

FORESTS WITH HISTORY: EXPLORING THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE
CREATION OF THE CORDILLERA AZUL NATIONAL PARK ON THE CHAZUTINO
PEOPLE OF AMAZONIAN PERU

By

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To my friends

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDSESEP	Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana
APECO	Asociación Peruana para la Conservación de la Naturaleza
CANP	Cordillera Azul National Park
CEPKA	Consejo Étnico de los Pueblos Kechwas de la Amazonía "Llaktakuna Tantanakudu"
CIMA	Center for Conservation, Research and Management of Natural Areas / Centro de Investigación y Manejo de Áreas Naturales Protegidas
COFOPRI	Agency for the Formalisation of Informal Land Ownership / Organismo de Formalización de la Propiedad Informal
COICA	Coordinating Body of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin / Coordinadora de Organizaciones Indígena de la Cuenca Amazónica
COP	Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
DIVINCRI	División de Investigación Criminal
DNI	Documento Nacional de Identidad
ECOMUSA	empresa comunal de servicios agropecuarios
FEPIKRESAM	Federación de Pueblos Indígenas Kechwas de la Región San Martín
IBC	Instituto del Bien Común
ILO	Labor Convention
INDEPA	Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo de los Pueblos Andinos, Amazónicos y Afroperuanos
INEI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística
INRENA	Instituto Nacional de Evaluación de recursos Naturales
MRTA	Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement / Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru
MUF	Social Asset Mapping / Mapeo de Usos y Fortalezas

NGO	Non-governmental organization
ORPIAN	Organización Regional de Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonía Norte del Perú
PDA	Alternative Development Program / Programa de Desarrollo Alternativo
RAISG	Red Amazonica de informacion socioambiental georreferenciada
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SPDA	Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental
SERNANP	Servicio Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas por el Estado
TIPNIS	Territory and National Park Isiboro Secure
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNAP	Universidad Nacional de la Amazonia Peruana
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
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My dissertation examines the history of the Chazutino people of the northern Peruvian Amazon and the development of Cordillera Azul National Park in 2001 in the forests and mountains where they used to hunt. It is my intention to contextualize the creation of the Park within the local history of the Chazutino people.

External influences have brought successive waves of change to the Chazutinos over the past five centuries; the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century, the acquisition of the Quechua language, shifts toward Peruvian mainstream society, the introduction of formal schooling, the opening of a road in 1980, and the beginning of the coca boom in the 1990s, all shaped Chazutino lives and livelihoods before the creation of the Park. These changes also paved the way, to some extent, for the creation of the Park in 2001. By that time, there were no Chazutino people living in the mountains of the Cordillera Azul: local people had previously migrated to towns and villages, where they could enjoy better access to markets and public schools.

The establishment of the Park and the imposition of rules led to changes in livelihoods and social relations. In parallel, Chazutinos faced the arrival of dispossessed

migrants from the Andes and the coast, who settled in the forests near the Cordillera Azul and converted them in agricultural lands. For Chazutinos, it was a threat to their territory. Within this context, conservationists allied with Chazutinos in order to stop the advances of migrants. Chazutinos since then have experienced an identity revival that echoes the emergence of the Amazonian indigenous movement. Thus, the establishment of Cordillera Azul Park cannot be identified as the sole source of change for Chazutinos, but it has marked a recent turning point which I explore through my research.

In terms of broader scholarly impacts, by focusing on current interactions between conservationists and the local Chazutino people through the lens of local history, I expect to improve our understanding of the regional indigenous and conservationist movements, as well as the socio cultural impacts of parks among Amazonian peoples.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Peruvian Amazon is home to over a hundred indigenous groups, with approximately 300,000 people who identify themselves as indigenous peoples and live in legally recognized native communities. They currently have legal ownership of 17.1% of the Peruvian's rainforests.¹ The region is also home to hundreds of thousands of people of indigenous heritage without ethnic identity who live in towns, villages, and peasant communities. These people have been called *ribereños* (riverine people), *campesinos amazonicos* (Amazonian peasants) or just *naturales* (native) of a particular place. They usually have a strong attachment to their location, but in contrast to the people living in native communities and with officially recognized ethnic identity, they have no legal rights over the forests where they have traditionally hunted and gathered forest products. Furthermore, since the 1970s, they have seen portions of their forests occupied and cleared by migrants from the Andes and the coast. More recently, protected areas have been established in some of the remaining forests. Protected areas now occupy one fifth of the land area of the Peruvian Amazon.² As a result of these external factors, Amazonian peoples, both indigenous peoples and *naturales*, have seen their lands encroached upon by both the arrival of migrants and conservation initiatives.

¹ According to the webpage of the NGO Instituto del Bien Comun (IBC) there are 1497 native communities occupying 10, 263,464 hectares, and five reserves for indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation occupying another 2, 812,686 hectares. This makes for a total of 13, 076,150 hectares in the Peruvian Amazon.

² According to the IBC protected areas in the Peruvian Amazon occupy 15, 524,383 hectares, 19,8% of the total territory.

In this context, this work examines the long history of the Chazutino people in the Central Huallaga valley, and how their lives have changed since the creation of Cordillera Azul National Park over forests that they have historically considered part of their ancestral lands. Chazutinos do not see themselves as an indigenous people, but as *naturales* of this place. They have a long history of occupation on both banks of the Central Huallaga river –where most of their villages have been established. Until forty years ago, they relied heavily on hunting, fishing, and extraction of forest products from the Cordillera Azul mountain range for their subsistence. They even had some settlements established in the mountains. When the Park was created in 2001, however, the Chazutino people were already in the midst of a socio-economic shift towards the Peruvian mainstream society and a cash economy. Native settlements within and near the Park boundaries had already been abandoned, and people had relocated to villages on the banks of the Huallaga river.

Conservationists drew the borders of the Park carefully to avoid overlapping them with those of the nearby villages and communities. Their primary aim was to protect these forests from the threats posed by coca farmers and colonists who were converting forests into agricultural lands; had the native settlements in the forests of the Cordillera Azul still been populated, these areas would not have been included within the park's boundaries. By 2001, native people were relying more and more on the market to satisfy their daily needs, but they were also still hunting in the forests of the Cordillera Azul. The abandonment of the upland settlements and an increasing dependency on the cash economy allowed the establishment of the Park in these forests, and consequently reduced the negative impact of its creation on native people.

The creation of the Park coincided with the assimilation of Chazutino people into the mainstream of Peruvian society, a process which had begun some decades before. The park's establishment, however, led to a transformation of the relationship between local people and the outside world. Integrated development and conservation programs to help protect the park's boundaries sparked local alliances between the Chazutino people and conservationists against the arrival of Andean colonists. They also encouraged the emergence of a political discourse for the protection of local resources and the environment. In this sense, although the creation of the Park certainly has not been the sole source of social change in the area, it has marked a turning point which I intend to explore throughout this work.

This research aims to shed new light on how first, the shift towards the Peruvian mainstream society led to the progressive abandonment of the mountains of the Cordillera Azul, and paved the way to its occupation by the Park. Second, how the imposition of a park has affected the wellbeing and livelihoods of Chazutino people. Third, in what ways they have used the Park –and the conservationist assistance and the ecological discourse- to redefine their collective identity and rights over their territory. Within this framework, it lies the intertwined relationship between the Chazutino people and their lands. They have relied on them for centuries to satisfy their needs and are deeply attached to them. However, external agents, such as the creation of laws and policies by the Peruvian government, the pervasiveness of the ideology of development, and the arrival of colonists, changed the panorama before the creation of the Park. It is my contention that a complete understanding of the impacts of creating a park requires to look in-depth previous changes among Amazonian people and how the

external agents (such as the conservationists) have operated in the area after the Park was created.

In this introduction, I intend to provide the reader with, a) the socio-historical context of the Amazonian peoples, the Peruvian State, conservationists and indigenous organizations; b) a review of the main directions in the anthropological work on the region; c) the methodology and field techniques employed for this research; d) and the overall view of the next chapters, where I will delve into the case study: Chazutino people and Cordillera Azul National Park.

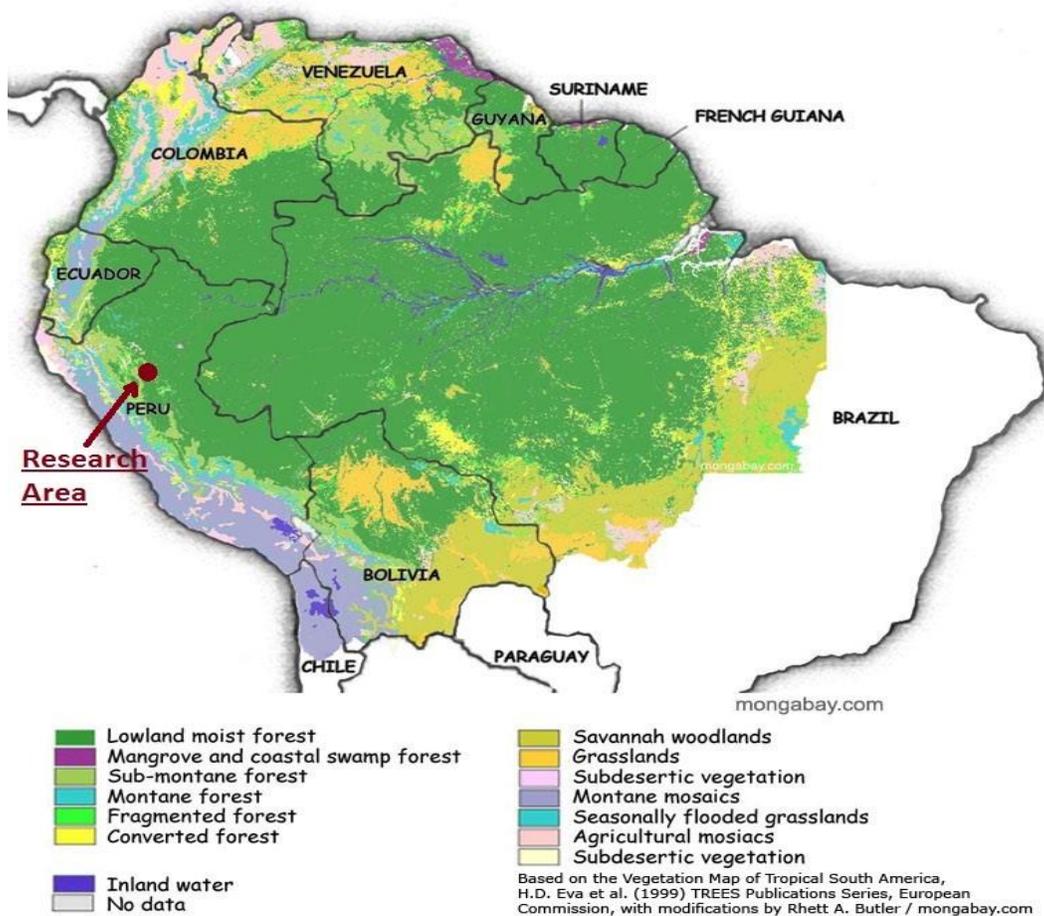


Figure 1-1. Location of the research area in the Amazon Basin (Source for the basemap: <http://www.mongabay.com/>)

Exploring the Research Problem: Linking Indigenous Lands, Amazonian Peoples, the Peruvian State, and Conservation

The Amazon rainforests covers over 7.8 million km² of the South American continent, including territory in nine different nation states (Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, Venezuela, Guyana, French Guyana, and Surinam), and is populated by over 33 million people. There are over 370 different officially recognized indigenous peoples in the Amazon basin, but it is very difficult to estimate the total indigenous population and the extent and number of their territories. Approximately 1.6 million people, occupying more than 2,200 territories, self-identify as indigenous peoples, but if the estimate includes descendants of indigenous groups who have acculturated in the past (e.g., *caboclos* in Brazil, *ribereños* in Peru, or *cambas* in Bolivia) their population may be triple or quadruple that number.³ In this sense, when we talk about Amazonian people and distinguish them from new waves of migrants from other regions of South America, we should include indigenous peoples and the rural folks with more or less indigenous heritage.

For Amazonian peoples, the rainforest has been their traditional source of livelihood and sustenance. Forests are also embedded with symbolic meanings for them, and are filled with local histories (e.g. Descola 1994, Surralles and Garcia 2004, Santos-Granero 1998). Amazonian peoples have an affective bond to the forests, or what geographers refer to as place attachment (Altman and Low 1992) or topophilia (Tuan 1974). People's attachment to the place is intertwined with bonds to the communities, extended kinship, sense of communal identity, and social relationships.

³ The calculation of the number of indigenous peoples is tricky and misleading. It depends on the categories used to define it. It's really just how you choose to define it. Sometimes the number is estimated by self-identity and/or native language. In Peru, it is estimated by the number of people living in officially recognized native communities.

Nowadays, Amazonian peoples may depend on the rainforests for individual physical survival much less than they did in the past, but access to the forests is still vital to their culture. Indigenous organizations of the Amazon basin, headed by the Coordinating Body of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA) at the regional level and the Asociación Interétnica de la Selva Peruana (AIDSEP) at the national level, as well as grassroots organizations, have channeled a great part of their efforts on securing forested lands. They emphasize that the indigenous people and its territory are one indivisible entity.⁴ Non indigenous peoples, such as the *ribereños* and *caboclos*, have frequently supported these claims and partaken in local and regional mobilizations. Moreover, Amazonian peoples see forests as a safety net for eventual hardships, and as an inheritance for their children. Land rights are the major issue faced by the majority of Amazonian peoples, whether they have an indigenous ethnic identity or not.

Indigenous territories are very difficult to enumerate and delimit. Lack of records of previous occupations, juxtapositions with the lands of other native peoples, and different conceptions about what constitutes a territory all make the task challenging. In 2009, the Red Amazónica de Información Socioambiental Georreferenciada (RAISG), a network of conservation NGOs and institutions working in the Amazon, published a map of Amazonian protected areas. According to this work, 25.3% of the entire Amazon rainforest consists of indigenous lands which are legally recognized or in the process of being recognized, and 20.9% is in conservation areas.

⁴ In Spanish, the slogan "*el indígena y su territorio son uno solo*" has been used frequently. For example, they were the words of Alberto Pizango - the president of AIDSEP, who was prosecuted by the Peruvian State after the indigenous rebellion of 2009. It was also the title of a seminal book on indigenous rights (Chirif, Garcia and Chase Smith 1991).

These data should be taken with some reservations, however, as they ignore the fact that some of the lands categorized as protected areas are also being claimed as indigenous lands or were occupied by indigenous people sometime before, or that the information provided by RAISG is still unavailable or unknown in indigenous communities, and thus remains unverified. In fact, local indigenous organizations had little participation in the creation of RAISG's 2009 Protected Areas and Indigenous Territories Map⁵, and COICA was not at all involved in its production. In 2009, in response to the publication of RAISG's map, COICA announced among their partners their intention to verify its contents in each Amazonian country and with each indigenous organization. To date, however, neither COICA nor any other organization, indigenous or otherwise, has obtained the financial aid to gather reliable data on the extent of native lands across the Amazon basin.⁶ These difficulties involved in attempting to understand the diversity of Amazonian peoples, their complex land rights, and the full extent of their forested territories have deep roots in the past.

A Brief Demographical and Historical Overview of Amazonian Peoples

The expansion of European culture, power, and influence in Amazonia since the 16th century unleashed economic, political, and demographic forces which transformed indigenous lives, cultures, natural resource management, and territories. As noted by Fausto and Heckenberger (2007), the simple fact that most of the Amazonian people perished during the first century of colonization makes it difficult to trace the continuity between the pre- and post-contact eras. Around 6 to 8 million people lived in the

⁵ No indigenous organization is a member of RAISG, though they may have agreements or alliances with the national members of RAISG.

⁶ In 2010, at least one proposal was submitted to the European Union in search of funding for this project.

Amazon basin before 1492, but by the 18th century they were reduced to two or three million. This impact can be seen in the fact that more than half of the Amazonian languages spoken in 1492 have disappeared. Over 350 now survive, but most of them are doomed to extinction within the next two decades (Aikhenvald 2012).

There is evidence that large areas which had been relatively heavily populated in the pre-Columbian period experienced demographic collapse due to disease, hunger, and warfare. This resulted in the forests regenerating in these former population centers by the 1750s (e.g Denevan 1992, Cleary 2001). Vast expanses of forest which had been cleared in the Pre-Hispanic period were naturally reforested. Indigenous people who had previously occupied these lands died off or fled to other lands. This depopulation of former population centers would eventually allow the creation of large protected areas in the Amazon in the 20th century without expelling native people from currently occupied land.⁷

In addition to this, the economy of boom and bust cycles that has characterized the Amazon history since the late 19th and early 20th centuries caused displacements, affected the livelihoods of native people, and changed their social relations with mainstream national societies (e.g Hemming 2008). Settlements moved and sometimes lost their connections with their traditional territories, or were occupied by other peoples. This can be seen in the example of the Huitoto and Bora people along the banks of the Putumayo river in Colombia. During the international rubber boom of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, they were forced to adopt an economy based on rubber extraction. In 1932, the Peruvian Amazon Company relocated them along the banks of the

⁷ This contrasts to the creation of protected areas in Africa, where displacement of the local population was often a part of the process.

Ampiyacu and Amazon rivers in Peru (Ochoa 1999; Pineda 2003). In the intervening years, the rubber economy collapsed due to production from Asian plantations, and other indigenous peoples moved into their historic territories. Thus, one might ask, what would constitute Huitoto and Bora territories today? Could they claim possession of the lands along the Putumayo River which are now occupied by other peoples? These and other questions regarding indigenous territories remain unanswered.

Moreover, these questions are even more difficult to deal with for another reason. Along with these settlements, there are thousands of villages populated by people who claim no affiliation with any particular tribal group, despite the fact that their parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents belonged to a tribe and spoke an indigenous language. The people in these communities have been labeled by researchers and the mainstream society as *caboclos* in Brazil, *ribereños*⁸ in Peru, and *cambas* in Bolivia. Many of these people also have some ancestors from other ethnic groups, such as Portuguese and African in Brazil, and Spanish and indigenous Andean in Peru.⁹ Though they may have a diverse set of different ethnic backgrounds and local histories, what is common to most of them is that they see themselves neither as indigenous people nor as colonists from other regions. Along with the self-recognized indigenous peoples, the people in these villages also frequently have territorial claims based on historical roots in the land.

Caboclos, ribereños, and cambas lost their ethnic identity as a result of demographic changes, intermarriages, involuntary displacement and voluntary

⁸ *Ribereño* is a very generic term in Spanish for the people who reside on the banks of a river.

⁹ Frequently, they have indigenous surnames (e.g Chibnick 1994; Gow 2007; Stocks 1981), but not always. In many cases, their ancestors took the Spanish or Portuguese name of the slave owner or landlord.

movements, and racism from the mainstream society. Although *caboclos*, *ribereños*, and *cambas* deny affiliation with any particular indigenous group, their collective identity is nonetheless based on their location, and is passed on from generation to generation, and members of many groups believe that they share common origins. Local history and demographic changes explain the variation between *camba* and *caboclo* people on one side and *ribereños* on the other: *camba* people from the Bolivian Amazon and *caboclos* from the southern Brazilian Amazon tend to possess many non-indigenous characteristics due to a long period of intermarriages with white people, while Peruvian *ribereños* have more marked indigenous traits (e.g Chibnik 1991, 1994)

The *caboclos* of Brazil, for instance, had their origins in 17th century Amerindians who adopted in the *Lingua Geral*, a standardized form of the Tupian language, as a result of being settled in Jesuit missions.¹⁰ In the 19th century, they came to be known as *caboclos*, or Amazonian peasants with some Portuguese heritage, and began the process of acquiring the Portuguese language (Parker, 1985).

