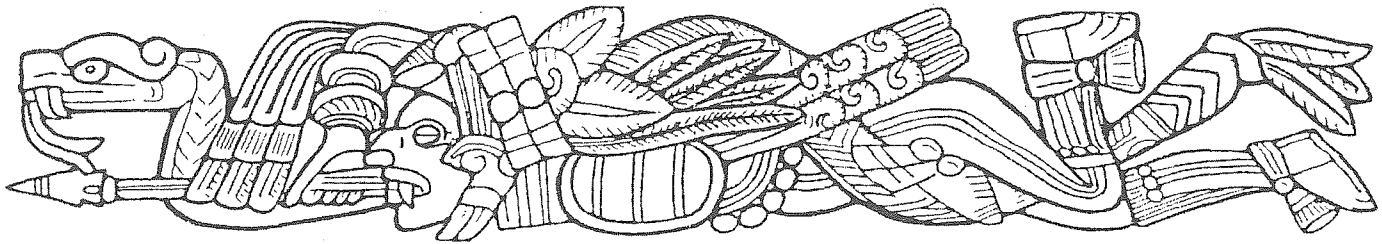
Thanks to the following foundations for their generous support: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Public Welfare Foundation, Judith Stronach Fund of the Vanguard Public Foundation, Foundation for Deep Ecology, Funding Exchange.

*Abya Yala is the Kuna word for Continent of Life which includes all of the Americas.

Indexed: Alternative Press Index, Ethnic News Watch.

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In search of work, new ways of life, and better opportunities, many indigenous people are driven into the urban areas of Latin America. This influx has created a new society, complete with its own culture, challenges, and uncertainties. This issue is dedicated to the inspirational accomplishments of indigenous people who strive to preserve their distinct identity while promoting the prosperity of indigenous peoples in cities.

In metropolitan areas, we often find ourselves on the fringe of the economic and social infrastructure. To counter this, we must forge our own networks of support. Migrant indigenous organizations coordinate labor unions, establish training centers, and provide for basic material needs. This essential foundation revives the communitarianism characteristic of our traditional societies, generates solidarity, and reinvigorates cultural pride.

For the first time, since the migration began about sixty years ago, a significant population of indigenous peoples, born and raised in urban areas, now find themselves part of a unique emerging society. In Lima, the synthesis of urban culture with indigenous origins blends to create Chicha. Distinctive music, food, clothes, and dance define this modern culture. Attracted by its urban themes it has become the symbol for today's youth.

Second generation of indigenous migrants, now, middle aged and raising families of their own, are becoming aware of another reality. Ethnic discrimination, and assimilation have forced many indigenous people to swap their cultural identity for economic success. As human rights indigenous activists, we at SAIIC, can not allow the disintegration of our cultures. We must join together with the numerous indigenous organizations forming throughout Latin America to empower indigenous people to reclaim our heritage. Transmission of indigenous languages is crucial to cultural survival. The power of the spoken word rests inside the heart of indigenous culture. Extinction of a language is not simply the loss of an historical account. With its disappearance escapes the values, perceptions, and philosophy of generations past.

Consequently, preservation of our ancestral heritage has become the most pressing priority of urban indigenous communities. One approach focuses on education. In Quito, Ecuador, NGOs build a school where lessons will be taught in their native language, Quichua. This complements the children's formal education by reinforcing the Quichua language and instilling the young with respect for traditional culture. At the same time, there is an effort to bridge the gap between urban indigenous communities and those living in rural areas. By establishing communication, we rediscover kinship ties once lost and exchange history. This, in turn, develops a sense of a collective memory.

Despite migration, the diaspora residing in urban areas will never lose sight of the importance of the land. We must focus our search on alternatives to traditional development. In Brazil, the Panará are beginning to resolve their land problems. Forced relocation previously fragmented their society. After two decades of displacement, they have returned to the remaining forests of their traditional homeland. As they rebuild their community they draw from the spirit of their ancestors, practicing reciprocity with the environment.

Safeguarding our cultural integrity provides a unifying structure for indigenous peoples. Migration to the cities has presented new challenges, yet simultaneously created opportunities for growth and prosperity. In this stage of transition, our primary responsibility resides in preserving our culture for the generations yet to come. The articles in this issue provide examples of how indigenous people maintain their identity as they meet the challenges of urban life.

SAIIC Board Directors

French Guiana: Indigenous Peoples Contemplate Legal Action to Protect Their Land Rights

The Federation des Organisations Amerindiennes de Guyane (FOAG) held its Second Congress in the Kalina community of Awala, 13-15 December 1996. FOAG is a coordinating body representing more than 20 Indigenous organizations in French Guiana. French Guiana, a French Overseas Department, lies on the North-eastern coast of South America, to the North of Brazil and to the East of Suriname. It is home to a number of Indigenous peoples, some of whom like the Kalina and Lokono live on the coast, while others like the Wayampi live along the main rivers of the rain forest interior.

One of the main subjects discussed at the Second Congress was land rights and the position of the French Government with regard to the recognition thereof. On the national level, two legal decrees exist in French Guiana concerning land titling for Indigenous peoples, Maroons and others, but for a number of reasons they are considered to be of limited utility by FOAG. One of the most important reasons is that titles issued under the decrees are subject to taxation. On the international level, the French Government has consistently been one of the most vigorous and outspoken opponents of the recognition of Indigenous people's rights. At the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which is presently working on a draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the French Government opposes Indigenous rights on the grounds that the French Constitution states that all citizens are equal and, therefore, Indigenous peoples may not enjoy "special rights". In common with other countries it is also opposed to the recognition of collective rights.

At its Second Congress, FOAG decided that, although French President Chirac has taken a more conciliatory stance on land rights since a meeting of Indigenous peoples from the Americas in Paris in May of 1996, the French government is not taking Indigenous land rights seriously enough. Consequently, the Second Congress resolved to establish a legal commission to examine the feasibility of enforcing land rights through the French legal system. Given the limitation of French law, it was also decided that option of utilizing the European human rights system must also be examined. Should the FOAG file a case in the European human rights system, it will be the first time that Indigenous peoples have used that system, widely regarded as the best available; to enforce their human right to own and control their ancestral lands and territories.

Also discussed in connection with land rights, was the French Government's proposed National Park. This park covers approximately one third of the country and encompasses the traditional territories of the Wayana, Oyapoc and Wayampi peoples. As presently conceived, land rights in the park amount to nothing more than loosely defined "living zones," which are narrow strips along the major waterways, in which the affected people have use rights. Also, it is unclear how future regulations relating to the park will affect the Indigenous peoples living therein and how the extent and impact of increased tourism will be controlled. The position that FOAG has taken is that it will not discuss the park until land rights are fully recognized in accordance with international human rights standards.

For further information please contact the Forest Peoples Programme, 1c Fosseyway Business Centre, Stratford Road, Moreton in Marsh, GL56 9NQ, U.K.; Tel: 44 1608 652893; Fax: 44 1608 652878; E-mail: wrm@gn.apc.org; The Forest Peoples Programme is an affiliate of the World Rainforest Movement.

Suriname: People of Kwamalasemutu Fight Canadian Mining, Seek Land Rights from the Government

A delegation from the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname went to Kwamalasemutu last week to investigate complaints raised by village leaders concerning the activities of Canadian mining company, Golden Star Resources and Surinamese company, NaNa Resources. They want Golden Star and NaNa to leave their land and they want their land rights to be recognized by the Government so that they and future generations may leave in peace and security. Kwamalasemutu is located in the South of Suriname near the border with Brazil and is one of the largest indigenous villages in Suriname, with approximately 1500-2000 persons from nine tribes. Kwamalasemutu is also located in a gold and diamond concession held by NaNa Resources, that also includes the Sipilawini Nature Reserve. The Nature Reserve is the only place on Earth where the endangered Oko Pipi frog can be found.

The VIDS was asked to investigate by the Head Captain of the village at the Gran Krutu of Indigenous and Maroon peoples held recently in Galibi. Complaints were also raised at the Third Annual Meeting of the VIDS held last year. The VIDS was informed that in November 1995, late Granman Pesife and the Captains of the village had signed a letter to the Ministry of Natural Resources stating that they had no objections to Henk Naarendorp of NaNa Resources obtaining a concession to prospect for gold and diamonds on their land. The leaders had refused to sign the letter, that was written by Naarendorp claiming to represent Golden Star, on more four separate occasions before finally giving in. The village leaders said that Naarendorp had put a lot of pressure on the village leaders to sign; that he had used a translator who had misinformed them about the contents of the letter and that even today, over a year later, they still do not fully understand what the letter means.

After obtaining a large prospecting concession, Naarendorp allowed Golden Star to work there. Since then, village leaders have had a number of meetings with Golden Star, Naarendorp and NDP Chairman, Bouterse. Each time they said that they do not want Golden Star on their land, that they did not understand the implications of signing the letter and that they want their land rights recognized. In the last of these meeting, late Granman Pesife was told by Bouterse that Golden Star will work on their land and that there will be no more discussion on the subject. International law states that a lack of understanding of the law on the part of Indigenous and Maroon peoples may not be taken advantage of by government, multinationals or anyone else and that any agreement or understanding concluded in this way are void and unenforceable.

Golden Star is not working in the area now, but the people of Kwamalasemutu are afraid that when they return they may be forced to relocate, be denied access to their hunting grounds and agricultural plots and be mistreated and intimidated by

armed security guards and the police just like the people of Nieuw Koffiekamp. They are also afraid that Brazilian gold diggers will invade their land when they discover that Golden Star is working there and that their environment will be destroyed by the garimpeiros or the company. The people say that Golden Star has already polluted the water where they were working and they have seen desert where forests used to stand in Brazil and they do not want this to happen to their land.

The VIDS supports the people of Kwamalasemutu in demanding that Golden Star leaves their territory and that their land rights, as defined by international law, be recognized and respected by the Government. The same applies to all other Indigenous and Maroon peoples in Suriname, especially those that find themselves in concessions held by Golden Star, NaNa Resources or any other of the multinationals that are presently invading their ancestral lands. This is especially the case for the Indigenous community of Kawemhakan, also located in a concession held by Golden Star and NaNa Resources, where Golden Star recently announced drilling results at a site called Antino that indicates that there may be commercial quantities of gold in the area. Like the people of Nieuw Koffiekamp, the people of Kawemhakan were not consulted or even informed about the granting of a concession on their land. We urge the Government, as did the Gran Krutu held in Galibi, not to give any further concession until their land and other human rights are fully recognized in the Constitution and other laws of Suriname.

For further information please contact the Forest Peoples Programme, 1c Fosseyway Business Centre, Stratford Road, Moreton in Marsh, GL56 9NQ, U.K. Tel: 44 1608 652893 Fax: 44 1608 652878 E-mail: wrm@gp.apc.org

Youths Burn Indigenous Man Visiting The Capital Brasilia, Brasil

While visiting the capital, our brother Galdino Jesus dos Santos of the Pataxo tribe was the victim of a vicious crime in Brasilia, Brasil. On the evening of April 20th, 44 year old Galdino was returning to his pension after attending a FUNDAI meeting. When he arrived, it was after 9:00 PM, the hour at which the hostel locked its doors. Unable to enter, Galdino was forced to spend the night outside, sleeping about 20 meters from the hostel at a bus stop. It was here, late at night, when five youths came upon the sleeping visitor and doused his body with a flammable liquid and lit him on fire. The flames quickly spread, engulfing Galdino's entire body as he fell to the ground, trying to roll and screaming for help.

By the time Galdino arrived at the hospital, 95% of his body was covered with third degree burns. By dawn he was dead. The perpetrators responsible for this hate-crime were five upper class youths, the sons of a judge and an ex-minister of justice. All five have been incarcerated. The minister of the interior of justice, Milton Seligman, has called this incident a crime of extreme perversity. In a letter from Rio de Janeiro, Felicitas Barreto has said that Galdino's death "demonstrates the depth of the hatred and scorn that the colonizers have for their victims, the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas."

For more information regarding the death of Galdino Jesus dos Santos contact: Marcos Terena, Dirigente del Comite Intertribal-ITC, Brasilia, DF

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Ecuador: Amazonian women feel that they are the last hope

Transnational corporations are tightening their squeeze, but the women of the Amazanga community of Pastaza refuse to succumb to temptation or threats and demand that their ancient voice be heard and their traditional wisdom not be forgotten. As the men fall into the trap of corporate deceit, they close all means of expression and communication to these visionary women. While their husbands and fathers refuse to listen, the women of Amazonia clearly stated that they are committed to the preservation of our "continent of life." Since the First Congress of Women of the Amazon last Sept., 24-27 1996, in Union Base Pastaza, Ecuador, a bad situation has deteriorated into near hopelessness. Through the Panshpanshu Biological Reserve, Atlantic Richfield Oil Co. has begun construction of a pipeline. Not only does this endanger the reserve, but the Villano river valley and the entire watershed of the Curaray river as well. If this is allowed to continue the natural indigenous ways of life of these traditional Shuar peoples, a small community of Quichua, and their vital ecosystem will surely face eminent destruction. Once happy and free in their beloved rain-forests, these women are faced with the grim choice of trying to raise their children on petroleum contaminated, clear cut 'dead zones' or migrating to the cities. While the Shuar peoples search for legal assistance to help protect the Panshpanshu Biological Reserve, they also begin the process of caring for the sacred lagoons of LLushino and recovering stolen lands from colonial encroachment. Against insurmountable odds, these brave women are organizing. Providing bi-cultural and bi-lingual education, the Jeri-Juri Indigenous Children's Boarding School is actively teaching and preserving traditional knowledge and natural ways of life for future generations. They have also created a Natural Indigenous University, Univeridad Natural Indigena. Here, foreign students are allowed to explore direct experience natural living and health restoration traditions.

Information from: Christina Gualinga, Coordinadora Regional de Mujeres, Casilla 10-16-704 Puyo, Pastaza, Ecuador or 3330 North Shore Circle Tallahassee, Florida 32312 tel: 904-997-6042 email: amazonwomen@applicom.com



Indigenous Migration and Identity in Quito

*by Narciso Conejo and
Robert Andolina*

Anyone who has traveled to Quito, Ecuador, and seen the now very touristic historic quarter can testify to that city's Indigenous character. Underneath all the glitter, however, lurks a harsher reality: the majority of Indigenous migrants in Quito live lives of economic and social marginalization. In this article, Narciso Conejo and Robert Andolina provide us with a glimpse of migrant life in the capital, and most importantly, how Indigenous peoples have mobilized to insure their survival as distinct peoples inside the metropolis.

Rosa, an Indigenous girl from Chimborazo province, bags mandarins and limes in the Alameda park. Rosa, her parents, and friends from Chimborazo, prepare for another day of selling fruit to the people of Quito. Rosa lives in el Panecillo, a hill in central Quito known not only as an important Pre-Incan center of astronomy but as a famous lookout for locals and visitors alike who seek a good view of the capital. This mount is not only home to Rosa and her family but to many Indigenous peoples of the central and southern provinces. Quito, like many other cities in Latin America, is the home and working place of tens of thousands Indigenous peoples who have migrated from rural areas.

The contemporary Indigenous migrations in Ecuador, particularly to Quito, have their beginnings in the middle of this century. Although the majority of the migrants are Quichua people from the mountainous regions, there are Indigenous people from all the various cultures in the country.

The migrations in Ecuador are largely the result of the disruption of the hacienda system (where poor campesino laborers work for rich landowners) brought about by the agricultural reform laws passed in the 1960s and 70s. These reforms involved the distribution of *huasipungos* (parcels of land) to the head of each family. The campesinos and Indigenous families received the poorest and most overexploited lands—inadequate for the most basic needs. This shortfall forced Indigenous and campesino people to migrate to the cities. The policies of

agricultural modernization implemented by subsequent administrations have tended to benefit the powerful landowners who continue to occupy the best lands, leaving the poor no other option than to migrate.

On the other hand the boom in petroleum production in the 60s and 70s allowed the economic growth of the cities—especially Quito, the capital, and seat of the largely state-controlled oil industry. The oil boom allowed the city budget to grow, and contributed to urbanization, especially of the middle-class northern neighborhoods. These abrupt economic changes in the country lead to increased labor demands in the cities, especially in the area of construction.

The processes outlined above have been the principal causes of rural migration to Quito. In recent years, neoliberal economic policies have become dominant, jeopardizing the Indigenous ways of life, and producing a massive internal migration—not just of men or youths, but of entire Indigenous families.

Indigenous migration does not occur out of curiosity or vagrancy. Many believe Indigenous people migrate because they are tired of working their land, and blame them for Quito's urban problems. But migration must be understood as a strategy for survival, for the diversification and complementation of Indigenous economies, and as a form of cultural survival. Migration processes create enormous challenges for those involved, particularly in the areas of labor, gender, and identity.

Hard Labor

The work of Indigenous migrants in the city is diverse. Among the most common are *cargadores* (carriers), construction workers, street vendors, merchants, maids, and janitors.

The life of Indigenous migrant workers in Quito is hard, and often dangerous. "The money we earn through so much

sacrifice suffices only for *la sopita* (food)," says Juan José Toaquiza Tipanga, Indigenous laborer from Cotopaxi province and one of the 100 workers in the Mercado Mayoristas in the south of Quito, "and so we can't send our huahuas (children) to the city's schools. With the help of friends, we have, thank God, been able to give our children an education. There they don't require uniforms, or other expenses; this is the only way we can educate our huahuas."

According to Julio Agualongo, president of the COINDIA (Comunidad Indígena del Desarrollo Integral y Autogestión - Indigenous Community for Integral Development and Self-Management), Juan José Toaquiza and his companions carriers of the Mercado Mayoristas suffer from clear exploitation in their work.

Despite migrants' harsh reality, there are special cases like that of Laura Bonilla, Otavaleña from Imbabura Province, who has received a good education and is now the owner of an *artesanías* (craft) shop in Quito's modern center.

"For what we have today, we had to make many sacrifices, and be dedicated. We had to make an effort to study and later we worked as maids. I first started in my uncle's shop (another Indígena from Otavalo) where I learned to manage this kind of business. Since we came from a family of weavers, that experience helped us in some ways. After five years of each one of us working on our own, my husband and I decided to become independent. So we founded our own shop. Here in Quito, you can't live if you don't work. It's really hard..."

Although Laura is not thinking of returning indefinitely to her community because of the realities of work and life, the large majority of Indigenous migrants, upon not having any success in the city, wish they could return to their communities. Rosa, a young Indigenous girl who works in the Alameda park, says "I surely would like to return to my native land, to

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Narciso Conejo is Quichua from Peguche, Ecuador. He has studied anthropology and social communications, and has worked in the Communications Department of CONAIE and FICL. Robert Andolina is a PhD Candidate in Political Science at the University of Minnesota. He has worked as a volunteer at CONAIE.

my community, if only our terrenito (land parcel) provided us with enough to live on. But since that's not the case, we have to live somehow..."

Men and Women in Migration

Migration to the city is difficult for all the Indigenous peoples involved, but it affects men and women differently, both in the city and country. When men are the only ones to migrate to Quito, the women who remain in the communities assume all the responsibilities in the home, of production and reciprocity, of the transmission of culture and identity, and participation in the community.

Despite women's assumption of this enormous task, their work is rarely valued by men and the larger society, on pretext that it isn't paid work. This differs from a traditional Andean Indigenous economy which has its own internal logic. Every culture varies in its economic practices, resulting in a complementarity in the roles and expenditures of men and women. In contexts where these values are still practiced, the traditional role of women as well as new roles resulting from migration are valued by men and society.

The responsibilities of Indigenous women in the city don't vary very much with respect to traditional roles, but the context changes, and takes a crucial place in the family economy. Migrant Indigenous women prepare meals for their husbands and family members who work in construction and other sectors.

Indigenous women's lack of education makes their lives in the city very difficult. "The situation here for the compañeras is terrible, it's more complicated than that of men," says José Atupaña, from the Quito Indigenous Organizations Movement (MOIQ, Movimiento de Organizaciones Indígenas de Quito). "Generally they work as empleadas (maids), street vendors, or as cooks in city markets. In some cases they have to confront *machismo* and cannot defend themselves. The compañeras are not accustomed to this kind of conduct. To solve these problems, they have few alternatives other than to get organized."

