

the impact of recent national legislation in the vaupés region of colombia

introduction

This paper examines, in a very preliminary fashion, the process of determining how the Vaupés *resguardo* (literally, "protected area") in southeast Colombia is being transformed into one or more *Entidades Territoriales Indígenas* or ETIs (Indigenous Territorial Entities). These ETIs are administrative units now being defined by Indian communities and organiza-

abstract

This paper analyzes Indian and non-Indian reactions in the Vaupés region of Colombia to the 1991 Colombian Constitution and subsequent legislation, specifically reactions to the on-going process of converting the Vaupés *resguardo* (a 3-million-hectare territory collectively owned by the region's Indians) into one or more "Indigenous territorial entities" (ETIs), a new form of political-administrative unit. The paper argues that despite apparently substantial increases in the degree to which the region's indigenous inhabitants can administer their territory and ensure their future as a distinct ethnic entity, we can discern subtle ways in which the Colombian state is attempting to co-opt the Indian movement, at both national and local levels.

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tions, by the *Comisión de Ordenamiento Territorial* (Territorial Ordinance Commission), and by the Colombian Congress. Because this process is still underway, it gives us an opportunity to document and analyze the ground-level negotiations preliminary to establishing new political-administrative units such as ETIs. The paper begins by describing recent legislation affecting Colombia's Indians, and then analyzes the particular situation of the communities located in the Vaupés region in southeastern Colombia where problems differ from those facing most indigenous communi-

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to their land, they inhabit a highly politicized local world that connects in all manner of ways to the Colombian state and other national and international institutions. These connections, the paper concludes, may allow states like Colombia to work in subtle ways to co-opt self-determination movements of marginalized peoples within their borders, even though these same states are facilitating legislation intended to further such peoples' self-governance and their ability to maintain a distinct ethnic identity.¹

recent changes in colombian law with respect to indian rights

In Colombia, vast changes started taking place in the 1970s with respect to the position of Indian -- and, more recently, black² -- communities vis-à-vis the state. Some of these changes, such as land reform, began in the early 1960s, although struggles for Indian rights, particularly land rights, began much earlier. Mobilization on a national level commenced in the 1920s, and was originally tied to Colombian

resumen

Este artículo analiza las reacciones indígenas y no indígenas en la región Vaupés de Colombia a la Constitución colombiana de 1991 y legislación subsiguiente, especialmente las reacciones al proceso en curso de convertir el *resguardo* del Vaupés (un territorio de 3 millones de hectáreas, propiedad colectiva de los indígenas de la región) en una o más entidades territoriales indígenas (ETIs), una nueva forma de unidad política-administrativa. Este artículo sostiene que a pesar de los aumentos substanciales aparentes en la medida en que los habitantes indígenas pueden administrar su territorio y asegurar su futuro como una entidad étnica bien determinada, se puede discernir la manera sutil en que el Estado colombiano intenta cooptar el movimiento indígena tanto al nivel local como nacional.

Marxists who partially broke with assimilationist positions held by both left and right parties: the Communist party spoke of "Indianness" and championed an "Indian proletariat." For a while, Indian leaders such as Manuel Quintín Lame -- a Páez who styled himself as "the great leader of all Indians" (Gros 1991:179) -- who had fought for land rights for a decade, participated in protests organized by the Marxists. However, during the 1930s, Quintín Lame came to espouse Indian separatism (see Gros 1991; Molano 1994; Pineda 1984; Rappaport 1990). During the 1930s and 1940s, the struggle for land was taken up by the *Movimiento Agrarista* in the southern part of the department of Tolima (Triana 1993). Communist guerrillas continued this struggle in the 1950s, forming "independent republics" which gave rise to the largest guerrilla organization now operating, the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) (Molano 1994). Indigenous mobilizing, much of which focused on repossessing illegally expropriated lands titled to Indian communities during the colonial era, continued during the 1970s and 1980s.³ Unfortunately, many Indians have been victims of the violence accompanying these struggles, both as bystanders caught in the crossfire and as activists protecting their communities in places such as Urabá, San Andrés de Sotavento, and Terradentro. Indians have been killed by the military, secret, illegal paramilitary squads and guerrillas (Campo 1994; *El Espectador* 1993a; Guzmán Arceaga 1994: 11-A; T. Sánchez 1994: 8A).

Recent changes go beyond land reform, however, and reflect attempts to decentralize state power. This effort began in the 1980s, beginning with mayoral elections, and took a substantial step forward with the 1991 Constitution which reapportions governmental power at all levels. Until now, most decisions have been made in -- and most resources have gone to -- Bogotá, the capitals of departments, or other urban areas. But the 1991 Constitution stipulates that the new territorial entities will make their own decisions about their affairs.

The new Constitution explicitly recognizes "the multiethnic character of the Colombian nation," and includes various general statements of principle, mostly drawn from constitutions of other national states and from the several covenants, treaties and pacts Colombia has signed during the past fifty years (including The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [1948] and Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization regarding Rights of Indigenous, Tribal and Semi-tribal Populations [1989]). Unfortunately, as everyone agrees (e.g., Correa 1993:319), the language of the Constitution is vague in crucial respects.

In many important ways, this new Constitution is the opposite of its predecessor, written in 1886 largely by the statesman Rafael Núñez. Ac-

ording to de la Calle Lombana, that constitution was concerned with homogenizing Colombian society, and "with order rather than liberty," while the present one values diversity, and is the result of the "most dissimilar positions, being born of popular participation and not of impositions by elites" (1994:8-9). The 1991 constitution also installs participatory democracy, opens the door to popular consultation, and seeks to institutionalize conflict rather than suppress it.

The 1991 Constitution and subsequent legislation have profoundly affected Colombian Indians. Numbering between 500,000 and one million and constituting less than 2 percent of the population,⁴ Colombian Indians already collectively own about 24 percent of the national territory -- more than 25,000,000 hectares (a hectare is 2.47 acres) in the form of *resguardos* or *reservas* (Sánchez, Roldán and Sánchez 1992). The word *resguardo* is not easy to translate; reserve, the closest English word, is misleading. Established during colonial times (the first legislation was in 1549), *resguardos* were pieces of land granted by the Crown to New Spain's Indian populations, which collectively managed and worked them and paid tribute to the Crown (Triana 1993:101-106). From the 17th century onward, *resguardos* were threatened again and again; laws were established allowing the sale of *resguardo* land, and juridical formulas effectively legalized their violent expropriation (Jaramillo Bustamante 1994; Pachón 1980-81; Ramírez de Jara 1993). Many *resguardos* fell into decline. Then in 1890, law 89 reversed the previous "progressivist" legislative trend during the 19th century that attempted to eliminate tribute-paying and privatize collective lands. The new legislation strengthened Indian claims to the lands given them by the Crown, and became the foundation for repossessions during the 1970s and 1980s. In addition to territory granted during the colonial era, new lands have been given to Indian communities during the past thirty years, most in the form of *resguardos*, some as *reservas* (reserves).