For Nugent (1993, 1997), the formation of the *caboclo* people should be understood within the context of the socio-economic relationships established since the colonial times between local Amazonian populations, the Brazilian state, and the world economy. In his own words: “What is continuous from the point of view of caboclo culture/identity-formation is not an autochthonous tradition (Indian or mestiço), but the client status of the region... caboclo society in Amazonia has been largely a function of externalities.” (1997: 41-42). In other words, *caboclo* is an umbrella term which refers to

¹⁰ Also called *reducciones* (reductions). They were settlements for Christianized indigenous people, created by the Jesuit Order during the 17th and 18th centuries. The strategy of the Spanish Empire was to gather native populations into these settlements in order to Christianize, tax, and govern them more efficiently.

a variety of people united under similar socio-economic conditions, but not necessarily the same culture and identity. There may exist multiple local identities which the mainstream society places under just one label, be it *camba*, *ribereño*, or *caboclos*.¹¹

In Peru, the word *ribereño* refers to the unclassified rural Amazonian population. These are the people who, despite mostly indigenous ancestry, do not consider themselves indigenous, but still remain at least somewhat separated from the urban Peruvian mestizo mainstream. These are rural people who carry with them indigenous knowledge and blood, and are not as integrated into the Peruvian mainstream culture and society as people from the Andes and the Pacific coast. They, as the *caboclos* from Brazil, are not a single people with their own tradition. By socio-economic conditions, they are rural Amazonian folks or under the Peruvian society, just peasants.

Anthony Stocks (1981, 1983) defined some of the *ribereño* people in Peru as being “invisible indigenous peoples”. Stocks explored the history of three peasant communities in the lower Huallaga river, and discovered that they had, in fact, been indigenous Cocama people not long before. The demographic and cultural changes triggered by the Rubber boom, along with permanent contact with the Peruvian mainstream society, produced a shift in identity and ethnic affiliation. By the 1970s, the people in these communities saw themselves as peasants: in part because they were classified as such by the Peruvian State, and in part because they did not want to be associated with negative adjectives used by the mainstream society to label indigenous peoples. Nonetheless, this outward negation of their indigenous origins does not mean

¹¹ In fact, until recently no people identified themselves as *caboclo* in Brazil because it is a pejorative term (Pace, 1997).

that there has been any historical break between their indigenous Cocama past and their current peasant identity.¹²

In the locality, the *ribereños* have, in most cases, a strong identity and attachment to that specific place, based on their history, culture and livelihoods. In this sense, at least in the Peruvian Amazon, it is often possible to find continuity between the past and present of local institutions, communities, economy of subsistence, and social memory. Consequently, these Amazonian people with no indigenous identification also have territorial claims based on previous land occupation and forest uses. In fact, as mentioned by Mora (1995), categories such as “invisible natives”, *ribereños*, *caboclos*, or “Amazonian peasants” are not identity labels. These terms help us to label a broad range of peoples with no ethnic identification (detrilled Amazonian people), but as categories, they fall short in helping us understand the local identity and attachment to a particular place.

While the Amazon basin has been populated by Amazonian peoples with deep historical and cultural roots in the region, the States that emerged from the Spanish and Portuguese colonies remained largely indifferent to the region until the late 19th century and beginning of the 20th.

The Peruvian State Seeing the Amazon Rainforests

Andean and Brazilian urban elites have often perceived Amazonia as a depopulated land, unproductive yet rich in natural resources. The prevailing view has been that the region should eventually be civilized and populated, and its resources

¹² The term “invisible natives” became popular in the Peruvian works on Amazonian people, and is still considered a valid concept which can help us understand the identity and socio-cultural context of the so-called *ribereño* people.

managed in ways that increase the national wealth. The integration of the Peruvian Amazon into the national economy first began in the late 19th century with the extraction of natural resources to supply urban market demand in Peru, United States and Europe. It then continued in the first part of the 20th century establishing laws and legal property regarding the forests. In the 1950s, the slogan "*la conquista del Peru por los peruanos*" (the conquest of Peru by the Peruvians) was intended to encourage migration from the highlands to the lowlands. This slogan also illustrated that, to Peruvian urbanites, the Amazonian indigenous peoples were not Peruvians, despite the fact that they lived within Peruvian territory.

In Peru, as in other Amazonian countries, this migration started to take place in the 1960s. Socio-economic conditions have driven peasant colonists and cattle ranchers from other regions into the Amazon basin. This has led to the expansion of the agropastoral frontier, and further assimilation of Amazonian peoples, land and resources into the market economy (e.g Schminck and Wood 1992; Aramburu 1984). These settlers have occupied large expanses of land near cities, rivers and roads; and thus are often seen as the primary agents of deforestation. The Peruvian State has in most cases granted migrant settlers land titles, and promoted the formation of peasant communities. The primary goal in granting colonists land tenure is to encourage agricultural production; thus, lands granted by the State must be developed for agricultural or pastoral purposes. Colonists or migrants have therefore converted forested areas into agricultural lands and pastures in order to obtain land titles.

The Peruvian State has also granted lands to indigenous peoples, who since the 1970s have received the official label of *nativo* (native). The 1974 Law on Native

Communities (*Ley de Comunidades Nativas*) recognized collective lands for indigenous peoples grouped in communities. This legislation defined these indigenous territories as lands occupied by indigenous groups on a permanent basis, and used for traditional subsistence activities such as farming, hunting and fishing. However, in 1978, the Law on Forestry and Wild Fauna (*Ley Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre*) limited the titling of forested lands within native community territories. These forested lands within the communities may be used for hunting and extraction of forest resources, but cannot be owned by the native people.

There are also vast tracts of forest which legally belong only to the State. In some cases, these lands were once occupied by indigenous peoples who had been forced to move out of these areas in order to avoid captivity -as for instance happened during the rubber boom. In other cases, indigenous peoples have hunted and fished on these forests for decades or centuries, but never claimed property rights (Benavides 2005). Indeed, it may be that they will not bother to claim legal rights if they can still hunt and fish there without restriction, or if no political organizations intervene and drive them to proceed with the legalization process.

Thus, the delineation between indigenous and non-indigenous lands remains unclear. Even COICA, which, as I previously mentioned, provides political representation for the indigenous peoples of the entire Amazon Basin, has not given a definition of what exactly constitutes indigenous lands. COICA emphasizes that indigenous territories are intrinsically connected with their past and recent history,

patterns of settlement, livelihoods, and future prospects (e.g COICA 2009), but prefers to leave the question open in order to examine it on a case-by-case basis.¹³

Moreover, indigenous territories are linked to local subsistence economies. Where indigenous people live in relative isolation, local economies may remain more or less autonomous systems. For historical reasons, however, local economies are more often in a dependent relationship with mainstream society and markets (e.g Rojas 1994). Local people have often maintained a subsistence economy based on farming and hunting, and used timber extraction or cultivation of cash crops to raise money for external needs such as education costs, travel, metal tools, among other products. Local people often claim that their territories are the lands they currently use which are directly linked to their well-being, essentially taking a de facto approach to land tenure.

To make the issue of delineating indigenous lands even more difficult, most of the current descendants of indigenous peoples do not label themselves as indigenous; they prefer a variety of local terms which may be encompassed in the more regional term of Amazonians. Coming from a history of displacement and cultural destruction, and continuing to face overt racism in modern society, these people seek to distance themselves from the labels used to denote native ancestry, as these continue to have negative connotations. For instance, the common vernacular term *Indio* is essentially a derogatory term in both Spanish and Portuguese. It suggests that the people thus referenced are wild, uncouth, vicious, or ugly. Likewise, in Peru, the word *indigena* was expelled from official documents, census reports, and mass media in the 1970s, and its use would still be considered offensive today.

¹³ Personal communication with Juan Carlos Jintiach (Coordinator of International Economic Cooperation and Self-Development of COICA) and Valentin Muiba (COICA's advisor and indigenous leader).

Conservationists in the Amazon

Echoing the emergence of the conservationist movement in the Western world, a new social group came to light in the Amazonian countries in the 1970s.

Conservationists were driven by a desire to protect forests and biodiversity.¹⁴ Through their ties with governments, they campaigned and lobbied for the creation of protected areas in large tracts of forest devoid of permanent human settlements, in order to protect these forests from human impact.

Anthropological theory indirectly supported this conservationist vision of forest protection. The school of cultural ecology emphasized the equilibrium between semi-nomadic indigenous peoples and fragile Amazonian ecosystems, sustained by their deep understanding of nature. This idea was revolutionary at the time, because it refuted the common mid-twentieth century belief that Amazonia was a land of endless resources which indigenous people could not take full advantage of or properly develop due to their primitive outlook.

This notion of a fragile equilibrium between Amazonian society and nature found fertile soil in the minds of conservation practitioners, and reinforced their fears and concerns regarding the growing threats to Amazonian ecosystems. The conservationists believed that the only way to ensure the preservation of nature was the creation of more protected areas. Under this assumption, most of the current protected areas in Amazonia were established during the 1970s, '80s and '90s.¹⁵ By 2001, protected lands represented 12.9% of the entire Peruvian territory (Young and

¹⁴ In Peru, the conservationist movement can be traced as far back as the 1930s (Solano 2006), but they did not have an actual impact in the Amazon until the 1970s.

¹⁵ Over the past thirty years in Latin America and Africa, the lands designated as protected areas for nature conservation have increased by 500% (Wittemyer et al. 2008).

Rodriguez 2006: 242), and more protected areas have since been established. These were carefully chosen and established; the government and conservation organizations avoided legally owned lands, and resorted to resettlement of local people in only a few rare cases. Conversely, they also ignored indigenous people's rights, imposed borders without prior consent in areas which had been governed by local systems of land tenure, and frequently made and enforced rules which violated local custom.¹⁶ The creation of protected areas brought a new set of rules on land management, and different ways of seeing the landscape and forests; external agents such as international and national NGOs established their offices in large Amazonian cities far from the protected areas themselves, and restrictions were established for the people living close to these parks.

This boom in the establishment of protected areas and their impacts on local people, has also been the subject of some work in the social science literature, although very little of it has focused on the Amazon basin. Most studies have emphasized power inequalities between local non-western people and the western institutions who support global conservation policies.¹⁷ The establishment of protected areas is often portrayed as a form of green post-colonialism that imposed a new way of dividing space and using nature. Academic books such as *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and*

¹⁶ Even conservationists have recognized this unfair treatment. Gonzalo Oviedo (2004), recognized conservationist from IUCN, critically pointed out that at least 50% of the world protected areas were established on indigenous territories around the globe.

¹⁷ Conservationists have noticed that there are not only power relations between indigenous peoples and conservation NGOs, but also between conservationists. "In some cases, the nationally recognized biodiversity conservation goals have not been implemented, apparently because they do not coincide with objectives of the international conservation institutions" (Young and Rodriguez, 2006: 244). Doureojanni (2006) also arrived at the same conclusion.

Nature Preservation in Africa (Neumann 2002) and *Conservation Refugees: The Hundred-Year Conflict Between Global Conservation and Native Peoples* (Dowie 2009) have targeted a wide audience, and focused on examining the displacements of indigenous peoples due to the creation of protected areas. Conversely, a few studies have suggested a positive impact on the wellbeing of local people, such as an article published in *Science*, *Accelerated human population growth at protected area edges* (Wittemeyer et al. 2008).

However, the creation of protected areas in Latin America has not generally involved the degree of social conflict found in North America or Africa. Displacements have been rare; in some cases, local communities have even seen protected areas as an opportunity to protect their lands, and have established alliances with conservation organizations. Conservation NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC) have sometimes helped indigenous peoples to establish legally recognized lands for their communities. For example, the Cofan territory in the Northern Ecuadorian Amazon could not have been created without the combined support of TNC, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and The MacArthur Foundation (Cepek 2012, Cofan leaders personal communication). As long as indigenous people act as the stewards of the forests, and offer a solid front against the arrival of agriculturally driven colonists, conservationists tend to support their claims.

Alliances between conservationists and indigenous peoples are currently taking place at different levels: at the local level between the national NGO and the

community, and at the regional level between TNC or other big international conservation NGOs and the national indigenous political organizations.¹⁸

The Emergence of the Amazonian Indigenous Movement

In the 1980s, Amazonian indigenous peoples started a long process of reclamation of their ancestral lands with the emergence of national indigenous movements and organizations. These organizations were most often formed by the intellectual elites of native peoples, usually bilingual teachers educated in Catholic and Christian schools. They were educated, spoke both the local native language and the national language, and knew how both worlds operated; thus, they were often elected as leaders of their local communities. Eventually, indigenous advocacy groups developed a structure and network of both local grassroots organizations and national organizations, headed at the regional level by COICA. It took at least 20 years for the indigenous organizations to solidify this structure and become recognized social actors in the region, but by the 2000s, they were already the necessary interlocutors between external agents (e.g., conservationists, governments, and private companies) and local self-identified indigenous peoples.

The head of the structure, COICA, was founded in Lima, Peru in 1984. They moved their headquarters to Quito, Ecuador in 1992. COICA acts as an umbrella organization for the national indigenous organizations of the nine Amazonian countries. It has been involved in defending indigenous rights, particularly those associated with

¹⁸ These alliances are not without some caveats: for example, Redford and Stearman (1993) stated that conservationists must be alert that indigenous peoples may be understanding conservation of nature in a very different way.

the recognition of indigenous lands, the effects of climate change, and the impact of extractive industries.



Figure 1-2. COICA and its nine national members (source: COICA)

COICA provides political and technical support to the national members, and sometimes to the grassroots organizations as well, in the form of training sessions on a variety of themes (climate change, territories, geographic information systems, the Convention on Biological Diversity, indigenous rights, among others), and workshops which aim to coordinate political action on these and other issues.

In Peru, the Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana (AIDSESP) represents the 60 Amazonian indigenous peoples of the country at the national level, encompassing around 300,000 indigenous peoples in 1,400 native communities. AIDSESP has been intimately linked with COICA since its foundation in

1984. The organization gained legal status in 1985,¹⁹ and has supported the creation of individual organizations for every indigenous group in the Peruvian Amazon.

Since their inception, the indigenous organizations have claimed that protected areas often overlap with indigenous territories. However, it is only in the last decade that these indigenous organizations, have become unavoidable actors with whom any external agent must negotiate. Conservation NGOs have recognized this fact and are increasingly developing alliances with indigenous organizations (Chicchon 2009), even when this means a redefinition of the basis from which protected areas were created. For example, a Brazilian anthropologist working for The Nature Conservancy indicated to me that, although no one would have thought before that TNC could ally themselves with indigenous political organizations, he could see TNC accepting co-management of protected areas with indigenous groups within a few years (Helcio de Souza, personal communication, 2009). This represents a huge shift in the paradigm of conservation practice.

Today, COICA and AIDSEP are deeply involved in the politics of protected areas and indigenous territories, and thus are often involved in meetings and joint decisions with conservation NGOs. These interactions have subsequent impacts on local areas, such as Chazuta.

One of the results of these connections is that international trends are realized in the local areas faster than they previously were. For example, due to international concern about climate change, protection of Amazonian forests through programs such as Reductions of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) are being

¹⁹ It is "a civil non-profit making association because, to this day, there is no legal status in Peruvian legislation by which to recognize indigenous organizations" (Chirif and Garcia 2008: 39)

negotiated at different levels: in international forums, between individual nations, and at the local level. Activity at all of these levels is impacting the local, and influencing the way that indigenous organizations build their own agenda.

The success of the Amazonian indigenous organizations is that, for the first time since the creation of the nation state of Peru and the other Amazonian countries, there are political bodies formed by indigenous leaders which represent their own interests (Chirif and Garcia 2008: 40). Before this, someone else represented the demands of indigenous peoples. From the beginning, these organizations have worked to build a platform from which to express the primary indigenous demands and concerns. Another achievement has been the development of an autonomous perspective, which from the beginning has worked to recover the term “indigenous” as a positive sign of identity.²⁰

On the other hand, indigenous peoples have had to adjust their own notions of territory to align with the Roman-based notion of territorial rights that dominates Amazonian countries. As a result, the indigenous territories legally recognized by the national governments are often fragmented (Garcia 1995, Chirif and Garcia 2007). Moreover, indigenous peoples have only partial rights on these lands. They may hunt and fish, but typically need permission or license to use forest resources. They also have no rights whatsoever to underground resources such as gas and oil, which belong to the State.

What of the *ribereño* people, or the “invisible natives”? In contrast to self-identified native peoples in Peru, they have not articulated their own political discourse

²⁰ For example, Omaira Bolaños (2008) illustrates how the sense of ethnic identity of the Arapium and Jaraqui Indians in Brazil is associated with the political dilemmas of indigenous identity and land rights for people of mixed descent.

to claim their rights. Nonetheless, they usually do align with indigenous claims when the rainforests are at the stake. In this context, in an interesting twist of history, some *ribereño* communities in Peru are now returning to their ethnic origins, and have initiated the process of becoming native communities. In the 1970s, there was no advantage to being identified as a native community, there were still plenty of forests to hunt in, and the stigma associated with being “native” discouraged self-identifying as such; now, most of these forests are either protected areas or have been occupied by colonists. Therefore, the only way to gain access rights to forested lands is to attain legal recognition as a native community. Being recognized as indigenous people also provides more chances to obtain international funding for development projects, attract climate change mitigation projects (REDD projects for example), and, last but not least, access to a network of organizations which can help support your claims.

This process of ethnic revitalization may take decades, but it has already been noted and observed in several parts of the Amazon (e.g Bolaños 2008). Indigenous organizations are far from the only actors in the region, but they have become important interlocutors for the rights of Amazonian people. Where the circumstances are auspicious, they may even speak and represent non-indigenous communities.

In the district of Chazuta, most of the Chazutino people do not see themselves as indigenous people, but as *naturales* of the place. They have a strong identification with their lands. As a people, they are the result of the ethnogenic process that began in the 16th century with the arrival of Spanish missionaries and the demographic collapse of the indigenous population. The Cordillera Azul National Park was established from lands which had been used by the Chazutino people, but not permanently occupied.

Shortly thereafter, conservationists began working with local people to protect the Park's forests. They have since supported the Chazutino people in the implementation of sustainable development programs, and assisted with land zoning and land rights issues. The conservationists' prime motive in this work is to avoid the arrival of colonists from the coast and Andes. In the process, more Chazutinos have begun to adopt an "ethnic" and "green" discourse, and communities that previously denied their identity as native communities are now searching for recognition as such.

Theoretical background: Environmental Anthropology in Amazonia

For several decades, anthropological works on Amazonia focused almost exclusively on indigenous peoples and ignored the *ribereños*, *caboclos*, and *cambas*. These works tended to portray indigenous peoples as existing in a state of stasis, perfectly ecologically adapted to their environment and territories. Anthropologists focused on the traditional or immutable aspects of Amazonian societies, while disregarding the aspects which had supposedly been introduced by Westerners. The extent to which white and mestizo people from the mainstream societies had oppressed indigenous peoples and changed them was not typically seen as relevant or important.²¹ In taking this approach, however, anthropologists overlooked the fact that Amazonian societies have been in constant transformation since the 16th century.

The school of Cultural Ecology and its emphasis on humans' adaptations to their environment contributed to the sort of research that tended to isolate indigenous peoples from history and ongoing socio-economic processes. Julian H. Steward (1955),

²¹ An extreme of this was the portrait of the Siriono people by Holmberg (1969) as a "Stone-Age" tribe who had managed to barely survive into the present, but ignoring the changes caused by the Rubber Boom and their subsequent erratic itinerary to survive.

considered by many to be the founder of Cultural Ecology, posited that the environment acts to restrict population growth, and that culture is the mechanism by which society adapts to these constraints. Shortly after, in the 1950s, this idea resonated in the work of Betty Meggers, who became the main proponent of cultural ecology for Amazonia. She argued in *Amazonia: Man in a Counterfeit Paradise* (1971) that the ecological restrictions of the lowland Amazon, namely the combination of poor soils and fragile ecosystems, limited population growth. In contrast to the Amazon basin, the Andean environment, with its rich soils and wide variety of micro climates, allowed the development of highly organized, stratified, and densely populated societies.²²

Anthropologists of the school of Cultural Ecology (e.g Moran 1993, Chagnon 1968) used ethnological comparisons between some semi-nomadic indigenous groups to conclude that there were several important livelihood strategies which indigenous peoples used to adapt themselves to the Amazon environment. These consisted of: slash-and-burn agriculture to allow soil regeneration; control of hunting, fishing and collection of edible plants, to avoid their extinction; control of the population size, primarily through wars and female infanticide; and a semi-nomadic life which involved ranging over vast territories.²³

²² Emilio Morán (1993) followed the sound argument of Meggers and stated that: “a human population in a given ecosystem will be characterized by strategic behaviors that reflect both present and past environmental pressures. In general the longer a population has been in a given environment, the greater its degree of adaptation to those environmental pressures.”