Indigenous Identity: Challenges and Threats in the City

"Society must understand Indigenous identity in the city as a specific identity of

Indigenous peoples who live in the city. This is not the same identity as in their communities. Here there isn't the same relationship with nature. It's another context, practically a different world," says Agualongo of COINDIA. This recognition is an important step in the strengthening of the identity of Indigenous peoples not only in Quito, but in other cities as well.

Many Indigenous migrants are clearly losing their language, particularly children. This is because in the city, Indigenous children are the laughingstock of the other children because they speak Quechua, and as a defense their parents prefer to speak Spanish in their houses and even do away with traditional dress to "pass" as mestizos. Their intention is simply not to suffer the racial and cultural segregation handed down by Quito's urbanites.

Children are not the only ones to have these problems. Frequently, adults also face discrimination based on their language and culture. In public services, if Indigenous migrants speak Quechua, they are not well attended. Speaking Spanish is a necessity for them to receive the attention they require.

Sometimes, economic success can lead to a loss of Indigenous identity. "Our children understand Quichua,* but they don't speak it," says Laura Bonilla, an Indigenous woman from Cotacachi. "We don't speak Quichua in the home. We'd like to teach Quichua to our children, but our surrounding doesn't allow us. The kids learn English in school as a second language. To remedy this reality, what we do is return to the community every weekend, so that the interaction with the family and the community can strengthen their identity."

In other cases, especially for Indigenous migrants from the central provinces of the country, the loss of cultural identity is more pronounced. "They are successful economically," says Agualongo, "but they forget their relatives and friends and don't help them out. They integrate better with mestizo society and try to pass as one of them." The urban world often brings out this new individualism among Indigenous migrants. Their private realities and lives in the city limit their relations with their own people. "The families around here, in their own little rooms, can't invite their relatives, their friends. People start thinking only of themselves, and leave community aside," says Agualongo.

Organizing as a Solution: Responses to the Problems of Indigenous Migrants

To solve the many problems faced by Indigenous migrants in the city, many of them, especially those from the central provinces of the country, have decided to organize. One example is the founding of Escuela Tránsito Amaguaña (Tránsito Amaguaña School) which benefits of the Indigenous migrants who work in the Mercado Mayoristas in southern Quito—the majority from the central provinces of Cotopaxi and Chimborazo—with bilingual Quichua-Spanish education. The school has been functioning since 1990. In its beginnings it had only two students. As the program took shape, enrollment increased. Today, 80 children, women, and men attend its programs, thanks to the efforts of parents and the people and institutions of Quito.

"Some children have forgotten how to speak Quichua," explains Darwin Pomagualli, Indigenous professor and volunteer in the school. "We reinforce the Quichua language with classes to complement what they don't know. We make it possible for them to realize that we are Indigenous people and we instill in them the respect for what is ours." The programs offered by the Escuela Tránsito Amaguaña benefit not just Indigenous peoples. "In the last few years, we have had mestizo students who also learn the Quichua language and respect Indigenous culture. They can already speak some Quichua, and if they can't speak very well yet, the others teach them," says Pomagualli.

The Escuela Tránsito Amaguaña is one of the positive ways Indigenous peoples have confronted the grave problems of education and cultural transmission. With the education that's provided, combined with the extras offered by the school (trips to students' Indigenous communities on fiesta days, during *mingas* (communal work), etc), Indigenous identity is strengthened and Indigenous culture is recreated within the city.

Although the Escuela started as an independent project, two years ago it became part of COINDIA. COINDIA itself began ten years ago, when Indigenous migrants were centered mostly in Quito's historic quarter, in the 24 de Mayo area, and the Terminal Terrestre bus station. Later the Mercado Mayoristas Association,

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as well as an organization in San Roque, formed.

COINDIA currently works with seven migrant organizations based on different labor sectors, like the carriers of the markets. It also works with Indigenous women and students' organizations. Its program benefits 150 Indigenous families. Staff consists of one president and 10 volunteers.

Aside from its education programs, COINDIA works with migrants to enhance their participation in the market. "We train the *compañeros* to select quality products and to make sure products arrive on time," explains Agualongo, "and to recognize and confront certain business practices. We are about to build a training center for community business, which on top of providing basic material needs, can promote solidarity and recreate Indigenous communitarianism.

To reach its objectives, COINDIA has been able to get the support of CONAIE and ECUARUNARI, as well as national and international NGOs. Still, much more support is needed to attempt to deal with all of Indigenous migrants' needs in Quito.

Another important organization for Indigenous migrants is the Quito Indigenous Organizations Movement (MOIQ, *Movimiento de Organizaciones Indígenas de Quito*), which formed in 1992 with the objective of uniting the Indigenous migrants organizations on the basis of types of labor and geographic areas. The focus on geographic areas is to strengthen local Indigenous migrant identities and preserve diversity while unifying people. Since 1995, MOIQ has expanded its activities, and now works with Indigenous migrants not just in Quito but in the surrounding *comunas* as well.

In addition to programs in education, labor, and legal rights for migrants, MOIQ wants official recognition from the Municipality of the Quito Metropolitan District. "We don't matter to the municipality...and their policies hurt migrants," says MOIQ president José Atupaña. "We need a political space where our voices can be heard, where we can demand our rights, where we can put forth our own proposals that correspond to our realities and have them be taken into consideration by the municipality." Julio Agualongo, of COINDIA, specified what was being asked to the city: "We asked the



Indigenous children in the Escuela Tránsito Amaguaña

mayor of Quito, Jamil Mahuad, to put together an integral municipal proposal which recognizes migrants, and he waited two years to give us a concrete answer." He adds that the movement has achieved "a little bit" with respect to city politics in Quito.

We have seen organizations that exist inside cities for Indigenous migrants, but these are not the only examples of organizing that exist. Along with formal organizations, innumerable informal associations and organizations that exist in Quito, whether based on labor, cultural identity, or kinship. One of the persons interviewed for this article stated simply, "We don't have anything to do with migrants organizations, but we meet freely among ourselves, as in our community, to face down any problem that may arise."

There is still much work to be done in the way of supporting Indigenous migrants in Quito. The formal organizations need to value and get involved with the specific projects of the smaller locally based organizations. There have also been difficulties between the various formal migrants organizations based on cultural, religious, and political differences. But organization leaders all agree that there exists affinity between the organizations on the basis of their common work and as Indigenous people, and this affinity could

be the basis for the strengthening of the organizations, identities, and improving the quality of life of Quito's Indigenous migrants. 🐾

* A variant of Quechua spoken in the Andes and Oriente regions of Ecuador.

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Brazil: Migrating Between Extremes

While we were doing the research for this issue, one of our colleagues informed us that Paulo Pankararú, the first Indigenous lawyer in Brazil and currently on the staff of the Instituto Socioambiental, was on the West Coast. SAIC took the opportunity, along with the Rainforest Action Network, to invite Paulo to the Bay Area for an event and an interview. Paulo has worked to defend Indigenous rights in Brazil and was interviewed for an article in Veja magazine on the topic of Indigenous migration to the cities in Brazil. In what follows, SAIC discusses the article with Paulo.

(SAIC) What is the principal cause of Indigenous migration to the cities of Brazil, and what is the relation between this phenomenon and the conditions inside the Indigenous reserves?

The problem of migration is linked to the conditions within the Indigenous areas. Many Indigenous peoples are heading towards urban centers to find new ways life, to find work, anything to make possible the survival of their families. This is what is evident today in Brazil.

Nevertheless, if Indigenous areas were demarcated, and if alternative development projects within the areas received support, this migration would be reduced to the point of being insignificant.

Does migration have to do with the increase in the Indigenous population in Brazil?

Happily, the Indigenous population in Brazil has been increasing in the last few years, but this doesn't constitute a problem for Indigenous peoples. The reality, I think, is that the Indigenous population could grow much more, because before the colonization—in the 1500s—we were about 5 million Indians. Today in Brazil, there are approximately 300,000 Indians. So, the question of the increase in Indigenous population is not a problem.

Still, upon analysis, things are changing: Indigenous peoples are gaining back lands, and are becoming more organized. This is due to the work of Brazilian NGOs, Indigenous organizations, and to the alliances with international NGOs. So this is a solution for [the problem].

The Veja article states that migration to the cities is an attempt to flee from the misery of the Indigenous reserves. In the reserves, the life expectancy often fails to surpass 46 years. Yet, a dominant idea, indeed the basis of the campaign of support: to title Indigenous lands, is that Indigenous peoples can live better lives in their territories, on their lands. What are your thoughts on this matter?

The Veja article exposes a very real situation in Brazil. This is linked to my first response. Due to the new and bigger perspectives within the Indigenous areas, many Indians are going to cities. Within the areas, there exists a host of pressures, like land invasions, and a situation of corruption at many levels. It's not that life in the Indigenous area is not "better" than life in the city. Problems exist that are linked to the question of land, and this problem is generating migration. Now, it is difficult to really evaluate what would be the advantages of staying in the village or of finding a solution in the city. This is a very difficult question to answer because we are dealing with extremes; when you deal with extremes, it's not possible to really compare, what would be better, what would be less harmful.

The Veja article also says that the Indigenous peoples living in Brazil's cities constitute the second biggest "tribe" of the country, behind only the Guaraní, who number 35,000. This statement creates the image that urbanized Indians in Brazil are unified, or have social unity in the city. Is this accurate, or, are they not uniting as Indigenous peoples in the city?

There are various Indigenous organizations working in the cities, but this

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doesn't mean that there is a "national organization of urban Indians," just like there isn't a "national organization of reserve Indians." This is an impossibility in Brazil because these are differentiated peoples, geographically, linguistically, etc.

But the question is also that, in migrating to the cities, despite cultural differences, their problems become very similar.

Yes. What is most common is that people find family, or relatives, in the city. There's continuity, almost an extension of the reserve community, within the city. But this doesn't go as far as to reflect a spirit of national organization, if anything because, when Indigenous people go to the cities, they often do it only on a provisional basis. They do not aspire to remain within the city. So, in this context, one can speak of the cultural side of migration, and arrive at the thought that we are not dealing with "migration to the city," but more realistically a search for means to support oneself as an "Indian," to provide continuity to one's culture, maintaining contact with one's relatives, and returning to the reserves, and returning again. Indigenous cultures permit this movement of going and coming back.

Does there exist a generation of Indigenous peoples born in the city? If so, their reality must be completely different.

Yes, this exists. It is a very different reality from the person born and raised inside an Indigenous area. But there is no doubt that the person who lived in the Indigenous reserve 30 years ago also had a very different reality from the person who lives there today. So, for all those living in Indigenous areas, there are differences across time.

So, we cannot work with this closed

concept of Indigenous culture with respect to space and Indigenous areas because this back and forth movement exists. Our ancestors already communicated with other Indigenous areas, and exchanged experiences.

In regards to this pattern of Indigenous peoples and cities, I did not do the [Veja] article knowing the cultural reality proper to Indigenous communities, but I did it to expose an existing social problem. I do not think that

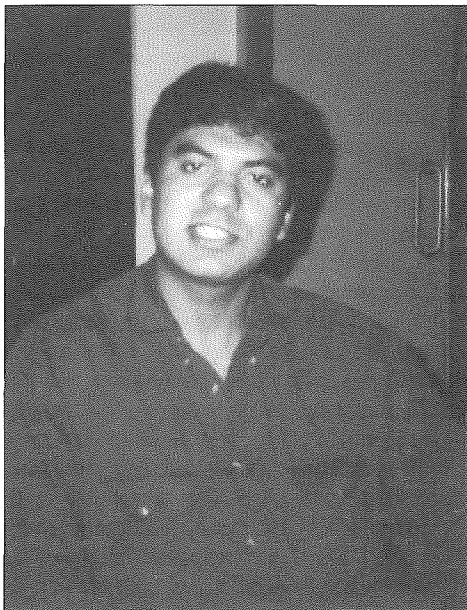


Photo: Gerard Schullings

Paulo Pankarau during an interview with SAIC

Indigenous peoples should in any way be "restricted" to the Indigenous areas, because it is possible to have this interchange between city and Indigenous area, and to work out proper cultural mechanisms.

So, the question becomes one of resolving the land problems of Indigenous peoples, and to work for alternative and sustainable development for the

communities. Then, the "problem" would be resolved.

Do the major organizations of the Indigenous movement in Brazil like CAPOIB, COIAB, and CIR, work with the urbanized "sector," if one can speak of such a thing, and do they consider this as an important cause to defend?

There is a connection, but today in Brazil the strongest goal is to defend Indigenous lands so that Indigenous peoples can live in their own territories.

Do distinct organizations exist to assist Indigenous migrants in the cities?

There are associations. For example, my people have an association in São Paulo, Brazil's largest city. This association exists so as to prevent conditions of mis-

ery for our people in the city. But, its principal objective remains to advocate for a solution to the land problems of evictions so that these people may eventually return to the areas.

Is it possible, in regards to Indigenous migration to the cities, to speak of positive effects or results, or is it only a negative experience leading to poverty, exploitation, marginalization?

If we analyze migration to the cities as a strategy for survival, then it is possible to say that it has a positive result. For people who go to the city to show their culture, make contacts with institutions, to show the Indigenous reality, it is productive, but it is another level of relations that is at work.

The ideal is that there exist relations based on respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. If these respectful relations existed, Indigenous peoples could more freely visit the cities and also receive their friends in the Indigenous areas.

What about for those people who remain in the Indigenous areas? Is it beneficial for them to have relatives or family in the urban context? Does it make their political work easier, for example, to have relatives in the city?

Yes, alliances with people in the city are very important. They are necessary, considering our objective to have a more pluralistic society in Brazil. It's important to establish these alliances, with universities, with NGOs, with environmental organizations. These alliances exist, but much more for rural laborers.

The sector that supports Indigenous peoples is also composed of organizations of urban laborers. This is the idea behind the unification of forces to reinforce the organizations.

Do labor organizations and their partisan politics and various ideologies have any influence on the Indigenous movement?

No, they have no influence on the Indigenous organizations, but the political support of a wide base of organizations is important. For example, when Decree 1775 was instituted, with all the problems it implied for Indigenous areas, many organizations came out against it. In this way they supported Indigenous peoples, but this doesn't translate into this movement's having any influence on

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Urban Mapuches: Reflections on a Modern Reality in Chile

Following a census in 1992, there appeared a series of demographic studies about urban Mapuche populations in Chile. The apparent "discovery" of this hidden face of contemporary Indigenous society has initiated a sudden interest in the study of the seemingly new sector. But who are the new Mapuches, these transplanted children of cement and migration who go unrecognized in the theories and reports? To answer this question, it is necessary look beyond ineffectual studies, statistics, and anthropological theories.

by José Ancán Jara

Other than the loss of independence, self-determination, and territorial integrity, one of the most significant consequences of the politico-military upheavals experienced by the Mapuche people at the end of the 19th century is the disintegration of societal and familial relations. The sustained deterioration of traditional economic systems, dispossession of traditional lands, and the resulting urban migrations of the Mapuche people are hallmarks of this new order of subordination to the Chilean state.

The urban Indigenous population is primarily a result of rural to city migrations. A situation common in Latin American countries in the last 100 years is the industrialization of the large cities and continual economic restructuring which have caused repeated crises, shaking the traditional population models and changing relations between the rural and urban worlds.

What had heretofore been a silent, constant flow of Mapuches into the cities became a flood during the 1930s. In recent years, far from having abated, this process has been sustained and has even increased. In this way, a new frontier has developed—the "big city"—in the context of interethnic relations between the post-reductional* Mapuches and the Chilean nation-state.

Despite the historical Mapuche presence in the cities, this undeniable reality remains in a state of semi-obscurity, poorly understood by social scientists, authorities, and—ironically—in the "official" Mapuche discourse of the day. This discourse, hegemonized and controlled by leaders and organizations, and lately by the state indigenist organ (CONADI), takes its ultimate form in a state Indigenist law (no. 19.253), which in only three of its articles (75-77) concerns the plight of the urban Mapuches.

The Vision from Within

The atmosphere of generalized melancholy in which post-reductional Mapuche society debates itself has brought with it, as one of its principal consequences, the idea of a supposed "integration" into the Chilean state. This "integration" nevertheless occurs in the context of inequality and conflict between the two

sectors. These new interlocutors, the myriad organizations of ethnic resistance, have come to be known as the contemporary Mapuche Movement, and have elaborated through various strategies a discourse that, due to its extensiveness and antagonism, could be labeled as "official" in its attempt to represent an entire people.

The rupture and self-denial that city existence has meant to the reproduction of Mapuche ethnic identity have transformed, by opposition, the official discourse of the Mapuche movement into one that hails the rural community as the timeless, uncontaminated, and exclusive refuge of the "real Mapuches." The rural community is seen as the last place where the most important traditional cultural elements of the Mapuches reproduce themselves freely, such as language, religion, etc. Nevertheless, this fundamentalist view has glossed over the complexities of contemporary Mapuche ethnicity, and even led to an internal discrimination that juxtaposes the "pure" and "authentic," in other words the rural, with the "impure" or "awinkado," the urban.

The 1992 Census

A fabric of discourses, at times contradictory, arising from the constant need of self-affirmation faced with the mostly uninformed and hostile Chilean society has marginalized and even negated the urban Mapuches. It was not until the publication of the results of the population and housing census of 1992 that, abruptly and unexpectedly, numbers came out that have challenged what had been up to that time held up as truths. The census did nothing else, however, than confirm what many already knew, and this is that for the last several decades, no rural Mapuche family can say it does not have relatives who reside permanently in the city.

The census results showed that around 400,000 Mapuches (44% of the 930,000 persons 14 years old or older who identified themselves as Mapuche) live in Santiago. This was a surprise to leaders in the Mapuche movement. In comparison to the momentum generated by the 500 years of Columbus and the debates surrounding the Ley Indígena (Indigenous Law), the census was not viewed as a major priority for the objectives of the "official" Indigenous circles. A few organizations made declarations explicitly about the census, while others had hoped to see numbers amounting to about 300,000 Mapuches.

Many Indigenous leaders criticized and continue to criticize census figures that establish the Mapuche as one of the largest Indigenous nations of the continent, more numerous even than

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some national states, with half of its population being urban. For the "official" discourse, the need to maintain the traditionalist-rural posture is, for the moment, stronger than that of reformulating ideas and proposals based on the "socio-political success" caused involuntarily by the census.

The Next Generations: Mapuches Born in the City

All theories and postures set aside, the numbers have spoken and the Urban Mapuche is today simply a reality. Even more important, an important percentage of the population that auto-identified itself as Mapuche corresponds to persons autochthonous to the city—the children of migrants, first or second generation, born and raised in the city. This is undoubtedly the most controversial sector of the urban Indigenous population, most "invisible," and most difficult to classify according to the parameters of established anthropology.

The census figures showed that 54% of the roughly 400,000 Mapuche population that resides in Santiago represents persons 15-34 years of age. It is possible to imagine that the majority of these people were born in Santiago, based on the fact that sustained migration to Santiago dates back to the 1930s, and that the large majority of those who migrate are single and move in their productive years, establishing themselves with their families in a corner of the urban periphery.

Undeniably Mapuches, these sons and daughters of migrants are the principal victims of the military and political defeat of 1881 in Araucania. They are the inheritors of marginalization, dispersal, and the discrimination of a society alienated from its most visible traits that tries to "protect" them from the larger society's scorn. The urban Mapuche defines his or her existence on the triple discrimination for being Mapuche, poor, and urban. Only the recuperation of subtle fragments of ethnicity adapted to the new frontier environment will allow for the recreation of a solid identity.