Indian communities living on *resguardos* prior to 1991 already enjoyed certain kinds of autonomy with respect to internal matters. Local authorities were known as *cabildos* -- another colonial institution. *Cabildos*, reflecting the Spaniards' interest in centralizing and urbanizing the scattered, "uncivilized" Indian populations, usually consisted of a governor, a mayor, and other officials known as *alguaciles* and *mayordomos*. *Cabildos* played an important mediating role between the Indian communities and the Spaniards, regulating tribute and *corvée* labor (Pachón 1980-81; Ramírez de Jara 1993:4). For a while, the new *resguardos* in the lowland forests and plains regions that were established during the last thirty years were governed by *cabildo*-like entities called *capitanías*, which did not reflect traditional political-administrative structures because these regions had no tradi-

tion of centralized authority. For example, a *capitanía* was installed when a *resguardo* was established in the Putumayo region by then-president Virgilio Barco; Indians were told to work out how this accorded with their traditions (Roberto Pineda, personal communication).⁵ Thus Indians appear to control an abundant quantity of land in Colombia. Yet, according to some estimates, non-Indians are found in as much as 80 percent of these territories, and "the majority of Indians continue to live in the most isolated and least fertile zones, in conditions of absolute misery" (Ayala Villamil 1994:2-C).

Legislation passed prior to 1991 guaranteed Indians the right to use their own language and to receive instruction from bilingual teachers. Still other laws protect native healing systems and facilitate their incorporation into the Ministry of Health programs in Indian communities. Indians also pay no taxes, are exempt from military service, and have certain rights with respect to subsoil resources (contained in the *Código de Minas*, the Code of Mines).⁶

The 1991 Constitution recognizes the authoritative bodies previously referred to as *cabildos* and *capitanías* as "indigenous authorities," (see the *Fuero Indígena* -- roughly translated as "Indigenous Privilege" -- the compendium of laws pertaining to Indians [Roldán 1990]). But Article 330 of the Constitution establishes how such territories can become ETIs with greatly increased local control of jurisprudential and administrative matters (see, for example, *El Tiempo* 1995), providing Colombia's Indians with an opportunity unparalleled in the rest of Latin America. These ETIs are to be governed by *Consejos Indígenas* (Indigenous Councils); the nature of these councils, and methods for recruiting members, are currently being decided by Colombia's Indian communities and the government. The Indigenous Councils will:

1. Oversee the application of legal norms regarding use of the land
2. Design the political programs and plans for economic and social development within the territory, in accordance with the National Plan of Development
3. Promote public investment in the territory and oversee its implementation
4. Identify and distribute resources
5. Safeguard natural resources
6. Coordinate the programs and projects promoted by the different communities in the territory
7. Collaborate in the maintenance of public order within the territory in keeping with the instructions and dispositions of the national government

8. Represent the territory to the national government and other entities
9. Perform other functions indicated by the Constitution and the Law (see Padilla 1993:18).

In Colombia, political-administrative territorial units take the form of departments, districts, municipalities, and indigenous territories (which can be *resguardos*, *reservas*, or civil communities). The Constitution also recognizes provinces, which can be formed by various units -- municipalities or indigenous territories -- within a department, and regions -- associations of departments. Currently, the process of establishing ETIs involves disseminating information to people living in indigenous territories, and organizing their decision-making about what type of administration they desire. Once choices are made, they will elect the kinds of authorities needed. This is part of the overall *ordenamiento territorial* process that recognizes local autonomy in a fundamentally new way and applies to the entire country, not just to Indian or black communities. The Constitution arranges for follow-up legislation, called the Organic Law for Territorial Demarcation, to specify the actual distribution of territorial entities and define in detail these units' actual responsibilities. This law will also regulate dispute settlement between the national government and the ETIs (see Betancourt and Rodríguez 1994:22).

The Constitution and subsequent legislation are part of an attempt to radically reorder Colombia's political landscape so that a significant amount of power will flow from the regions instead of from the capital. Orlando Fals Borda, Secretary of the Territorial Ordination Commission, states that "the future of the country is in its regions" (Alvarado 1994). These changes have spurred a great deal of debate in the national media. Colombia is excoerated by some as an isolated, backwards country; others warn that the centrifugal forces seen in the former Yugoslavia and Russia should be taken as a warning by the authorities engaged in bringing about a New Order (de la Calle Lombana 1994:8).

The Constitution does not specifically associate ETIs with *resguardos* (see Correa 1993:332, who also provides an overview of types of Indian territories). *Resguardo* legislation is concerned with land tenure, pure and simple, and establishes how Indians collectively own their lands; the ETI process (and the territorial ordinance as a whole) conceives of territory as material, social, and cultural space. Hence, in Colombian law, *territorio* means far more than its English cognate,⁷ and legislation on the future ETIs is far more comprehensive than the *resguardo* legislation.

Why has Colombia ceded so much territory to such a small segment of its citizens? Arriving at an answer obviously entails understanding the roots

of the crises the country is facing: the consequences of the peasant movements of the 1960s and the ethnic minority movements of the 1970s and 1980s, and the role of interested non-indigenous parties (the left, anthropologists, lawyers, etc. -- see Jimeno, this volume) in those movements; the legacy of violence (particularly between 1946-1966) and the persistence of armed insurgency in so many areas of the country; and the problems of Colombian traditional political parties have faced since the official end of the National Front in 1974 (see Hartlyn 1988; Kline 1983; Pearce 1990). Although ostensibly a centralized, bureaucratically modern -- albeit economically underdeveloped -- republic, the Colombian state is in fact so weak that it cannot administer a significant amount of the national territory, collect no taxes on the substantial portion of its GNP derived from the illegal drug trade, and falls far short of adequately enforcing civil and criminal statutes. The military and civil authorities' failure to successfully prosecute vast numbers of crimes⁸ have resulted in a horrendous human rights record: more than a million citizens have been displaced, an appallingly large number for a country of 38 million not formally at war (*El Espectador* 1993b). Colombia has the highest homicide rate in the world, and since 1988 more than ten people a day have been dying for political reasons (Colombia Update 1995:1).

In such a situation, there is perhaps an advantage to legislation that encourages citizens (Indians) to patrol their lands; some groups have applied for and received funding for such surveillance from international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In addition, giving so much land to its Indian minorities makes Colombia look good in the eyes of international indigenous rights and ecology movements. Such legislation may also work to safeguard various natural resources from exploitation until the government can control such "development"⁹ itself. One final reason might be the hope that this legislation will help transform activist Indians from dangerous revolutionaries into law-abiding citizens who see the government as an ally in their struggles to retain their land and preserve cultural and political autonomy.