²³ To honor the truth it is also important to mention that Meggers and Moran distinguished between *Terra Firme* (uplands) and *Terra de Várzea* (floodplains), attaching different indigenous management strategies to both, and therefore different knowledge systems. The former were characterized by severe problems to prevent deterioration of the soil and very low human density, and the latter as having a greater capacity to sustain human population due to the enrichment of the soil by periodic floods. Moran underlined the heterogeneity of peoples that inhabit the Amazon as it reflects of the diversity of ecosystems, diversity of adaptation systems, and of course diversity of ecological knowledge. Thus, Moran recognizes that some areas, as for example the Upper Xingu did sustain far more people before the year 1500, and that there are many parts of the Amazon with rich soil. He pointed out that: “Many of the generalizations made

In parallel to Cultural Ecology, we must also consider that the work of some symbolic anthropologists, inspired by Claude Levi-Strauss, perpetuated a sort of idealization of Amazonian indigenous peoples as being isolated and atemporal. They focused on the symbolic meanings of society and nature, rather than the material world, ecology and economy of Amazonian peoples. For example, in the work of Phillip Descola (1994; 1996; 2003), the society-nature relationship is conceived of as a part of the human kinship: not a consanguineal relationship, but rather, an affinal one. Nature is not an independent entity, but rather, it is part of the Amazonian society. Thus, there is no dichotomy between nature and culture. If there is an adaptation to nature, it is in the means of subsistence, but in the symbolic world, society and nature are perceived as one entity. For westerners, and, consequently, conservationists, nature is an entity separated from humans, and can be measured and isolated. For non-westerners, such as, for example, Amazonian indigenous peoples, nature is an extension of the society. The two form a single entity, and therefore, creation of parks makes no sense in this worldview.

In a similar way, the influential work of Reichel-Dolmatoff (1975, 1976, 1999) and the perspectivism of Viveiros de Castro (1998), among others, focused on the role of shamanism and the production of knowledge within indigenous cultures. But, they tended to keep history and the socio economic changes of the 20th century out of their research.

about Amazonia's ecological limitations refer, in fact, to the extreme and unusual conditions found mostly in the Rio Negro Basin..." (1993: 37). So, in this sense, he has been correcting Meggers's main argument, although not reconsidering the adaptation model of the cultural ecology school

Since the 1980s, however, anthropologists have come to realize that we cannot understand the dynamics of change within native societies without examining socio-economic trends in the mainstream society, their impact on native peoples and communities, and the ties with the world economy (e.g Sponsel 1995). Moreover, without delving into the regional history, it is difficult to grasp current ethnicities and identities. In other words, anthropologists have come to understand that there is no such thing as a cultural isolate, the global is connected to the local, and living conditions are often influenced by decisions made elsewhere (Auge and Colleyn 2006).

Fernando Santos Granero, in *Hacia una antropología de lo contemporáneo en la amazonía indígena* (1996), made the same claims for the Amazon. He pointed out that anthropologists should pay more attention to historical changes and contemporary processes, namely: i) the colonial encounter in the 16th and 17th centuries; ii) the capitalist expansion in the 20th century; and iii) the globalization process which began in the 1980s with the emergence of indigenous organizations and COICA, NGOs, and the increasing media interest on Amazonia. These three events have been turning points that cannot be excluded from any research on indigenous peoples in the region.

Also, the works of Heckenberger (e.g 2005) in Amazonian archaeology, Balee (e.g 2006) and Posey (e.g 2001) in ethnobotany, Erikson (e.g 2006) in historical ecology, among many others, have debunked the assumptions of cultural ecology. Amazonian peoples transformed the biodiversity of the rainforests, enriched the soils, and established cities in the jungle.

Likewise, the new field of political ecology also helped to illuminate Amazonian anthropology. These works have tended to focus on the threats to the Amazonian

peoples and the rainforests. Susanna Hecht and Alexander Cockburn's classic *Fate of the Forest* (1989) was an exploration of the long history of social struggles in Amazonia. *Contested Frontiers in Amazonia* (Schmink and Wood 1992) brought up an interdisciplinary analysis of the process of frontier change, in which the ideology of development has promoted road construction, logging and ranching, and speculation, thereby increasing the value of land. Paul Little, in *In Amazonia: Territorial Struggles on Perennial Frontiers* (2004), offers us an account of the contemporary conflict between indigenous or local peoples, developers, and conservationists in the Jari river region of Brazil and the Aguarico river area in Ecuador. He argues that the current situation in Amazonia is the result of fragmented but interconnected environmental and social histories, and the overlapping of different cosmographies.²⁴

In parallel, anthropologists began to pay attention to the effects of large-scale forest protection projects implemented by big international NGOs. Articles that emphasized the negative impact of big conservation NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation International (CI), and Worldwide Fund (WWF), on indigenous peoples received wide coverage among the intellectual elite. Mac Chapin's article "*A Challenge to Conservationists*" (2004) was read and reviewed by conservationist practitioners and anthropologists alike.

In this context, for environmental anthropologists, the topic of the creation of protected areas and their impacts on local people has emerged in the last decade, integrating the ethnographic perspective at the local level with the broader scope of

²⁴ For Paul Little, cosmography refers to the "identities, ideologies, and environmental knowledge systems developed by a social group" in regard to a territory. When different peoples or social groups (such as native people, colonists, developers, or capitalists) operate in the same place, clashes are likely to happen.

political ecology that examines the economic and social political drivers at the regional level. This is what the seminal article *Parks and Peoples: The Social Impact of Protected Areas* (West, Igoe, and Brockington, 2006) named the anthropology of protected areas. This is an approach that bridges the gap between “the political economies of globalization and the subtle but profound local social effects of the creation of nature and environment in places where those categorizations of people’s surroundings did not exist until recently” (2006: 1415). In other words, protected areas should be understood as a way of seeing, understanding, and producing nature (environment) and culture (society), and as a way of attempting to manage and control the relationship between the two.

As a new subfield within Environmental Anthropology, the study of protected areas and their effects on local people is still largely unexplored. However, now it is clear that, as mentioned by Fernando Santos Granero (1996), research on Amazonian native peoples cannot be encapsulated in models of equilibrium between nature and society, nor can it ignore the demographic collapse of the 16th and 17th century, the concentration of Amazonian peoples in Catholic missions, or the formation of new identities and the constant changes and dynamics of each society.²⁵

Moreover, some scholarship has shown that most Amazonian people are “in between” indigenous tradition and modernity (e.g Floyd, 2008). The phrase “In between” in this sense does not mean in transition from indigenous tradition to modernity, but rather, it refers to the multiple perceptions of and practices in nature that can sometimes

²⁵ For example, Nimuendaju who pioneered in indigenous studies, did not pay attention to what was happening with Amazonian non- indigenous peoples. There are some exceptions such as Wagley’s book “Amazon town: a study of man in the tropics” published in 1953, where he pointed out that current hunting and fishing methods practiced by *caboclos* follow indigenous knowledge of the local fauna. But that was an exception for its time.

can be interpreted as “indigenous,” and sometimes as “modern”. In fact, all of these variations “in between” are expressions of cultural change that result in different ways of seeing and using nature by native people.

Some research indicates that local people with no indigenous self-identity have inherited indigenous land use and natural resource management practices (e.g Hiraoka, 1992; Parker, 1985; Padoch and Pinedo-Vasquez, 2001). Their ecological knowledge has been neglected by the literature until recently, and it has typically been considered an extension of indigenous wisdom. Most of these people are changing their traditional subsistence techniques, and this change is frequently accompanied by the loss of the native language and adoption of the “modern” language, i.e., Portuguese or Spanish (e.g Maffi, 2001).

The subfield of environmental anthropology still needs more research to cover the wide variation of peoples and environmental practices in Amazonia. More case studies are also needed to document the context that paved the way to creating protected areas in lands occupied by indigenous peoples in the past, and the effects of these protected areas on the way people see nature and lands.

Research Methods and Walking into the Forest

My ethnographic data were collected while doing traditional anthropological fieldwork in the district of Chazuta with the Chazutino people and, to a much lesser extent, with colonists in the same district. It is a place near the city of Tarapoto, an important city in the Northern Peruvian Amazon, in a geographical area known as *la montaña* in Peruvian Spanish. As a Peruvian, I did not have problems to enter in the area.

Interviews and participant observation took place in four locations: the main town, also called Chazuta, located on the left bank of the Huallaga river, and three settlements on the right bank, and therefore in the buffer zone of the Park: Chipaota, Ramon Castilla, and Siambal. The town of Chazuta was my main point of residence. It is very convenient in terms of mobility, with road access to Tarapoto city, and river access to the Chazutino villages and communities along the Huallaga river.

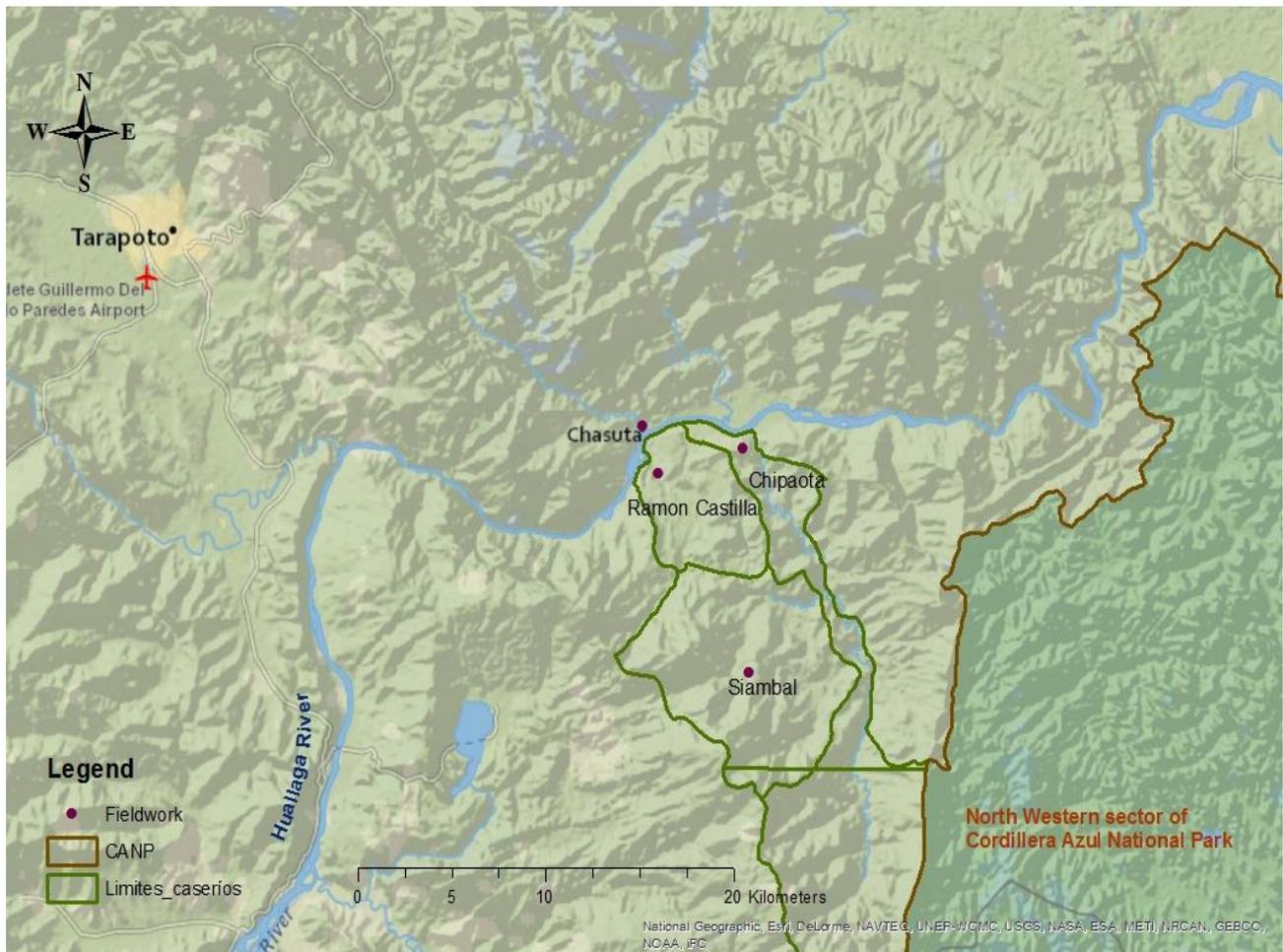


Figure 1-3. Locating field places: Chazuta town and the villages of Chipaota, Ramon Castilla, and Siambal

However, relevant information regarding the political ecology of the Andean Amazon was gathered in the offices of COICA and TNC, both in Quito, Ecuador; in the

Headquarters of the Center for Conservation, Research and Management of Natural Areas (Centro de Conservación, Investigación y Manejo de Áreas Naturales Cordillera Azul – CIMA) in Lima; and at multiple workshops in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Guyana, and Panama where indigenous leaders and conservation practitioners discussed their different goals, found common grounds, negotiated their mutual collaboration, and smoothed out their differences.

Fieldwork is made of challenges. Every ethnographic researcher has to deal with a “gaining entry” phase while trying to gain acceptance by the people under study (Kornblum 1996). Once accepted by the people, we have to “build relationships” to gain the confidence of the locals. Trying to “maintain objectivity” is the next challenge. Finally, the process itself helps us to reflect about our role as observers.

My own personal journey to my research topic also reflects these challenges. I gained the trust of the Chazutino people while being there, and earned the confidence of indigenous leaders by working for them as a practitioner. During that time, I thought constantly about the opportunities and frictions that arise between the local and the regional, between the desire of protecting the forests and the desire to uphold indigenous rights, and between traditional fieldwork conducted in only one location and the multi-sited ethnography.²⁶ My original intention was to conduct research in a Peruvian indigenous community and investigate how their relationship with the environment has changed in the last few decades due to cultural transition, language shift from the Amazonian Quechua language to Spanish, and the subsequent loss of

²⁶ George Marcus examined the emergence of this methodological trend as a means to understand the connection between the local and the world system (1995). It is not that the single-sited ethnography is part of the past; it is the recognition that the local cannot be fully explained alone.

ethnobotanical knowledge. Before long, however, I understood that external factors affect life in any community to such an extent that it is not possible to do research as if they were encapsulated in history and space, as if no migrants from other parts of the country had ever come to compete for land, and as if decisions made somewhere else did not affect the community. Therefore, I decided, first, to delve into the context of the wider district, and not just the local community; and, second, to incorporate within my analysis the politics associated with conserving nature and defending indigenous rights at the regional level.

I began delineating my research in spring of 2007, during my second semester at the University of Florida, but it was not until my exploratory first trip to the Department of San Martin in Peru that summer that I had my first encounter with Quechua-speaking communities in Amazonia and Cordillera Azul National Park. I had previous fieldwork experience with communities in the lower Amazon, but I did not have in-field experience with the adjustments, conflicts and negotiations between conservationist programs and indigenous communities. On this first trip to the area, I became acquainted with some people in the town of Chazuta town and the village of Chipaota, as well as the staff at CIMA. As a result, my research plan shifted toward examining how the creation of a national park changed the means of subsistence and social relations within a community.

Two short trips in the summers of 2008 and 2009 allowed me to become familiar with the people and the zone, explore the relationship between local people and conservation institutions, and to conduct some interviews and archive research. From then on, access to the research communities was secured by my affiliation to the NGO

CIMA (which is in charge of the management of the National Park and the buffer zone), and by personal communications with the local authorities.

However, in March of 2009, after finishing my coursework and going back to Peru and Ecuador, I took a job with COICA as a consultant on indigenous lands, climate change, and biodiversity. My decision to wait on my research and gain experience there ultimately allowed me to see how indigenous organizations operate on two levels: one, to the exterior world, at the regional level negotiating with international NGOs, governments, and scientists; and two, to the interior world, working to strengthen indigenous structures, represent indigenous demands, and achieve consensus among local organizations. As a result, in a very subtle way, I began to realize that I could not focus only on changes at the community level, but rather, needed to rethink the topic in terms of the interaction between external aspects and local aspects, and how regional environmental politics are influenced by local actors. I began to think about connecting the dots between changes in the local economy of the Chazutino people, local alliances with conservationists, the rules imposed by the creation of CANP, the emergence of indigenous movements, and the structure of indigenous organizations in the Amazon basin.

By the time I started my longest sojourn in Chazuta, from January to July of 2010, I had already decided to expand the scale of my research from the very local to the district level, and examine the connections to regional trends in conservation and indigenous struggles. My fieldwork continued to be based in the town of Chazuta and the villages of Chipaota (aka Mushuk Llacta), Ramon Castilla, and Siambal; but in order to have an additional understanding of the context, I also made a few trips to the main

cities in the area, Tarapoto and Lamas. In both cities, I acquired more information on the Federation of Quechua Indigenous Peoples of the San Martin Region (Federación de Pueblos Indígenas Kechwas de la Región San Martín - FEPIKRESAM), and interviewed government officials and NGO personnel.

By July of 2010, between data collected in the field and the data collected at COICA, I had enough to proceed with my analysis. However, I then found a new source of data in The Nature Conservancy. I was hired to work as a specialist in indigenous affairs for TNC's Amazon Andean Program, based in Quito, Ecuador. Here, I had the chance not only to gather more information on how conservation NGOs work in the Amazon, but also to organize and participate in meetings in Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, Panama and Bolivia. During these working meetings, I witnessed the friction between conservation goals and the demands of indigenous organizations. As part of my job I also organized a workshop in Tarapoto, which included the participation of some Chazuta leaders, to discuss issues regarding indigenous lands, protected areas and indigenous rights. Unexpectedly, I, the researcher, also became a means by which Chazuta leaders connected to an International NGO and became acquainted with other indigenous leaders from Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.

Finally, I cannot complete any description of my own personal journey without mentioning how my position as an outsider in the communities has changed. In these communities, I have always been identified as a guy from Lima, wealthy by local standards, educated, a non-indigenous person, and with social connections that they usually lack. This means, for instance, that if I needed to, I could go and meet with the director of CIMA and government officials in Tarapoto, or perhaps receive preferential

treatment at the hospital in the event that I get sick. On the other hand, I was still a student collecting data, just like other students who have come to Chazuta. By the time I was working for TNC and organizing the workshop in Tarapoto, however, I was one of the many people from Lima working for development and conservation, for better or for worse.

Furthermore, there has been another factor which has increased my engagement with the Chazuta people and the community of Chipaota. As the founders of a non-profit association dedicated to environmental education and cultural diversity, Ojo Amazonia, my colleagues and I visited the communities of Chazuta and Chipaota during my last month of fieldwork in order to film and document daily life. My colleagues in the association returned to Chazuta and Chipaota in 2011 and 2012 to help with the implementation of the local library and conduct workshops on painting, among other things, and I, too, plan to return in the years to come. During all that time, I built friendship with some guys in Chipaota and Chazuta who provided me with the congenial base from which to extend my participation in the community's life.