The most dramatic of the strategies of "protection" employed by the parents of city-born Mapuches is the abandonment of the Mapuche language and the most visible aspects of Mapuche customs. We've heard it so many times that the justification for this is now common knowledge: "I didn't teach my children to speak Mapuche so that they wouldn't be made fun of... like I was." This strategy is reinforced by the desire to ascend the social ladder, the desire of migrants to send their children to receive formal education "so they'll be more than we were."

The Extremes of Mapuche Identity

The cold data of the 1992 census have brought face to face two versions of Mapuche identity, the extremes of "Mapucheness" at the end of the century: the informal that enters the mansions of the rich through the side door, who's standing on some corner of the marginal periphery, swelling the drinking crowds of bars, a masked, fleeing, contradictory apparition that, when in front of the mirror, recognizes himself through his "otherness;" and the other, official, fed by proper truths and certainties, but too a constructor of stereotypes of invented authenticity.

The rupture and disintegration that migration has engendered, this feeling of one's being outside of a collective future, taken in its entirety, have caused Mapuche society to forget that

the distinctive aspects of its collective memory are made up of a multitude of histories of communities, of kinship ties, of the organized movement of the 20th century, and of the life experiences of all who are part of this society. The formulation of a collective identity for the urban Mapuches must pass through the recuperation of this collective memory, this knowledge of one's roots, of where one comes from, and of what family line one belongs to, the essence of the historical memory of the Weupife (Mapuche historian and orator). It must also utilize the many mechanisms that Mapuche society has elaborated through the years to maintain a minimum degree of internal cohesion.

The Positives: The Rise of New Mapuche Actors, the Persistence of the Old

Migration to the city is a strategy for survival, and thus carries with it an inherent hope in the resolution of conflicts and problems previously insurmountable. For the Mapuche, migration has opened perhaps as many doors as it has closed, and provided a glimpse of what cultural survival will require in the future.

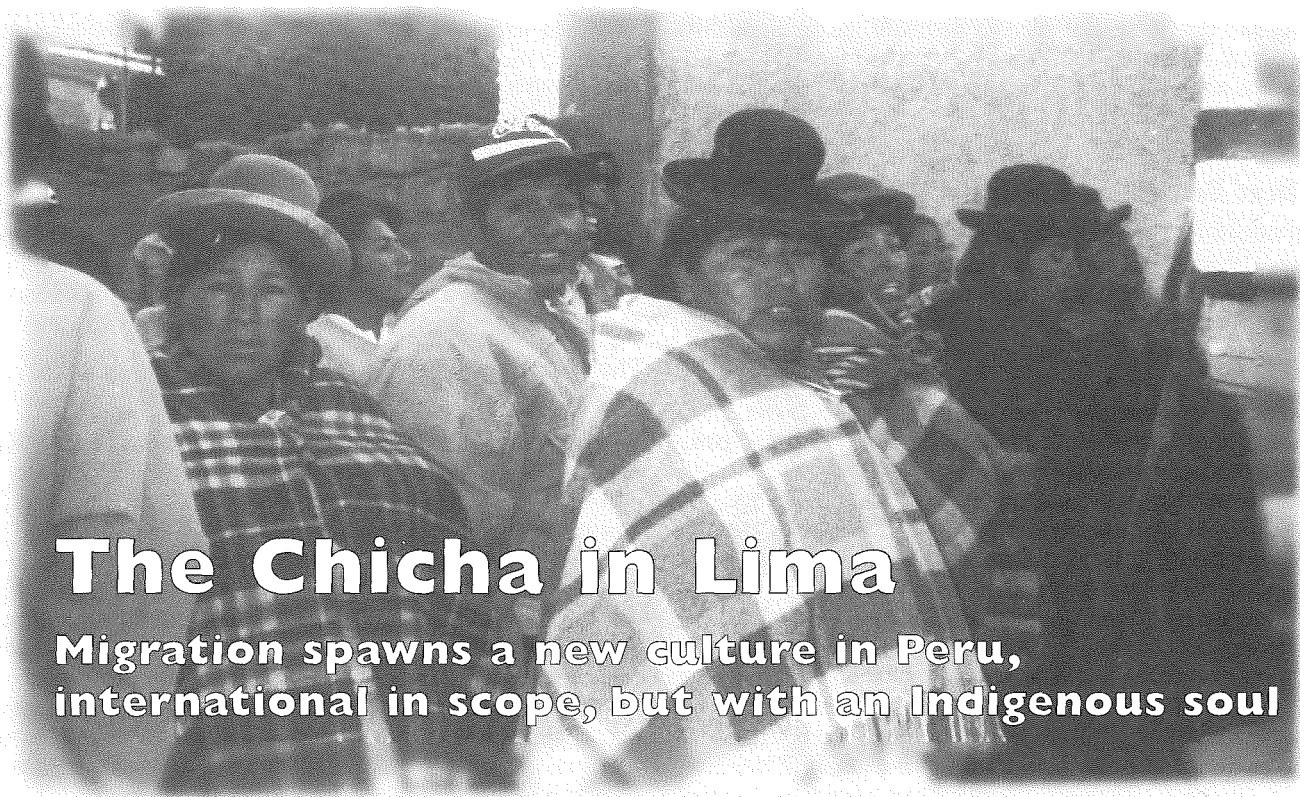
Migration and the ethnic discrimination of the urban context that results, at the same time that they masks identities, can also result in a new Mapuche subject, able to mitigate between the interests internal and external to Mapuche society. The acquisition of spheres of influence in all of the places where Mapuche society is dispersed, and the adoption of a new concept of the Mapuche movement by all of the sectors that conform it, various of them urban, will bring forth the cultural, social, and political rebirth of the Mapuche people, so urgently needed these days.

For decades, a very complex web of links between migrants and their communities of origin has developed. Mechanisms seemingly trivial as the subtle reproduction of various elements of non-material Mapuche culture, symbolized in values, customs, beliefs, continue to exist. The links between city and community also translates in the economic aid provided by "successful" migrants to relatives in the community.

Urban Mapuches are at a comparative advantage for access to a formal and advanced education, allowing for a rapid social ascent and assured participation in the economy. On the other hand, this also brings with it the risk of identity loss upon being in contact with the maximum representatives of the "modernization paradigm." Often, if the acquisition of a formal education occurs without the reinforcement of identity, the urban Mapuche will form an identity based on conflicting oppositions.

Within the internal relations of the Mapuche people, the majority urban composition of the population has led to the need to reflect on various issues. In particular, today, as we near the end of the 20th century, when we refer to our people, to their traditions, their struggles and demands, do we mean everyone, or only one part? It will be the Indigenous peoples themselves who, in the necessary identity reformulation that the new reality requires, and in the solution that what many refer to as the "tradition vs. modernity" problem, will control these important decisions. 🌿

* Refers to the period after the wars in Araucania



The Chicha in Lima

Migration spawns a new culture in Peru, international in scope, but with an Indigenous soul

Photo: ©1997, CHIRAPAO

Indigenous migrants from the high region of Puno arrive in Lima.

*"When I visited Lima for the first time in 1919," writes José María Arguedas, "a 'serrano' was immediately regarded with curiosity or disdain; as people quite foreign and unfamiliar, not as citizens or compatriots. In the majority of the small Andean pueblos they did not realize the significance of the word 'Peru.'"** Today, after political violence in the Sierra has displaced hundreds of thousands, Lima is one of the most multicultural cities in America. This isn't only due to the multiple regional identities of the provinces—approximately 6,000—and the Afro-Peruvian influence, but also to the tide of foreign immigrants of Japanese, Chinese, Italian, Jewish, and Arab origin. Lima is a reflection of Peru in general, a country of all bloods (*Todas las Sangres*). Out of this cultural mosaic, Andean migrants have forged a new culture, called "chicha" culture, which, in its music, combines the most unexpected cultural elements—from rock, to distant Caribbean conga rhythms, to cumbia from Colombia, with the huayno the more traditional melodic patterns typical of Andean Indigenous ensembles.

(This article is an edited version of a work written by Marcela Cornejo of CENDOC)

Call it rock serrano, call it techno huayno, or even new-brand Andean music, chicha music is perhaps the most visible, most intense recent cultural phenomenon born of massive Indigenous migration to the city of any region in Latin America. Although today it's driving cumbia rhythms are fading in the wake of new musical creations taking over, chicha music made its mark on the cultural consciousness of the Andean region like no other since the Andean folklore boom of the 1960s.

Chicha started out almost as a joke, among the musical groups in migrant circles, of combining unexpected styles. Chicha groups have the basic structure of a rock band: three guitars, a drum set, and a percussion section belting out a strange clockwork brand of cumbia and salsa beats. When

audiences responded, they took the new music to a new level, calling it La Chichera. "We started looking for character," says Oscar Carillo in an interview with *Quehacer* magazine, "for a musical message to give to this big public that started dancing with us, and started liking what we were doing."

Soon, Chicha music exploded on Lima's increasingly drab urban periphery. It became an industry, bringing with it an army of producers, organizers, promoters, radio stations, night clubs, DJs, etc... Plazas, parking lots, and clubs—now referred to as "chichodromes" (*chichódromos*)—filled with fans. It paralleled another social phenomenon that was progressively changing the face of Lima, this heretofore *criollo* stronghold—massive migration of Indigenous and mestizo peoples from Peru's Sierra.

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Peru Wakes Up to a New Reality

When the accelerated pace of Peruvian urbanization caught the attention of social scientists during the 60s, it was far advanced. Some dated the beginning of the migrant boom to Lima in the 40s, others in the 20s. In fact the "new face" of Lima began to define itself into the last century with the removal of the colonial walls that encircled the city (1872) to allow space for its growth and its transformation. At the turn of the century, the expansion of the periphery increased, and in the 1920s, no less than 34% of its inhabitants originated from other parts of the country. Between 1940 and 1981, the population of Lima grew seven-fold, from 661,508 to 4,608,000. Today in 1997, it has reached 6,913,682 (Lima and Callao). One in every four inhabitants of the country lives in Lima.

Migration from the Sierra has meant a dramatic shift in the ethnic character of the city, from dominantly criollo and Afro-Peruvian, to distinctly Indian and mestizo. That the separation had existed for so long is due to Peru's peculiar division into two republics: the Republic of the Spanish, and the Republic of the Indians. It is the painful heritage, not surprisingly, of European conquest.

This century's massive migration to the cities, especially Lima, has exposed once and for all this dichotomy to Peruvian society. Under the eyes of long-established criollo elites, huge peripheral extensions of the city—the pueblos jóvenes, or "young towns"—burgeoned in the desert around Lima. The settlements of Villa El Salvador, Comas, Huaycan, San Juan de Lurigancho, Puente Piedra, San Martín de Porres, Ate-Vitarte, etc., were still sandy fields in the 50s. Today, some of these reach a half a million inhabitants, like Comas and San Juan de Lurigancho.

Migrant peoples and their children in Lima, as in the other mega-cities of Latin America, live lives of profound marginality and hardship on the outskirts of the political and infrastructure network of the city. As in other cities, the problem of forging an identity that responds to the immediate surroundings and maintains ties to the past is a complicated one. People's patria chica, or town of origin, becomes the basis of their identity and solidarity. The panorama becomes much more complex when we examine the internal aspects of regional identities, the existence of strong local customs, which are the basis of competition and even strong rivalries. In Lima, unlike in Quito and La Paz which are clearly Andean cities, a host of factors have tended to stamp out migrant Indigenous identities and customs, as in the conservation of traditional dress for example, or the patron fiestas. The migrant has had to cohabitate with both worlds, at the same time evolving new forms of expression, this time distinctly urban. This is where chicha comes in.

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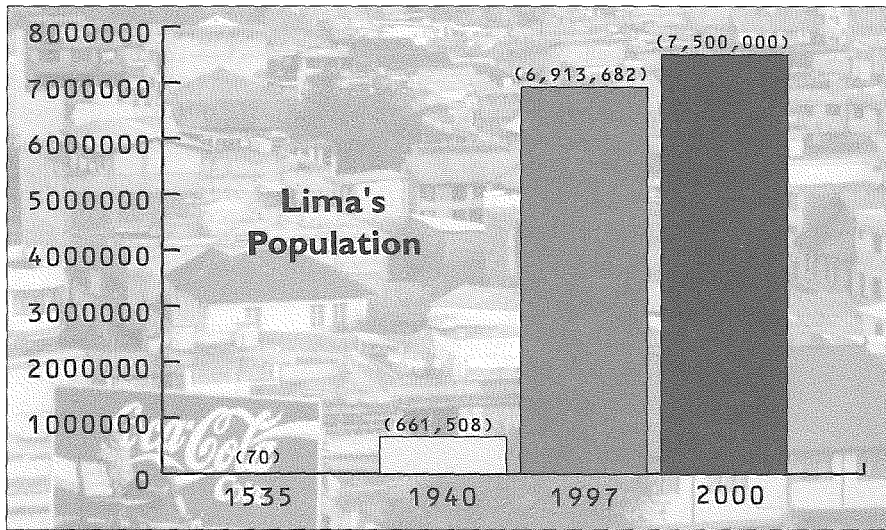
Chicha Music is Born

Chicha culture originated in the early 70s when the popularity of tropical rhythms (guaracha, mambo, cumbia, etc.) and rock merged in the bands of young migrants in Lima. The musical culture of this youth had always been fed by the melodies of their original pueblos; but simultaneously, they had assimilated to urban culture, and began to play foreign rhythms with their Andean instruments.

According to a Quehacer article, there were two main formative periods for chicha music: the initial years from 1968 to about 1978, and the years from 1980 to 1987. In the first, coastal chicha music predominated, sounding very much like Colombian cumbia. When the stream of Sierra migrants became a torrent in the early 80s, the music began to change, to be dom-



Photo: ©1997, CHIRAPAO



Source: INEI, Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática

inated by the haunting huaynos typical of Andean music. The spectacle, the colorful dress, the dance, all became distinctly Indigenous. The themes revolved around the musicians' urban marginality, uprootedness, and hope. Today, three distinct versions of chicha music thrive: the costeña (coastal), andina (Andean), and selvática (Amazonian).

Early chicha groups took on names as heterodox as their music. Among the first chicheros to combine cumbias and huaynos were Los Demonios del Mantaro and Los Destellos. Los Shapis set the fashion of the second stage (in the 1980s), with the assumption of the Andean identity. They set the Andean style in music, shows, choreography, dance, and the colors of their clothes. Their songs spoke of the joys and sorrows of life in the province in Lima. Other groups of this Andean genre are Vico y su Grupo Karicia, Génesis, Markahuasi, Los Wankas, Súper Genéticos, Geniales, Super Sensuales, etc... More than forty chicha groups exist today.

Chicha Music, Chicha Culture

Chicha music has produced, by extension, a chicha culture, where the transgression of classical parameters seems to be the norm. Unexpected mixtures are the norm from everything to food to music. A chicha plate might consist of bright green noodles, red tomato sauce, some yellow ají pepper, and a glass of bright red chicha morada (tamarind juice). A chichero recalls Octavio Paz's descriptions of the Pachuko: he passes by on his tricycle adorned with a Guns N'Roses t-shirt, Nike shoes, a cellular phone in hand.

Chicha culture's heterodoxy has also been the source of its cool receptions outside of the marginalized sectors. It has been pooh-poohed by the conservative members of the provincial community, the puritans, the intellectuals, as well as the middle and upper classes. They have referred to it as hybrid,

finding its newness and legitimacy by borrowing from other musical styles that have already internationalized.

"This urban folklore is adopted by the children of the migrants, who now don't fully identify with the legacy of their parents, but who also don't feel like equal participants in the expressions of the city," writes Mary Soto in an article for *El Peruano* ("El Tsunami de los Andes," May 7, 1992).

A look at chicha lyrics says it all:

Soy un muchacho provinciano/ me levanto muy temprano/ para ir con mis hermanos/ ayayayay/ a trabajar.../ no tengo padre nu madre/ ni un perro que a mi me ladre/ solo tengo la esperanza/ de progresar...

(I'm a provincial muchacho/ I get up very early/ to go with my brothers/ ayayayay/ to work.../ I have no father or mother/ not even a dog to bark at me/ only the hope of progressing).

* José María Arguedas, *Perú Vivo*, Lima, Ed. Juan Mejía Baca, 1966, pag. 12.

Ahí va la generación de pueblos de inmigrantes,
Que vivieron un mundo diferente a la de sus padres, a la de sus abuelos,
Asistieron a colegios con gente de ciudad,
Fusionando sus costumbres.

Nostalgia provinciana en busca de oportunidad,
Ahora pasado el tiempo, ahora somos muchos más a una vida urbana,
Y eso de ser marginal,
Hizo de nuestra raza, acero de superación.

Ellos forjaron aquí otras generaciones,
Por eso salimos muy orgullosos de esta nueva tierra y de nuestros padres,
No somos limeño de sangre más tenemos su cultura,
No habremos nacido en provincia más es nuestra sangre...

Nostalgia provinciana... (coral)
Lima limeña, Lima provinciana,
Lima tu presente, somos tu futuro

En tus calles como ambulantes,
En tus mercados como comerciantes,
En tus edificios, en tus pueblos jóvenes,
Desde el obrero hasta el empresario.

Ya me voy, ya me estoy yendo,
Ya Dios mío ayúdame por favor, cantaban al partir,

Lima limeña, Lima limón,
Lima serrana, Lima Provinciana
Lima de recuerdos, Lima hermana,
Provinciana...

(From the song "Nostalgia provinciana," by the group Los Mojarras, from the CD *Ruidos en la Ciudad* (1995). Thanks to Javier Lishner for his invaluable help in composing this article)

Unseen and Forgotten in Mexico City

Indigenous migrants face extreme hardships in the world's most populous city

Mexico city—perhaps the largest and fastest growing city in the world—began its tormented existence as an indigenous city in 1325 on the shores of the lake of Texcoco. Invaded and set ablaze by Hernán Cortez in 1521, Mexico City nevertheless remained the center of commerce for central Mexico. By 1950, it had become Mexico's most industrial city and center of economic, political, and cultural life. The industrialization of the 1950s combined with land reform in the campo prompted a large-scale migration from the nearby cities and rural areas. As the economic conditions of rural areas deteriorated, and the demand for labor increased as industries grew, people were "pushed" from their rural existence and "pulled" into Mexico City. Today, the Distrito Federal swarms with a human mass unparalleled anywhere on Earth. Many are Indigenous, and conditions of poverty persist.

Reprinted from La Jornada, Sep. 15, 1996, by Karina Avilés/ASIC.

Mexico city and its surrounding urban areas, known as the Indigenous capital of the country, is home to one out of every twenty Indians in Mexico, most of them living in conditions of extreme poverty.

Known as "phantoms of misery" by some, approximately half a million Indigenous migrants of various ethnicities walk the streets of the capital seeking scraps of food, a chance to earn a few pesos, or sit huddled in a corner, unseen and ignored.

These unseen do have faces though, they are the faces of the Mixtecos and Zapotecos who may find work in the civil service; they are the fortunate of the Triquis who may find work in the military, and they are those of lesser means who sell regional products from mobile stands. They are the Mazahuas, working as laborers and freight handlers, and the Mixtecos telling fortunes, the panhandlers, the Otomíes selling Chicles, the

Indian women working as servants in the residential zones.

Born of malnourished and anemic parents in the poorest states of health, the poor Indigenous of Mexico City "are abused since conception" say anthropologists Carlos Avila and Alicia Vargas of the Interdisciplinary Center for Social Development. (CIDES). Their poverty is so extreme that "a child of three years is ready to begin supporting the family."

Together they are 446,243 Indians trying to eek out a living under these harsh circumstances, working for pennies in the Metropolitan heart of Mexico City to stave off starvation. And together they make up 5.32 percent of the total Indigenous population of Mexico. For survival, the Indigenous people have divided the metropolitan area into five municipalities or delegations;

—Iztapalapa, the largest delegation, contains 22,242 Indigenous, mainly Nahuas from the state of México and Otomíes from Querétaro,

—the municipality of Naucalpan, numbering 18,890, mostly Triquis from Chichahuaxtla in Oaxaca.

—the third largest municipality, Nezahualcóyotl, numbering some 17,582 Mixtecos and Zapotecos from Oaxaca.