At present, the Territorial Ordinance Commission is working on extensive changes in the political map of Colombia. (One recent debate, for example, concerned whether to set a minimum of a million inhabitants before a given Territorial Entity can be granted the status of department [Alvarado 1994: 7A1].) As part of this task, the Commission is to consider proposals on the "public territorial politics" (*politica pública territorial*) of the process of decentralization, a process that will radically alter the functions of the Ministry of Interior (Murcia 1994). ETIs will have much more flexibility in deciding how to govern themselves than will other administrative entities.

Thus, in the process of establishing ETIs, the Commission is supposed to develop procedures for administering territory inhabited by Indians that accord with local tradition which will, by definition, differ from those procedures for governing non-indigenous territory. Indians will also choose the kind of development and cultural strengthening they deem appropriate (Unidad Indígena 1993a:8). In sum, the 1991 Constitution and subsequent legislation recognize that Indians as a category have special rights, and seek to protect the variability and diversity found among the country's 84 Indian communities.¹⁰ An excellent example of putting such principles into action has been the efforts to translate the Constitution into Indian languages (see Garcia 1994; Rappaport and Dover, this volume).

Among the important issues still to be addressed are the status of non-Indians living within ETIs, and control of the subsoil in these territories. (On this latter point, there is a contradiction in the law: as Murillo [1993:4] points out, the Constitution says the subsoil belongs to the state, and also that natural resources on Indian lands will be respected.) Negotiations on these and other matters are public and spirited; for example, a proposal by the Ministry of Government that a minimum number of people be required for a territory to qualify for ETI status was strongly contested by Indian organizations (María Clemencia Ramírez de Jara, personal communication, November 1993; see also Padilla 1994).

Although space limitations prevent a detailed account of the Constitution and subsequent legislation, one point should be made clear: the Indigenous Councils will encounter serious obstacles in fulfilling their official duties. The list of Indigenous Council functions given above contains potential contradictions -- for example, preserving natural resources might very well conflict with promoting development. Problems may arise when current *cabildos* are integrated with the new Indigenous Councils because younger people, feeling more able to deal with the new tasks the Indigenous Councils are facing, may challenge the elder *cabildo* members (María Clemencia Ramírez de Jara, personal communication, February, 1995). In general, when we look at many of Colombia's Indian communities -- certainly the Vaupés -- we find their current capacity to administer ETIs severely limited.

the vaupés case

The characteristics of the Vaupés region pose considerable problems for Tukanoans (a term I will use to cover all inhabitants of the region, including Arawakan speakers and Makú¹¹) trying to determine what kind of ETI, or ETIs will suit them.

First, the Vaupés *resguardo*, titled in 1975, is quite large, totalling 3,354,097 hectares of communally owned, inalienable land. (Other, smaller *resguardos* have since been established in adjacent territory.) Geography makes transportation and communication difficult: dense forest and rapids-filled rivers characterize this territory and there are no roads. Its 20,000 Indian inhabitants, while most live near rivers, are widely dispersed: outside of the municipality of Mitiú, the capital of the department of the Vaupés since 1994, the largest settlement (the mission town of Acaricuará) is 300 people. If the Vaupés becomes a single ETI, the problems of administering such a vast area with such forbidding natural features will be a nightmare, even without the other problems such a scenario suggests to those who know the region.

Second, the Vaupés does not easily divide into smaller units along socio-cultural lines. The traditional Tukanoan social structure and settlement pattern do not allow any clear correlation between territory and ethnic group (with the exception of most, but not all, Cubeo, who live on the Vaupés river itself and to the north). Although they are called "ethnic groups," the patrilineal language-affiliated units (previously referred to as tribes: I call them language groups) are actually exogamous clans that participate in a regionally integrated social system characterized by extensive multilingualism and linguistic exogamy.¹² Each community belongs to a language group, and individuals must marry someone both from a different community and affiliated to a different primary language -- a "father-tongue," since the system is patrilineal. While each of these language groups is associated with a certain area within the Vaupés, they do not inhabit any area exclusively, (again, with the exception of the Cubeo), and their respective boundaries are fuzzy at best -- most language groups' settlements overlap with those of one or more others. Also, as with all small-scale societies, demographic fluctuations affect the size of the territory actually inhabited over time. In short, given the number, fluctuating sizes, and distribution of language groups, it would be extremely difficult to delimit potential ETIs using criteria associated with language group membership.

Third, depending on whether one includes mestizos or not, the population of the Vaupés region is between 84 percent and 95 percent Indian. This means that Mitiú poses a problem, because almost all the region's non-Indian and mestizo inhabitants live there. (A few *colonos* -- colonists -- live along the road under construction that connects Mitiú to the mission town of Monfort on the Papuri River to the south; other *colonos* live in Taraira and Monca)¹³ Some ETIs elsewhere in the country are making provisions to accommodate non-Indians within their borders; others are to be made up of

Indians from several Indian communities (e.g., both Páez and Guambiano live in Cauca, see Murillo 1993:4). Thus, while ETIs will be governed by Indigenous Councils, they are not conceived of as containing exclusively Indian populations. Nonetheless, the ETI-formation process currently underway in the Vaupés does not reassure the non-Indians living there that their needs will be taken care of come the New Regime.

In a booklet on ETIs written for Indian communities by the federal General Direction of Indigenous Affairs (*Asuntos Indígenas*), one of the question-and-answer pairs is, "What happens if a white population is surrounded by an Indian territory, and does not want to be a part of this ETI?" The answer offered is "we all will look for a solution" (Ministerio de Gobierno 1993:62). This question is indeed asked constantly in the Vaupés, and the responses are no more helpful than the response given in the booklet: Non-Indians living in Mitiú -- most of whom, of course, depend on Tukanoans for their livelihood in some way -- seem to be quite worried about the future. Those who work for government agencies know that decentralization means their offices will no longer be part of the Ministries of Government, Education, or Health, etc., with supervisors in Bogotá, but will be part of a departmental Secretary of Government, Education, or Health, etc., located in Mitiú, with a staff very likely to be mostly Indian. Tukanoans have held such government positions already in the region. One, Jesús Santacruz, a Carapana, was Secretary of Education; another, Leonardo Caycedo, a Wanano, was Secretary of Government. Hence, non-Indian bureaucrats and technicians living in Mitiú, sent there by the state, worry about retaining their jobs and about how these jobs will change if they do keep them.

Some non-Indian *colonos* in Mitiú make despairing comments such as, "this is a totally artificial town, it generates no money, it lives off of the government and corruption; there never were any real possibilities and there never will be." Several *colonos* I spoke with in October, 1993 were moving upriver to grow coca in a recently delimited *resguardo*. The Tukanoans currently living there were brought from downriver communities by rubber gatherers earlier in the century, displacing that region's traditional inhabitants, Carib-speaking Carijonas. So far these Tukanoans are permitting *colonos* to enter the *resguardo* and plant coca, but sooner or later conflict will erupt, and the region may experience its first violent interethnic confrontation in many years (note that bloody confrontations between Indian and non-Indian individuals occur all the time).