Nevertheless, two populations were elusive to me during fieldwork: women, and Andean migrants/colonists. In the first case, because of the clear gender division of the society, I did not venture to socialize with Chazutino women. Talking with a young woman, as many male researchers have noticed before (e.g Whyte 1943) could lead you into troubles. Either it is seen as taking advantage, or as a marriage prospectus, offensive, or off the limits. In the second case, because most colonists had been involved in cocaine production at some point in the recent past, they tended to be suspicious of my activity as an anthropologist.

My methods and the data gathered are supported by traditional anthropological fieldwork among the Chazutino people in the town of Chazuta and three nearby communities. As I mentioned before, my plan in the beginning was to conduct research in only one community, the native community of Chipaota (aka Mushuk Llacta in Quechua). In the process of understanding the impact of the Park on the people of Chipaota, however, I realized that I should also interview people in other villages as well as the main town, Chazuta. As a result, I ended up spending weeks in the villages of Ramon Castilla and Siambal, with both Chazutino people and colonists.

My understanding of the local and regional context, basically the San Martin Region, was obtained through interviews and the time spent with some friends from Tarapoto. Finally, my access to documents, workshops, people, and agendas of the main indigenous organization of the Amazon basin, COICA, and The Nature Conservancy allowed me to see how the international is connected to the local.

In other words, on one hand, I conducted an ethnography grounded in the experience of living in one place, the district of Chazuta. On the other hand, my own work experience in the Amazon region and contacts with key conservation officials and indigenous leaders, plus participation in regional workshops, gave me a multi-scale perspective on my topic. This multi-scale approach to my topic, although not as systematic as my life as a traditional anthropologist in Chazuta, shed some light on the development of local events, such as the participation of the Chazutino people in the 2009 regional protest against the concessions of Amazonian lands to big companies (in detail in Chapter 5). As such, this work intends to shed light on how the local people should be understood in the context of regional trends and changes. These local –

regional connections gave rise to multi-sited ethnographies which have become increasingly common in anthropology, and reflect the effects of globalization on local cultures (e.g Burawoy et al. 2000; Hannerz 1996).

I do not place myself at the center of this narrative, and I intend to be objective in my analysis –although that goal is unattainable in the purest sense. In appropriate places in the dissertation, I have included my own thoughts and feelings, and reactions. At least it may show my involvement and my own bias.

Finally, because of my shifting roles- as a researcher, a conservationist practitioner, and a consultant for indigenous organizations- I have become aware of the risks of becoming blind to certain positions and facts which may contradict my position.

Interviews

In the beginning, I selected informants based on specific information needed. Known as “purposive sampling,” the objective is to collect the specific data, without excessive consideration to an overall sampling design and certain conditions (Bernard 2002). Once the sites and framework of the research had been defined, I conducted a total of 60 semi-structured interviews at the four fieldwork sites. The interviews focused on four topics of interest: peoples’ traditional means of subsistence, local history, the creation of the Park and resulting changes, and informants’ expectations for the future of their village or community and their children. The majority of informants were native men. They were selected for their knowledge of the place and their role in the community, and were “opportunistically chosen” for their willingness to participate in the research. Informants ranged in age from 19 to 85 years. As mentioned before, however, I neither gained access to the social spheres where women and colonists spend most of their free time, nor could I accompany them in their work routines. Only three women

and three colonists were interviewed at length.²⁷ As a result, data collected in formal interviews are biased towards native men's opinions and attitudes.

In addition to these formal interviews, I conducted numerous informal ones on a wide range of topics, from Peruvian politics and support of right- or left-wing parties, to military service on the borders, to identity, soccer, etc. In most cases these informal interviews were, once again, conducted with native men. I was also able to informally interview around twenty male colonists, but women remained inaccessible.

In the cities of Tarapoto, Lamas, Lima, and Quito, I interviewed conservation and development practitioners from local, national, and international NGOs, government officials, and indigenous leaders. My interviews with these people focused on regional trends in development and conservation, the creation of protected areas in the Andean Amazon countries, and alliances and conflicts between indigenous organizations and conservationists.

Survey

In addition to the interviews, I prepared and applied a survey (see Appendix A) which covered the area of study. The survey consisted of questions regarding nature and the Park, ethnobotanical knowledge, land tenure, and engagement with external actors and projects among indigenous peoples in the buffer zone of the Park. I applied a stratified sampling method in order to cover the people living both in the villages and far from them. A total of 160 people were surveyed: 41 in Chazuta, 40 in Ramon Castilla, 32 in Chipaota, and 47 in Siambal. Of these, 99 were natives and 61 colonists. I used random sampling to select informants within the villages. This was not possible for

²⁷ The women interviewed were a nurse in Chipaota community, the teacher of the elementary school in Chipaota, and the facilitator of the NGO Rain Forest Alliance. All of the Chazutinos.

individuals living far from the villages, however, due to the smaller sample size. Thus, I deliberately selected those informants who lived outside the villages.

This survey allowed me to compare the perceptions and attitudes of indigenous peoples in Chazuta town to those of colonists in Siambal and Chazuta. The work was carried out with the help of two young people from Chazuta town. Without their help, I could not have obtained data from Chazutino women and colonists.

Participant Observation

During seven months in 2010, and three more months in the summers of 2007, 2008 and 2009, I participated in the daily life of Chazuta town and the Chazutino villages of the district. I frequently visited local farms, participated in communal work projects, and attended the weekly or bi-weekly community meetings, and witnessed special events such as funerals. During my fieldwork, I also observed the constant flux of people from the area to the main city, Tarapoto, and even to the cities of the Peruvian coast. I recorded my observations, thoughts and feelings as field notes.

This fieldwork was conducted in Spanish, my native language, which is spoken by virtually all the people in the area. In the last fifty years, Spanish has almost completely replaced the native language, called Lamas Quechua. This variety of Quechua language, which has been spoken for at least three hundred years in Chazuta, is now on the verge of extinction, and only a few people were willing to speak to me in Quechua. Lamas Quechua although not spoken in daily life, is alive in the ethnobotanical vocabulary, toponyms, jokes, etc. Though I never became fluent in this language, my basic knowledge of Quechua helped me to gain the trust of the local

people, and to understand the subtler meaning of their Quechua-tinged Spanish dialect.²⁸

Workshops

My work with COICA and TNC allowed me to participate in regional workshops and international meetings, forums, and congresses, where I witnessed negotiations between indigenous peoples and conservationists first-hand. These observations brought several interesting patterns to light. One was the fears of conservationists regarding the support of indigenous land claims, which on the one hand could lead to conflicts with Amazonian governments, and on the other, could provide indigenous people the option of deforesting their own lands. Another was the perception of indigenous leaders that conservationists are using them to achieve their own goals of forest preservation, all while ignoring indigenous demands for local development.

Several meetings were held in Quito and in Lima, at least one workshop in Tarapoto and one in Iquitos, and others in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, Manaus, Panama City, Georgetown, Guyana, Buenos Aires, and New York City. I collected presentations, draft documents, reports, and pictures from all of these meetings.

Maps, Documents and Archival Work

I had access to unpublished documents and internal reports produced by CIMA, TNC, and COICA, all of which gave me some insights into institutional relationships, financial agreements, and common objectives. I also conducted archival research in the

²⁸ In fact, it is not uncommon that the researcher does not obtain a proficient knowledge of the native language, but as mentioned by several researchers the fact that he or she is trying to learn the local language establishes the sincerity of the researcher's interest in the people more than anything he could have told them of his work. For example, William F. White while doing research in an Italian neighborhood in the 1930s (later published as *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*) tried to learn and speak Italian. He actually got proficiency in the language, and although useless for collecting data because English was widely used, it helped him to get the trust of the people.

public library of Tarapoto and the National Institute of Statistics (Instituto Nacional de Estadística – INEI) in Lima, in order to obtain more detailed information about the population of Chazuta. In addition to this, CIMA provided me with satellite maps and remote sensing data, which gave me a general overview of the Park.

Overview of the Chapters

For the purposes of this dissertation it should be clear, that while for historical reasons the forests of the Cordillera Azul were used by the Chazutino, they were not permanently inhabited (at least no lasting settlements were established in the last century in what is now the Park). This only created the context, a condition *sine qua non*, for the creation of the Park (Chapters 2 and 3). The exact timing of the creation of the Park in 2001, however, was determined by threats to the integrity of these forests in recent decades, such as the arrival of Andean colonists and agricultural expansion towards its borders (Chapter 3). Both chapters pave the way for Chapter 4, “Preserving Nature: Cordillera Azul National Park”, which examines the livelihood changes caused by the implementation of conservationist policies. Finally, in Chapter 5, I explore the responses of the Chazutino people to the creation of the Park, associated social changes, and their desire for development, in the light of broader regional trends, as can be seen, for example, in the alliances and conflicts between indigenous peoples and conservationists.

In Chapter 2, I delve into the intertwined history of the Chazutino people and the forests of the Central Huallaga valley and the Cordillera Azul. In doing so, I explore their collective identity, their history and settlements, and, finally, their traditional subsistence systems.

In Chapter 3, I focus on the history of the region since the 1960s, including the beginning of development projects, the opening of roads, the arrival of colonists from the coast and Andes, and the arrival of coca cultivation in the 1990s and its subsequent eradication in the 2000s. While Chapter 2 deals primarily with the Chazutino population, Chapter 3 addresses how the regional context and integration into mainstream Peruvian society have in the last decades changed these people, the landscape of the district, and livelihoods. In other words, I examine a) why the Chazutino people abandoned the settlements within the Park or near it, consequently creating the context which allowed for the creation of the Park within its current limits; and b) the threats to the forests of Cordillera Azul which drove conservationists to create a Park in order to protect it.

In Chapter 4, I describe the creation of Cordillera Azul National Park, the pressures that led the Peruvian government to establish the Park, and the impact of new conservation policies on the wellbeing and livelihoods of Chazutino people. This description and analysis of the impacts of Cordillera Azul National Park, along with the integrated development and conservation projects implemented in the surrounding area, allows the reader to understand the degree to which the creation of the Park changed Chazuta.

In Chapter 5, I examine connections between the programs implemented in Chazuta since the creation of the Park and its own struggles to secure their lands. In doing so, I observe the following: i) the development of a conservationist discourse among Chazutinos which emphasizes protection of the headwaters and preventing arrival of new colonists; ii) new trends in conservation, such as projects to mitigate climate change, which have now permeated expectations, perceptions and programs in

Chazuta district and among the Amazonian peoples; iii) the participation of Chazutinos in the Bagua events which led to the death of 35 people in the Northern Peruvian Amazon; and iv) the ongoing discourse on sustainable development among Chazutinos and its emphasis on forest protection, identity, and territory.

In Chapter 6, I conclude the dissertation by summarizing the current situation in Chazuta, pointing out the trends for the future, and finally reviewing potential areas for future research.



Figure 1-4. Dawn in Chazuta town. (Photo: Alberto Giovanetti)

CHAPTER 2

WHO ARE THE CHAZUTINO PEOPLE: IDENTITY, HISTORY AND LIVELIHOODS

As we know, culture is not an isolated and finished entity, but rather, a product of history, and therefore in a continuing state of flux (Auge and Colleyn 2006). As noted by Fausto and Heckenberger (2007), studying the culture and history of an Amazonian people is sometimes no easy task, due to the discontinuity in time and place caused by demographic collapse, migrations, and the formation of new identities from the remains of different peoples. In some cases, however, such as with the Chazutino people, it is still possible, despite the above factors, to follow a continuous history of the people in a particular place over time. The particular history and social evolution of the Chazutino people are, in fact, tied to a specific place and environment. In this chapter, my objective is to trace the historical formation, social organization, and traditional means of subsistence of the Chazutino people in the Central Huallaga valley and the forested mountains of the Cordillera Azul.

In doing so, I hope to illustrate the extent to which the historical and social formation of the Chazutino people ultimately paved the way for the establishment of Cordillera Azul National Park (CANP) on territories previously occupied by indigenous peoples, and the degree to which this history of previous settlements allowed the Chazutino to claim some rights to these territories on the basis of their identity, history, and traditional livelihoods. I will also explore the expansion of the Chazutino settlements in the direction of the forested mountains of the Cordillera Azul, and the ways in which their traditional means of subsistence exploited forest resources. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to demonstrate that the Park and its buffer zone were not established in pristine forests, but rather, in forests with a history of use by local people.

For practical reasons, I have divided this chapter into four sections. In the first section, I explore the current identity of the people of the Chazuta district and how it is tied to their place. In the second section, I examine the historical formation of the Chazutino people, in order to shed some light on the locations of their settlements and their historical expansion towards the Cordillera Azul. In section three, I describe their traditional means of subsistence and social organization. In section four, I summarize the most important points of the chapter.

Who are the Chazutino people and what is their Environment?

People in Chazuta have lived for centuries at a crossroads between the mountains of the Upper Amazon and the alluvial plains of the Lower Amazon. Chazutinos do not fit the typical image of what rainforest indigenous peoples are like: they are not engaged in initiation rituals, warfare, feasting, gift exchanges, complex kinships, etc. The Chazutino people live primarily within the political boundaries of the Chazuta district,¹ which is located in the department of San Martin. The 14 rural settlements of the Chazuta district are represented politically by the District Municipality.

The Huallaga river flows through the narrow valley which comprises most of the district, and is flanked by the hills of the Cerro Escalera and Cordillera Azul mountain ranges, each over 1000 meters high. The capital of the district, the town also called Chazuta, is located on the left bank of the river, at an elevation of 260m, with a population of approximately 5700 inhabitants. Approximately 2900 inhabitants live in the 14 rural settlements (INEI, 2007).

¹ There are some descendants of Chazuta people in the lower Huallaga and Ucayali rivers as a result of a forced diaspora in the late 19th century, but it is out of the scope of this research. See Barclay (2001) for more information

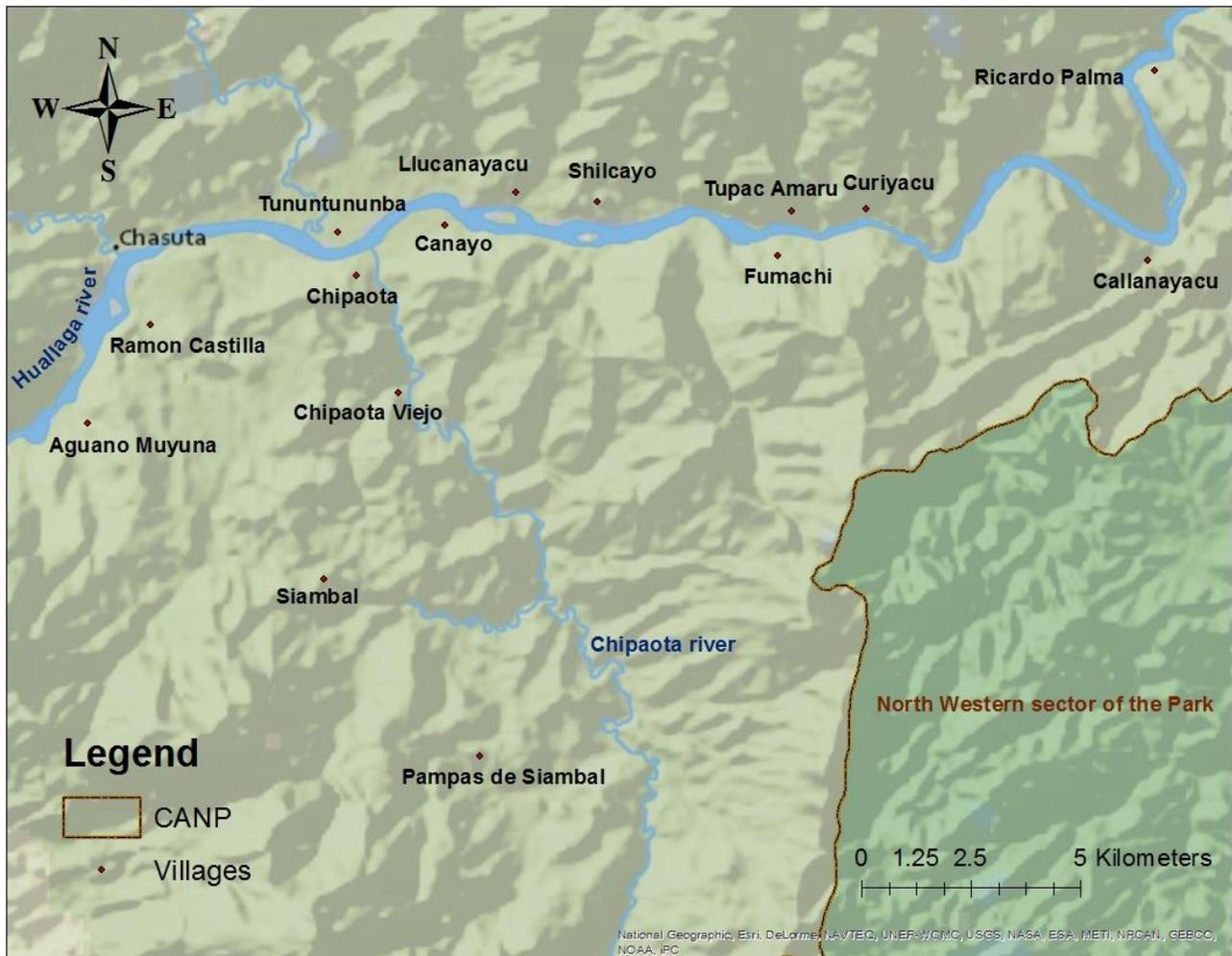


Figure 2-1. The district of Chazuta.

Tarapoto, the largest city in the Department of San Martin, is also located to the left (northwest) of the Huallaga river, and Chazuta has been connected to Tarapoto by a 30-mile unpaved road since 1980. Most of the agricultural and forest products of Chazuta are sent to Tarapoto, and Chazuta’s manufactured goods are obtained there. It is also necessary to travel to Tarapoto for any and all legal procedures, such as obtaining a National Identity Card (DNI). The best high schools and the four universities of the department of San Martin are also located there.

The vast majority of the population of the district of Chazuta and the department of San Martin is concentrated on the left bank of the Huallaga river and the lands to the

west. Towns and villages are usually connected by roads. Most mature forests in the area have been logged, and those which have been spared from clear-cutting are usually located far from roads.² These mature forests are found on the hills and the upland interfluves. In contrast, young forests can be seen near the roads, where they form a mosaic with agricultural lands, shrub lands, and fallow fields. Since the opening of the main roads, commercial timbering operations have impacted both young and mature forests. Profitable and valuable species such as mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) and tropical cedars (*Cedrela odorata*, *Cedrela fissilis*) are now very rare in the area.

The right, or east, bank of the Huallaga river, has been part of the buffer zone of Cordillera Azul National Park since 2001, and therefore, according to Peruvian regulations on protected areas, the livelihoods and uses of the natural resources in this area should be in harmony with the goals of CANP. The right bank has not been deforested to the same degree as the left bank. There are no roads in the buffer zone, only indigenous footpaths, and to reach the national park one must follow these paths into the forest. As one approaches the park proper, the forest becomes increasingly denser and less disturbed. According to the rapid inventories carried out by the Field Museum of Chicago, the northern Cordillera Azul region is home to an extraordinary variety of habitats. In fact, Cordillera Azul may have the highest concentration of habitat types among all Peruvian protected areas within its altitudinal range. 1600 species of plants were registered in the two-week expedition conducted by the Field Museum, but

² In this work, I use the term “mature forests” instead of the widely used term “primary forest”, because the latter implies no human activity on the forests. “Mature forest” is a more neutral term. Likewise, I have chosen to use the term “young forest” to refer what are usually called in the conservation literature as “secondary forest”.

the estimate for the region is between 4000 and 6000 species (Alverson, W.S., L.O. Rodríguez, and D.K. Moskovits 2001).

Forty-five different species of palm have been found within the Park and the buffer zone. Their vines, fruits, and leaves are often used by the Chazutino people. The abundance of these palms in both young and mature forests in the area may indicate a long history of human occupation, though this remains difficult to definitively ascertain.