—Ecatepec, with 16,112 Indigenous people.

—La Gustavo A. Madero with 13,743 Indigenous people representing 1.25 percent of the entire population within this demarcation.

The Indigenous colonies in the Metropolitan Zone are "basically formed through an information network assisting in the occupation or purchase of urban lots," says Teresa Mora, investigator at the National Institute of Anthropology and History.

Researchers Marjorie Thacker and Silvia Bazúa are studying the plight of the Indigenous people in Mexico city and explain some of the difficulties they face. "Life for the Indigenous person is characterized by the daily struggle for money,

up to perhaps a hundred pesos a day, but food and transportation costs consume all this money. These people are living in poor areas but with high costs of living."

"Tension, aggression, and domestic violence are common and a majority of the people are undocumented in their own country (lacking civil registration, credentials, licences, etc.) which makes it even more difficult to gain access to institutional programs. Jobs that require identification, education, and fluency in Spanish remain inaccessible to them."

Despite the difficult conditions that the capital offers, data from INEGI indicates that the Metropolitan Zone is the epicenter of Indigenous migrations at the national level. The last report of INEGI established that 1.36 percent of the Indigenous population lived in Mexico City in 1930 and by 1990 the percentage had risen to 1.5. "One can earn more begging in this city than working in the countryside" explains Marjorie Thacker, director of the Metropolitan Zone branch of the National Indigenous Institute.

Nonetheless, leaving one's home for the city creates difficult strains on a person. "I don't know why, but when I am here (in the city), my home town seems more and more beautiful, but when I go

home I miss the city," is a common refrain expressing the dicotomy and contradictions in their lives says Thacker.

Anthropologist Teresa Mora completed a study of the Association of Indigenous Migrants, an organization established by Indigenous peoples to form a network and help their communities. Mora says that the political parties, especially the PRI, take advantage of these groups to amass votes among the electorate. The parties "insert themselves into the Popular Urban Movement" says Thacker, "only to exploit the poverty of the Indigenous people to augment their own wealth."

Night falls on a shantytown, darkening row upon row of houses made from remnants; carboard boxes, old carpets. Buried in a trilogy of misery, death, and hopelessness, the urban Indigenous are chained by misfortune in the struggle to survive among an alien and aggressive world surrounded by a people who despise them.

The Otomías and Band-Aid Politics

Caught between the laughter and tears of their memories the Indians speak

of their new lives and of death. Telésforo Arroyo Mora died thirty minutes after arriving at the Red Cross of Polanco while his more fortunate friend Juan Gabriel Domínguez lost only a leg. A cement wall fell on them. It was 47 days since they moved to the new home. On June 7, 1995, they finally listened to their fears and abandoned the traffic island on avenida Chapultepec and snuck into their new home: an uninhabited plot, hidden from pedestrians by a facade. It was there that the wall caved in on them. The late Telésforo and Juan Gabriel belong to a group of twenty-six Otomi families who now live in a vacant lot behind an old gate marked 346 Chapultepec Avenue. The rest of this Indigenous community shares two rooms to sleep, some pit toilets, and showers belonging to the Tabasco State sports facility.

This death and misfortune attracted the attention and intervention of the authorities of the Delegacion of Cuauhtémoc. Juan Sabines Guerrero, District Subdirector of the Educational and Social Development Services, arrived promising to provide "a place with services for basic living" and brought them to a basketball court. "We

Xochimilco: In the Path of a Giant

As the urban tentacles of Mexico City steadily expand outward and overtake surrounding areas, towns and communities of Indigenous origin get pushed out of the way. The wealthy classes escape to recreational and industrial park settlements to get away from the jungled "D.F." (Federal District). But these vast playgrounds threaten the last shred of integrity of the ancient communities surrounding the city which hope to retain what traditional customs, values, and lifestyles remain after over half a millennium of suppression. Xochimilco, one of those threatened towns, is in the unfortunate position of being swallowed up by perhaps the most populous and most rapidly expanding city

in the world.

Xochimilco was settled in 1327. A canal system supplied the people with both clean water and inspired a unique method of agriculture: the *chinampas*.^{*} Xochimilco used to supply Tenochtitlan (prehispanic Mexico City) with food from its *chinampas*. During the Porfiriato, the long rule of dictator Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911), the canals were covered up and the government began pumping treated water in from surrounding towns. Now, most of the canals and the fields are dried up, the water has been sent to Mexico City, and the residents of Xochimilco depend upon others for food and water.

As the government seeks solutions to Mexico City's appalling con-

ditions, it uses the surrounding areas as "steam valves," relocating problems there. In the case of Xochimilco, the massive increase in population has put enormous pressure on what used to be a peaceful outlying town. Concessions were given to large corporations to help relocate industry out of the city region. The state even built a prison on expropriated farmlands in the mountainous region. Essentially, Xochimilco, one of the last vestiges of common land in the Valley of Mexico, is now being converted into government and corporate facilities or wealthy peoples' retreats.

In order to halt the increasing deterioration of Xochimilco, Secundino Beceril of FIPI (The Independent Front of Indigenous Peoples) and member of the Xochimilco Delegation has taken action to "defend the earth and water, and with it the indigenous cultural identity," he said in an interview with SAIIC. FIPI confronts the

couldn't even put down cardboard boxes to sleep in," laments one Otomí member, because according to sports administrator Peñoles

THE DAY OF THE VISIT, ROCIO LÓPEZ GAVE AN ULTIMATUM TO THE LEADER OF THE OTOMÍ GROUP, JUAN VENTURA: "TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT," IT'S THE ONLY OPTION THAT THEY HAVE TO ALL BE TOGETHER. HE ALSO GAVE THEM A SECOND ALTERNATIVE: "RETURN TO YOUR VILLAGE."

"they're an eyesore."

The sixty-eight Otomíes bounced from athletic facilities to gymnasiums, from homeless shelters to psychiatric wards. At the Salvation Army shelter they were forced to wake up at six A.M. to take cold showers. The infants and elderly took sick and so they left the shelter. Nonetheless, the orders of

Sabines were plain: "they must be housed somewhere."

Social worker Rocío López brought a delegation of the group to what was to be their next home, the so-called "promise land" where all 26 families could be together. The destination was a psychiatric hospital.

The psychiatric center houses 380 patients categorized by four levels of insanity: the helpless, the psychotic, the senile, and the self-sufficient. They are then separated into six rooms, each with 80 hospital beds, depending on their degree of illness. Joel Hernández, the subdirector of the Social Home for Indigent Adults, was going to have to meet the 68 Otomíes in order to distribute the large group "without classification" throughout the facility. The day of the visit, Rocío López gave an ultimatum to the leader of the Otomí group, Juan Ventura: "Take it or Leave it", it's the only option that they have to all be together. He also gave them a second alternative: "Return to your village."

The following morning, on September 7, Juan Ventura directed a letter to the then delegate of the Cuauhtémoc, Jesús Dávila Narro, "to inform him that the 26 Otomí families are not satisfied with the Social Home for Indigent Adults to which we have been

assigned and that we do not consider the characteristics and conduct of the people committed there to be similar to that of ours.

"Yesterday, some of us reviewed the installations of the ward that we were assigned to and the very thought that our children would have to live there, sharing space with people who are mental insane, frightens us; we hope that we can rely on your valuable help and reconsideration" of the situation.

Responding to the request for relocation, Joel Hernández, subdirector of the psychiatric ward known as The Cascade, claimed that "I, only for the children, will say that it is not suitable for these families to enter this institution." He also maintained that "the indigents without mental problems that arrive here should leave right away; normal people are not detained here, they are in their houses," although he had previously denied that The Cascades was a facility for the mentally ill.

"The 28 of July 1996 we went with Juan Sabines to tell him that a full year had past and that we still did not have a place as he had promised us and he told us that he was not going to be able to do anything more for us." ❀

authorities by organizing in small groups representing each town. One is called the Permanent Commission of the Mountain Peoples. When a town is threatened with unwanted development, the delegations join together to face the developers and the government.

A recent example of the strength of these citizens groups occurred in December 1995 when hundreds of citizens in Tepoztlán, Morelos, closed off their city and protested against a golf course, residential zone, and corporate park project inside the Tepozteco National Park. The area of the golf course is home to many medicinal plants and is still used by the elders. The "development" of this land signifies a clear disregard of Indigenous peoples, their customs, and their values. Their actions were successful, resulting in the expulsion of corrupt city officials and a strengthening of their voice in the local politics.

Xochimilco, although not as radical as Tepoztlán, is headed for a similar fate. As an Indigenous region undergoing urbanization, it must engage in the continuous debate on the differences between indigenous peoples' and criollo ideas of development. The traditional criollo belief is that indigenous peoples are behind the times and are enemies to the progress of the country. On the contrary, Beceril states that the natural development of indigenous peoples has been broken since the Spanish conquest. He emphasizes that for indigenous cultures to develop, they must attain respect and space very soon.

Xochimilco is not alone in its battle to preserve its natural treasures. The international community has recognized the importance of conserving the human ecology of this region. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) wants to declare

Xochimilco a "Historical and Cultural Patrimony of Humanity" and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has promised to help rescue the traditional canal ecosystem. With continued support, the people of Xochimilco will restore their canal system and gain due rights to their traditional lands.

** rectangular raised-beds anchored with planted fences of willows, filled in and periodically fertilised with piles of marshy vegetation and mud.*

Information from an interview with Secundino Beceril (January 30, 1997), FIPI (Frente Independiente de los Pueblos Indios), La Jornada (4/12/95), and Jose Augustin Ortiz Pinchetti

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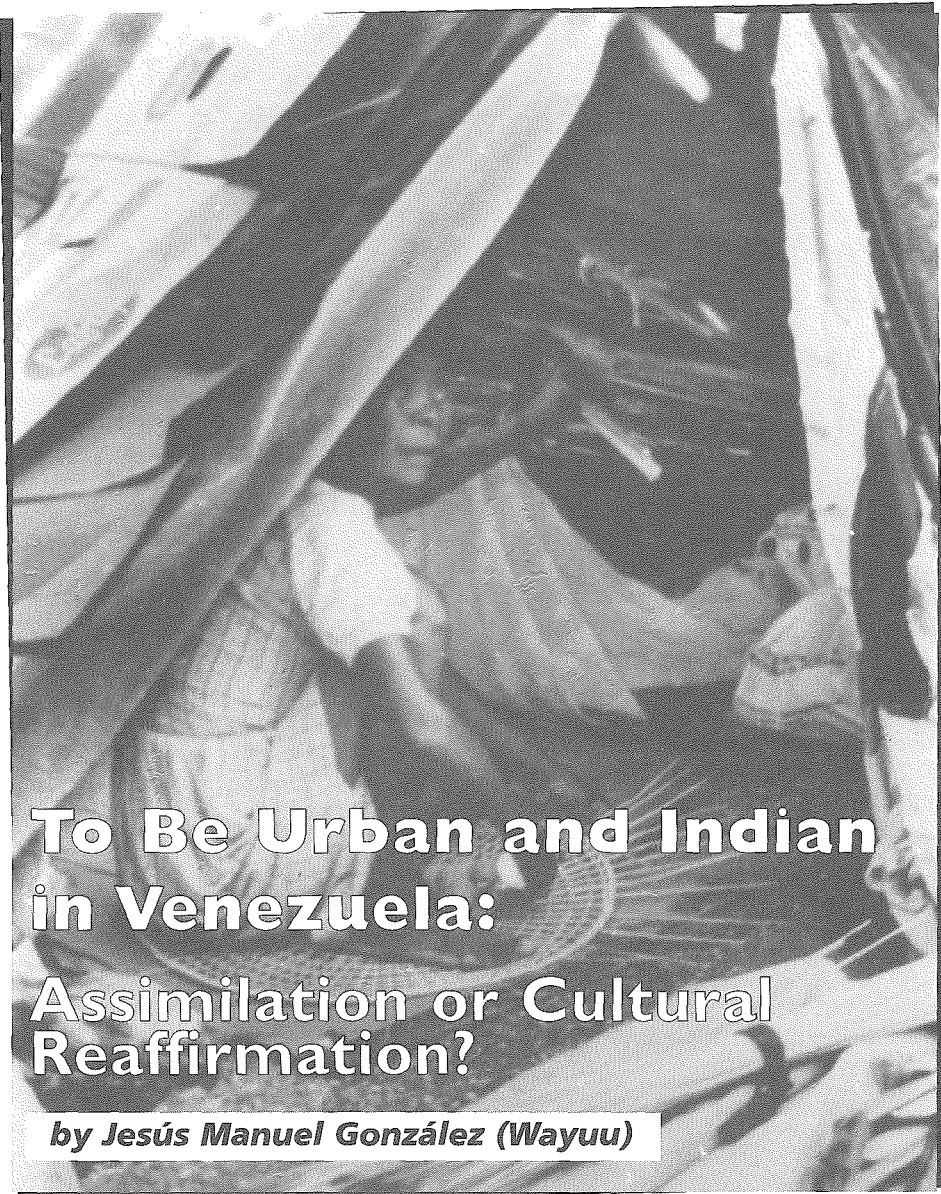


Photo: Maria José

To Be Urban and Indian in Venezuela: Assimilation or Cultural Reaffirmation?

by **Jesús Manuel González (Wayuu)**

The indigenous population in Venezuela numbers roughly 400,000, comprised of twenty-five culturally and linguistically distinct groups in the states of Anzoategui, Amazonas, Apure, Bolívar, Delta Amacuro, Monagas, Sucre, and Zulia. Over 50 percent of this population occupy traditional lands and approximately 42 percent reside in urban areas. This high percentage of indigenous people living in urban areas is a result of

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an important rural-to-urban migratory trend. In the eight federal states with significant indigenous populations, this migratory process has led to the formation of many indigenous neighborhoods that, in some cases, reach considerable dimensions and continue to grow both in size and number in cities such as Maracaibo, Ciudad Bolívar, San Félix, Tucupita, El Tigre, San Fernando de Auro, and Puerto Ayacucho. The migration of the indigenous population to the cities is a result of the following factors:

—The systematic reduction of traditionally occupied territories resulting from the violent process of conquest and colonization.

—The scarcity of land suitable for

agriculture, hunting, and other traditional forms of subsistence.

—The erosion of traditional indigenous economic production systems.

—Transportation and distribution difficulties for such small-scale production.

—The lack of adequate support from national and regional governments necessitating the search for better living conditions.

—The human rights abuses suffered in frontier areas caused by drug trafficking, warfare, smuggling, and the strong military presence.

Some 83 percent of the urban indigenous population are Wayuu people living in 48 indigenous neighborhoods in Maracaibo, the second most important city in the country. The other 17 percent are Pemón, Yecuana, Guahibo, Piaroa, Añu, Panare, Warao, Bare, etc. The indigenous neighborhoods are comprised of students and professionals as well as workers and merchants. The problems characteristic of any marginalized Venezuelan urban areas are exacerbated for the indigenous neighborhoods by discrimination and racism by the Creole population who reject and scorn the fact that many indigenous peoples still conserve their identity, language, cultural icons, and own socio-economic systems. The indigenous populations maintain strong social, economic, and familiar links with their peoples and communities of origin, resulting in a further agglutination of the population into groups based on ethnicity and place of origin when several groups coexist in the same neighborhood.

The high level of social marginalization characteristic of the urban indigenous populations manifests itself in extreme poverty, malnutrition, and grave environmental and sanitary deterioration causing many deaths from infectious diseases. In the urban centers the socio-cultural uniqueness of the indigenous population is ignored in the educational system. The educational programs are the same as those for the Creole population and are characterized by utter lack of understanding and contempt for the nation's indigenous peoples. Furthermore, these educational programs are not taught in ways consistent with traditional methods further contributing to the loss of language and eradication of custom and culture, all of which make the youth ashamed of their ethnicity. The consequence is increasing dependence upon

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the State and burgeoning social problems such as begging, prostitution, and drug addiction.

One extreme expression of this marginalization is the sporadic migrations of the Warao, Yukpa, and Panare people who move into the main cities to beg in the streets only to be expelled forcefully in busloads by the authorities, who consider them a "shame" but deny any State responsibility.

Those living in the indigenous neighborhoods have varied means of economic survival. According to the 1992 government economic census of the indigenous population, 48 percent of the people exist at a subsistence level only, 31 percent are partially employed, and only 21 percent have regular incomes.

The discriminatory and racist treatment that the indigenous people receive from society at large often translates into violence and human rights abuses. The state security forces frequently are the culprits of these abuses, especially of the Warao in Tucupita, the Wayuu in Maracaibo, and the Piaroa and Guahibo in Puerto Ayacucho.

The grave socio-economic problems are aggravated yet further by the rise in drug trafficking. The drug cartels take advantage of the desperate situation in the cities, using indigenous women as "mules" to smuggle drugs into Venezuela. In the last ten years alone, thirty Wayuu mothers have been killed in the trade between Venezuela and Colombia. In 1996 thirty-eight women were imprisoned, some of them while pregnant, for carrying small quantities of drugs. The law is applied unequally in these cases by the justice system; the indigenous people receiving the brunt of the punishment while the leaders of the drug rings are often ignored.

Cultural Resistance And Ethnic Reaffirmation Among The Urban Indigenous Population

Life in the city has generated in the indigenous population various mechanisms of cultural resistance; on one hand the cultural norms that determine the existing cultural identity and on the other hand, organized mechanisms of the city such as guilds and unions. Unlike the government, these organizations recognize the desire of the indigenous people to

maintain and reclaim the historical continuity as distinct peoples and societies. The process of acculturation has not been uniform. Some sectors are able to integrate into national life while still maintaining some cultural identity, others cannot.

Among the mechanisms of cultural resistance is a strongly rooted adherence to and practice of the social norms, customs, ceremonies, traditional medicinal techniques, and languages. These customs serve as specific models for group living and social relations. For example, the practice of traditional women's education among girls born and raised in the Wayuu neighborhoods including the rite of initiation as performed in the Guarija (the traditional territory of the Wayuu) continues in the urban neighborhoods today. Domestic disputes are still settled in the customary manner as well.

The processes of organized cultural resistance are varied. For example, in the popular markets such as Las Pulgas in Maracaibo and the Mercadito in Puerto Ayacucho where many indigenous people, especially women, congregate, they organize not only to participate in commercial activity, but to fight racism through cooperation and solidarity. The indigenous have formed their own commercial, transportation, work, and professional networks and organizations.

The rise of the organized indigenous movements in Venezuela began in 1994 when the first indigenous neighborhoods began to consolidate themselves. These groups began organized struggle for human rights, respect for their cultural identity, and to obtain some land within the cities.

Since then, these movements have continued to grow and now number thirty-two indigenous organizations dedicated to various aspects of the struggle. Since 1990, in the field of cultural promotion, diffusion, and preservation, many organizations have been formed such as Grupo Cultural Paramu (Preservation and diffusion of traditional Caribbean dance and music-Bolívar), Grupo Cultural La Coromoto (Traditional Hiwi Dances-Amazonas), FUNDAIN (Foundation of Indigenous Painters), Grupo de Danzas Kaulayawaa (Traditional Wayuu Dances), Grupo Cultural Jalianayaa (Indigenous Artists), and ASEINLUZ (Association of Indigenous University Students).

An important accomplishment of

these cultural groups has been the official recognition of the Wayuu language by the state of Zulia. This recognition has led to the creation of radio programs in the Wayuu tongue such as "Tu Alatakaa Sümüiin Wayuu (The Wayuu news broadcast)" and "Wanüiki Sūmaa Waküipa (Our Indigenous Culture and Art)." These programs are produced by indigenous people living in Maracaibo and are transmitted throughout the entire state of Zulia.