CRIVA (*Consejo Regional de Indígenas del Vaupés* -- the Regional Indigenous Council of the Vaupés), the local Indian organization founded in 1973 to protect indigenous culture and land rights, has played a significant

role in protecting the Vaupés *resguardo*. This includes collecting information about, and reporting intrusions of, *colonos* interested in prospecting for gold or growing coca. However, CRIVA is reluctant to take a stand on this particular issue. One member explained, "we don't want to undertake a *muela* (civil suit) against narco-traffickers." When I commented that it was Mitú *colonos*, not the bosses, who were going to grow coca, I was told, "It's the same. If we attack the growers, it will be seen as attacking the dealers." This anecdote illustrates one of the many difficulties those who lead the Vaupés ETTI (or ETTIs) will have to confront.

Fourth, the nature of the future Vaupés Indigenous Council is an important issue for all. Many in the region, Indian and non-Indian, fear the future Council will resemble the present CRIVA. I cannot go into the organization's past or present problems here (see Jackson 1989, 1991, 1995a) except to note that CRIVA, while bringing some real benefits for Indians in the region (successfully pressuring the government to eliminate a military base established in 1988, and helping to win civil suits against New Tribes Missionaries and exploratory titanium mining; see ICAN Noticias 1993:5), nonetheless has an extremely weak base outside that part of the *resguardo* nearest Mitú, and problematic relations with several of the twelve local Vaupés Indian organizations that are its affiliates.

One proposal — based on the size of the Vaupés *resguardo* and the substantial Indian majority, was simply to create an Indian department rather than one or more ETTIs. But, people asked, what would become of the department of the Vaupés, which would then effectively consist solely of the part of Mitú that was not part of the *resguardo*? What would happen to the governor? A town of approximately 6,000 hardly needs department status; Mitú is currently governed by an *alcalde* (mayor) and his council. Furthermore, Mitú itself is mostly Indian — Mitú's mayor until September, 1994 was a mestizo who self-identifies as an Indian.

The solution, I was told in October, 1993, by informed people in Bogotá, was to make the Vaupés into one or more ETTIs, not a department. In addition, the director of a large division of the Ministry of *Planeación Nacional* (National Planning) informed me that the government would never accept an Indian department. (However, another well-placed, well-informed individual remarked, "Never say never. Who would have thought we would have such a Constitution ten years ago? That something like the ETTIs would be legislated into existence? That the Church would lose so much power?") As a department, the Vaupés could have enjoyed many short-term benefits: a fair amount of power in Indian hands and a considerable amount of money coming in. But there would have been far less opportunity for the Vaupés to

define itself as *Indian* in terms of maintaining traditions, rejecting conventional politico-administrative arrangements and non-Indian forms of politicking, or being free to create a genuinely new kind of territorial order.

All in all, it is not surprising that the activist members of CRIVA I spoke with in October 1993 saw a great deal of work ahead of them. With respect to the ETTIs, CRIVA leaders seemed most worried about the possibility that other local change agents might challenge the unification CRIVA claims to have achieved over the past twenty years in the region. A document prepared by CRIVA in May, 1993 as part of the Territorial Ordinance process states that:

The Vaupés ought to be a single ETTI. We cannot divide a territory which, during thousands of years, has been inhabited by 23 indigenous populations. This would go against the traditions and rules that arose during centuries of interethnic coexistence and harmonious relations with our forest. We think, also, that those territories inhabited by indigenous communities, that have the nucleus of their original population in the Vaupés territory, ought to be annexed to this great territory, because we cannot continue making territorial divisions without considering the cultural ties that unite us. [CRIVA 1993:2-3]¹⁴

The document states that the Vaupés is the largest cultural complex not only in the Amazon basin but in the entire world, because 23 *pueblos* (peoples¹⁵) live together. The document links ethnic and biological diversity, saying that the great variety of flora and fauna found in the Vaupés depends on the continued existence of the region's ethnic variety, and vice-versa. "If there is an element common to all of our cultures it is that we live and we respect this biodiversity" (CRIVA 1993:4). The document warns that people coming into the region from elsewhere might not understand this relationship of mutual dependence, and so threaten the environment; it goes on to recommend formulating strategies to restrict immigration. It ends with the signatures of eighteen Tukanooan community leaders (*capitanes*). The authors of the document have clearly been influenced by two currently fashionable discourses: ecological awareness and multiculturalism, both of which draw on notions of richness and variety to strengthen their arguments. Certainly the national media and indigenous press often link Indians to ecological awareness (see, for instance, Solorzano 1994:15A), and Tukanooans read and talk about some of these pieces.¹⁶

An account of negotiations between CRIVA and a team from the De-

Department of National Planning trying to devise a development policy for the Department of the Vaupés in October 1993 provides an example of one sort of threat CRIVA perceives. According to the leader, the team devised a plan that would create four ETIs in the form of municipalities. The advantage of such an arrangement would be that each ETI could request funds directly from the national government, rather than having to go through the Vaupés governor's office. Mitiú, already a municipality, would not be an ETI, and would continue its role as the administrative and commercial center of the region.

The team also had a development plan for the four proposed ETIs. The upper Vaupés would specialize in tourism, with Tukanoans earning money for baskets and other artisanal production, and Tukanoan dance performances -- the leader had seen videos of "adventure tourism" and she felt the upper Vaupés had some potential for this. To the south, in the Pirá-paraná region, gold deposits would be developed. And in the Tiquié region, where, the leader said, traditional culture is still strong, Indians would specialize in marketing medicinal and other exotic plants. The fourth ETI would consist of the area to the north of the Vaupés River. Space does not permit a thorough analysis of this scheme; suffice it to say that it reflects a fairly profound ignorance of the problems and prospects of those Vaupés regions at some remove from Mitiú.

A member of CRIVA who had attended a meeting ("confrontation" was the term he used) between the CRIVA board and the development team told me the team's proposal was utterly unsatisfactory. He said CRIVA fundamentally disagrees with the idea of dividing the *resguardo* and creating several municipality-like ETIs, each with a mayor and council. He also said that he told the team that the four proposed ETIs would be competing against each other. Further, since the *resguardo* is protected by the Constitution, why would anyone want to give up some of it and cede territory to the municipality of Mitiú? He did acknowledge that, in the future, Indians living in the municipality of Mitiú and not on *resguardo* land would present a problem. They would either have to move (which I think is very unlikely, and he agreed) or some arrangement would be made for them to be under Indian law, not non-Indian law. He stated:

We have fought 20 years to unify the region. There is diversity here, and earlier there was a lot of mistrust...if you called a meeting, someone would say, "there's a Carripaco, and he's going to poison me..." But now we have reached a point where we are unified, at least a bit, despite the diversity. At least now

someone from Mitiú can go to Yapiú [on the Papuri River to the south], and a Tukano can go to Cubeo communities...well, now they go, to talk, to consult. This cost us a lot of work, it was not easy. How are we going to agree, then, to our territory being divided? We do not want a municipality arrangement.¹⁷

I cannot evaluate whether CRIVA is correct in its belief that dividing up the Vaupés *resguardo* would be wrong; there are advantages to division and advantages to territorial unity. Dividing the Vaupés into two or more ETIs would almost certainly diminish CRIVA's power base. They have already faced such threats: in October 1993, I was told that Tukanoans in the Pirá-paraná region had announced earlier in the year that they were pulling out of CRIVA's sphere of influence (they later decided not to).