The Chazutino Identity

The identity of the Chazutino people is tied to their place and livelihoods. They see themselves primarily as hunters and fishers, and are proud to say that the traditional Chazutino would be a hunter in the forests surrounding their villages, and a fisher in the Central Huallaga river. Despite this, however, they in fact spend more time working in their cultivated fields, or *chacras*. They also say that the Chazutino people have been the stewards of the forests for centuries, taking from them only what is necessary to live. This particular narrative is undoubtedly encouraged by the increasing influence of conservationists and promoters of sustainable development.

The Chazutino people, like their Cocama neighbors on the lower Huallaga river, can be considered “invisible natives.” However, while their Cocama neighbors refer to themselves as *ribereños* (Stocks 1981), or as “just Peruvians” (Gow 2007), the Chazutino prefer to refer to themselves as *naturales* of the district of Chazuta. The term *indio* or *indigena* has a profound negative connotation. To be an *indigena* means being a savage, a wild person, or a brute infidel.³ In this sense, and given efforts to eliminate the ethnic identities from above, the words *naturales* or *ribereños* allow native people to

³ Or *infidel* in Spanish, which literally means “one without faith”, catholic faith to be precise.

disengage themselves from their “wildness” and, rather, to emphasize their long occupation of a place and rights to it.

Until the 1960s, most of the population of the district was classified as Indians by government officials and mainstream society. In the late 1960’s and early ‘70s, however, nationalist military governments, combined with strong left-wing social movements, put substantial effort into abolishing the previous racial and ethnic classifications (e.g Degregori 1993, Nugent 1992, Granados 1998). For the nationalist government, ethnic identification was considered a barrier to the process of homogenizing the population and securing their allegiance to one entity, the Peruvian nation. For the left, it was seen as preventing people from seeing the main struggles of the society, i.e., the class war between the rich and the proletariat, and the division between urban people and peasants. Now, as in many other parts of Peru, racial/ethnic definitions are avoided, and regional/geographical/local identities are considered more relevant in peoples’ daily lives and interactions with those from other places.

Chazutino people share a common history and cultural ties with the Quechua Lamista ethnic group of the Department of San Martin. They speak the same variety of Quechua language and share a similar folklore. In fact, Chazutinos see the Quechua Lamista people as their closest brothers, in comparison to other indigenous peoples, such as the Awajun or Shipibo, who are considered distant brothers (*hermanos amazonicos*) who speak other Amazonian languages. However, only in extraordinary circumstances do Chazutino people stress their ties with the Quechua Lamista people.

The Quechua Lamista people are the major ethnic group in San Martin department. It is difficult to estimate the population of the ethnic Quechua Lamista, in

part due to the aforementioned issues related to self-identification. Estimates from different sources of the total Quechua Lamista population range from 18 000 to 24 000 (Puga, 1989). Again, however, it is difficult to count their real numbers, as up to half of the population of the department of San Martin could in fact be “invisible Indians”. According to the national census of 1940, a third of the San Martin population were indigenous at that time, based on the fact that 32% of the population (aprox. 25 000 people) spoke Quechua.⁴ By 1971, the census indicates that only 8.5% of the department’s population (aprox. 14 000 people) were Quechua speakers, and in 2007 just 1.8% of the department’s population (aprox. 1 500 people) reported fluency in Quechua. As we can see, there has been a sharp decline in both the absolute and relative number of Quechua speakers, but we must also consider one important caveat for these census figures: the reported number of speakers of indigenous languages in the Peruvian census may be far below the real number, because native people do tend to deny their indigenous language abilities.

A major reason for this drastic reduction in the number of auto-identified Quechua Lamista people is institutionalized racism in the Department, which echoes racism in the country as a whole. From Colonial times through the mid-20th century, people in the department of San Martin were divided into the category of Indian or white/mestizo, albeit with a considerable grey area where both categories overlapped. In this context, the Quechua-speaking population of the department flourished for two hundred years, despite asymmetrical relations with mestizo people (Scazzocchio

⁴ An interesting analysis about the number of speakers of indigenous languages reported in the 1940 National Census can be found in Rowe (1947).

a1979). Indigenous peoples at that time were still not integrated ideologically, politically, or economically to the mainstream society.

Since the 1960's, however, indigenous groups have become integrated into the mainstream society, and have thus acquired mainstream aspirations, dreams, and cultural models. As a result, although a large amount of the population of San Martín is of Quechua extraction, with parents and grandparents who spoke Quechua, they no longer see themselves as indigenous people, and the vast majority speak only Spanish. They do, however, have a regional identity, as *San Martínenses*, and a strong identification with their place as *naturales* of Chazuta.

There are currently no ethnic identification options in the Peruvian census, and the indigenous population of the Peruvian Amazon is estimated by counting the number of people living in officially native communities. This is misleading, however, because for every native community, there are many more officially peasant communities inhabited by “invisible natives”. In a personal communication, a teacher indicated me that there is a report made by the Dirección Regional de Educación San Martín (Regional Department of Education of San Martín) which shows that at least 200 rural communities in the department of San Martín are of Quechua origin.⁵ In this sense, the Quechua native identity has been encroached upon, and only is fully manifested in some pockets of officially recognized native communities. The Quechua language and ethnic identities may have been encroached upon, however, but not the geographical identity and sense of place. These local identities, though they involve denying indigeness, remain alive and vibrant. So does the Chazutino identity.

⁵ The teacher in question did not know where this document was archived.

It is debatable whether the Chazutino, as people born in Chazuta with ancestors from there, actually see themselves as indigenous/native people and simply choose to use a more acceptable terminology (*naturales* or *ribereños*). The Chazutino identity can also include mestizo people. There is no clear social and cultural delineation between indigenous people or mestizo people, but there is certainly a clear definition of the Chazutino identity, which derives from the long occupation and demographic lineage of the Quechua speaking people in the district.⁶ A light skinned Chazutino from a mestizo merchant family with ancestors and roots in the district is seen as just as *natural* to the place as one with indigenous features. In this sense, Chazuta identity is strongly related to the sense and memory of place, which corresponds more or less with the district political boundaries; but beneath that are ethnic roots connected to the Quechua Lamista people and more contemporary to the general Amazonian people.

One person can have several identities, and each of them may be relevant depending on the circumstances. Identification with the indigenous roots that are emblematic of the region may become important in certain situations, such as when there is a confrontation with the national government on who has owns the rights to forests and underground resources. This is what happened in 2009 when the population of San Martin used both their ethnic identity as Quechua Lamistas and their regional identity as *amazonicos* (Amazonian people) to oppose the government's decision to

⁶ Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that most of the Chazutinos carry the indigenous surnames common to the area. Some of them are evidently of Quechua origin, and some are of an unidentified origin, maybe from other native languages: Shapiama, Panaifo, Cenepo, Izuiza or Ishuiza, Jumachi, Chashnamote, Apaguenho, Chujandama, Amasifuen, Pizango, Sangama, Tapullima, Saurin are among the most common surnames. Reinaldo Cachique, a bilingual teacher in the secondary school of Chazuta, conducted a survey among his students and found that 80% of them have Quechua surnames. 95% people surveyed in this study had at least one indigenous family name; in most cases, both surnames were of indigenous origin. Spanish names are also visible, but those with Spanish surnames are considered no less Chazutino than the others.

allow oil and gas extraction in the region. In daily life and less dramatic events, however, place and landscape have played a more important role in shaping the local “invisible native” identity of the Chazuta people. Generally speaking the Chazuta people, though not necessarily downplaying their ethnic identity, tend to place more importance on the condition of living in Chazuta for generations and being the *naturales* of the place.

When Chazutinos speak about the Park or deforestation threats driven by colonists, they usually affirm their rights over the place as Chazutino people –in other words, as the people who have occupied these lands for centuries. Colonists may have lived there for some years but are still considered as migrants, colonists, *colonos*, or in a pejorative way *paisanos*,⁷ that have come from the Andes and coast of Peru. Now, colonists count for a sixth of the district population. As mentioned by Frederik Barth (1969) in a seminal work on ethnicity and boundaries, the sense of group identity is based on sharing a number traits recognized as particulars to the group as well as the opposition to “the other” peoples. In Chazuta, the opposition between who are *naturales* and who are *colonos* shapes their identities as separate peoples with different origins, cultures, behaviors and loyalties⁸.

Identity is also expressed by the trust we have for people we define as ours, in the sense of community, of equality and mutual help. Chazutinos frequently remark that “We are good people, poor yes, but good people. You do not see here big houses and

⁷ *Paisano* means a man from his own hometown. Used by colonists to refer to men from their own hometown in the Andes, it was adopted by native people to refer all colonists.

⁸ There are also people from other parts of San Martin department, who are in Chazuta for work, relatives, marriage, etc. They, in contrast to people from the Andes and the coast, are not seen as colonists or outsiders.

luxury.” In contrast, people from outside can potentially be dangerous: not only colonists, but outsiders such as conservationists, government officials, and developers. They think that there is a long history of people from outside acting against local interests. As one Chazutino said to me “*Wiraochas* [white people] come here and take advantage of us. They do not even thank the community”. But, when Chazutinos talk about their traditional means of subsistence or tell stories about snakes and animals of the forests, they assert their traditional identity as hunters, and the trust they feel for Chazutinos.

The Chazuta People and Sense of Place

A sense of familiarity with the environment is also linked to Chazutino identity. Naming is one of the ways that a “space” or a previously undifferentiated mass of land receives meaning and becomes a place (e.g Cresswell 2004).⁹ Many rivers and natural features are named with Quechua words, thus revealing the long influence of the Quechua language and the connection between the places and traditional livelihoods. For example, the tributaries of the Huallaga river in Chazuta have names such as: Chazutayacu (the river of Chazuta), Sachapapa (a variety of potato that grows near the river), Tununtununba (the onomatopoeic sound of a waterfall), Llucanayacu (river climbing), Curiyacu (river of gold), Yuracyacu (white river), Callanayacu (river of pottery/clay), Yanayacu (black river), Cachiyacu (river of salt), Angashyacu (river of pumpkin bowls), Huicunguyuc (name of a plant), Aguanurarca (whirlpool in a stream), and Chipaotillo (name of a plant), among others. Likewise, the hills on the outskirts of

⁹ An example of place-making is provided by Hugh Raffles in *In Amazonia: a natural history* (2002). He gives us a delicious narrative on Caboclos naming the watercourses, and in this way making a home in the floodlands.

Chazuta also have Quechua names: Wayra Purina (walking with the wind), Huaman Wasi (house of the hawk), and Chapitel (name of a plant), among others. Some places also now have Spanish names, as well. In other cases, compound names are used which combine both Quechua and Spanish. For example, the native community of Chipaota's full name is a compound one, Comunidad Nativa Santa Rosa de Chipaota Mushuk Llacta. This name joins the traditional Spanish name of the community, Santa Rosa de Chipaota, with the Quechua name, Mushuk Llacta, or "new town," in reference to a new settlement founded in the community.¹⁰

The Chazutino historically occupied both banks of the Huallaga river. In the years since European contact, however, settlement patterns, social life, and symbolic meanings were different between the two banks. Spanish rule not only imposed a new language in Chazuta, the Quechua language, but also a new social classification between the civilized, tamed, or Christianized Indians and the infidel, wild Indians. The former inhabited the left bank of the Huallaga river, around the town of Chazuta, and were connected by roads and paths to other missions such as Lamas and Tarapoto. The latter, who refused Christianization, remained on the right bank and in the forests of the Cordillera Azul until they disappeared by the end of the 19th century, probably through integration with the Chazutino people.

This social and spatial division is intertwined with the formation of the Chazutino identity and traditional subsistence methods. Historically, people tended to concentrate

¹⁰ In fact, it is not only in Chazuta where Quechua toponyms are massively found. In the entire department of San Martin Quechua names are found. A thesis of George McIntosh, "Non-Spanish place-names in the Province of Lamas" (1971) provides us a thorough description of toponyms in the province of Lamas, where most of the neighborhoods carry on Quechua names such as Tapullima, Cachique, Ancohuallo, Quilloallpa, Muniche, Pashanantas, Amasefuén, Suchiche, Ishuisa, Sangama –some of them also are family names.

around the town of Chazuta and the left bank, while the right bank and the forests of Cordillera Azul remained open lands used for hunting and other extractive activities. As the population expanded in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, they began to settle the right bank, where unoccupied land could still be easily found. At this time, Chazutino families also moved closer to the forests of the Cordillera Azul, where game was still abundant.

The Historical Formation of the Chazutino people

The natives of Chazuta are probably descendants of several indigenous peoples in the area that currently corresponds to the department of San Martin who adopted the Quechua language in the 17th and 18th centuries.¹¹ It is very likely that their previous or pre-Hispanic identities disappeared around this time, and merged into one new one. This process is known as ethnogenesis, because it refers to the historical formation of a new ethnic group with its own social, cultural, and linguistic heritage.

The history of the Amazon provides a fertile soil for studies of ethnogenesis. The work of Jonathan Hill in northwestern Amazonia (a1996, b1996, 1998), Neil Whitehead in Surinam (1996), Norman Whitten (1976) and John E. Hudelson (1981) in the Ecuadorian Amazon, and Francois Scazzocchio in the Peruvian Upper Amazon (a1979, 1981), shown that survivors of the post-contact demographic collapse from disparate groups commingled to form new, distinct peoples. Several works have also explored the

¹¹ The Quechua spoken in San Martin is a distinct language belonging to the larger Quechua family. It has been classified as part of the Quechua II subgroup B, and is related to the other Amazonian Quechuas: Pastaza Quechua, Napo Quechua, Chachapoyas Quechua and Ecuadorian Quechua. It also has links to the subgroup II A (spoken in Pacaraos, Laraos, Ferreñafe and Cajamarca) and II C (spoken in Cuzco, Ayacucho, Bolivia and Santiago del Estero). It is less related to the Quechua spoken in the Central Peruvian Highlands (Junin, Ancash, Pasco, Huanuco) or Quechua I. (Torero, 1964; Cerron Palomino, 1987)

ethnogenesis of the non-indigenous population, namely *caboclos* in Brazil (Nugent 1993; Parker 1985), and *ribereños* in Peru (Chibnik 1994; Stocks 1981).

The genesis of the Quechua Lamista ethnicity can be traced to the foundation of missions by Jesuit priests and Franciscan friars in the Central Huallaga basin during the 17th and 18th centuries (Scazzocchio 1979). It is now well-known that the Spanish soldiers and missionaries, who were tasked with subduing indigenous people before the Spanish crown and converting them to Catholicism, in reality were dealing with decimated peoples suffering from recently introduced European diseases. To accomplish their goal, the Spanish focused on concentrating indigenous populations in “missions,” where they could be Christianized and forced to work for the Crown.

The Lamista/Chazuta people are far from the only Quechua speaking people in the Amazon. The Jesuits introduced the Quechua language into many areas, and, as noted by Anne-Christine Taylor (2007) created a relatively uniform social classification scheme throughout the Upper Amazon: wild Indians, known as *aukas*, or speakers of Jivaro languages; *mansos*, or Christianized and tamed Quechua speaking people; and whites. There is a broad group of Amazonian Quechua peoples, including the peoples of Huallaga, Marañón, and Curaray in Peru, and of the Napo, Canelos, Puyo and Tigre rivers in Ecuador. These groups do not all speak the same variety of Quechua, but their Quechua dialects are all closely related.

Peoples in Pre-Hispanic Chazuta

We know very little about the indigenous peoples who lived in the area before the arrival of the Spanish. There is some scattered evidence of intense Pre-Hispanic occupation, and of migrations of several peoples through the region. At this crossroads between the eastern slopes of the Andes and the lower Amazon, it is likely that bands

from Arawakan, Tupi or other families passed through or settled here. According to Julio C Tello (1960) Amazonian people could have reached the Huallaga river on their way to Chavin de Huantar in the Central Andes as far back as the third millennium BC. Furthermore, he suggested that the people involved in this early east-to-west migration belonged to the Proto-Arawak family.

However, by the 16th century Tupi peoples were dominating regional exchange networks in the Western Amazon (the Amazon, Napo, Ucayali, Maranhon rivers) because of their riverine base, widespread migrations, control over desirable technologies such as cloth and canoe manufacturing, and their aggressive stance toward other peoples (Reeve 1993: 110). Omaguas and Cocamas, both Tupi peoples, occupied at the time of conquest vast territories along the Upper Amazon river, Napo river and the Lower Ucayali. It is not arbitrary to assume that Pre-Hispanic Chazuta was populated by Tupi people. DeBoer, following Lathrap's hypothesis, suggested some Tupi heritage for the people of Central Huallaga. This was based on the discovery of twenty sites in the Central Huallaga basin which were surveyed in a rapid archaeological survey in 1984. Six were situated on the Huallaga river, three were found on its affluent the Mayo river, and eleven on smaller tributaries of the Huallaga. Only five sites were larger than one hectare (Goldstein 1985). DeBoer established that a distinctive polychrome pottery style emerged sometime after 1000 AD. Interestingly, this is a style which is also found in many localities of the Upper Amazon, and this is explained by Donald Lathrap as a manifestation of the Tupi expansion into the western Amazon (DeBoer 1984: 115 – 116).

Nevertheless, the ancient peoples of Chazuta might have received some influence from the Chachapoyan culture too. The Chachapoyas lived between the Upper Huallaga valley and the Marañon river, and developed a highly populated society which left evidence of intense transformation and use of natural resources (Church 2005: 470). Thus, it would not be unreasonable to speculate that the people of the Central Huallaga may have been involved in trade with Chachapoyas and the tribes of the lowland Amazon, and may also have participated in the linkages established by the Inca Empire in the late 15th century. In other words, the ancient peoples of Chazuta were likely part of a chain of exchanges moving both from west to east, from the Andes to the lowland Amazon, and vice versa. In fact, in what is now the town of Chazuta, there was a pottery center and a hub for interregional exchange where “Lowland products including tobacco, sarsaparilla, feathers, and pelts met highlands and coastal imports such as metal tools and glass beads, the implements and baubles of civilization” (DeBoer 1984: 36).

To the south of the intersection of the Huallaga and Mayo rivers were the Cholone and Hibito peoples. They spoke the Cholon and Hibito languages, and it is thought that both languages belonged to the same small family. Research on both languages has not found affinities to other linguistic families, neither in the Andes nor in the Amazon (Adelaar and Muysken 2004: 460 - 461). Both languages and their ethnic identities disappeared in recent history: the Hibitos in the mid 19th century, and the Cholones around the 1930s. It is likely, however, that people from these ethnicities became Quechua speakers of Chazuta at some point in their history.

Historical linguistic analysis is also fragmented. The languages spoken between the Mayo and Huallaga rivers were not documented by early Spanish writers and colonial officials. According to the account of the Spanish official De la Riva Herrera (2003) and the work of Scazzocchio (a1979, 1981), six different nations were living in the area when the Spanish arrived in the area in the 1540s. All were known in Spanish as Motilones, or “shaven heads”. The Tabaloso people were located to the south of the Mayo river, while the Lamas occupied the north bank; Suchichis occupied the Tarapoto area, and the Amasifuenes and Cascoasoas were living on the shores of the Huallaga river, now Chazuta. Two centuries later, the Father Juan de Velasco recorded the presence of several ethnic groups in the area, such as the Amasiguines, Lamas, Motilones, Pativas, Suchiches, Saparinas and Tabalosos, with each speaking their own languages. The great difficulty in reconstructing the ethnohistory of this area is that the speakers of all of these languages had died out by the end of the 18th century.