The task of cultural resistance and ethnic reaffirmation is not only realized through the diffusion and preservation of indigenous culture but also by instilling a respect for equal rights as citizens. Actually the most important accomplishment was the development of the Network of Indigenous Women. Formed in 1995, this organization is developing campaigns to organize indigenous women living in cities. One of the most interesting accomplishments of the Network is a

neighborhood health project developed by the women of the Wayuu. This project trains neighborhood women to act as epidemiological watchdogs, reducing the danger from prevalent diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, hepatitis, and parasitosis. They also developed a program to battle

the epidemic of child malnutrition, by implementing community breakfasts in the most needy indigenous neighborhoods. Another area the Wayuu women are working in is the battle to bring attention to the plight of indigenous women and children. They are especially combating abuses in the workplace, seeking labor rights, and trying to obtain documentation and protection for themselves and especially the children. The work of the indigenous women is being immensely aided by participation and support from young indigenous professionals.

THE PROCESS OF ACCULTURATION HAS NOT BEEN UNIFORM. SOME SECTORS ARE ABLE TO INTEGRATE INTO NATIONAL LIFE WHILE STILL MAINTAINING SOME CULTURAL IDENTITY, OTHERS CANNOT.

Success Story in Brazil: The Return of the Panará

by *Stephan Schwartzman*

At the end of the 1960s the contact of the Panará Indians (or Krenakorore, as they were then known) became a national drama in Brazil. They were rumored to be giants, fierce and elusive. As the contacting expedition led by Claudio and Orlando Villas Boas sought their villages only just in advance of the engineers opening the Cuiabá-Santarem highway, they fled. Once contacted, they were devastated by new diseases, and reduced to beggary by the side of the new road bisecting their traditional territory. In February 1975, less than two years after the official contact, 79 demoralized survivors were transferred to the Xingu National Park.

Now, two decades later, with much of their territory overrun by gold mining, ranching and logging, the Panará have returned to the remaining forest of their traditional land in the upper watershed of the Iriri River in northern Mato Grosso and southern Pará. Over the last four years, the group has studied their territory, identified an area of 490,000 hectares still forested and unoccupied, reestablished permanent occupation of the region, and filed suit in federal court for indemnification for losses and damages in the contact and the transfer, as well as for demarcation of their remaining land. In December 1994, FUNAI identified the area, beginning the process of official recognition.

The recent history of the Panará is paradigmatic of larger processes in course among Indigenous peoples in Brazil—processes of demographic loss and recovery, ethnic and cultural reaffirmation, territorial reintegration. The history of the Panará illuminates tendencies general to

Steve Schwartzman did field work with the Panara between 1980 and 1983 and received his PhD from the University of Chicago based on this research. Since 1990 he has worked with the Panara and the Instituto Socioambiental in support of the Panara initiative to reoccupy and defend their traditional territory.

Indigenous peoples in Brazil, and also contributes to important advances in anthropology.

Who are the Panará?

"I had never seen them but my grandfather told me, 'The whites are very wild. They killed many of us with guns. If they come to the village, club them, they are dangerous!'"
(Akè Panará, interview, November 1991, Xingu Park)

When the Panará were contacted on the Peixoto de Azevedo river in January 1973, the media portrayed them as isolated stone age Indians. The anthropology of the time viewed groups such as the Panará in more or less the same way—as "subsistence" societies, whose culture and society was best understood as an ancient adaptation to particular ecological circumstances. Some scholars thought that the societies, cultures and economies of contemporary Amazonian societies were the same as those of precolombian groups and thus could serve to ground general explanations of Indigenous societies as adaptations to Amazonian ecosystems (Meggers 1971). Recent historical and ethnohistorical research has demonstrated to the contrary, that the present disposition and circumstances of Indigenous societies result from their historical experience of contact with the surrounding society, as well as from their internal social and historical dynamics (cf Carneiro da Cunha 1992). The Panará are a case in point.

Most of the Panará alive when the Villas Boas expedition arrived in the Peixoto had never seen a white person. But they preserved the memory of at least two hundred years of war against the Portuguese and then Brazilians.

The nine villages of Panará, with some 350 to 600 inhabitants, that existed in 1967 in the Peixoto de Azevedo and Upper Iriri basins were in fact the last outpost of a much larger people, well

known to the chroniclers of the 18th and 19th centuries. Panará oral traditions relate that they came from the east, from a savannah region, where they fought white people with guns. Linguistic and ethnohistorical research (Heelas 1980; Schwartzman 1988, 1995; Giralдин 1994; Dourado and Rodrigues 1993) has now shown that the Panará are the descendants of the Southern Cayapo, who in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries occupied a vast territory between the Triangulo Mineiro, western São Paulo, Mato Grosso do Sul, Goiás, and southern Mato Grosso. Several bandeiras were sent against them, most notably that of Antonio Pires de Campos, who mobilized Bororo Indians against them, and is reported to have brought 2,000 Cayapo back to Cuiabá as slaves. By the turn of the century, they were considered to be extinct.

In reality, the Panará of the Peixoto and Iriri rivers are the descendants of the westernmost group of Southern Cayapo, who refused peaceful contact and settlement, and withdrew in the later 19th or early 20th century to the region in which the "first contact" occurred in the 1960s. Ethnohistory of both the Northern Kayapo (a distinct group, belonging to same linguistic subfamily, the Northern Gê) and the Panará attests that the Panará inhabited the Peixoto and Iriri basins by the 1920s, when their war with the Kayapo—a living memory for both groups—began.

Attempts to explain Panará customs (some of which are reported from mid-19th century settlements in Goiás, such as log racing and certain curing practices) as "adaptations" to the forest ecosystem of the Peixoto/Iriri basins would then be futile. Attempts to read from Panará subsistence practices information on precolombian populations are equally misplaced. The Panará in the late 1960s were extremely well "adapted" to the tropical forest ecosystem of the Peixoto and Iriri rivers, practicing a diversified, and highly symbolically elaborated agriculture with geometrically designed gardens and fixed

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locations in the garden for given crops, as well as fishing, hunting, and collecting a wide variety of forest fruits. By all the accounts of the older Panará who grew up in the region, their modest technology—stone axes, bows and arrows, clubs, basketry, rudimentary ceramics and no canoes—provided an abundant livelihood. But in the 1960s the Panará had lived there for no more than 100 years.

On the other hand, the historical record makes clear that Panará of the 1960s were neither passive victims of the conquest, nor slaves to an inflexible subsistence adaptation. They had on the contrary actively rejected settlement and assimilation, and adjusted quickly and effectively to a vastly different environment in the course of securing their independence. Panará society and culture equally demonstrate this dynamic quality: clearly, elements of the new tropical forest ecosystem (and the economy the Panará devised to make a living there) were integrated into Panará ritual and cosmology and to the process of their transformation. Brazil nuts, for example, which do not occur in the savannah, are a key symbolic reference in Panará myths, as well as in the ritual cycle.

Further, the memory of the two hundred year war that drove the Panará from São Paulo to northern Mato Grosso was to have a decisive influence on the Panará understanding of the contact with the Villas Boas expeditions and the tragedy that ensued on it.

First Contact Again

The Panará probably settled in the Peixoto/Iriri because of the region's wealth of natural resources, and its isolation. The life histories of older Panará men invariably include extensive accounts of long expeditions, to visit kin, flee internal conflicts, or found new villages, before the arrival of the Villas Boas expeditions. In these narratives, the men recount that, arriving in a new place, they would search the forest for signs of enemies (hi'pe - 'enemies, others, whites'). Having assured themselves that there were no enemies and no enemies' trails nearby, they would stay and plant gardens.



Photo: Steve Schwartzman

In 1967, two events presaged the end of the Panará's autonomy. First, the Mekragnoti Kayapo attacked the northernmost Panará village, Sonkënasan, in the Iriri basin, for the first time with a large supply of guns and ammunition. While the Panará had raided, and been raided by the Kayapo for a generation, guns and ammunition turned the 1967 raid into a massacre. Some 26 Panará were killed and the village burned. The survivors fled to another village, and by the time a war party was mounted to avenge the attack, the Kayapo had fled. Then, the incident came to the attention of Villas Boas brothers, then directing the Xingu National Park, who mounted a contacting expedition. When the first airplanes arrived over the Panará villages, and began dropping trade goods—knives, machetes, beads—there began a debate amongst the Panará that would continue for the next five years. Were the airplanes (and later the expedition) "wild" (asâr)? Did they mean to kill the Panará, as historic experience suggested, or were the gifts of goods evidence of peaceful intentions?

The elder men (taputunara) argued, say present-day chiefs such as Akè and Teseya, that the whites were wild and dangerous, and counseled attack or flight, while the young men (piëntwara) held that the goods left by the expedition showed peaceful intent. and argued for getting the goods left by the expedition,

and making contact.

From 1967 to 1973, the elders prevailed. The first expedition was recalled in 1969 when funds were cut off, and a second expedition was only launched in 1972, as an advance team of surveyors was laying out the route of the Cuiabá - Santarém highway. The Panará, already having abandoned their easternmost villages, then withdrew south before this expedition, which set out from the Cachimbo airbase. With the abandonment of successive villages and gardens, increasing numbers of people were concentrated in fewer and fewer villages. When the Villas Boas reached the Peixoto de Azevedo, the Panará, after collecting trade goods at the expedition's advance post, crossed the river and occupied the village of Yopuyèpaw. The first epidemic struck there. So many people died, and so debilitated were the survivors that they could not bury the dead, and vultures ate them. After the survivors recovered, they returned to the Peixoto, and accepted contact.

In 1974, the road opened. The Panará, fascinated by the traffic on the road, confounded efforts by the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) personnel to prevent them from mingling with the army engineers, and passing truckers. Ensuing deaths triggered witchcraft accusations, since witchcraft was the traditional explanation for serious illness. At least 176 people died of epidemic dis-

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eases between 1973 and 1975, when the surviving 79 Panará were transferred by FUNAI to the Xingu National Park. The Peixoto de Azevedo was thrown open to gold mining and colonization immediately thereafter, and the small area reserved for the Panará during the contact was transferred to INCRA for agrarian reform.

The Diaspora

The Panará arrived in the Xingu sick, demoralized, and disoriented. The group was settled in the Kajabi village of Prepuri, where several more died in the first months. The Panará began to talk of returning to their land. Instead they were moved to the Kayapo village of Kretire and delivered to their traditional enemies. Before the year was out ten more Panará had died, as new diseases continued. English anthropologist Richard Heelas, who lived with the Panará in this period described them as walking corpses. They were again removed (although a number of women and children were constrained to stay with the Kayapo), and settled with the Suya. In a less oppressive climate, new leaders emerged, and began to mobilize the Panará to perform traditional dances and songs. Once the Panará founded their first village in Xingu, in 1977, their population began to increase. They began a gradual process of reconstituting their society and culture. When I conducted field work between 1980 and

1983 with the Panará, they described their traditional village as having men's houses in the center of the village plaza, in the middle of the circle of extended family households grouped into four clans, with fixed locations on the village circle. The Panará said that when there were more boys, they would build men's houses (traditionally the place of residence of pre-adolescent, unmarried boys). In 1991, when I returned to the Xingu, they had built a men's house.

In 20 years in the Xingu, the Panará adapted effectively to a new ecosystem, adopted new technology (learning to build canoes, crucial in the flood plain of the Xingu, and to fish with hook and line, hunt with guns, and grow new cultivars from surrounding groups). They now number about 160, with at least 60% of the population under 20 years old, and more than half under 14. They have recovered as much autonomy as any of the 16 other Indigenous groups that live in the Xingu. But the Panará never reconciled themselves to living in the Xingu. They have lived in seven places, in a permanent search for land resembling the region of the Peixoto and Iriri. From the perspective of the Panará, the difference between their land and the Xingu is that between wealth and poverty, and their passage through the Xingu a process of impoverishment.

Their concept of the land changed as well over the last decade. In 1983 when

the Panará spoke of land (kupa), they referred to earth or soil. They discussed the Peixoto and Iriri region in terms of places, villages, gardens or rivers, but not as something which could be owned. By 1991 the Panará spoke regularly of "the land of the Panará," (Panará nhō kupa). They had developed a sense of their land, as something to which they had rights.

The Panará Return

"Where will all the children live that are growing up and will have children of their own? Here in this little piece of other peoples land where we are? When I think of the children I am sad. How will they live when they grow up?" (Akè Panará, interview, Xingu National Park, October 1991).

By 1990, the Panará found themselves increasingly the victims of their own success. With a growing population and a vital ceremonial life, they had moved to the western boundary of the Park, on the Arraias River, where they found forest that more closely resembled their traditional land. The best hunting territory, however, was outside the Park on private land, where the Panará began hunting and fishing.

In the same year a group of Panará killed a ranch hand in a dispute. Leaders such as chiefs Akè and Teseya became increasingly concerned with the future of the group. With a young and rapidly increasing population, they were caught between the approaching deforestation outside the Park, and the other groups within the Park, also growing, and already long established on much of the best land. Once again, the Panará's attention turned to their traditional land. They sought help from FUNAI and several non-governmental organizations active in the Xingu—which now form the Instituto Socioambiental—as well as my help, as the anthropologist who had lived longest among them.

In November 1991 a group of six Panará men returned for the first time to their traditional territory. They witnessed the ecological effect of nearly twenty years of

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The returning Panará observing the devastation inflicted by miners in their area.

gold mining in the Peixoto de Azevedo, as well as ranching and colonization and the boom towns left in their wake. Their territory in the Peixoto had been occupied and very largely degraded. Flying over the region, however, they discovered that the Iriri basin was still unoccupied and forested. From that moment they began to formulate a plan to return to the area. Between 1992 and 1994 groups of men returned repeatedly, to locate former village sites, take cognizance of the processes in course in the area and plan their reoccupation of the region. In 1993, they reached an airstrip near the headwaters of the Iriri, and determined that the supposed owner was subdividing an area of public land under the control of the National Institute for Agrarian Reform (INCRA) for sale—a process of land fraud. The Panará recognized that they would have to act quickly if the Iriri headwaters were not to succumb to the uncontrolled occupation that had already devastated the Peixoto.

In the dry season of 1994, the Panará identified a new village site on the Iriri, not far from an historic landmark they had recognized from the air, the Great Lake (inkôtunsi), the spot where the Panará of Sonkênsan village had intended to make a new village in 1967, before the Kayapo attack. They set to work building a village, gardens and an airstrip to facilitate access for health care. In August 1994, through their attorneys at the Núcleo de Direitos Indígenas, the Panará filed two lawsuits in federal court in Brasilia, seeking indemnification of losses and damages suffered in the contact and transfer, and the demarcation of their remaining traditional land.

In October 1994, a FUNAI and INCRA team lead by anthropologist Ana Gita de Oliveira identified the area, verifying the presence of the Panará in the village and determining traditional resource use and the boundaries of the area. Two days after the FUNAI team had left the village, a group of armed men appeared in the village, alleging to have been sent by the Mayor of the regional town of Guarantã looking for the FUNAI team. After a tense discussion, the group left.

In December 1994, the president of FUNAI published the decree (portaria) recognizing the Panará's rights to an area of 488.000 hectares in northern Mato Grosso and southern Pará states in the Diário Oficial. Subsequently modified to

remove an area titled to private interests, the revised area (490,000 hectares) is awaiting the signature of the Minister of Justice for its demarcation to proceed.

In October 1995, a group of Panará families moved to the new village, brought in successive flights by a FUNAI plane. Their airstrip is in operation, their gardens are growing, and some 65 Panará now reside there. They are engaged in building houses and planting more gardens so that the rest of the group can join them. The Panará are aware that the edges of their land have already been invaded by loggers and that the grileiro maintains a presence in the southwestern corner of the area. But they remain convinced that their future is in the reoccupation of the area, and the defense of its natural resources against depredation.

The Future of an Illusion - the Myth of the Vanishing Indian and Culture as laundry list

In little more than twenty years, the Panará have come full circle, from the paradigmatic "victims of the miracle" of the military government, on the brink of cultural if not physical extinction, to protagonists of the successful recreation of their own society and culture. The process of territorial reintegration was the consequence of this: only in reinventing traditional leadership, and satisfying themselves that it could be both adequate to the challenges of life among other people, and legitimate with reference to traditional knowledge—of myths, rituals, songs, dances, the proper ordering of work and sociability—could the Panará form the necessary consensus to take on this task. The reconstruction of Panará society was in short also its recreation, its transformation. But not for the first time—the historical record of the Southern Cayapo demonstrates that the ancestors of the present Panará undertook an epic migration, involving a radical shift in ecological adaptation from savannah to closed tropical forest, and also changing culturally. Nor was this process of change, impelled by the pressure of the frontier though it was, unique. A longer comparative view of the languages and cultures of the Northern Gê linguistic family shows that for several thousand years (cf Urban 1992), these groups, descended from the speakers of

one language, have developed and elaborated a diversity of languages and social and cultural forms—men's societies, age grades, "formal friendship", joking and avoidance relations, kinship, marriage and naming systems, ritual complexes—all of which, while distinct, bear "family resemblances" to one another, much like the relations of cognate words in related languages to one another.

It is still common to assume that Indigenous peoples Brazil are a vanishing race, doomed to succumb to the pressure of superior technology and disappear into the surrounding society. Behind this idea is a notion of culture as static and unchanging—culture as a sort of laundry list of traits. If an Indian wears clothes, speaks Portuguese, or plants rice, then he is no longer a "real" Indian.

Anthropology has in the past lent credence to such beliefs by, for example, attempting to explain cultural and social organization as adaptations in an ecological time frame to given ecosystems, or indeed by focusing on the reproduction of Indigenous social organizations to the exclusion of history. As both the short and longer views of the history of the Panará demonstrate, culture, rather than a list of traits or institutions, is better understood as the capacity for collective self-creation or reinvention (Turner 1995). In this context, what is exceptional about the dramatic story of the Panará is its unexceptionality.

Most of the Indigenous peoples in Brazil have passed, like the Panará, through a succession of "first contacts," lost population to new diseases, have

IN LITTLE MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS, THE PANARÁ HAVE COME FULL CIRCLE, FROM THE PARADIGMATIC "VICTIMS OF THE MIRACLE" OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT, ON THE BRINK OF CULTURAL IF NOT PHYSICAL EXTINCTION, TO PROTAGONISTS OF THE SUCCESSFUL RECREATION OF THEIR OWN SOCIETY AND CULTURE.

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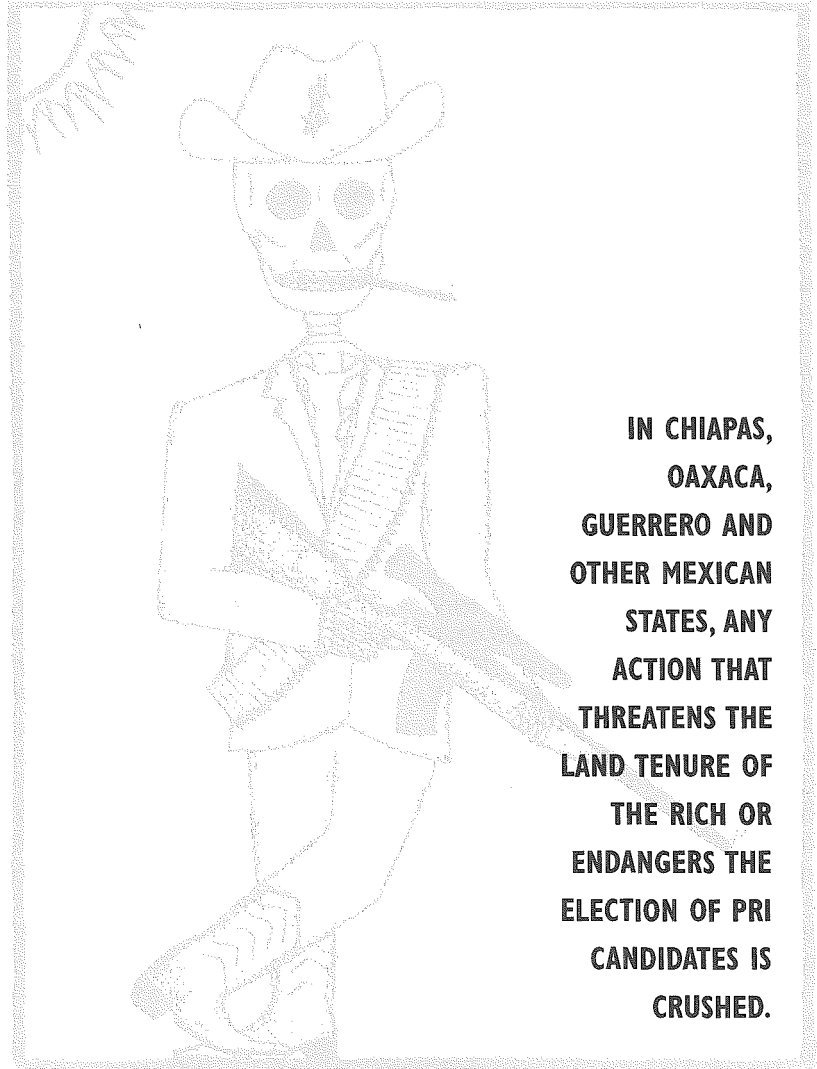
Mexico's Hired Guns

“**T**he bullet entered from under his jaw, and came out the top of his head,” says Maestro Ernesto of the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD). With his index finger as the barrel, he forms his hand into a gun and sticks it into the soft flesh of his jowl. Then he pulls the trigger and taps the barrel against his skull.