Whatever administrative unit or units come out of this process they will definitely not resemble traditional Tukanoan patterns of administering territory. Several of the ONIC (*Organización Nacional de Indígenas de Colombia*, National Organization of Colombian Indians) lawyers who worked on proposals for the Constitution specifically sought to "create nothing new whenever possible"; however, such a goal is simply impossible to achieve in this case.¹⁸

Another interesting issue is the role mestizos will play in the Vaupés when it is converted into one or more ETIs. Mestizos are a well-recognized minority (perhaps 10 percent); all of them, so far as I know, have a non-Indian father and Indian mother. Both Indians and non-Indians in Mitiú say that Mitiú mestizos are opportunists, that one cannot always know whether a given mestizo will try to appear white or Indian. And it is true that in the past mestizos have usually tried to appear non-Indian. And if it is true that there are advantages to being Indian, many are swinging in that direction.¹⁹ A good example is Maximiliano Veloz, mayor of Mitiú until the fall of 1994,²⁰ who is always referred to as "Indian" and "Carapana" even though his father is non-Indian. Twenty years ago Veloz would have been classified as *caboclo* ("mixed race," originally a Portuguese term roughly meaning "backwoodsman") rather than Indian: since kinship is patrilineal, one cannot belong to one's mother's kin group. But Veloz was nonetheless celebrated as the first Indian to be elected mayor of an important town. For example, he is identified as a Carapana in a booklet on ETIs prepared by Asuntos Indígenas, and quoted in the opening section:

[T]o be able to manage [Power is to know how to administer. It is something very good, but one must know how to hold it. I am holding power in the Indian way. [in our communities] we nomi-

nate a head [captain], one must respect this person. But he has to consult with the community when he acts. He does not act on personal authority but on authority given him by the community. Indigenous power means coming together in order to make a decision, in my case, to consult with the municipal council, hold meetings with the indigenous communities, with CRIVA and with various institutions, so that they have a say in things as well. [Dirección General de Asuntos Indígenas 1993:15-16]

Some *colonos* illustrate the fluidity of the classification of mestizos in Miti. One *colono*, Henry Gómez, had a famous rubber-gatherer father (known as "Tío Barbas") and a Yuruti mother. Henry has always looked and acted non-Indian. However, when I spoke with him in 1993, he referred to "we the Indians" every so often and said he regretted that his father had forbidden Henry's mother to teach him her language.

Vaupés mestizos will play an important role in the next few years. For one thing, their numbers are growing. Miti mestizos have their own local organization (although it is at present largely moribund) and rarely see eye to eye with CRIVA. (CRIVA did support Veloz in the 1992 mayoral election, but a CRIVA leader told me the organization withdrew its support when everyone saw that Veloz was just as much of a *politiquero* -- an entirely self-interested politician -- as all the other public officials in Miti).

Politiqueria is also one of the two problems (the other is alcohol abuse) most mentioned by non-Indians in both Miti and Bogotá when discussing CRIVA; the organization is said to mishandle funds and to buy votes. Still, it is very clear that *some* sort of pan-Vaupés Indian organization is necessary; for one thing, a gate-keeper is needed to lessen the risk of remote Tukanoan communities being deceived by unscrupulous agents. Furthermore, without such an organization, Vaupés Indians would not be well represented, either locally or nationally, because of the historical and political context in which they live. Virtually everyone has more or less the same following criticisms of CRIVA, which is especially worth noting because it seems very likely that similar criticisms will be made of any Indigenous Council that ultimately governs the Vaupés ETI (or ETIs), no matter how it is chosen or who its members are.

1. CRIVA often denies access to Tukanoan communities to parties from outside the Vaupés -- in Bogotá and internationally -- interested in developing the region (and to anthropologists wanting to carry out research).

2. Tension and competition exist between CRIVA and the more narrowly localized regional organizations, in particular UNIZAC (*Unión de*

Indígenas de la Zona de Acaricuara, representing the region around Acaricuara).

3. CRIVA has access to money and power, and envious people believe such resources should be deployed elsewhere. (For example, I have been told that providing equipment such as a laptop computer for research projects authorized by CRIVA is a waste of money.)

4. Racist people see CRIVA as one of many examples of a world gone topsy-turvy because money, power, and symbolic capital properly belong to non-Indians.

5. Some non-Indians who definitely support the idea of a pan-Vaupés Indian organization have had so many run-ins with individual CRIVA officials that they are antagonistic to the entire organization.

6. A substantial number of leaders of Tukanoan communities have had conflicts with CRIVA leaders.

7. There are other, at times competing, interests in the Vaupés (such as the Catholic Prefecture, the *Centro Experimental Piloto* [the Experimental Pilot Center, run by the Ministry of Education], *colonos*, etc. (see Jackson 1995b)).

Unfortunately, even if all of CRIVA's officials were to be replaced, the situation might not change much. CRIVA receives mixed reviews mainly because of the environment within which it operates. Its leaders may not have performed well, but they are anything but hardened criminals. Rather, the organization's unfortunate reputation derives from its beginnings (some still see its officials as lackeys of the local Catholic Prefecture); its structure, which is based entirely on a western bureaucratic model still not fully understood or accepted by some Tukanoans; and its role as a pawn in the machinations of various vested interests, both local and in Bogotá. Finally, its main role models, non-Indian public officials in Miti, are, for the most part, absolutely deplorable. In short, most of CRIVA's problems have arisen from the political-economic structures and cultures within which it is embedded, despite the fact that it is an organization of Indian people. Most of this political environment will remain, and will affect future Vaupés Indigenous Councils in similar ways.