To complicate matters further, the Inca expansion may have forced a new migration into the area between 1430 and 1470. During that time, the Chachapoyan people near the San Martin region fell under Inca rule and began a demographic decline, due to several rebellions which were crushed by Incan military expeditions. This coincides with the local mythology of the Department of San Martin, which says that around that period, the Chanca Quechua-speaking people from the Southern Peruvian Andes, fleeing from the Inca expansion, arrived in the Central Huallaga basin and formed the aforementioned Lamas people.¹² Both hypotheses are plausible: that the

¹² Scazzocchio (a1979, b1979, 1981) and DeBoer (1984) questioned the historical accuracy of this myth, due to the fact that escaping to the eastern slopes and the Amazon is a recurrent Andean motif. According to Scazzocchio, the Quechua language was imposed on indigenous people by catholic

Quechua language expanded into the area because it was the lingua franca of the Inca empire, or that it arrived in the area as the language spoken by the Chanca people who settled in Lamas.

However, while toponyms indicate the existence of pre-Inca languages in the Chachapoya region in northern and north-western portions of the Department of San Martin (Church 2005); the toponyms in the Central Huallaga basin and Chazuta are overwhelmingly Quechua, despite the fact that many other indigenous languages were once spoken there. This supports the aforementioned hypothesis that the Quechua language was the *lingua franca* before the arrival of the Spanish, and was the language that the Inca Empire promoted at the expense of local ones. Quechua also may have been the native language of traders. Consequently, the Quechua language could have aided the extinction of the local tongues even before the demographic collapse of the 16th and 17th centuries.

In any case, much more research on archaeology and linguistics is needed in order to understand the Pre-Hispanic Central Huallaga valley. It is likely that archaeological exploration will discover additional sites. For instance, in the central square of the town of Chazuta, several tombs, dated around 800 to 1100 A.D, were discovered and unearthed by 2000. Ancient potteries were also found in the middle of the native community of Chipaota, and locals say that they know there are more archaeological sites which have not yet been investigated.¹³

missionaries. I suggest that, on the contrary, the Quechua language was already spoken as a lingua franca in the area prior to the arrival of the Spanish.

¹³ It important to mention that Chazutinos do not think there is a connection between the pre-Hispanic people who was buried there and them.

Deposits of rock salt are found on both sides of the river, which probably added to the importance of the area. Salt has had a historical importance in trade, diet, and food preservation around the earth (e.g Kurlansky 2002). Its importance cannot be underestimated, especially in the Amazon basin, where a fish, if not salted, might last only a day before rotting. We can hypothesize that mining of the salt rocks and the abundance of fish in the Huallaga river stimulated commerce between the Chazutino and other Amazonian peoples; this may have played out in a similar fashion to the way it did in the area around the Perene river, where the salt mines were a center of commerce and cultural production among the Ashaninka people and others (Varese 1968).

The salt mines of Pilluana and Callanayacu (in Quechua, *callana* means potsherd, and *yacu* is river) are the largest ones, but small deposits are also common in the tributaries of the Huallaga, and can be readily identified by the appearance of the Quechua word for salt, *cachi*, in their toponyms. DeBoer (1984) found Pre-Hispanic pottery in the areas surrounding these salt rock deposits. Travelers of the 19th century (Raimondi 1965 [1913], Poeppig 2003 [1835], Herndon 2000 [1853], and Smyth 1836) also pointed out that the salt extracted from Pilluana and Callanayacu was a means of exchange, and that the commerce in which the Chazutino were involved stretched from the Andes to beyond Iquitos in the lower amazon.¹⁴

There is evidence of high population density on the left/west bank of the Huallaga river. Archaeological sites have been found beneath current towns and villages, although no serious study has been undertaken to identify ancient sites. Even in the

¹⁴ In Appendix B, we can see a map created by CIMA which identifies the locations of some archaeological sites and salt deposits in the Park and buffer zone.

1560s, a full 40 years after introduced diseases had begun taking a high toll on the indigenous population, Spanish soldiers were often attacked by 2000 or 3000 indigenous warriors when they traveled through the Central Huallaga valley (Friar Pedro Simon 1942 [1627]: 20). When hungry Spanish soldiers entered indigenous villages, they came across abundant food stocks. Moreover, long after first contact with the Spanish, a series of epidemics between 1669 and 1680 killed 240,000 indigenous people in the Lamas sector alone (Scazzocchio 1981: 108). In other words, there were more people in the Lamas sector in the 1670s than in the entire department of San Martin in the 1940s. In addition, De La Riva Herrera frequently encountered villages of sixty houses (2003) or more, and this was considered normal at the time. Friar Pedro Simon's description of Pedro de Ursua's journey down the Amazon river suggests that Spanish wandered along wide, well-maintained tracks which connected indigenous villages and towns (1942 [1627]). The Spanish only surveyed and documented the left bank of the Huallaga river, because the right side was the domain of the "wild Indians" who had not surrendered to Spanish rule. Thus, there is no reason to think that the right side of the river was less populated than the left side in the Pre-Hispanic era.

Within that context, it is not farfetched to think of an anthropogenic landscape shaped by human activity over centuries, if not millennia, as has been suggested for other parts of Amazonia (e.g Denevan 1992, Baleé and Erickson 2006, Heckenberger et al. 2003, among others). Some data suggest the presence of sophisticated pre-Hispanic agroforestry techniques. For example, Poeppig, traveling in the area between 1827 and 1832, noted that indigenous people employed mechanical devices to coppice trees at a height of 20 feet above the ground, in order to allow their future regrowth. He

also noted that forests were temporally cleared in order to cultivate edible plants in a given year. This unique logging technique, followed by burning the ground, did not actually destroy the forest, as the larger trees would regenerate, and new pioneer species would begin growing in the plot the following year (Poeppig 2003 [1835]: 302 – 303).¹⁵ Moreover, the account of Friar Pedro Simon (1942 [1627]) describes a region with a high population density, but does not suggest the existence of large deforested areas in the Central Huallaga valley.

Another example of indigenous management of wildlife is provided by the Spanish Friar Pedro Simon, who described an indigenous village where over seven thousand turtles were being farmed (Simón 1942 [1627]: 33).¹⁶ This may be an exaggeration of the writer, but it does give us a clue as to the intense manipulation of the environment which took place at the time, largely achieved using techniques which are now in disuse. Artificial ponds for farming turtles could have provided a good source of protein.

Life for indigenous people in the Central Huallaga valley was disrupted even before the physical arrival of Spanish soldiers in the 1540s. Old World diseases probably spread to the area in the decades before, and quickly decimated the

¹⁵ Poeppig, commenting about the slash and burn system, said: “... *al rozar el bosque a ninguno se le ocurre extraer las raíces, trabajo durísimo por supuesto, y los árboles gruesos se talan a veinte o más pies encima del suelo, levantando con este objeto amazones alrededor de ellos para facilitar el trabajo. Sólo en raras ocasiones se extingue, a consecuencia de semejante procedimiento, la fuerza vital del árbol, que resiste incluso al tremendo calor de la quema, y ya en el segundo verano vuelve a brotar el bosque, presentándose simultáneamente una cantidad de otras plantas que se desconocían antes en el lugar.*” (2003 [1835]: 302-303)

¹⁶ “*Sacó luego nuestra aquí el vientre de mal año (como dicen) con la mucha comida que hallaron de maíz, frisoles, y otras raíces de la tierra, con muchas tortugas e hicoteas que tenían los indios vivas en unas lagunillas arrimadas a sus casas, cercadas de empalizadas, que al parecer de los soldados echaron tanteo que eran las que hallaron vivas, sino otras que estaban recién muertas para comer, mas de seis mil o siete mil, en que metieron las manos a osadas.*” (Simón [1627] 1942: 33)

population. In fact, introduced diseases would continue to impact the population over the next three hundred years.¹⁷ When De La Riva Herrera passed through the Central Huallaga valley in the 1640s, he observed traces of large populations which had already crashed (2003: 194). The account of Riva Herrera also mentions that, in 1645, the provinces populated by the peoples called Motilones and Tabalosos were devastated by a smallpox epidemic that killed the majority of the local people (2003). Epidemics would return many times over the following centuries. The Jesuits estimated that 240,000 indigenous people in the Lamas sector died from Western diseases between 1669 and 1680. Another epidemic in 1749 caused great mortality among a people called the Orejones (big ears), also in the Lamas area (Scazocchio 1981: 108).

The Colonial Period and Ethnogenesis in the Central Huallaga Valley

The Franciscan and Jesuit orders divided the region into two parts for evangelization purposes. The Upper Huallaga valley and half of the Central fell under Franciscan administration, while the area stretching from Chazuta to the lowlands was granted to the Jesuits. By 1676, the Franciscan friars founded two missions on the left bank of the Huallaga river, 100 miles to the south of Chazuta: the missions of Sion and Pisana. They gathered the remains of the indigenous Cholones and Hibitos in these missions and began to christianize them. Jesuits in the east were also active, and founded several missions. As happened in Lamas and other missions, it is very likely that the Jesuits attracted the surviving remnants of indigenous groups in Chazuta, either

¹⁷ In the nearby region of Chachapoyas, for instance, the population was reduced to just 10 % of its pre-contact number by 1650 (Church 2005: 470). The combination of smallpox, measles, and rubella killed an incredible number of local people throughout the colonial times, and has left its mark on the population until now.

by force or by luring them with metal tools. We know the generic name of these tribes, the Coscanasoa peoples, but no more.

In the period between 1638 to 1767, the Jesuits managed to create a new social structure and set of interrelationships in the Western Amazon region, from Chazuta to the lowlands. Missions and new villages were founded throughout the Western Amazon, where different Amazonian peoples were grouped together, and new identities thus were forged.

The Quechua language was adopted by the missionaries to be used as the *lingua franca* among the infidels. As mentioned before, it was probably already the *lingua franca*, but as of now we do not have conclusive evidence of this. In any case, Jesuits christened the remnants of the Pre-Hispanic indigenous peoples, who adopted the Quechua language as their maternal tongue. The account of De La Riva Herrera, for example, mentioned that some young people were sent to live with a Spanish priest in order to learn Quechua and Spanish (2003). This was a common practice in the Spanish and Portuguese Americas, in order to create a group of people who would become dealmakers or intermediaries. Eventually, after several generations, most of the natives would acquire the second language, and eventually teach it to the children as their mother tongue.

This process of ethnic formation and adoption of a new mother tongue is by no means easy and peaceful. We know, for example, that in the Upper Amazon, the Spanish missionaries took military control over the areas with salt rock deposits first, and then began forming alliances with different indigenous groups. This was followed by a technological change brought up by the introduction of metal tools, which

consequently caused changes in the agricultural practices, hunting, fishing, use of space, and social relations (e.g Bellier 1994, Grohs 1974, Rojas 1994). For example, during the 17th and 18th century, one of these peoples, the Ashaninka, became technologically dependent on metal tools provided by the Spanish. The missionaries, once situated as the main intermediaries of a previous network of exchanges among the ethnic groups of the Apurimac, Perene, and Ene valleys, christened the Ashaninka, but only after a series of revolts and their subsequent political subordination (Rojas 1994, Varese 1968).

In a similar way, it is plausible to think that the strategic position of the Central Huallaga valley and the salt deposits found there played a role in stimulating Spanish interest in controlling the area. For example, a traveler in the 19th century noted the salt trade between Chazuta and the Amazon lowlands:

Among the most important events disturbing the usual routine of village life, are the voyages to the Huallaga for salt and poison from the Marañon. These are commenced about the end of June or beginning of July, and the salt mines of Chasuta are reached by about the end of August, so that the salt may be excavated from the river bed, and the return journey effected before the waters of the Huallaga begin to rise, towards the end of September. The season of floods on the Huallaga and Ucayali seems to correspond to the season of lighter currents on the Napo, which favour the up-stream journey-or rather, perhaps, render it practicable-and enable the salt collectors to complete their tedious journey by November. (Simson, 1883: 25)

Quijos people from the Ecuadorian Amazon obtained salt from the salt mines in the Huallaga banks (Villavicencio 1858: 388). Herndon also noticed that, at midyear, Cocama and Shipibo Conibo peoples from the Maranhon and Ucayali rivers made a voyage *shitarear* up the Huallaga river to secure their supplies of salt (2000 [1853] 172). Old people in Chazuta still remember these voyages, because these same salt mines

were exploited until the 1960s –until refined salt could be found and purchased in every Amazonian shop.

Exchanges with their close neighbors the Cocama people were for sure frequent. Fishing activities and techniques described by Rivas (2004) among the Cocama people are also found among the Chazutinos. They may speak completely different languages, but share some vocabulary, such as for example –a verb that describes the process of catching with your hands a fish hidden in the bed of a river.

In this sense, it is understandable why the Spanish had an interest in dominating the indigenous peoples of the Central Huallaga valley. Once conquered, they would become the Chazutino people (“civilized Indians”), and the primary intermediaries between the Spanish and other, unconquered indigenous peoples of the lowlands such as for instance the Cocamas and Shipibos.

How did this take place? We don’t know, but it is likely that these people became politically and socially subordinated to Spanish rule only after the Spanish took control of the salt mines of Pilluana and Callanayacu and the indigenous peoples in the Central Huallaga valley became technologically dependent on metal tools. We do not have descriptions of these people and the events surrounding this period. We know that, after the Conquest and the relocation of indigenous peoples to Chazuta town, the Chazutino were, to some degree, protected by the Spanish law on indigenous peoples, as were many other indigenous peoples considered to be “pacified Indians”.¹⁸ An English botanist, Richard Spruce, left us with some descriptions of the place and the people:

¹⁸ For example Poeppig said that “*Los lamistas de Chazuta han conservado, más que los de otros pueblos, el modo de vivir de los indios de la selva debido a la situación del lugar, pero no son tan rudos como aquellos; gozando, desde tiempo atrás, de la protección de los frailes, no les faltaban oportunidades para desarrollar sus facultades.*” (2003 [1835]: 286)

We reached Chasuta on the evening of the 18th [June 18th of 1855]. It is a considerable village on the left bank of the Huallaga, at the mouth of a rather large ravine, and from being situated at the very foot of abrupt rocky hills, while loftier ones appear on every side, it is one of the most picturesque places I have seen. Its population is entirely of Indians, though many show evident traces of white blood, and they are among the tallest and handsomest I have met with, especially the women. Even the Governor is an Indian, an old man, formerly a soldier, in which profession he learnt his Castilian. The pueblo numbers less than 300 married men, and about 1500 souls. All speak the Inca language, and very few have a smattering of Spanish. (Spruce, 1908 vol II: 22-23)

Spruce also described what seemed to be a ritual fight in Chazuta. What is more important about this account is that, according to him, the Chazutino people were composed of two (or maybe more) tribes:

I have myself seen that Indian women can fight. At the village of Chasuta, on the malos pasos of the river Huallaga, which, in 1855, had a population of some 1800 souls, composed of two tribes of Coscanasoa Indians, the ancient rivalry of those tribes generally breaks forth when a large quantity of chicha has been imbibed during the celebration of one of their feasts. Then, on opposite sides of the village, the women pile up heaps of stones, to serve as missiles for the men, and renew them continually as they are being expended. If, as sometimes happens, the men are driven back to and beyond their piles of stones, the women defend the latter obstinately, and generally hold them until the men are able to rally to the combat (Spruce, 1908: 458).

This, however, is the last record we have of the Coscanasoa people. If there were at least two different tribes who inhabited Chazuta in the Colonial period, then by the late 19th century, these ethnicities were dissolved into one: the Chazutino people we know today. We do not know if the people on the right bank of the Huallaga were also Coscanasoa, although we can assume that, if they were, their affinity to the current Chazutino people would have made integration relatively easy.

Indigenous Rebels: Civilized Natives on the Left Bank and Infidels on the Right Bank

The Spanish rule and the mission system imposed a social structure and classification which were to last, with some modifications, until the first half of the 20th century. Indigenous peoples were placed at the bottom of the social pyramid and divided into three distinct groups: civilized, semi-civilized, and wild Indians (Scazzocchio 1981: 107). Indigenous groups who avoided being Christianized and lived on the right bank of the Huallaga river and in the interior of the Cordillera Azul were labeled “wild Indians.” Detribalized indigenous peoples on the left bank of the Huallaga, who had adopted the Quechua language, were “civilized people.” Spanish priests, soldiers, or merchants were the rulers.

The right bank and the forested mountains of the Cordillera Azul were the land of the Infidels, who, if they did not already live in the area, had fled from the Spanish and settled in the hinterlands. For example, De La Riva Herrera (2003) complained that indigenous chiefs frequently tried to convince their people to leave before the Spanish arrived, and to find refuge across the Huallaga river. Other indigenous chiefs also asked their people not to accept Spanish offerings, and to run away (2003: 194). We can only speculate now as to the reasons behind these appeals, such as fear of the deadly diseases which broke out in every group which had made contact with the Spanish.

The Spanish did not venture onto the right bank of the Huallaga River, nor into the mountains of Cordillera Azul (at that time known as Pampas del Sacramento). Most of the missions were founded in the “pacified” left side of the Huallaga river, in order to avoid indigenous attacks from the other side –although it seems that a few villages and

posts were established in the right bank too. Either way, missions flourished on the left bank of the Huallaga for almost 300 years.

A number of Franciscans friars did travel by boat to both sides of the Cordillera Azul. One of them, Sobreviela, who traveled around 1783 – 1790, left us with some information. According to the priest Bernardino Izaguirre (2002 [1922]), Sobreviela found that several indigenous peoples lived in the Pampas del Sacramento or Cordillera Azul area, where they enjoyed abundance and good weather: the Shipibo, Sétebo, Pano, and Cocama (pp. 234).¹⁹ The map produced by his 1791 expedition shows no towns or missions in the inland area.

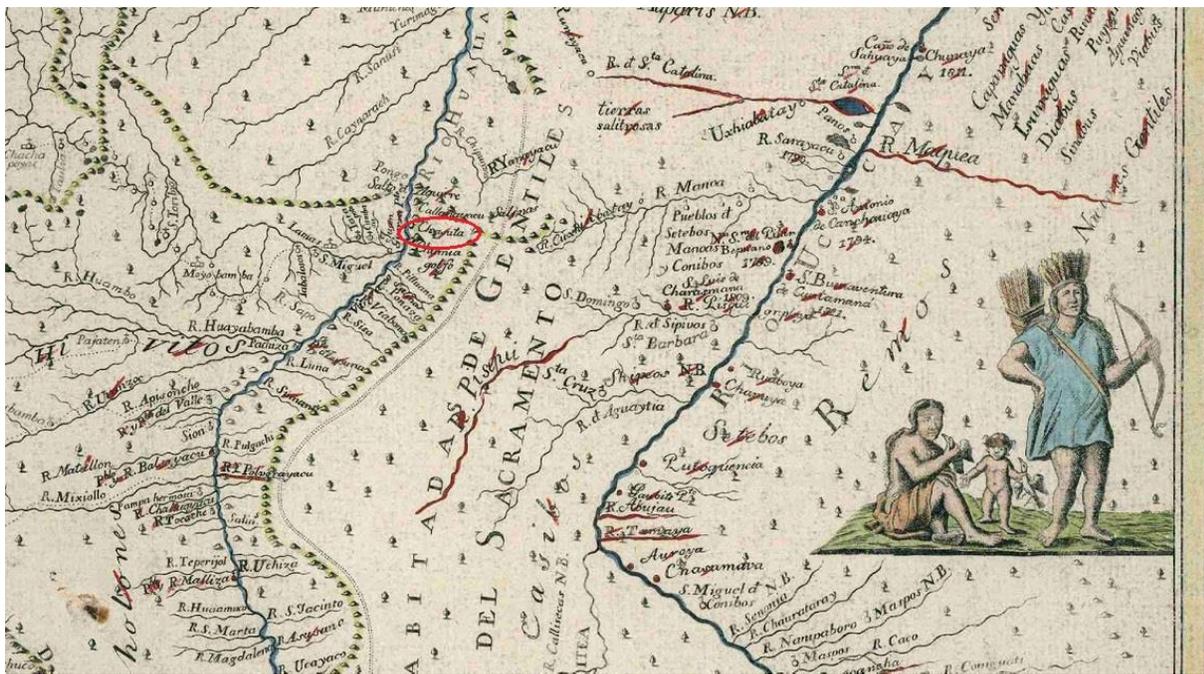


Figure 2-2. Part of the map “Plan Del curso de los Rios Huallaga y Ucayali, y de la pampa del Sacramento” (1791). Within the red circle is the name “Chazuta”. Source: <http://www.bne.es/es/Micrositios/Guias/12Octubre/MapasAmerica/GaleriaMapas/DetalleImagen26.html>

¹⁹ In fact, currently AIDESEP and the Shipibo organizations on the opposite side of the Park claim that there are still Cacataibo people in voluntary isolation within the Park –but the area of contention is far from Chazuta and irrelevant to Chazuta people.