“The government says it was a robbery or altercation, but the manner in which he was executed indicates otherwise. It was retaliation for the previous kidnapping and killing of a PRI candidate. He was assassinated by the Judicial Police.”

The body of R.E. Martinez was found in his home in Nueva Palestina, Chiapas on January 16, 1996, the victim of what the PRD and opposition groups are defining as more than an isolated act of vengeance. Funded and orchestrated by wealthy landlords, cattle ranchers and the ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), it is an intentional campaign of oppression against Indigenous and campesino communities carried out by the police, Mexican National Army and private goon squads called the White Guard. In Chiapas, Oaxaca, Guerrero and other Mexican states, any action that threatens the land tenure of the rich or endangers the election of PRI candidates is crushed. Mexico's population of over 10 million indígenas, the majority of whom are campesinos or peasant workers, has been

Brad Miller is a free-lance journalist who has written for newspapers and magazines such as the Progressive, and for a section of the Utne Reader entitled "Nine Views of Mexico."



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by Brad Miller

hit heavily by these pistoleros. In the continuing 500 year nightmare of genocide, the corpses of the Tzotzil, Chole, Mixe and Nahuatl Indians that appear in alleys or irrigation ditches are written off as the victims of drunken brawls or jealous husbands.

The victims converge on the PRD office in the Chiapan capital of Tuxtla Gutierrez. The residents of Jaltenango de la Paz and Nueva Palestina travel the 150 miles by bus to register complaints con-

cerning human rights abuses and land-tenure disputes.

“The Judicial Police arrived at our house with ten vehicles and a helicopter,” says Muriel Perez of Jaltenango. “They beat up my husband. Now my 70 year-old mother-in-law and three children are missing. We have been looking for them for three days.”

She believes that the rich landlords who own the property next to her small farm want to expand onto her land and

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that they have been directing the activities of the Judicial Police.

"Our farm is titled under my mother-in-laws name. And now we can't find her."

Behind Maestro Ernesto a sign hangs on the cracked, concrete wall: "The brave don't shoot cowards in the back."

The Mexican government denies any violations committed are officially sanctioned, and in their version of history, the White Guard has never existed. But historically, the national rulers and the state of Chiapas have supported the landlords and cattlemen, called ganaderos, and the formation of their private armies.

Since the invasion of Columbus, Cortéz and the Conquistadors, those gluttonous for land have forced Indigenous subsistence farmers off fertile land and into the rocky canyons and jungle. Several Chiapan governors own vast spreads of cattle land, forming special police forces to persecute cattle thieves and creating laws allowing ganaderos to carry weapons. The ganaderos, strongly tied to the PRI, have continued to be given credits, subsidies and political aid from the Mexican government. The cattle industry is also propped up by the foreign credits of the World Bank, the United States, New Zealand and Australia.

The ganaderos have consolidated their power by forming groups like the Citizen's Defense Group and the National Small Property Owner's Confederation and arming their White Guard, who are usually young ranch hands, to defend against anyone occupying "their" land. They have felt especially threatened since the 1992 Quincentennial date marking the arrival of Christopher Columbus and the beginning of Indigenous genocide. The ganadero leaders pump local residents full of fear, telling them the "Indiada" is coming, that Chiapas will soon be an "Indian reserve." Chiapas—where 1/3 of the land is used for cattle ranching, while indígenas and campesinos farm only 1/5 of it. Chiapas—the state that produces 28% of Mexico's meat supply while most Indigenous people can rarely afford to buy farm animals or eat meat.

The Fray Bartolome Center for Human Rights reported that ganaderos

were accompanying the Mexican Army as it advanced through Altamirano and Ocosingo during the 1995 winter offensive against the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), breaking into houses and stealing horses and cattle.

In several northern municipalities of the state, indígenas and campesinos were displaced by armed PRI groups who attacked PRD-based communities and ejidos and by police operations backed by local ganaderos. The expulsions intensified as the fall 1995 elections approached. More private armies were formed—the Force of Reaction, the Juvenile Revolutionary Front, Paz y Justicia (Peace and Justice). Paz y Justicia established a "summary court," where 63 families were judged and fined for participation in the PRD.

Since June 1996, the violence and terror have been escalating, influencing the EZLN to pull out of the peace talks on September 2. The Estación Norte de Distensión and Reconciliación, established by a number of human rights groups to monitor the situation and facilitate a peaceful and positive outcome, has reported that some communities are under a state of siege. They lack food, water and medicine and are continually confronted by members of "Paz y Justicia."

The pistoleros of those in power have also been attacking Indigenous communities in Oaxaca, a state situated next to Chiapas—both geographically and in terms of poverty and Indigenous population.

Oaxaca, rich in natural resources, has been the sight of a long-running battle between foreign and mestizo colonizers and Indigenous communities. The greed for narcotics-generated money has only intensified the conflict.

Indigenous groups in Oaxaca say the PRI is using the pretext of fighting narco-traffickers to militarize the area, but that armed groups are being used against Indigenous communities and their leaders. They also believe the assassins of the Oaxacan opposition leaders are actually the ones involved in drug trafficking.

The caciques and ganaderos "have used the force of judges, the police and army," while they "have been infiltrated by drug trafficking and have created paramilitaries or White Guard," says the Union de Comunidades Indígenas de la Zona Norte del Istmo (UCIZONI), an

organization that promotes the rights and culture of indígenas and provides them legal aid.

During the local elections of November 1995 the PRI sent in armed groups to Mazatlán Villa de Flores to disrupt the traditional system of communal vote-taking, killing one person. In the ensuing state of siege, seven more people were killed. Two Mixe Indian communities were displaced and one Mixe leader assassinated by PRI gunmen.

UCIZONI leaders have been popular targets of the military and White Guard—for harassment, torture and assassination. In 1989, a Mixe named Crisforo José Pedro was murdered. In November 1995 it was Blas Santos Vásquez and Armando Agustín Bonifacio. On Sept. 18, 1996, Abraham González was killed and three other Mixes wounded.

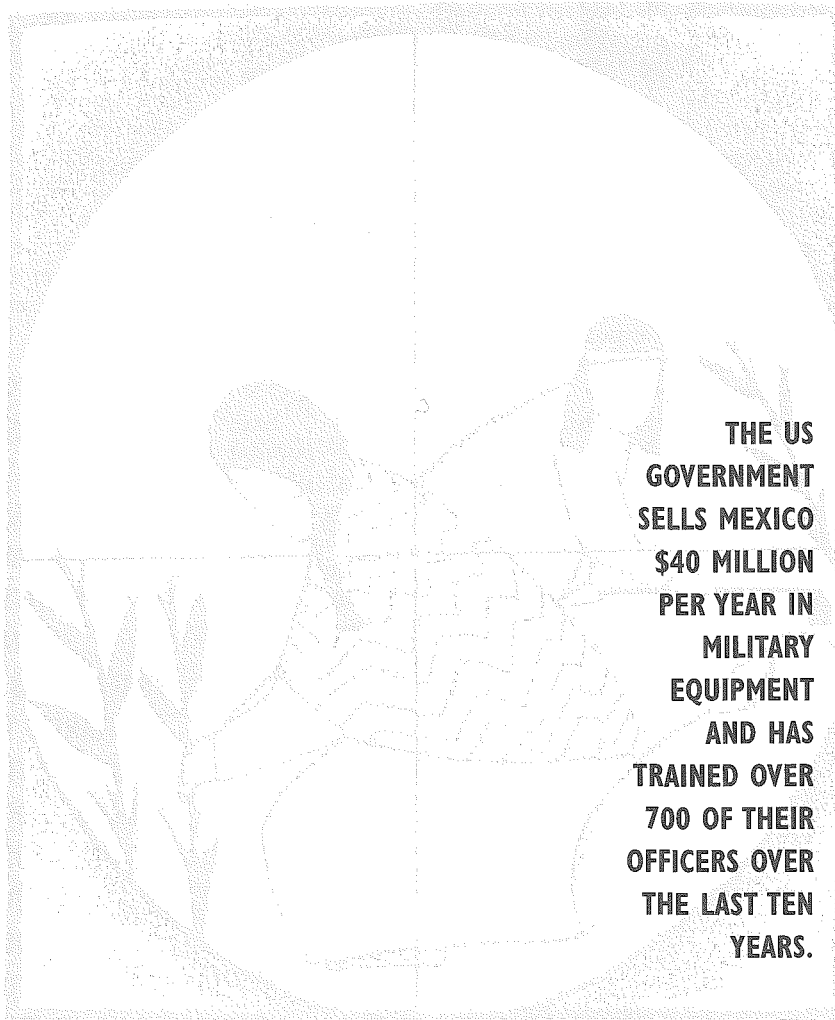
Official complaints to the government concerning the killing of indígenas are filed, but usually ignored. According to the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, six members of the Organization Indígenas de Derechos Humanos en Oaxaca (OIDHO) were killed between May 1995 and July 1996. The killing of OIDHO representative Honorato Zarate Vasquez was called a suicide.

Teachers in Oaxaca, many of whom are Indigenous, are also seen as a threat to the power structure. They are often threatened, beaten and killed.

As its leaders are murdered, Oaxaca's Indigenous communities are slowly eliminated through displacement, emigration, fear and detention. The Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights state that as of July 1996, half of Oaxaca's 3,600 inmates were Indigenous. The residents

INDIGENOUS GROUPS IN OAXACA SAY THE PRI IS USING THE PRETEXT OF FIGHTING NARCO-TRAFFICKERS TO MILITARIZE THE AREA, BUT THAT ARMED GROUPS ARE BEING USED AGAINST INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND THEIR LEADERS.

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**THE US
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THE LAST TEN
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Blackhawk helicopters and 75 Swiss-made P-7 jet trainers and 250 French tanks. The trainer jets have been souped up into lethal machines. The helicopters, authorized only for drug enforcement duties, have been used to battle the Zapatistas and help the ganaderos and landlords crush organization and dissent. When not used directly by government forces against opposition groups and indígenas, automatic weapons have 'trickled down' into the hands of the White Guard, whose oppression was one of the initial reasons for the formation of the EZLN—and others.

"Our principle fight is against the existing ruling class," says Maestro Rodolfo of the Coordination of the Campesinos for the Popular Struggle, based in Venustiano Carranza, Chiapas. "We have organized to stop people's hunger."

Hunger and land starvation is increasing, and Mexico's continued emphasis on an export-oriented economy and the PRI's globalization have further marginalized indígenas and campesinos. The revision of Article 27 of the 1917 constitution allows communal property to be seized if the owners fall into debt, and permits Indigenous lands to be purchased by outsiders. NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and World Bank and IMF policies prescribe a shift to export crops and animal feed. As the Zapatistas pronounced in a communique, NAFTA is a "death sentence" for Indigenous people.

Land invasions have been organized by indígenas and campesinos in order to pressure the government to give them more arable land. The revision of Article 27 states that anyone 'holding' private land can be sentenced to 40 years in jail. This 'holding' is essentially the only means by which indígenas and campesinos can reclaim land formerly taken from them by ganaderos or landlords.

"But the government's solution to land battles is to buy more arms and respond with violence," says Maestro Rodolfo.

Violence was the response in the cool hills of the Sierra Madre of Chiapas, as a land battle erupted on the coffee finca of Liquid Amber. In August 1994, an armed group called the Union Popular Francisco Villa (UPFV) took control of the finca and held it for ten months.

"They held us in the office at gunpoint for four days," says Gerardo Saenger

of Union y Progreso, who had been living as refugees in a neighboring town for two years due to the violence created by the caciques and their pistoleros, travelled to the City of Oaxaca in October 1996. The displaced then set up camp in front of the Governor's palace in a protest to their desperate living situation.

But the government continues to respond with more force, increasing its deployment of military and police since the public emergence of the People's Revolutionary Army (EPR) in June of 1996. The army arrested almost all the community leaders in Agustín Loxicha, Oaxaca and rounded up villagers in the mountains of Guerrero (the state where the EPR first appeared). In Guerrero, military repression is nothing new. In June 1995 alone, three Mixtec members of the Guerrero Council of 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance were murdered, and in a separate incident, 17 villagers were shot to death as a group of police

fired on a passing truck in Aguas Blancas.

In the state of Hidalgo, "the problem of the private armies isn't as significant as the use of government forces," says Sabino Juarez of the Special Agrarian Committee. "The caciques just use the police and Federal Army as their White Guard."

A convoy of Mexican soldiers in US-supplied HUMVEEs winds through the tight curves of Chiapas's Highway 190. The soldiers look out from under their US-supplied kevlar helmets, scanning the cornfields that are scattered on the steep, rocky hillsides, the stalks poking out of the road cuts.

The US government sells Mexico \$40 million per year in military equipment and has trained over 700 of their officers over the last ten years. Through military credits and drug enforcement and eradication grants, the Mexican armed forces, which now number over 200,000 troops, have acquired over 80 Huey, Bell and

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González, Liquid Amber's administrator. "They killed the doctor and used the furniture for firewood."

When the UPFV grabbed the finca, its owner, Lawrence Hulder, armed his Guatemalan workers and tried to take it back. When the efforts of his White Guard proved to be unsuccessful, he called in the police and military, which arrived in helicopters to drive out the UPFV.

Saenger shakes his head when asked if Liquid Amber has any White Guard.

"We just have to make a call down to Jaltenango if there are any problems."

But residents of the nearby ejido of Nueva Palestina say the 100 White Guard of Liquid Amber travel the road from the finca to their town.

"We can't live a tranquil life," says Luisa Montoya. "Not with the finca's pistoleros walking the streets."

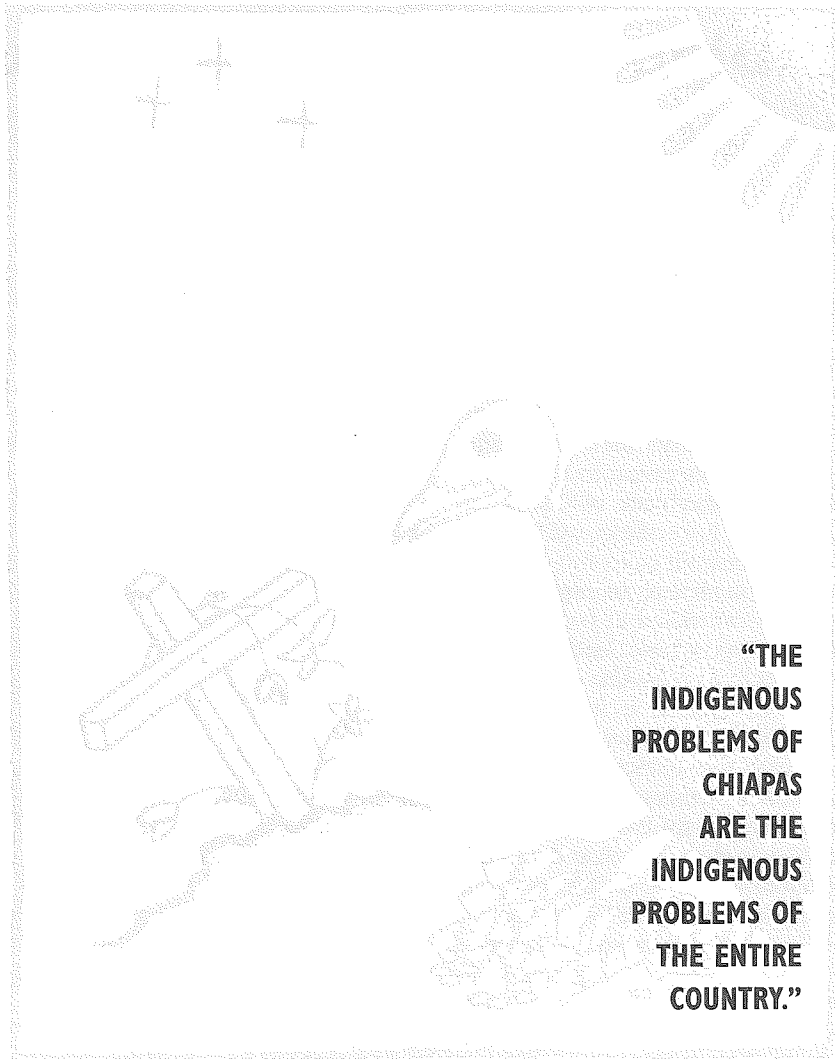
The ejido and its marginalized community are surrounded by coffee fincas and the El Triunfo Bioserve, on which they have not been allowed to cultivate—even though Liquid Amber already has.

"The problems are coming from outside the ejido of Nueva Palestina," says Saenger. "The villagers are calm until the groups from the town of Venustiano Carranza fill them with Marxist and communist ideas."

But problems do exist inside the ejido, where Public Security roam the streets and the Mexican Army and police, having implemented an operation to capture opposition leaders sympathetic to the Zapatistas, arrest and torture UPFV organizers.

Marginalized societies of other areas have also initiated land occupations when given no other option. In April 1992, indígenas battled the state police over land that had been sequestered near Palenque, Chiapas to make room for "Mundo Maya", a tourist project celebrating the ancient Mayan heritage of the same people the government murders. Two hundred Chole Indians were tossed in jail.

In protest, members of the Indigenous organization called Xi Nich, meaning "ants", marched 1,100 km to Mexico City. The federal government ignored their grievances, just as they've ignored the more recent warnings of Indigenous leaders such as Xi Nich's Victor Guzman, who stated at the Special



Forum for Indigenous Rights in February 1995 that "the Indigenous problems of Chiapas are the Indigenous problems of the entire country."

The empowered elite of Mexico have been receiving adequate warnings of insurrection for a long time. In the book of Chilam Balam, the Mayan gods dictated that "the shield shall descend, the arrow shall descend...together with the rulers of the land."

In the states of Oaxaca, Guerrero and Michoacán, there have been reports of the formation of new opposition groups, armed for self-preservation.

In the trendy city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, where tourists come to buy Mayan crafts, sip coffee and listen to folk artists sing about Che Guevara, an Indigenous girl stands on a corner. She watches a ladino girl of her same age walk

proudly to church wearing an elegant, white dress. On the next street a group of Tzotzil Indians carries the white casket of a child off to another world. Road cuts don't yield enough corn to live on.

In the same trendy city, Subcomandante Marcos of the EZLN gives a press conference behind a black ski mask, smoking his pipe, flanked by Comandantes David and Tacho.

"The problems in this country are not just in Chiapas. They also exist in Oaxaca, Guerrero, Vera Cruz, Hidalgo..."

Mexico has 31 states and a federal district. Subcomandante Marcos could have gone on and on. 🐦

Graphics by Brad Miller



Ambiguous Ruling in Colombia: U'wa Struggle to Stop Oil Concession Continues

A recent ruling by the Constitutional Court of Colombia that the government must "consult" with the U'wa Indigenous people regarding oil activities in their territory may be a move to undermine Indigenous rights in that country. The U'wa, under threat of an oil concession to Occidental de Colombia, an affiliate of Occidental Petroleum of Bakersfield, CA, have threatened to commit collective suicide if the company is allowed to exploit oil in their territory.