Of course, a radically different indigenous organization might bring much improvement. A Tukanoan version of a populist, reformist political party could challenge CRIVA's current leaders and operating procedures, and be swept in by a landslide vote as a Vaupés pan-Indian political organization that genuinely represented its constituency. But so many barriers would have to be surmounted for this to take place, in both Miti and Bogotá, that such an optimistic scenario is extremely unlikely. Although there is not space

here to fully develop this argument, the lesson is that what appear to be grass-roots movements -- inspiring examples of local or national minorities wresting a modicum of power from the ruling elite -- may be short-lived or not entirely what they seem. This is not to deny the enormous changes that have occurred as a result of the Indian rights movement in Colombia but only to say that what appear to have been revolutionary changes may not have been all that radical and comprehensive in terms of changing the social and political order. Hence, we need to understand how those changes that have occurred must fit with what in many respects remains a status quo political process.

the chimeras of extensive ethnic autonomy within modern states: auto-orientalization and cooptation

In the Vaupés and elsewhere, it is possible that the processes leading to the formation of ETIs will not strengthen the Indians' traditional forms of self-government, but rather will result in nothing more than the appearance of autonomy with political and economic domination by the metropole remaining as the continuing, underlying reality. Obviously, the legal mandates to establish Indigenous Councils and new mechanisms for self-governance constitute very significant entitlements and could indeed safeguard traditional practices. But as all ETIs must be administered in accordance with the Constitution and other Colombian laws, they will need mechanisms allowing them to interact with other equivalent units and the national government.²¹

Under the law, when local communities have decided what form their ETI will take, local councils will determine whether or not to institute taxation, what kinds of land tenure systems will be permitted, and what development policies and programs need to be established.²² That these will be *indigenous* policies, programs, and agencies is indisputable; the Constitution declares these to be "indigenous territories," to be administered by "indigenous authorities." However, the Vaupés situation shows that the resulting arrangements, while visibly different from non-Indian arrangements in some respects -- alterity will be recognized and celebrated -- might fall far short of securing and maintaining traditional forms of self-government. The complex distinction between the "indigenous culture" discourse and actual indigenous people -- who show individual and collective behaviors, opinions, and beliefs, and who come into contact with, and perforce must deal with,

the behaviors, opinions, and beliefs of other individuals and groups -- is crucial here (see papers by Jimeno as well as Rappaport and Dover, this volume). For example, at first sight, the Vaupés seems extremely fortunate: the vast majority of people in the territory are Indian; the danger from *colono* invasions so far has been slight when compared to many other parts of the country; there is ample land; and their form of land tenure is as secure as that possessed by most citizens of the country.²³ Yet the picture is not a rosy one, both for reasons spelled out above (e.g., narcotrafficking), and the potential constraints on the autonomy of the indigenous communities inhabiting the ETIs, in the Vaupés and elsewhere, resulting from current trends in the metropole. Will *indigenous culture* come to mean a monolithic indigenous culture, one arrived at through negotiation, largely concerned with socio-political ends, among non-indigenous experts (*asesores* and other kinds of advisers), Indians who have come to adopt an essentialized pan-Indian vision of indigenous culture, and bureaucrats from the various ministries representing a variety of vested interests?

Another risk is that councils will evolve in ways characterized by a process of auto-orientalization (see Carrier 1992; Jackson 1995a; Said 1978). That is, Indian individuals and organizations may try to fashion themselves to fit Western constructions of Indianness. Friedman (1992:332) describes a process by which we in the West, who retain the practice of writing the Other for ourselves, feel we have the authority to both represent the Other and to prevent the Other from speaking. Then, through a variety of colonial and post-colonial apparatuses, we return that identity to Others so that it becomes their own identity. When I speak of Indians orientalizing themselves I refer to one version of this process. And when this happens (and I have argued elsewhere [1995a] that it is already happening in the Vaupés), it means that the dominant society (at all levels -- local, Colombian, and the West in general) is, to some extent, determining the Indian identity found in these communities.

That an emerging notion of Indianness in the remotest parts of Colombia receives some of its form and content from battles for the right to alterity fought elsewhere by the pan-Indian and pan-aboriginal movements is not in itself worrisome. I am not saying that compromise, or evolution, or blends of indigenous, western -- and even self-orientalized -- cultural forms are not ever appropriate; indeed, many conflicts between indigenous communities and national states have been resolved, apparently successfully, in ways that involve precisely such compromise. In Colombia, for instance, the *Línea Negra* (a "Black Line" formed by all the sacred sites in the region of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta defined by religious leaders from the Kogui,

Arhuaco, Arzario, and, more recently, Kankamo groups), is included in Article 36 of Law 99 of 1993 concerned with the process of territorial ordination (Solorzano 1994:15A). Communities must periodically pay at these sites what in effect are insurance premiums in order to maintain the ecological equilibrium of the entire world; without this line being defined and maintained by such payments, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and pestilence would prevail. Another example comes from New Zealand: in a legal case brought by the Te Ahi Awa tribe, the Chief Justice began by stating that it was important to seek out "the spirit, the life force of the [Waitangi] Treaty... and asked the members of Te Ahi Awa for advice on how to do this" (quoted in Levine 1991:445). Hanson (1989), coining the word "Maoritanga" for this process, analyzes it as a case of "bicultural" processes in which two very different traditions accommodate themselves to each other in certain significant ways. One other innovative solution that appears to have succeeded elsewhere involves safeguards for indigenous intellectual property rights worked out between various U.S. Indian communities and state and federal agencies (see Greaves 1994). But while there are success stories, and while the dangers are admittedly far less serious than those faced by many indigenous communities elsewhere in the western hemisphere (Guatemala and Brazil being prime examples), the effects of these more subtle hegemonic influences, although often obscured, are very much in evidence in countries like Colombia. When it is the Indian communities that do all the bending and compromising, we do not have a story of success.

Being a self-orientalized "other" might indeed be better than annihilation or assimilation into the lowest socio-economic stratum, totally detracinated and without hope or self-esteem. Surely the current popularity of the indigenous rights movement among non-Indians throughout the Americas is vastly preferable to the earlier popularity of our hemisphere's own forms of ethnic cleansing. As many have noticed, at present it is very much the fashion -- in Colombia, the United States, Europe, and elsewhere, -- to celebrate Indianness as an alternative to our consumerist, exploitative, arrogant, wasteful, violent, non-spiritual western culture. The largest Indian tribe in the U.S., according to *The New Mexican* (1993), is the "wannabe tribe" (1993), and the various ways Indians in Canada and the U.S. deal with non-Indian "wannabe" pressures, which come in many forms, are instructive (see Churchill 1994; Ford 1993; Johnson 1994).

Earlier state projects in Colombia and elsewhere excluded Indians almost entirely -- including them as distinct entities only in laws that granted temporary special privileges (or, most often, restrictions) during the time they needed to become "civilized" citizens. What is occurring at present, at

least in Colombia, sometimes seems a rather subtle form of neo-colonial indirect rule. And while this is no doubt an improvement over the attempt to create a homogeneous, Christian, Spanish-speaking national society, we must not assume those in power envision genuine autonomy or genuine cultural valorization. Diaz Polanco (1993) refers to this idea with the apt metaphor of the "Trojan Horse" (see also Padilla 1993:26). Other informed activists in Bogotá make the same points. For example, one commented to me in October 1993 that:

The state has let go of the reins and allowed Indian organizations to assume a lot of power. But this means that Indian organizations will become part of the state apparatus. They're losing their capacity to criticize the state. There are Indians in ONIC who no longer can criticize the Ministry of Education -- they say it is the best ministry in South America, repeating what they have heard there, because that's where they get their money and social status from. They have been co-opted.