Sobreviela pointed out that the left side of the Huallaga was populated by industrious whites and indigenous peoples dedicated to weaving. He added that a militia was formed on the Spanish side of the Huallaga in order to launch raids into the savage territories. However, the map indicates that only gentiles or “wild Indians” live there. We do not know who the indigenous peoples to the east of the Chazuta area were. It is unlikely that they were Cacataibos, Shipibos, or Conibos, who currently inhabit the Cordillera Azul, but very far from Chazuta. It is more likely that they were related to the Chazutino people, and that they gradually adopted the Quechua language, as well.

The right bank of the Huallaga River and the mountains of the Cordillera Azul became a refuge for indigenous peoples who did not accept Spanish rule and Christianization (Poepig [1835] 2003; Herndon [1853] 2000; Sandeman, 1939). We do not know their numbers, but it does seem that there were fewer people than on the left bank. They were decimated, and in fear of Spanish Peruvian expeditions, as every once in a while, expeditions of mestizo/white Peruvians or Spanish would cross the river to capture indigenous people and enslave them.

When the American traveler Herndon was travelling down the Huallaga River in 1851, he noticed that the right side of the river was known as being populated by peoples who avoided contact with the “civilized” people:

Our popero [boatman] says that the Infidels dwell near here, and the people of *Tarapoto* go a short distance up this river [referring to a tributary of the Huallaga river on the right side] to capture the young Indians and take them home as slaves. I believe this story; for I found servants of this class in Tarapoto, who were bought and sold as slaves. Slavery is prohibited by the laws of Peru; but this system is tolerated on the plea that the Infidel is Christianized and his condition bettered by it (Herndon 2000 [1853]: 158).

However, we also have some clues that, for the Chazutino people, the right bank and Cordillera Azul were familiar places where fish and game were abundant, and not a

“wild” place. In 1894, for example, the Chazutino rebelled against new rules imposed by the Peruvian authorities, which actually violated colonial laws that protected them from abuse. When the rebellion was subsequently put down by government troops, the Chazutino found refuge on the right bank and in the Cordillera Azul (Barclay, 2001), which indicates that these areas were not unknown or hostile territory for the Chazutino.

As in other parts of the Amazon (e.g Denevan 1992, Balee 2006) forest regeneration probably happened relatively quickly, due to low population densities. Wild animals were found in abundance on the right side of the Huallaga river, as well. The black jaguar (called *yana puma* in Quechua) was depicted by Poeppig (2003 [1835]) as the most dangerous animal living on the right side of the river. In the left side of the river, in contrast, wild animals were seen only in rare occasions.

Small settlements of three or four huts were often seen on the Infidel side. Herndon noted that the people in these settlements were timid, and would not face white men (158). In the late 1930s, another traveler, Sandeman (1939), pointed out that, well into the 20th century, incursions were made into territory on the right side of the river in order to capture children, who would then become domestic servants in Tarapoto. This illustrates the total disregard for indigenous peoples’ lives, especially those labeled as infidels, who for centuries were dehumanized as “savages”.²⁰

By the 19th century, the population probably began to recover from the demographic collapse. According to Smyth and Lowe, the population around 1840 was 1100 inhabitants (154). Herndon found 1200 inhabitants in Chazuta in 1851 (160), and

²⁰ Time does not necessarily change social relations and the social pyramid. Even in 2010, some Quechua speaking families sent their underage daughters to be maids in Tarapoto, Lima or Trujillo. They often complained that their daughters were paid less than the minimum salary and forced to work long hours. This is still a common occupation in Peru for the children of indigenous peoples.

Spruce calculated around 1500 souls by 1855. However, as mentioned by several travelers, these people had already become dependent on metal tools, and thus, were in need of the mestizo market in order to obtain them.²¹

We know that at least by the end of the 19th century, some families were living pacifically in what is now the community of Chipaota.²² By the first decades of the 20th century there were also Chazutino families in what is now Ramon Castilla and Siambal. The three settlements on the right bank of the river where my fieldwork was done.

Settlements on the Right Bank and the Expansion Towards Cordillera Azul

By the first decades of the 20th century, the right bank of the Huallaga River began receiving families from Lamas and Chazuta in search of new hunting grounds. When game became scarce on the left bank and in the region of Lamas, Quechua speaking families usually moved to other areas, where game was probably more abundant. Today, people remember that there were plenty of available lands on the right bank.

According to Scazzocchio (a1979), the Quechua Lamista territory that we that know today was formed through many different, but continuous, migrations of Lamas people throughout the region in search of new forests for game.²³ During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Lamista people expanded and acquired new territories

²¹ Smyth and Lowe (154) observed that the most valuable items were knives, small axes, fish hooks, and trinkets. Note that most of these are related to fishing and hunting. Herndon (2000 [1853]): "These are principally articles of wearing apparel, or stuff to make them of. Heavier articles such as iron, iron implements, copper kettles, (for distilling,) guns, crockery, come from below. The axes are narrow, worthless things, made in Portugal, and sold in Tarapoto for a dollar in money". (166)

²² By 1869, half an hour after Raimondi (1965 [1913]) sailed down from Chazuta in the direction of Yurimaguas, he saw a house at the conjunction of the Huallaga and Chipaota rivers: "To the right is the mouth of the Chipauta river. We can see a house on the same shore" (*Por la derecha entra la quebrada de Chipauta. Se ve una casa en esa misma orilla*)

²³ In Quechua language their territory is called the *Runa Llactakuna*, which literally means the territory/place of the Quechua people.

throughout the San Martin region. This was due to demographic growth, the pressure exerted on Lamista land by mestizo people, and market incentives for certain products, such as game meat. These migrants encountered different peoples of unidentified ethnicities who were subsequently absorbed by the Lamas people. As a consequence, the remains of other ethnicities in San Martin Department were encroached upon in remote forests and headwaters, and were eventually assimilated into the Lamista people.

It is not clear to what extent this expansion affected the region of Chazuta, including the left and right banks of the Huallaga. The Chazutino people had maintained close ties with the Lamista people since the colonial period, and to external observers, they were the same people. During my fieldwork, many people recalled that their grandparents or great grandparents had come to the right bank from Lamas and Chazuta towns in search of game. Therefore, it is very likely that any surviving people of other ethnicities on the right bank and Cordillera Azul were assimilated into the Lamista/Chazutino people, and that no trace is left of their previous identities.

In this sense, whether people of other ethnicities were living on the right bank of the Huallaga river or not, or only scattered families of Chazutinos were already established there permanently, all of these people would have integrated with the Lamista/Chazutino people who moved to the right bank. Quechua speaking families coming from Chazuta and Lamas settled along the tributary streams of the Huallaga river.

Quechua speaking families settled along the tributaries of the Huallaga river until they reached the forests of the Cordillera Azul, where they hunted and fished. The

Chipaota river was populated from the 1920s to 1970s, by families looking for game and fish, from its mouth at the Huallaga river up to the foot of the mountains. Most of the Chipaota families recalled that their grandparents came to the right bank during the 1930s and 1940s, drawn there by the abundance of game. In the forests of Siambal, there were already six or seven families established by the 1920s.²⁴

The 1940 census states that, out of a total population of 2052 for the district, 1256 resided in the town of Chazuta, and the rest in 19 different villages and settlements on both sides of the Huallaga river.²⁵ On the right bank, 62 people were reported in the village of Chipaota, and 50 in the village of Sacha Papa (now Ramon Castilla). The people in Siambal were not included in the census, most likely because it was too far away for census workers to visit.

Data collected in the field also suggest that, until the 1970s, there were still families from Chazuta, Chipaota and Ramon Castilla moving into the interior of the right bank, towards the Cordillera Azul, due to the availability of land and game. As families increased in size, newer family members had to settle in farther-flung locations in order

²⁴ During the first half of the 20th century, the right bank of the Huallaga was also occupied by some landowners who had dozens of Chazuta native people working for them. Older people still remember that, up until the 1940s, they had to work for some landowners to receive just enough food for physical subsistence: "We could not take anything, neither fruits nor plants. All the food belonged to the patron... we worked from sunrise to sunset." By the mid-twentieth century, however, there was nothing in the area which could be exploited for financial gain, and no plants, trees, or animals with any market value. Consequently, the Peruvian landowners faded away, and indigenous people unexpectedly recovered part of their freedom. Portions of the lands which are now Chipaota and Ramon Castilla belonged to some landowners whose descendants still live in Chazuta town, and are considered just as Chazutino as the indigenous Chazutinos. It is possible that the existence of these landowners may have pushed some Chazuta families to go further into the mountains in order to preserve their freedom, but I have not found any strong evidence for this.

²⁵ The National Census of 1940 is especially remembered in Peru because it was first one that covered the entire nation, and also the only modern census which divided people into two racial/ethnic categories: whites and indigenous peoples. In Chazuta, out of the 2052 inhabitants, 945 were counted as white/mestizo, while 1107 were counted as indigenous (Republica del Peru, 1940). As this question was highly subjective, it was decided that it would be answered by the census takers themselves, and not the respondents (Rowe 1947).

to find more game. Hunting paths that led into the interior of the Park were cleared, huts for resting before and after hunts were set up, and small lakes in the area were given Quechua names.

In other words, from the late 19th century to the late 20th century, Chazutino people advanced towards the Cordillera Azul, founding new settlements along the way. The Cordillera Azul became part of their hunting grounds, if it hadn't been before- I have no reports of hunting in the area before the 20th century, but it seems unlikely that no hunting took place there before. It also seems that some families did in fact settle for a time in places now occupied by the Park. People in the communities remember old people, now dead, who until some years ago were living near the borders of the Park with no intention of moving back to the shores of the Huallaga river.

In these villages, as has been tradition among the Lamista and Chazutino people, the traditional leaders were usually shamans or healers. They were in charge of founding new settlements and mediating with the Spanish speaking world. Fluency in Spanish was and is a requirement for leadership positions. The power of the traditional leaders has typically been dependent on the consent and consensus of the villagers.

At least two settlements were established by some native families within the current borders of the Park. These two settlements were in the areas called Gayuyuc and Huicunguyuc. From there, the residents of these settlements opened paths to access hunting areas inside the Park. For example, Elias Juandama, now 78 years old, remembers that he came to Gayuyuc in 1960 because he was in love with his future wife, who had moved there with her family from Lamas. They married and lived a self-sufficient life there, where there was plenty of game to be found. Between 4 and 5

family units resided at this location. As we will see in Chapter 3, however, Elias Jujandama's family and the other families of Gayuyuc and Huicunguyuc moved to Chipaota in the 1980s, after deciding that their children should have better access to education, healthcare, etc. The houses in this area are now covered by "*purma*," or old forests.

The lake Laguna del Mundo Perdido, located well within the Park, an 8 hour walk from the park boundary, was well-known, and became, or already was, a sacred place. Quechua shamans and healers used to go there to have mystical experiences and commune with the spirits of the forests, and to collect plants. People also remember that the lake was surrounded by abundant wildlife. As it was a good place to hunt, families built huts (called *tambos*) in the surrounding area to rest in when they went on hunting trips in the Cordillera Azul. The names of the places and streams in the Cordillera Azul, within the Park, remind us of the history of Quechua people the area: Lupuna and Ungurahui (both fruits from a palm), Canelayuc (the place of the canela plant), Mishkiyuc (sweet place), Limoncillo (the Spanish name for a little lemon), Limonrarca (a ravine where lemon trees are found), among others.

Villages on the right bank of the Huallaga river, and the livelihoods that Chazutino people have practiced there, as well as the uses of the forests, were established according to their traditional subsistence patterns.

Traditional Subsistence and Uses of Forest Resources

In Chazuta and the hinterland villages, nuclear families were and are independent units with strong ties to their relatives and kin. Whether they live in a village, belong to a community, or are independent, each family has its own lands to

cultivate. Each family has, on average, 30 to 50 hectares, of which about 10 hectares are used for farming, with the remainder in forested land.

Land has traditionally either been inherited land from parents or claimed from available lands in the interior. There has generally been a consensus that each person should take what he or she needs for his/her subsistence. In consonance with this, there were no titles for land until recently. When tracts belong to a community, or are part of what the village considers their forests, then villagers decide in the Sunday meetings (*asambleas comunales de los domingos*) which lands will be granted to the young people. Now, however, as a result of demographic growth, the borders set by the Park, and the arrival of colonists, there is more pressure on available lands. Partially as a result of this, the current tendency is to try to secure legal land tenure.

Chacras have been cleared and worked where Lamista/Chazuta families have settled, usually within an hour's walk from the main house. The house has traditionally constituted the center for the family, while a periphery includes clearings, a gathering area, a hunting area, and a trekking area. *Tambos*, or huts in which to rest and sleep, have been set up both in the *chacras* and in the main hunting areas. Gathering has taken place in the *sachapi*, or periphery forests,²⁶ and hunting in farther areas, in the *sacha ukupi*, or remote and mature forests.²⁷

Agriculture

Agricultural fields lie in the surrounding jungle within a kilometer or so of the main settlements, and are prepared using slash-and-burn techniques. *Chacras* are usually productive for two or three years after clearing, until the soil nutrients have been

²⁶ Sacha means forest and the suffix –pi means “here”.

²⁷ Ukupi means “adentro” or in the interior.

depleted and yields begin to decline. At that point, the *chacra* will be left fallow, and a new one will be cleared. Plantains and tree fruits will continue to be harvested after the Chacra has been left fallow.

The Chazutino continue to utilize a traditional system of communal work known as the *minga*. The *minga*, widespread in both the Andes and the Peruvian Amazon, is a system by which a group of families will work the land of one family on one particular day or set of days, in exchange for food and the promise of reciprocal work in the future. This maintains the cohesiveness of the group around the village and kinship relations. A *minga* will usually involve people working together on one particular task, usually the clearing of a new *chacra* or opening of a new path through the jungle. In the *mingas*, they drink manioc beer, called *masato*.

Some scholars, such as Stocks (1981), have pointed out that indigenous communities have tended to form a barrier against the exterior as a defense mechanism, because they still remember the domination that they endured from the mestizo people. Within the community, they praise cohesion and communal work, and like to remark that all are equals. As individuals, they do not possess formal land titles, but within the community, the pre-existing division of lands is respected. Resources such as forests, fishes, and game animals may often be seen as being held in common.

Agricultural production is done on a family basis, not a village basis. Farming is done by each household, which owns whatever is produced. Families are involved in growing both staples and cash crops. Plantain and manioc, both important staple crops, are found in every *chakra*. Cash crop prices, which naturally influence which crops are grown, fluctuate with the market. In the colonial times, the primary cash crop was

cotton, while it is now cacao. Maize, rice, beans, and peanuts are also supplied to the expanding Amazonian towns. Though some staple crops may be sold for cash, most families' annual income derives from the sale of one or two cash crops. Currently, they still eat boiled plantains, manioc, and river fish, but canned tuna, noodles with red or chicken meat from the market, or hunted meat, are also common.

In the *chacras*, fish poisons such as *huaca* (*Clibadium remotiflorum*) and *barbasco* (*Lonchocarpus nicou*) have been cultivated, along with different types of sweet and chili peppers.

Attention is paid to the moon phases for planting. Full moon (*pukushka killa*) and the two first ascending quarters (*Ilullu killa*) are preferred. There is a constant process of planting and harvesting in *the chacras*.

Through centuries of farming, gathering of forest products, and selection of edible plants, Chazutino people may have transformed the biodiversity of the forests. For example, before the creation of CANP in the area around the lake Laguna del Mundo Perdido, native people planted bananas, beans and manioc around the *tambos* during the weeks they spent around the lake hunting. These plantations would then be left behind for a few months, until the group would return to the hunting ground and find the crops mature enough to feed them. These practices may have altered the species composition of the Cordillera Azul, and potentially increased the biodiversity of the area.

Hunting

Hunting areas have always been found in the forested interior (*sacha ukupi*), and in the mountains of the Cordillera Azul. As Chazuta and Lamas people moved closer to the Cordillera Azul and established new settlements, game also moved far away. This consequently provoked another migration toward the mountains in the next generation.

People say that every time the family did not have something to eat, they went hunting: “we used to go to hunt in the mountains”/ *nos ibamos a montear*. They use the word *montear* which comes from *monte*, or mountain, but as a verb, it means going to the mountains to hunt. Some Chazutino remember that, 50 years ago, there was still an abundance of game in the hilly forests of the right bank of the Huallaga, and in the Cordillera Azul.

Today, hunting is typically an individual activity. Not long ago, however, hunting, like the *minga*, was also a social and collective activity. People from the town of Chazuta would go in groups of 15 or 20 people (complete families, women and children included) to the mountains near or in the Cordillera Azul, often before holy days and feasts. These trips would often last several days, and sometimes several weeks.

Traditional hunting, as in many other Amazonian groups, was practiced with a blow gun which fired a small arrow tipped with poison, usually called by its Quechua name, *pucuna*. In Spanish the same weapon is called a *cerbatana*. However, only the older people recall its use in hunting, when they themselves were children.²⁸ About 60 years ago, people abandoned the blowgun in favor of the *retrocarga*, or breech-loading rifle.

Hunting in the forests was and still is a dangerous activity. Accidents happened before, and still happen regularly. Snake bites are occasionally fatal, especially if they occur far in the mountains and no one can help the injured person.²⁹ On other

²⁸ Old people reported that they saw skilled people in using the *pucuna* for hunting. Elias Juandama was the only person I met who had ever hunted with a *pucuna*. He did it when he was a child.

²⁹ The medicinal plant which counteracts snake venom is called *curarina*. It is only found in the *monte alto*, or old-growth forests.

occasions, one bad step in a trap left behind by another hunter can leave the recently arrived hunter injured. Medardo Panaifo, 40 years old, is crippled due to exactly such an accident.

Before going hunting, hunters prepare themselves. They drink a beverage made from plants which will make them silent to animals and also help attract the animals to the hunters. Their dogs also must be prepared, and they purify the dogs' bodies with tobacco smoke. Without these preparations, the animals would go further away. Hunting was once central to manhood, but no longer is. Hunting stories constituted the bulk of the Chazuta/Lamista oral tradition, and they were the favorite form of entertainment during evening gatherings.³⁰

As mentioned by Scazzocchio, hunting was also associated with certain prohibitions. If a man's wife were pregnant, he could not hunt squirrels or certain monkeys. Hunters afflicted with the recent death of a close relative could not kill deer, the animal where souls are most likely to seek shelter. Breaking these rules caused illness or bad luck. This could only be counteracted by a shamanistic cure involving the ingestion of certain medicinal plants, in order to identify the spirit which was offended (a1979: 191). Elder people still observe these prohibitions today, but many of the younger people do not³¹.

³⁰ The construction of masculinity and how is related to hunting is by itself an interesting topic, which by reasons of space I will not cover in this work.

³¹ During fieldwork, I received different comments about the prohibitions. Some say that younger people do not observe the required diet before hunting; others say that they do. The truth likely is somewhere in between.

Fishing

Fishing has been, and remains, a daily activity in which virtually everyone participates: men, women and children alike. People have fished in the Huallaga river and its tributaries, such as the Chipaota river, for centuries. In contrast to their neighbors the Cocama people in the lower Huallaga for whom fishing is the main activity, and is associated to their collective memory of wars and big leaders (Rivas 2004: 27), for Chazutino fishing has no epic connotations. No special arrangements are made before going fishing. Nevertheless, Chazuta people fish almost every day.³²

Aside from the daily fishing, there is also a special season of abundance, between June and September. It is called the Mijano season, named after the *mijano* fish which is the most common species found in this period. During these months, many schools of fish from the lowlands swim up the Huallaga river in order to reproduce in the headwaters. The Chazutino catch fish as they swim up the rapids of the Huallaga river. During the Mijano season, most of the Chazutino people suspend their normal activities and devote themselves completely to fishing. Fish caught during the Mijano are preserved in salt, and then may be kept for months without spoiling.