Fiercely opposed to the Colombian governments' agreement to allow Occidental to explore in their territory, the U'wa claim that they would rather die than live with the inevitable desecration of their sacred ancestral land which would accompany the oil extracting project. U'wa leaders say that they have "talked about collective suicide" and that their spiritual leaders, the Werhayas, will decide how they will make the sacrifice. In the late 17th century an entire community of U'wa committed mass suicide by jumping off of a cliff when a group of Spanish missionaries and tax collectors threatened to take over their village. Today the U'wa people call this spot "the Cliff of Glory."

On October 22, 1997, SAIIC sent out an urgent action to inform the international community that the U'wa Indigenous people in Colombia were threatening to commit collective suicide if the Occidental Oil Company went through with its plans to do seismic testing and exploit oil in the Samoré Block, a concession it had acquired from the state oil company Ecopetrol in 1992. For Occidental to obtain the necessary environmental permit to begin its seismic studies it was required by law to discuss the potential impact the project could have on the Indigenous communities in the region. By February 1995 Occidental was granted its license after having met with representatives from Ecopetrol, the Colombian government, and U'wa communities. A government human rights

organization called The People's Defender's sued the Environment Ministry on grounds that they disregarded the U'wa's position on the issue. The Environment Ministry and Occidental argued that there was no legislation that required the U'wa's approval of the project before its implementation. The final ruling decided that while a 30-day consultation period is mandatory, the government reserves the right to make the ultimate decision.

The 5-4 ruling on February 2, 1997, deemed that the Colombian government has 30-days to consult with the U'wa, after which time the government apparently retains the right to decide whether or not the oil exploration and eventual exploitation will continue. Although the court decided in favor of Indigenous participation in the decision making process, ONIC, the Indigenous Organization of Colombia, has stated that "[Indigenous peoples] gain nothing with the guarantee of the right to be consulted if the government has no obligation to respect the results of the consultation."

The court ruling apparently undermines the historic Decree 1397, which was established in August 1996 after a long Indigenous protest in Bogotá by the 82 native communities in Colombia (see *Abya Yala News* 10:2 Summer 1996). Decree 1397 calls for mandatory consultation with Indigenous peoples and their organizations (Mesa de Concertación) before starting any project in their communities. It requires that eight ministries, three Indigenous organizations and politicians as well as three other official bodies be in attendance during the discussions surrounding any future development, including oil exploration projects. Mining and Oil interests disputed the decree, claiming that it made the licensing process far too difficult for foreign investors. In response to these complaints, the Colombian government did

away with the environmental license previously required for seismic exploration. However a September court ruling called into question the legality of that action.

The suit and recent court ruling have brought to light the profound conflict of interest between indigenous peoples in Colombia and that of the nations' largest source of foreign revenue, oil exportation. Occidental has released the information that the oil field on which the U'wa live could be one of the largest in the hemisphere, holding between 1 and 2.5 billion barrels of oil. The Colombian government would get 80 percent of the profits from the exploitation.

The U'wa, who number roughly 8,000, are well aware of the ambiguous court ruling, and have sent out a letter to the international public expressing their dismay that "those gentlemen judges [of the Constitutional Court] have not been able to defend our fundamental rights: to the integrity of our territory, to our culture, and, in general, our life. Rights which, besides being recognized by the constitution and both national and international norms presently in force, are ancestral rights."

"What is sacred we don't negotiate," said Ebaristo Tegria in an interview with the Associated Press. The U'wa believe oil is the blood of Mother Earth and that its exploitation will lead to the destruction of their culture. "We have already made known our thoughts about this project to bleed Mother Earth," states their letter. "For us Mother Earth is sacred, is not for violation, exploitation, nor negotiation; it is to be cared for, to be conserved. For these reasons we cannot permit oil exploration on our traditional territory." 🐦

Information from ONIC and the Amazon Coalition. Please send letters to President Ernesto Samper calling for the respect of Indigenous rights to their ancestral territory.

**"WHAT IS
SACRED WE
DON'T
NEGOTIATE."**

**- EBARISTO
TEGRIA**

U'Wa Update

UWA people representatives toured the United States

U'Wa chief Roberto Cobaria and his companion Edgar Mendez came in early May for a two week U.S tour to try to garner support from environmental organizations and human rights workers in their fight to protect

ances, Chief Cobaria made clear the U'Wa belief that if there is no blood (oil) there is no light and there is no life. Petroleum is a part of the U'Wa's environment as much as the forests and rivers and animals are, and cannot be removed from its habitat without disrupting the precious

Photo: Nilo Cayuquén



Roberto Cobaria, chief of the U'Wa people.

PETROLEUM IS THE BLOOD OF THE MOTHER EARTH AND IS CRUCIAL FOR MAINTAINING THE DELICATE BALANCE OF THE WORLD.

their territory from oil exploitation. They met with Occidental in Los Angeles and gave press conferences and presentations in Washington D.C and San Francisco. The U'Wa are determined to continue their protest of Oxy and are standing firm in their refusal to allow any portion of their land to be

bought or sold or contaminated in any way.

For the U'Wa, petroleum is the blood of the Mother Earth and is crucial for maintaining the delicate balance of the world. In his numerous Bay Area appear-

equilibrium which the U'Wa work to maintain and protect. In an interview at the South and Meso American Indian Rights Center, Roberto explained how petroleum was here on earth before there was anything, before the world was created. The Occidental corporation refuses to respect this belief and has offered more royalties to the community in hopes of gaining access to the oil-rich region. The U'Wa asked Oxy who gave them the authority to buy, sell or exploit that which they do not own.

In a press conference at Rainforest Action Network, San Francisco, Chief Roberto Cobaria said that to negotiate this matter [we] are contaminating ourselves. The U'wa are continuing to fight for their right to protect and preserve the integrity of their land and culture. They feel that any exploration on their ancestral territory will gravely disrupt their culture and traditions as well as the land that has sustained them for centuries. 🌿

Continued from page 11

the Indigenous way of thinking. They are different.

Now, it is clear that the work of Indigenous peoples in the city, creating alliances, this is completely different from the problem of migration. Migration is not a method of establishing alliances. Migration is a reaction to a set of problems, like lack of land and unsustainable conditions in the Indigenous areas, which force people to head for the cities. This doesn't constitute a beneficial solution for the communities in the Indigenous areas.

Do Indigenous organizations aspire to a high level of autonomy, with a proper education, control over the territories, and self-rule in the respective areas?

The idea is that the government exercise greater respect towards the traditional organizations of Indigenous peoples. We are not seeking a very formal system of representation of Indigenous peoples, but simply that our traditional organizations and our customs be granted respect.

Are you seeking the right to administer the territories?

Indigenous areas in Brazil are destined for the usufruct of Indigenous peoples. They are the property of the state, and Indigenous peoples hold usufruct rights over them. This is a very complex issue in Brazil, because when people speak of "self-determination," various sectors interpret this as proof that Indians want to disassociate with the state and establish a type of sovereignty, and this in turn ends up jeopardizing our relations with the larger society. Therefore, in today's Brazil, we are speaking more about respect towards Indigenous cultures and customs and decision-making rights for Indigenous peoples regarding their territories. We make it very clear that we do not have the intention of creating a new state, and enter into conflict with national sovereignty. We want to support our systems of culture and traditions, and receive the respect of the state and of the larger society. 🌿

Learning from Grandma Lupe:

Indigenous Spirituality is the Source of all Knowledge at Indigenous Women's Conference

Thoughts of Grandma Lupe during the encounter.

In December 1996 the members of the Indigenous Cultural Society Tepehuanos organized a ceremonial meeting in the municipality of Escuinapa, Sinaloa, Mexico to focus on the theme "Indigenous Women-Respect and Dignity." Representatives of the Tepehuanos, Huicholes, Cherokee, Micmac, Maliseet, Passomoquody, and Algonquin peoples came to participate in the conversation circles, temascales (sweat lodges), and nights of medicine dancing. The meeting concentrated on supporting the cause of the Indigenous American Woman facing the challenges and obstacles that threaten indigenous culture and sacred values of the indigenous peoples.

The indigenous grandmothers stressed the importance of the indigenous spirituality in our lives. During the meeting we had the opportunity to interview grandma Huichola, Guadalupe de la Cruz Ríos de la Rallanera, (from Sinaloa) known as Lupe. Lupe emphasized the importance of keeping ourselves in the harmonious circle of connection with the Creator that is fundamental to generating constructive forces and battling the injustices suffered by the world's indigenous peoples.

Grandma Lupe told us that in her community they continue to practice their own culture based in the spirituality or spiritual vision of the Huicholes for whom they keep their customs alive. "Our Grandmothers left us this legacy," says Lupe, "and it is an ancient history from long ago and we the Huicholes continue to follow its footsteps."

Grandma, could you explain to us the Huichola spirituality that you practise?

In our Huichola spirituality, we all wear the Huichola clothing that is of fabric drawn with the images of the gods during the ceremonies. This distinguishes us from other religions. One of the most important ceremonies that we practice is the medi-



Photo: Laura Soriano Morales

Guadalupe de la Cruz Ríos de la Rallanera, master artisan and spiritual guide and healer in Sinaloa, México

cine gathering, when we harvest the Hicuri that helps us to concentrate and commune with our Creator and to perceive ideas that guide our lives and all our actions. In preparing for the ceremony we go to the mountains, to Huilcuta, once a year before the harvest to gather the Hicuri or Peyote Español (sacred plants). Huilcuta is a sacred place where dwell the gods; Tatemantiniague (water), Tate-Wari (fire), Tate-Huirika-Iumari (grandmother), Tate-Haramara (ocean), Tauyupa (the sun), Tate-Yulienaka (Mother Earth). The Gods guide our path, teach us, feed us with the fruit they give us, and with their spirit we live.

This ceremony is very important for our community since it is when we receive counsel and assistance to help us complete the tasks we want or need to do.

We also perform ceremonies when we sow corn, and when the first ears flower. We have blue, white, yellow, red, and black corn. The corn is sacred because it is our main foodsource and is a fruit of the Mother Earth.

There is a special day when we perform a ceremony with the children and the sun so that the Gods may give life and force

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Photo: Laura Soriano



Indigenous Huichola women participating in the ceremony of the Huicuri (peyote), Sinaloa, Mexico.

and so that the children gain a better understanding of their roots and language.

What is your mission as the spiritual guide of the community?

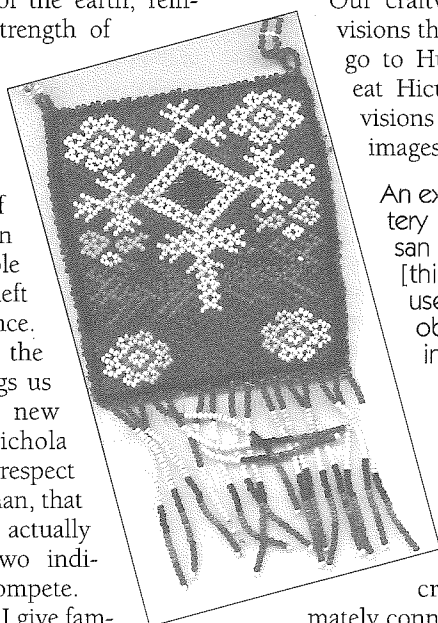
My mission is to teach the knowledge that my grandmothers have left me. Although I will no longer be here, the teachings of our grandmothers remain alive and I wish to reinforce our culture, teach the cultivation of the earth, reinforce the unity and strength of the family and especially maintain the Huichola spirituality. I also make offerings of food to the Gods. I leave an offering of corn drink or food on the altar in our temple since the Gods have left us things of importance. Eating and drinking the food of the altar, brings us new thoughts and new knowledge. The Huichola spirituality shows us respect between man and woman, that man and woman are actually complimentary, not two individual entities that compete.

As a spiritual guide I give family counsel to young couples who sometimes have problems with each other. The man and the woman are one

body. I show them that the Creator gives us intelligence and peace and thus we should always feel clean and happy. We do not create problems between ourselves and between those who speak other languages because we are all children of the Creator.

What is the relation between the traditional craftwork and Huichola spirituality?

Our craftwork is a product of visions that we obtain when we go to Huilcuta and when we eat Hicuri or Peyote. In the visions we see the different images and this is what we



An example of the mastery of Tepehuano artisan women. This is a [thingamajig] that is used to carry sacred objects needed during ceremonies.

copy and weave. De ahi viene los cuadros de chaquiras de estambre. My grandmother showed me. Our craftsmanship is intimately connected to our spirituality since every image expresses a significant relationship with nature and the universe. ♪

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 - Pehuenche Organizing Pays Off (Chile)
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Awastingni Sumo Defend Autonomy of Coast Against Government

Effort is to stop Asian logging giants from further destroying Indigenous lands on the coast of Nicaragua

The situation concerning the Sumo of Awastingni of the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua in the Autonomous region of the North Atlantic (RAAN) is becoming increasingly difficult under the government of Dr. Arnoldo Alemán, the current president of the republic. Aleman's administration has been unwilling to continue discussions regarding the management of natural resources and the rights of Indigenous communities in the coastal region of Nicaragua.

It was the previous administration of Doña Violeta Chamorro that granted a land concession to lumber dealers which affected the Sumo's territory. In March of 1996 the government of Doña Violeta Chamorro promised a concession to the timber company SOLCARSA, a subsidiary of the Korean company Kum Kyung, which granted the company a 30-year contract to explore and exploit the 63,000 hectares of tropical rain forest in the territory of the Sumo community of Awastingni. This concession was made without consulting the Sumo community. For the Sumos, this concession signifies a grave threat to the security and survival of the 364 families who live in this region and have traditionally fished, hunted, cultivated and buried their dead on these lands.

International pressure from financial institutions impelled the government of Violeta Chamorro to start privatizing state industries and to undertake development projects on a grand scale in order to attract foreign investment. The government alleged that, according to the Civil Code, the lands were not titled to private individuals but belonged to the government and could therefore be given in concessions. With this justification the government handed over great tracts of national land to transnational corporations like SOLCARSA. This policy contra-

dicts the Law of Autonomy of the Atlantic Coast as well as the measures concerning traditional lands which were won in 1985.

In September 1996, the Sumos presented a petition to the court of appeals in Managua against the Ministry of Natural Resources (MARENA) in an attempt to halt the concession. When their appeal was rejected, the community took their case to the Supreme Court. It in turn discarded their case, claiming that the appeal was submitted 30 days after the signing of the concession — in other words, they acted too late.

The Sumos considers these actions by the government to be in violation of international norms, the Constitution of the republic and the statute of the Autonomous government of the Atlantic Coast region. They have filed a petition of protest before the Inter American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Organization of American States (OAS). These organizations accused the Nicaraguan government of not complying with its obligation to guarantee the demarcation of the communal lands of Awastingni and of the other Indigenous communities of the Atlantic Coast. Particularly frustrating is the fact that the national government continues to make consequential decisions regarding the national resources of the Atlantic Coast region in complete disregard of the

"THE GOVERNMENT ALLEGED THAT, ACCORDING TO THE CIVIL CODE, THE LANDS WERE NOT TITLED TO PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS BUT BELONGED TO THE GOVERNMENT AND COULD THEREFORE BE GIVEN IN CONCESSIONS."

statutes of the Autonomous Government of the Atlantic Coast, which has been awaiting ratification in the national congress since 1990.

As a result of the meetings with the IACHR and the OAS, delegates from the Nicaraguan government and representatives from the Sumo and Miskitu communities formed a task force under the Doña Violeta administration to further study the issue. However, under the new administration of Dr. Arnoldo Alemán, new conflicts are surfacing. Delegates of the new government are accusing Sumo leaders of being separatists. It is evident that the new government has little desire to continue with the task force discussions.

Meanwhile the Sumos continue to suffer from the repercussions of the mining exploitation project that operated on their lands from 1930 through the 1980s. They bitterly recount their personal experiences of the destruction of their environment, their rainforests and their entire way of life. They are demanding that this time their rights as an autonomous community be respected. For many years the rivers in their territory have been severely contaminated. The consequences of this contamination are evident: high infant mortality rates, chronic diarrhea, open sores on their skin and a host of other illnesses and infections. The Sumos demand respect for their community and improvements in their roads, their schools, their public health facilities and the care of their fragile forests. One of their highest priorities is ensuring the reforestation of their land.

For the Sumos, the only alternative for the survival of their communities is the demarcation of their communal lands. In this way they can legally keep out forces like the Korean company Kum Kyung which continue to seek access to their lands and resources. 🌿

El Salvador:

No End in Sight to the Abuses Against Indigenous Communities in Sonsonate

Beginning on January 31 and continuing the following day, 30 Indigenous families were forcibly evicted from their homes and land in the community of Santa Julia del cantón Las Hojas, located in the San Antonio del Monte municipality in the Sonsonate region of El Salvador. At 11:30 on January 31, 19 units of the PNC (Policía Nacional Civil) invaded the Santa Julia Hacienda accompanied by the district's judge, a human rights delegate, and a representative from the government. Also accompanying the police force were 200 soldiers, who remained posted around the territory throughout the day and night of the 31.

By the following day the village was surrounded by 25 police units and 500 soldiers including a 100-strong riot squad armed with tear gas. Firefighters, the Salvadoran Red Cross, and two ten-ton trucks without plates had arrived on the scene. The riot squad threatened to throw tear gas in the homes in an effort to dislodge their inhabitants. Armed personnel proceeded to harass the cooperative's remaining inhabitants until dawn, removing them from their homes and loading each family's personal belongings into trucks bound for unknown destinations. Once the buildings were evacuated they were immediately destroyed and the land set on fire.

These kinds of violent attacks and flagrant abuses of human rights have intensified over the last few months. On February 5, 1997, Chief Adrian Esquino Lisco, leader of the National Association of Indigenous Salvadorans (ANIS) and his family were forced, under threat of death, from their home in Comarca San Ramón by Arena party activists Jorge Ruiz Camacho and Marta Benavides. Chief Lisco fled to the ANIS offices in Sonsonate, which are being patrolled by Death Squad members and are scheduled for impoundment. Members of ANIS have received death threats, have been

severely beaten, and have witnessed their family members being raped and tortured and their homes bulldozed and burned. On November 3, 1996, the Jaguar Battalion death squad murdered the Vasquez Ramirez family of San Miguelo, Sonsonate, who were members of ANIS. Using machetes the squad killed all eight family members, four children and three women among them. The home of Margarito Esquino, one of the leaders of ANIS now living in the United States because of constant threats, was bombed.

He was brutally beaten and his wife and young niece were raped by armed men. As of March 3, 1997, ANIS members have been given 72 hours to completely evacuate their homes and offices or they will be evicted by armed guards.

The situation in Sonsonate has a long, unhappy history. According to ANIS, these lands were purchased more than ten years ago by ANIS for its cooperative, at that time UCESISTA, with the help of loans from the Banco del Fomento Agropecuario and the Caja de Crédito de Izalco, which were canceled five years later. After this date, members of the Indigenous cooperative, UCESISTA, continued to work on this land until internal political differences drove a wedge between them. Influenced by the ruling

ARENA party, some of the families separated themselves from ANIS and identified themselves as the true UCESISTA members. Those who remained continued to work the land of the San Ramón and Santa Julia Hacienda in the Las Hojas region of Sonsonate where they suffered all types of tortures from various members of the ARENA party operating in Sonsonate, including the brutal massacre in 1983 in the Las Hojas cooperative of 74 innocent people. In the eyes of ANIS, these ARENA party members have manipulated the members of the original Indigenous cooperative UCESISTA by fomenting confrontation and instigating conflict and division within the Indigenous community, actions that have already cost many lives and the eviction of 30 families from the Santa Julia cooperative.