In short, Colombia remains a national state, a state that considers it necessary to vigorously promote the *Plan Pacifico* and other similar development projects which, disclaimers to the contrary, ignore the interests of the local communities being "developed."²⁴ Like all institutions, the Colombian state is interested in perpetuating and strengthening itself, as in all states, this involves getting citizens to see the state's goals as their own. Interested Colombians are investigating traditional forms of land tenure and methods of social control in Colombia's Indian and minority communities, and working out how to transform these institutions so that such groups can remain distinct yet participate fully as Colombian citizens. But they are doing this in ways that reveal a great deal about the mechanisms for furthering state interests by continuing to consolidate some forms of state power under the guise of policies promoting decentralization and multiculturalism.

conclusions

In recent years many national states, especially in the Western Hemisphere, have accepted the principle that their aboriginal populations have the right to exist qua populations -- eight Latin American countries have modified their constitutions along these lines (Padilla 1993:4). This is part of the larger postmodernist movement that recognizes there might be more than one truth, that accepts and at times celebrates cultural diversity, and

that questions earlier unexamined values such as progress, reliance on high-tech solutions, the advisability of ever-greater exploitation of the earth's resources, and the 18th century ideal of the democratic nation-state -- the nationalist master narrative analyzed by such authors as Anderson (1983), Gellner (1983), and Hobsbawm (1990). That Colombia is caught up in these currents is reflected by the 1991 Constitutional process and its sequelae.

In the future, Colombian Indian communities will not be overtly forced to acquire the language, religion, political, economic, and legal system of the West -- at least not to the extent they were during the colonial and republican eras. But I would argue that there is a danger that some of these communities will be subtly coerced, by hegemonic processes, into taking on a specific kind of alterity: that in searching for their roots (in the form of mythic and other traditional lore) to define and justify their choices of mechanisms to administer their territories and govern themselves, these communities will be greatly influenced by western traditions, including western notions of the Indian Other. The epistemological confrontation between the two traditions (in actuality, many more than two, because "Indian" takes many forms) will, of necessity, go forward; the result may be successful, unsuccessful, or both -- what defines success or failure is as complex as what determines them, and my purpose here is not to provide a programmatic set of criteria for either procedure. Rather, I want to indicate some of the more subtle dangers facing Colombian Indian communities undergoing this process, while acknowledging that opportunities exist for self-determination unavailable since the Conquest. These particular perceptions stem from my anxieties about the future of the region of Colombia I know best, the Vaupés.

Guillermo Padilla refers to current Colombian Indian leaders as "obsessed in a cult of law of the State that we might well call a fetishism of the law" (1993:14). He sees a "paradox" in which, after long years of bloody fighting and winning many concessions, now the parameters of the fight are changing and too much emphasis is being placed on the "parliamentary machinery" (1993:14), on the "game" of forming political alliances. In short, he is describing a process of co-optation in which Indian leaders come to accept the state's parameters and the state's definition of the terms under which an engagement will take place.²⁵ Diaz Polanco (1993) is of similar opinion.

In this process, Indian organizations become, in many ways, agents of the state, with similar bureaucracies, language, constructions of what needs to be done and how to do it. True, they are ostensibly outside of the state apparatus -- indeed, they represent interests often opposed to those of state

bureaucracies -- but such differences can become minor. Indian organizations gain power and win many concessions, but in the process these interactions can also lead Indian leaders to identify, at times unconsciously, with representatives of state agencies, or national or international NGOs. Substantial evidence of such identification can be found in Colombia. Padilla, referring to ethnoeducation, ethno-health and ethno-development, puts it succinctly: "It is as though the prefix 'ethno-' erases from the plan the threat of the expansion of western-capitalist hegemony" (1993:23). As he points out, if it is the Indians themselves, authorized by the Constitution, who are in charge of education, development, and so forth, then what (and who) is there to resist? "This leads us to question these reforms in the life of Indian peoples, whether these peoples gain or lose with the incorporation of their rights and legal systems in the constitutional orbit..." (Padilla 1993:24). He argues that the consciousness of otherness is the key to continuing to resist, and this explains the survival of native peoples: "It is as if with the possibility of incorporation of Indian peoples in the juridical-political structure of the State, they were abandoning their condition as peoples, with a particular historical vision and expression, in order to form part of civil society in a global project of the national society" (Padilla 1993: 25).

I concur; there is such a danger. Paradoxically, despite implementation of the new laws, Colombian Indian peoples might find the possibilities of living their culture and realizing their own historical project significantly reduced. The danger of being absorbed into the dominant culture, in the sense of coming to identify with the politics and ideology of the state (with perhaps some emblematic but rather superficial "lifestyle" differences enduring) remains great. The mechanisms are more subtle than outright forced assimilation, but, as Diaz Polanco (1993) comments, a state with mechanisms that are subtle and difficult to discern is a more effective state.

While the Constitution has created significant changes in the juridical status of Indians and Indian communities in Colombia, the guarantees, the laws that enforce such principles, remain to be worked out. As Correa (1993:333) indicates, these guarantees will "be a task that demands knowledge, experience and imagination." Colombia's Indians will need all three if they are to internalize and utilize sentiments like those expressed in this letter written by the *mama* (spiritual leader) Kancha Navinguma from Nabusmake to the Constitutional Assembly Constituent Lorenzo Muelas in 1991:

*For us it is strange that a law change, as happens with the
bunachis or civilized people. It is strange but we respect it...
Yes, it is strange, not because we do not understand it but be-*

cause for us the law is permanent, to [help us] remain Indians in conformity with our law, in conformity with our origin and tradition. The new Constitution of Colombia is not our fundamental law (ley de origen), but if it helps us achieve the mandate of our forefathers, and recognizes our territory, then we can well create an equilibrium that incorporates elements of this Constitution, subject to our traditions.²⁶

I am not saying that this is an "accurate" comment -- laws, for example, do change in traditional as well as modern societies. But it expresses an attitude of confidence in one's difference and in one's ability to remain different, a perspective that many Colombian Indian communities will almost certainly need in the coming years. Colombia, Indian and non-Indian, will change; what would be most advantageous is movement in both directions.²⁷

notes

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1. The processes discussed in this paper are ongoing, and while I have tried to keep abreast of events, distance and sporadic communication greatly hamper my ability to offer any comprehensive analysis of what has happened since October of 1993.

2. On the Colombian black consciousness movement, see Arocha (1992, 1993); Brooke (1994); Escobar (1994); Friedemann (1993); Friedemann and Arocha (1986); Ramirez (1994); and Wade (1993a, 1993b, 1995).