The Sonsonate authorities of the Arena party allege that the legitimate proprietors of this land are the members of the UCESISTA cooperative. On two previous occasions efforts to evict the families were halted when the members of ANIS presented documents to the court of San Antonio del Monte which demonstrated that they were in fact the legal owners of this property. The court was in the process of reviewing the documents before making a final decision when the primary judge of Sonsonate gave the order to evict the inhabitants of the Santa Julia cooperative. Today these families remain homeless, exposed to the elements, and are not being given any attention. Some have found refuge in the homes of families in San Ramón, who are soon to be the next victims of eviction under an order from the same judge. The community of San Ramón is scheduled for eviction on March 4, 1997. Representatives of the ARENA party have promised the Indigenous lands, including those parcels which ANIS has bought and has titles for, to other parties.

The situation in Sonsonate seems to be deteriorating daily. The atrocities being

LETTERS FROM THE UNITED STATES HAVE PROVEN TO HAVE HELPED ANIS IN THE PAST. THE FEBRUARY 18, 1997, LETTER FROM US CONGRESSMEN JOHN MOAKLEY AND JAMES MCGOVERN RESULTED IN THE ESQUINO LISCO FAMILY RETURNING TO THEIR HOME, ALTHOUGH ARMED OFFICIALS CAME SEARCHING FOR THE LEADER THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

Continue on page 36

committed at this moment call for urgent action. Death threats, illegal evictions, beatings, rapes and political shootings continue in El Salvador despite the peace that was promised in Chapultapec in 1992 (the El Salvador Accords). Indigenous Salvadorans continue to be threatened with violence by the National Civilian Police (PNC), the courts, and those connected with the ARENA party now in power. Letters from the United States have proven to have helped ANIS in the past. The February 18, 1997, letter from US Congressmen John Moakley and James McGovern resulted in the Esquino Lisco family returning to their home,

although armed officials came searching for the leader the following morning. 🐾

Please send letters by fax to the Salvadoran authorities urging them to respect the fundamental human rights of the Indigenous communities (Náhuat, Lenca, Pipiles, Pokomames, Ulúas and Maya people) in El Salvador and denouncing the repression and grave injustices committed against them by some members of the ARENA party. Please send your letters to the following addresses:

*Dr. Armando Calderon Sol, Presidente de la república de El Salvador; FAX 503-271-0950
Lic. Mario Acosta Oertel, Ministerio del Interior, Centro de Gobierno San Salvador; El*

Salvador; FAX 503-271-2484

Ambassador of El Salvador Ana Cristina Sol, Embassy of El Salvador, 2308 California St. NW, Washington, DC 20008; FAX 202-328-0563

Send copies to: Dra. Victoria Marina Velasquez de Aviles, Procuradora para la defensa de los derechos humanos de El Salvador, 9a. Avenida Nte. y Calle Poniente, Edificio Amsa No. 535, San Salvador, El Salvador

Adrian Esquino Lisco, Asociación Nacional Indígena Salvadoreña ANIS, calle Obispo Marroquín Oficina Antigua Aduana Ferrea 5-1 Sonsonate, El Salvador; FAX 011-503-451-0742

Violent Military forced Removal of Peaceful Indigenous Demonstrators in Honduras

After eight days of negotiation, at 4:00 am just five hours before the planned signing of an agreement, 2,000 well-armed Honduran soldiers and police attacked an encampment of indigenous and black protesters. The demonstrators were gathered outside of the Honduran Presidential Palace in Tegucigalpa to protest the politically motivated assassinations of Chortis' leaders, Candido Amador and Ovidio Perez, and to demand the return of indigenous lands. Abiding by their convictions, the demonstrators refused to leave until an agreement was signed and continued their peaceful protest despite violent assault from the government.

Over four thousand people from seven Honduran indigenous and black groups: Chortis, Lenca, Pech, Tolupan, Miskito, black English speaking Creoles and Garifuna arrived in Tegucigalpa as part of the "Great Indigenous and Black Mobilization" on May 5, 1997. In the camp, food was scarce and health care inadequate. Many people suffered from stress, heat exhaustion, heart conditions, and arthritis. Still, Hospital Escuela, only a mile away, refused to provide the pilgrims with essential medical treatment. The public health risks were comparable to those of many poor Honduran communities. Luckily, with the arrival of the

Honduran Red Cross, the Ministry of Public Health and private doctors, as well as the construction of latrines, there were no outbreaks of communicable diseases.

In the negotiating room, things appeared to be moving swiftly. By the second day, the government had already agreed to conduct a full internal investigation into the assassinations of Amador and Perez. The government was slow to comply with Articles 13 through 19 of Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO), which demands the return of indigenous lands and respect for indigenous cultures. This refusal to concede blocked negotiations for eight days. Pastor Fasquelle, chief government negotiator, finally presented an agreement directly to the encampment. Offering too little land and not enough guarantees, the proposal met with fierce opposition and was rejected in an oral vote. Finally, an agreement was reached that included a stricter timetable to restore indigenous land and stronger guarantees of government compliance.

Five hours before the agreement was to be signed at 9 a.m. on May 11th, 1,500 soldiers and 500 police descended upon the camp armed with riot gear and rifles, including M16's and M60's (large tripod-style machine guns). Unarmed men, women, and children assembled peacefully in front of Presidential Palace found themselves trying to avoid the blows of their attackers. One pregnant woman was brutally beaten, and many children were trampled by police. Large pots of cold water were poured over protesters and most of their possessions were destroyed. Michael Marsh, an interna-

tional observer, personally witnessed soldiers violently knocking over women with children in their arms.

The pilgrims relocated a mile away at a more precarious site. Fast moving cars encircled the encampment, hitting one protester. Most of their food and belongings had been confiscated, and authorities refused to release them. These government actions incited public outrage. Hundreds of students and other demonstrators flocked to the capital equipped with food, clothing, and other supplies.

It was two days before negotiations formally resumed. After the resignation of Pastor Fasquelle from the government negotiating team, progress was made toward resolving the crisis. The accord was signed on May 14th between President Reina and the indigenous delegation representing the demonstrators. In addition to promising a full investigation into the assassinations, the agreement also includes the return of 9,000 hectares of land, the instatement of human rights observers in Copan and Ocotepeque, where many indigenous people have received threats or been attacked by wealthy landowners, transportation to return the pilgrims to their communities of origin, assurances to fulfill its obligations from past treaties. The negotiators also agreed to instate a commission of Guarantors to guarantee the fulfillment of this agreement. The commission will work with indigenous groups and government agencies to insure compliance of the agreement.

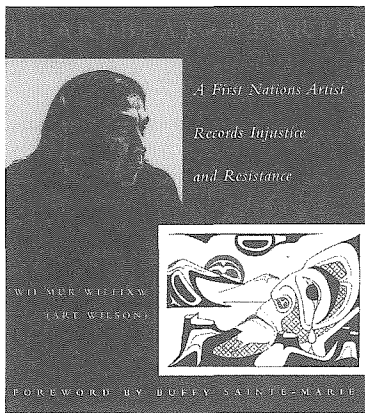
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New Publications of Interest

Heartbeat of the Earth.

By 'Wii Muk'Willixw (Art Wilson).
Published by New Society Publishers, PO
Box 189, Gabriola Island, BC V0R 1X0,
Canada. 1996.

This book is a series of forty brief but compelling stories starting with the Gitksan Native Nation from British Columbia, of which the author is a hereditary leader. From there, the author focuses on the struggles of



Indian Peoples throughout Canada, the US, and all the Americas as well as other World Indigenous First Peoples.

Each page of text faces the author's extraordinary artwork. In the molding of traditional Northwest Coast X-ray depiction of deep red and black animals and spirits, the images leap out with a contemporary twist, speaking of issues, asking for justice from injustice seen today. The past meets the present and begs us to consider the future of all, and of Mother Earth.

by Nathan Muus

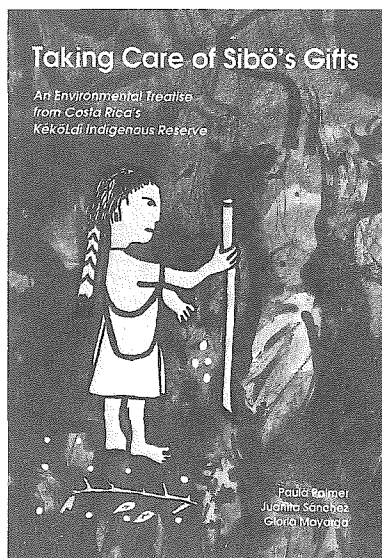
Taking Care of Sibö's Gifts

An environmental Treatise From Costa Rica's Kekoldi Indigenous Reserve by Juanita Sanchez, Gloria Mayorga and Paula Palmer. Published in San Jose, Costa Rica, 1993

If we want to save tropical rainforests, we will find our best teachers among the rainforests'indigenous inhabitants. For centuries, the indigenous people who

live in rainforests have known how to use rainforest resources without damaging the ecosystem. Their whole way of life--beliefs about God and Nature, agricultural practices, handicrafts and social relations --works to preserve the biological diversity of their forest home.

In a unique book, now available in English, the people of Costa Rica's Kekoldi Indian Reserve share the traditional knowledge that defines them as a people who "take care of Sibö's gifts," the gifts of forest flora and fauna. As they tell how their lives and livelihoods depend on rainforest resources, they appeal to us all to support them in their struggle for the survival of their forests and their way of life.



North American sociologist Paula Palmer collaborated with two indigenous women to write this book as part of a long-term project sponsored by the tribal council of the Kekoldi Indian Reserve. To protect their forests from destruction by

non-Indian squatters, poachers and commercial enterprises, the Kekoldi people have initiated a three part strategy. First, they are completing land tenure and land use studies which are needed as a basis for legal enforcement of their land rights. Second, they are educating the public

about their way of life in the rainforest and their struggle to preserve it.; Taking Care of Sibö's Gifts, in Spanish, English and Dutch editions, is part of that effort.. Third, they are raising funds to purchase deforested lands from non-indian landholders

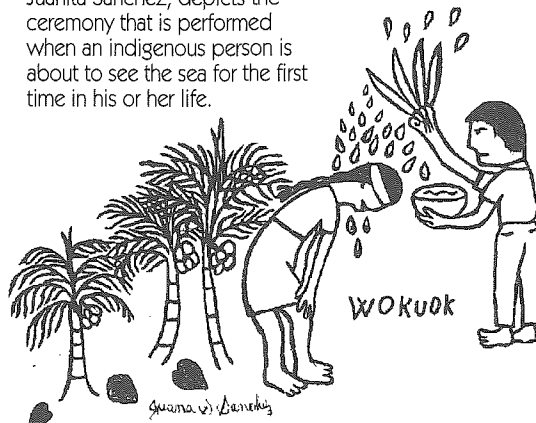
within the boundaries of their reserve, so that they can reforest these properties. With income from the sale of Taking Care of Sibö's Gifts, the Kekoldi people have already purchased three properties and reforested critical watershed areas.

In Taking Care of Sibö's Gifts, the Kekoldi people show how the rainforest provides them with almost everything they need to live, as long as they respect Sibö's laws governing the use of natural resources. The book is illustrated with black and white photographs, maps, and line drawings by Kekoldi artisan Jaunita Sanchez, who normally carves her pictures on dried gourds. Income from book sales goes directly to the kekoldi people, to support their rainforest conservation efforts and their cultural school.

This book is a unique resource for teachers and students of cultural anthropology, social ecology, environment and multicultural education. It can be ordered at the following address (checks made to Paula Palmer), for \$12/each; \$11/each with orders of 5 or more, shipping included. Please specify the English or Spanish edition.

Paula Palmer
1103 Linden Ave. Boulder, CO 80304

This illustration by Kekoldi artisan Juanita Sánchez, depicts the ceremony that is performed when an indigenous person is about to see the sea for the first time in his or her life.



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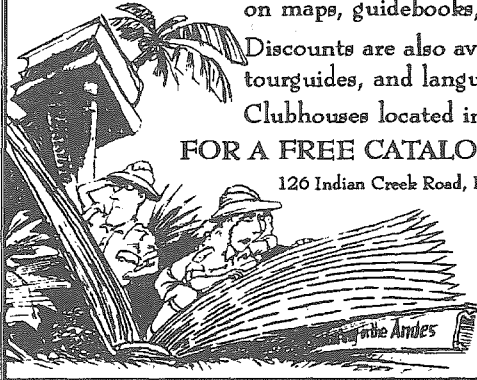
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lation in Brazil is, like the Panará, small but growing. The resistance of Indigenous peoples, and their capacity for self-recreation even in extremely adverse circumstances, is the sine qua non behind increasing official recognition of Indigenous land rights. When the National Indian Foundation was created in 1967, as the contact of the Panará was starting, an infinitesimal quantity of Indian land was officially recognized as such by the federal government. Today, Indigenous peoples have constitutionally guaranteed rights to some 11% of Brazil's territory, although only part of this area has been fully officially documented.

A plethora of histories like that of the Panará have shattered the illusion of the vanishing Indian. In so doing, they have better informed both national Indigenous policy, and scientific understanding of the depth and dynamics of Indigenous culture and history.

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(a previous version of this article appeared in the Brazilian magazine *Ciência Hoje*)

Continued from page on page 25 moved or been removed from traditional territories. Many, like the Guaraní in Mato Grosso do Sul, have returned to lands from which they were removed. The Indigenous population in Brazil reached its nadir in the 1970s and has grown since. In 1990, there were some 235,000 Indians in Brazil, while today there are 270,000. The Indigenous popu-

News from SAIIC...

AS USUAL, WE HAVE been extremely busy here at SAIIC. We went through a difficult period but we are confident in the future of our organization. Recently we had visitors from South and Meso America. Many of these visitors were here for the Abya Yala Fund board meeting, which was held in the beginning of May.

ALICIA CANAVIRI, AN AYMARA leader from Bolivia and Director of CDIMA, and President of Abya Yala Fund, was visiting the office in May. We conducted an interview with Alicia Canaviri about her experiences working with indigenous communities in her country. Alicia works to empower indigenous women and young people by urging them to attain the skills and confidence they need to become leaders in the fight to preserve their culture and their land. Look for the interview in the next issue of Abya Yala News.

ROBERTO COBARÍA, A REPRESENTATIVE of the UWA people from Colombia, toured the United States in May, sponsored by the Amazon Coalition and RAN, SAIIC, and Abya Yala Fund, to denounce the proposed oil exploration by the Occidental Petroleum Company in their territory. He gave several presentations and a press conference while he was in the Bay Area. We had the opportunity to interview him about the UWA culture, their values and their role as protectors of Mother Earth.

AMALIA DIXON, WHO HAS been the Director of SAIIC for almost two years, is moving forward. Amalia will remain an active board member of SAIIC. She is also part of the Abya Yala Fund Board of Directors. Amalia returned recently from the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, where she had a marvelous time with her family and friends. During her trip to Nicaragua she visited the indigenous communities and organizations on the Atlantic Coast. She gave a presentation in La Peña Cultural Center to give an update on Nicaragua. We thank Amalia deeply for all the hard work she did at SAIIC as Director.

LAURA SORIANO, A MIXTEC-ZAPOTEC from Oaxaca, México, has been working with SAIIC as the coordinator for SAIIC radio program, "Indigenous Voices". We have been sending the radio program to about 110 indigenous radio stations in Latin America. We have received wonderful letters of support from various radio stations across Latin America. We received news that our tapes have been played in community assemblies and under their special "international news" heading in their local radio programs. She has also been busy coordinating the SAIIC office since Amalia left. In addition to all this, Laura is currently doing a year apprenticeship at KPFA in Berkeley, where she is learning radio production and engineering.

JESS FALKENHAGEN, FROM CONNECTICUT moved to the Bay Area about six months ago. She has been teaching part-time and working at SAIIC as an intern. Jess majored in Socio-Cultural Anthropology with a concentration in Native American Studies and has always been active in indigenous rights work. She has traveled extensively throughout Mexico and Central America. Jess has been a writer for the Abya Yala News and has also worked on urgent action letter writing campaigns. We appreciate deeply all the hard work Jess is doing for SAIIC.

SOSHANA SPECTOR, CAME ALL the way from the University of Antioch in Ohio, where she is majoring in Peace Studies, to do a full time internship for a month with SAIIC. Soshana has been focusing on a special radio program project on indigenous human rights. This new project is concerned with how Globalization and current economic policies are violating indigenous human rights. Soshana has also been working on writing urgent actions. We greatly appreciate Soshana's commitment and the hard work she has put in at SAIIC.

PAULUS BOUMA, RECENTLY ARRIVED from the Netherlands to be with us for six months as an intern. Paulus is majoring

in International Relations with a focus on human rights. He found out about SAIIC from the University of Groningen internship coordinator. While in school, Paulus wrote about the influence of human rights organizations within the United Nations and about the connection between economic development and human rights within the World Bank. His interest in the role of indigenous human rights organizations in the United Nations led him to SAIIC. We warmly welcome Paulus to SAIIC!!

SPECIAL THANKS TO: David Rothschild, the former administrative and fundraising coordinator, for his dedication to the work of SAIIC. We will miss him and wish him luck in his new endeavor at the Amazon Coalition.

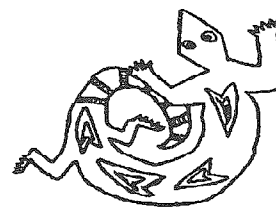
Gilles Combrisson, the former journal coordinator, for his hard work on Abya Yala News. We wish him the best in the future.

Sibylle Schult, for her valuable work in grant writing and development for SAIIC. We welcome her and appreciate all that she is bringing to SAIIC.

Edgar Ayala, a professional graphic designer, who has generously taken on the final stages on the journal production. We appreciate his helping us at a time when we needed his expertise and support. We couldn't have completed this issue without you!

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Adriana Ballén Jefferey Bronfman, Maya Miller, Victoria R. Ward, and KPFA's Samuel Guía for his valuable contribution as technician of SAIIC's radio program.

AND TO ALL SAIIC'S members, donors and supporters, who have been patient in waiting for this issue of Abya Yala News. We appreciate your patience and apologize for the delay.



ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM SAIIC

Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity

SAIIC's latest educational book takes on the Indigenous perspective and zeros in on biodiversity, bioprospecting, intellectual property rights, the Human Genome Diversity Project, related international agreements, and Indigenous biodiversity management alternatives and what they mean for Indigenous peoples of Mexico, Central, and South America. Written by David Rothschild with interviews and contributions by Leonardo Viteri of the Instituto Amazanga, Eugenio Castillo of Pemasky, and Alejandro Argumedo of the Indigenous Peoples Biodiversity Network. Made possible by the Foundation for Deep Ecology. Contact SAIIC for distribution information and copies. \$10.00 + \$3.00 shipping.



Daughters of Abya Yala

Testimonies of Indian women organizing throughout the Continent. Statements from grassroots Indian women leaders from South and Meso America. Includes resolutions from Indigenous women's meetings, a directory of Indian women's organizations and key contacts, information on Indian

women's projects, and poems by Indian women. Contains 128 pages with beautiful black and white photographs. Printed on recycled paper. \$8 + \$3.00 shipping.

"Indigenous Voices" Radio Program

SAIIC's latest taped radio program is now available. Focusing on topics related to biodiversity and Indigenous peoples, it serves as an informative base with which Indigenous peoples can protect themselves against unwelcome bioprospecting and biopiracy. 1 hour. Narrated by members of SAIIC's Board of Directors. (Available in Spanish only) \$8.00 + \$3.00 shipping.

Amazonia: Voices of the Rainforest

A resource and action guide with a comprehensive listing of international rainforest and Amazonian Indian organizations sponsored by SAIIC and the International Rivers Network, and published by Rainforest Action Network and Amazonia Film Project, 1990. Available in Spanish or English for \$4.50 + \$3.00 shipping.

Video: Columbus Didn't Discover Us

Native people's perspectives on the Columbus Quincentennial based on the footage of the 1990 Quito Conference. 24 minutes. A co-production of SAIIC, CONAIE, ONIC and Turning Tide Productions. Available in Spanish or English. \$19.95 + \$3.00 shipping.

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