3. The history of interaction between left organizing and Indian organizing in Colombia is complex; some orthodox Marxists, applying a class struggle analysis to the nation's problems, criticized Indian organizations as being "behind" (Jimeno, this volume). However, the guerrilla group M-19, at the time demobilized (but now reemerging; see Brooke 1995) was very influential with respect to ensuring representation for Colombia's minorities in the debates during the period (*pre-constituyente*) immediately before the Constitutional Assembly was convened. Buenahora Febrés-Cordero (1991), Gros (1991), and Pineda (1984) provide overviews.

4. The question of just how many Indians live in Colombia is not clear. Garcia (1994) states that there are one million Indians out of 38 million Colombians, or more than 2.5 percent of the total population. This is double the number cited in official sources prior to the census of 1993 (Jimeno 1993: 245). A newspaper article from October 1994 gives a figure of 700,000 Indians, stating this to be 1.5 percent of the country's population (Vargas Acevedo 1994: 2-A).

5. According to Ramirez de Jara (1993: 10), this legislation 1) helped stabilize the *resguardos*, 2) helped establish the indigenous *cabildos*' legal status, 3) stabilized the *cabildos* and thus the communities themselves, 4) provided for a certain amount of community decision-making autonomy with respect to their traditions and customs, and 5) strengthened *resguardo* titles by making them "impossessionable, inalienable, and imprescriptible" (also see Gros 1991).

6. Note that some apparent benefits were eliminated by the 1991 Constitution. For example, Indians can no longer obtain credit for agricultural enterprises from the *Caja Agraria* (agricultural credit bureau), which has been dissolved. Arrangements like subsidies are now criticized as having been "top-down" and paternalistic. At the first National Indian Congress in 1982, then-president Belisario Betancur spoke of a "politics of cooperation" between Indians and the government rather than one of "imposition" (see Roldán 1983:26-27).

7. See Jimeno (this volume) on the extensive meaning *territorio* has had in Colombia.

8. "The worst problem is that impunity in Colombia is all but absolute: 97 percent in criminal actions, and 100 percent in human rights violations since they are tried by the military judiciary" (Colombia Update 1995: 2, also Pearce 1990: 268-269).

9. See Stiles (1992), who hypothesizes that the real reason for the Tasaady and 'Tau' Batu deceptions in the Philippines -- the attempt to pass off interdependent foragers as isolated subsistence ones -- was to make it possible to declare reserves off-limits to everyone. These two groups happen to live in two of the last remaining primary forest areas in the country, forests with great quantities of valuable hardwoods, and the government can keep everyone except approved people out of these reserves. Approved people can and do include timber tycoons in the Philippines.

10. The actual number of Indian groups in Colombia is somewhat uncertain. Ayala Villanil (1994:2-C) lists 82, as do Cardona (1993) and Betancourt and Rodríguez (1994), but most sources list 84 (see, for instance, Navia 1994). Gros discusses the Kankuamos, a recently resuscitated Indian community living in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (1994: 2), which presumably increases the total number of indigenous communities in Colombia to 85 (see also *Unidad Indígena* 1993b:14; 1993c:10).

11. For more comprehensive treatments of Tukanoan ethnography, see books by Arhen (1981), Brúzzi (1962), Charrelia (1993), Goldman (1963), C. Hugh-Jones (1979), S. Hugh-Jones (1979), Jackson (1983), and Reichel-Dolmatoff (1971). Also consult Sorensen (1967), and Gómez-Inhber (1991).

12. At times CRIVA, the local Indian rights organization, lists 22 indigenous groups in the region, at other times 24; almost all fit this characterization (the Makú, Currupaco, Makuna and Cubeo do not follow the rule of linguistic exogamy; however, Cubeo and Makuna resemble other Tukanoans in most other respects).

13. I was told that the 25 *colono* families living on the Mitú-to-Monfort road are afraid they will be made to leave once the ETIs are established: "the government brought us in and now they don't care about us," they apparently said. I was also told that some *colonos* have married into Indian families in order to get access to more land; this was described as "pure opportunism."

14. This document was prepared for a forum organized by Corpes Orinoquia (the Ministry of Planning unit to which the Vaupés belongs) attended by representatives of ONIC (*Organización Nacional de Indígenas de Colombia*, National Organization of Colombian Indians) and the Department of the Vaupés in May, 1993. The Corpes Orinoquia office response was a document stating that, although the majority of Vaupés Indians wanted a single ETI, the possibility of several should still be considered, and that Indian Communes should avoid repeating the "centralist experience" of the existing department structure and should represent all Indian and non-Indian communities. This seems to me a not-to-be-veiled criticism of CRIVA.

15. *Pueblos* can be translated as "peoples" or "communities." According to Stephen (1994:1), the term is increasingly coming to mean "people" in the sense of "nation."

16. For a discussion of this issue among Canada's M'icmac Indians, see Hornborg (1995).

17. Note that Sánchez, Roldán and Sánchez (1993) propose a model for ETI organization that resembles municipalities a great deal.

18. Reichel (1992) gives a good example of just how legislation deriving from the Constitution fails

far short of replicating traditional cultural forms in parts of Amazonia to the south of the Vaupés.

19. For further information on "neo-Indians" -- those Colombians who want to journey from mesizo status to Indian status, see Gros (1994: 16). For a general discussion of Latin American "neo-Indian identity" see Varese (1991: 16-17).
20. Veloz was accused of hindering the transfer of 152 million pesos from the Ministry of Housing to the Tukanoans living in the Vaupés *resguardo*. He resigned "in the central plaza" of Mitú on September 21, 1994, after the mayoral offices had been occupied for several days by over 100 Tukanoans (*El Tiempo* 1994: 32 D; see also Ayala Villamil 1994: 2-G). For background on Veloz see Godoy (1988).
21. A good example of the exercise of state power is a case in which the Colombian court overturned an Indian community's punishment of a thief by exiling him (*El Espectador* 1994).
22. The national media's treatment of development illustrates just how thorny this issue is: at times, they champion a conservative position rejecting all non-Indian forms of infrastructure; at other times, they favor almost the opposite position (see Ayala Villamil 1994 2-C; Cardona 1993).
23. This is not to say their tenure is absolutely secure. Indians elsewhere in the country are finding their lands flooded by hydroelectric projects and expropriated for military bases (Cardona 1993).
24. See Barnes (1993), Escobar (1994) and Departamento Nacional de Planeación (1992).
25. Note that the way I am talking runs the risk of mystifying "the state" when examining the political processes in Colombia that involve Indian leaders and the federal government, because the state's various components -- actual individuals and agencies -- are quite often at cross-purposes with one another.
26. Cited in Gros (1993: 8), my translation. Padilla (1993: 27) also cites this letter.
27. Space does not permit an extended discussion of how anthropology needs to rethink its mission in order to be able to adequately analyze such bidirectional movement. See Friedman (1992), Hanson (1989), and Linnekin (1991) for pertinent discussions of this issue.

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