Traditionally, the Chazutino have fished with nets, hooks, and various forms of fish traps and weirs. Natural poisons have also been used, the most popular being *barbasco* and *huaca*.³³ Fishing with dynamite and artificial poisons was introduced in

³² A research study found that fishing is the main source of protein among riverine people in the lowlands of the Peruvian Amazon. It indicates that on average per day between 136 to 158 grams come from fresh fish (Dourojeanni 1990: 309). Although Chazutino do not live in the lowlands, this estimation should approx. the diet of the Chazutinos too.

³³ *Huaca* is the Quechua name for *Clibadium remotiflorum*. *Barbasco* is the Spanish name which covers a variety of toxin plants that are grouped together under the same name of *barbasco*. Some of them are domesticated and some wild. One of the most common plants called *barbasco* is *Lonchocarpus nicou*.

Chazuta in the 1940s. Both of these methods kill not only the large species, but also a multitude of small fish.

The use of *barbasco* has been documented since the first accounts of Spanish missionaries: the Jesuit Francisco De Figueroa (1986 [1661]) mentioned the use of a poisonous plant which he called *barbasco*. In the 19th century, an American traveler gave us the next account of the use of *barbasco*:

The fishing-party of the padre was a large affair. They had four or five canoes, and a large quantity of barbasco. The manner of fishing is to close up the mouth of a canho of the river with a net-work made of reeds, and then, mashing the barbasco root to a pulp, throw it into the water. This turns the water white, and poisons it, so that the fish soon commence rising to the surface dead, and are taken into the canoes with small tridents. Almost at the moment of throwing the barbasco into the water, the smaller fish rise to the surface and die in two or three minutes; the larger fish survive longer; and, therefore, a successful fishing of this sort is a matter of half a day, or till the canoes are filled (Herndon 2000 [1853]: 165).

The Chazutino people were and are recognized by their neighbors as skilled fishermen. They knew and know the rivers, the fishes, the natural hiding areas for some fishes, etc. They were and are able to find a fish hidden in the riverbed and catch it with their bare hands. There is even a verb for this: *shitarear*, named after the *shitara* fish, which usually buries itself in the riverbed.³⁴

Use of forest resources

The Chazutino know the names and properties of hundreds of plants from the forests, and the most useful are transplanted to their home gardens. A study on medicinal plants showed that there are at least 318 plant species used for medicinal purposes in the Chazuta district (Sanz-Biset et others, 2009: 4). This study also shows

³⁴ *Shitara* is the fish most often found hidden in the underwater sands. *Shitarear* is the verb used when speaking in Spanish or Quechua.

that more than a half of the ethnomedicinal knowledge has been encoded in the Quechua language. In 59% of the local plants used medicinally, Quechua was present in their names. 27.9% were completely Quechua in origin, while the remaining 31.1% contained at least one Quechua word. Spanish was present in 44.1% of all names, but only 12.7% had completely Spanish names. In 37.1% of the names there was at least one word which was neither Spanish nor Quechua.

This knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation, and is still being produced. For example, Miguel Cenepo, the shaman of Chipaota, knows the properties of the medicinal plants because his parents taught him about them. He also conducts his own experiments with them. He prepares remedies from the plants, and has more than 100 medicinal species in his home garden, where he can easily access them when needed. In fact, however, every family has healing plants in their home gardens: *chiric sanango* and *ajusacha*, for instance, both plants used to cure rheumatism; or *ajenjibre*, which helps infertile women to become pregnant.

Forests also have provided people with the resources needed for everyday life: proteins, medicinal plants, vines, woods for charcoal. People know which species can be found in a certain area and not in others. Until 30 years ago, people cooked inside the home in clay pots; “our parents raised us with clay pots ... the forest was our grocery store.” The thatches of the houses were and are made with palms they collect in the forests. From the dozens of vines they collect in the forests, the vine from a tree called *tamshi* is the most abundant, and the most durable.

Overview

The Chazutino people are “invisible natives”. They cannot trace their origins to any specific Pre-Hispanic indigenous people, as their ethnogenesis occurred in the 17th

and 18th century, from the remains of different peoples severely impacted by the effects of the Spanish conquest. In this sense, they belong to the Quechua-speaking people of the Department of San Martín, who, as we will see with more detail, in the following chapters, are experiencing a revitalization of their ethnic identity.

The Chazutino have an identity based on their roots in the area marked by the limits of the district of Chazuta. They have had a long history of settlements there, and of hunting, fishing and using the forest resources of both banks of the Central Huallaga river and Cordillera Azul. They have therefore accumulated a large amount of ecological knowledge. Thus, whether Chazutino people see themselves as indigenous peoples or simply as *naturales* of this place, the landscape is intertwined with their history to such an extent that they feel they have claims on the land.

The traditional territory of the Chazutino included some parts of Cordillera Azul, such as the Laguna del Mundo Perdido and the hunting places in its surroundings which now are part of the Cordillera Azul National Park or very near the border. Until forty years ago, in fact, Chazutino families were moving towards the forests of the Cordillera Azul in search of new places to hunt and fish. When the native population grew, the pressure on hunting areas intensified, and game became scarcer. People usually moved near other relatives, and eventually formed villages in which the origin of all the families could be traced to a small number of ancient families who moved to the place originally. They had some settlements and hunting areas within Cordillera Azul, but the settlements were voluntarily abandoned well before the creation of the Park. These settlements were not abandoned as part of the traditional cycle of shifting cultivation or nomadic hunting, but rather, as part of a profound socio-cultural shift: Chazutino people

have since tended to move to the Huallaga river in order to be closer to population centers providing education and healthcare. In Chapter 3, I will explore how new opportunities for Western schooling and access to modern medicine caused people to move back towards the banks of the Huallaga river, consequently lightening the pressure on Cordillera Azul, which was left only to hunting.

In this context, it is plausible to consider that the biodiversity of the right bank of the Huallaga river and Cordillera Azul may be the result of historical cycles. Forests on the right bank of the Huallaga river probably regenerated after the post-contact demographic collapse. Likewise, constant use of the forests of Cordillera Azul for hunting, gathering of medicinal plants, and timber harvesting would also have influenced forest structure and species composition.

This raises a question which we cannot answer: to what extent hunting was practiced in a sustainable way? We don't know. While there were hunting taboos, these restrictions would not necessarily limit the total amount of game taken. Perhaps, as has been seen in other Amazonian groups, there were cultural restrictions on the amount of hunting (limiting the number of animals killed for example) which aimed to keep the wildlife population stable, but I have found no evidence of that. Perhaps, because of the low numbers of people, hunting could be practiced in an unrestricted fashion in the forests near Chazuta without any long-term impact on game populations. What we do know is that the population grew, and that when game became scarce, either due to excessive hunting or agricultural practices, people then moved to the areas where game was still abundant. At least until, as we will see in Chapter 3, the aforementioned socio-cultural shift occurred.

CHAPTER 3
THE “MYTH OF PROGRESS”, ROADS, COLONISTS AND THREATS TO THE
FORESTS OF CORDILLERA AZUL (1970 – 2001)

In this chapter, I examine the context which prevented the Chazutino from populating the Cordillera Azul, consequently allowing the creation of the Park, as well as the factors which triggered the Park’s creation in 2001. The context which prevented settlement in the Cordillera Azul included the profound changes associated with the opening of the road which connected the Amazon with the coast, the introduction of national policies aimed at expanding education, military service, and agricultural development, and the integration of the Amazon into the national market. This cultural shift towards the culture of the mainstream society, sometimes called acculturation and sometimes assimilation, has been noticed in classical ethnographies throughout the Amazon but rarely studied and usually frowned upon. For example, Harner (1972: 210-211) lamented that the traditional culture and society of the Shuar were on the wane; Siskind (1975: 188) said, concerning the Sharanahua people, that she was “sad to see another culture vanish, another variety ground into the homogeneity of Western culture”; and Gray (1997) observed the political change within an Amazonian community as a result of the death of the shaman and attraction of the mainstream society. In fact, cultural change among indigenous groups has only recently begun to receive more scholarly attention. An example of this, it is the book *Customizing Indigeneity* by Shane Greene (2009), on how Aguaruna people have grown accustomed to and deal with the Modern Peruvian state and society.

In the case of the Chazutino people and the district, this cultural shift has come with some factors feared by conservationists worldwide: the expansion of the agricultural frontier, increases in coca production in the area, the decline of local wildlife

populations, and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. Not that Chazutinos caused them, but they were in the middle of a number of factors where they also were actors. These factors pushed conservationists to create the Park in 2001, and not sooner. In this sense, the analytical question addressed by this chapter is: what were the context and the threats posed to the integrity of the forests of Cordillera Azul by the year of 2000 that allowed and triggered the creation of the Park in 2001? In Chapter 2, I explored the history of Chazuta people and the expansion towards Cordillera Azul in search of new places to hunt and fish. However, neither hunting nor fishing were the main factors which impelled the conservationist movement to delimitate and create the Park. In fact, as we will see in this chapter, indigenous settlements had actually moved back from Cordillera Azul towards the banks of the Huallaga river, driven by new needs such as education for the children, health services, and an increasing dependency on the cash economy.

Rather, the primary impetus for the park's creation was the forces unleashed by an ideology of development that has permeated the State and society since the 1950s. The expansion of government agencies and the national market changed the material conditions of Andean peoples' lives, and, subsequently, their consciousness or subjective conditions (Degregori 1986). Referred by Peruvian anthropologists as the "myth of progress," this is the ideology of development that has acted as the driving force in the Peruvian Andes. It drew peasants from their birthplaces to seek economic and educational opportunities away from home (e.g Degregori, Blondet and Lynch 1986; Golte and Adams 1986; Urbano 1992). The ideology of development must be understood in combination with the State's plan to industrialize the country by

expanding the educational system, connecting every region of Peru via roads, and advancing the agricultural frontier in the Amazon. This project was perfectly illustrated by the popular slogan used by the civil government of Belaunde Terry in the 1960s “*La conquista del Peru por los peruanos*” (the conquest of Peru by the Peruvians). The military government (1968 – 1980) reinforced this project with its nationalistic rhetoric, its attack on the large land owners, and elimination of ethnic terminology from official documents, which saw terms such as *indios* or *Quechuas* replaced by class-based terms such as peasants (*campesinos*).

Within this context, the school was and still is one of the primary agents to integrate Andean and Amazonian peoples into mainstream society (e.g Ames 2002). Initially, perhaps, parents only saw the school as a means to provide their children with the tools to deal with the greater society. In the process, however, the children assimilated the ideology of development and its associated desire for material goods.¹ Therefore, the question remains open whether this ideology constitutes no more than an assembly of pragmatic real-life concerns or real a shift in people’s aspirations and attitudes towards life. Economic and educational aspirations partially explain these massive migrations which changed the demographic face of the country. Along with these material needs, however, has been a discourse that supports these migrations. Whether the discourse of development preceded and created new material needs, or merely justified pre-existing material needs, is difficult to determine.

¹ It is not possible to separate the ideology of development with “modernity” and the rupture with the past or tradition. Whether or not there is a real break with the past, modernity is defined by its opposition with the tradition. Modernity is a state of constant change, a “progress” towards something still unattainable, tradition is keeping the stability and patterns of the past (e.g Berman 1983)

The Peruvian Amazon was not changed only by the arrival of colonists. Native people were also influenced by this ideology of development as they became progressively dependent on the market to satisfy some of their basic needs. Most of the Amazonian indigenous peoples, among them the Chazutinos, began to rely more on supplies from the market, and to send their children to public schools.²

I have divided the chapter in five sections. In section one, I document the impact of the opening of the highway connecting the coast to the Amazon. In section two, I inspect the reorganization of the indigenous settlements which led to the formation of formally-recognized communities, either peasant and native communities. In section three, I examine that impact among Chazutino people. Chazutino people adopted the “ideology of development”, moved back from the borders of Cordillera Azul, chose to settle permanently on the banks of the Huallaga river in order to have access to formal schooling and health services, and changed their livelihood strategies. Section four is dedicated to the colonists in Chazuta and the perception that Chazutinos have about them. Section five provides a description of coca cultivation and its impact. In developing these sections, I expect to provide the context at the time of the creation of the Park in 2001, and the factors (such as agricultural expansion and coca cultivation) that triggered the establishment of the Park.

The Road *Marginal de la Selva* and “The Conquest of Peru by the Peruvians”

In the late 1960s, Peru entered a period of socio-economic transformation driven by social movements and a left wing military government. Until that period, the Amazon

² For example, Rojas Zolezzi (1994) in his book *Ashaninka, un Pueblo tras el Bosque*, pointed out that among the Ashaninka people cash income became important to satisfy their needs for education and Western medicines since the 1960s.

had been considered to be effectively beyond the frontiers of the nation. The State and Peruvian elites had historically perceived the Amazon as a depopulated land, unproductive but rich in natural resources. It was thought that it would eventually be civilized via settlement by migrants from the coast or foreigners, and that its resources would ultimately be oriented towards increasing the economic wealth of the nation.

At least one scientific expedition was sent to the Department of San Martin to assess its resources and possibilities. In 1948, under the auspices of the Peruvian Government and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a team traveled along the Huallaga river to document the indigenous peoples, flora and fauna, and minerals on both banks of the river (Buitron 1948, Bolivar 1948). However, no real effort was made to integrate the region into the rest of the country until peasant movements in the Andes began agitating for agrarian and land reform and more economic opportunity in the 1960s.

As a result of this pressure, the Peruvian state opted to build roads into the Amazon in order to allow colonization of what were seen as free lands. The roads were meant to facilitate settlement and conversion to agriculture by migrants from other regions. This was, in fact, part of a larger trend across the Amazon: in Brazil, Ecuador, and Bolivia, the military governments also encouraged peasants from the most poverty-stricken regions to migrate to the Amazon.

Encoded in the slogan *la conquista del Peru por los peruanos* was a criollo ideology which did not consider Amazonian indigenous peoples as Peruvian citizens, at least, not until they spoke Spanish, abandoned their traditional customs, became peasants, and embraced the Peruvian mainstream culture. From the vantage point of

the State and elites, this process could be accelerated by bringing in peasants from the Andes, who by that time were clamoring for jobs in cities and lands in the countryside. As a result, both the civilian and military governments of the 1960s and 70s encouraged migration from the highlands to both the Upper and the Lowland Amazon in order to integrate the nation, and also to alleviate social unrest among landless Andean peasants.³

Until the late 1950s, there were only two ways to get to the coast from the Department of San Martin. The first involved traveling by boat up the Huallaga river to Tingo Maria, where one could then cross the Andes and continue on to Lima by bus. This journey could take between 7 and 15 days. The other option was to take a plane from Tarapoto or Chazuta. Neither option allowed substantial commerce with the coast. Starting in the late 1950s, more roads began to be built which crossed the Andes and connected the Amazon to the coast.

The construction of the *Carretera Marginal de la Selva* highway (1960-1978) boosted the arrival of colonists to San Martin. The town of Tarapoto was recognized at that time as one of the “poles of national expansion.” Consequently, the socio-demographic face of San Martin changed. Colonist settlements were formed along the *Marginal de la Selva*, as this road was popularly known. These settlers claimed rights of use over the land, and often cleared the forests which had been used by native people. Encouraged by State propaganda, available land, and the ease of obtaining land titles, waves of migrants from the Andes came to the Huallaga River in the following decades.

³ The movement of colonists toward the eastern slopes of the Andes and the Upper Amazon has been the subject of numerous works in Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, and Ecuador (e.g Rudel and Horowitz, 1993).

Native people were soon outnumbered by migrants in some parts of San Martin. For example, the Quechua Lamista identity of the two traditional districts in Tarapoto, Suchiche and Barrio Alto, vanished as a result of the demographic weight of the immigrants. Some indigenous Lamistas grew alienated with the destruction of forests around the city and with the colonist culture and moved on to still-forested areas, particularly those around Sauce lake and Sisa. Some also moved to Chazuta. Others intermixed with immigrant settlers. By 1976, the districts of Suchiche and Barrio Alto were occupied primarily by Spanish-speaking settlers from the Andes.

Colonists cleared most of the land on the left side of the Upper and Central Huallaga river and the Tarapoto area for farms and cattle ranches. Road construction during the 1970s and '80s lowered the price of transportation to the coast, and encouraged the conversion of more forests into agricultural land. Peasants started agricultural production in part for self-subsistence, and in part for cash crops that provided the money needed.

According to the Gerencia Regional de Recursos Naturales (2008), deforestation in the department of San Martin did not exceed 8,000 hectares per year between 1940 and 1960. In the years 1960-1975, however, due to the opening of the road *Carretera Marginal de la Selva* and the ensuing arrival of colonists, deforestation jumped to an average of 50,057 hectares per year. In 1975-79, the Department of San Martin lost another 171,000 hectares of virgin forests. By 2002, a total of 1 423 743 hectares, approximately 20% of the department's area, had been deforested and converted into agricultural lands. Since the construction of the *Carretera Marginal*, the average deforestation rate has been around 50,000 hectares per year. In the other Amazonian

departments, deforestation has also increased, though still very high not as in San Martin. Loreto had a total of 13.18% of its territory deforested, Ucayali 8.74%, and Huanuco 8.37%. In all the departments, this was primarily due to conversion to agricultural lands and pastures.

In demographic terms, the population of San Martin tripled in three decades. In 1971, the census counted 224,427 inhabitants; in 1981, 319,751; in 1993 there were 552,387 people, and in 2007, 728,808. The growth rate fluctuated between 4 and 5% per year, more than double the national average of 2%.

The landscape of the region also changed. Forests were cleared and lakes drained in the surroundings of Tarapoto. As one old mestizo man from San Martin, who witnessed these dramatic changes, said:

Everywhere were enormous forests in the surroundings of Tarapoto city. People used to get firewood, to hunt deer, *carachupas* [armadillos]... the Lamista Indians used to come to hunt in a *cocha* [lake] near Tarapoto. That *cocha* does not exist anymore. It was drained when the city grew.

One of the main ecological consequences of this was its impact on the hydrologic cycle, which has led to shrinking reservoirs and deteriorating water quality. At that time, these environmental changes were considered as part of the cost of development, but as we will see in the next chapters, since the 2000s they have been seen as an unacceptable deterioration of life conditions.

The Formation of Peasant and Native Communities

Legislation meant to promote the expansion of the agricultural frontier was also enacted. In 1950, Law 11436 declared the Huallaga valley, and virtually all of the Department of San Martin, as open to colonization by migrants from the Andes. Every person in the Amazon had the right to claim property over cleared lands. Forests

remained property of the State until the farmer cleared the area and planted crops or stocked it with cattle. Law 15037, part of the 1964 Agrarian Reform, gave way to the creation of peasant communities (*comunidades campesinas*), and granted them cleared and forested lands –under the assumption that the forested area would support the slash-and-burn agricultural system. Therefore, forests near the communities were and are usually granted to the community or the individual who claims possession of it, but they are often secondary forests which would eventually be cleared again.

Most of the peasant communities formed in the Amazon during the 1970s and 1980s were formed in this manner. A group of colonists or a previous settlement of native peoples who were concerned about obtaining legal land titles usually applied to become a peasant community, thus gaining legal status. However, these laws favored recently arrived colonists, and supported their market-oriented agricultural practices. In this context, native people who relied heavily on hunting and extraction of timber and non-timber products could not obtain legal protection for their forests. They simply did not have previous legal rights on their territories, and as has been previously discussed, most were dispersed across the landscape in small family units with their own *chacras*. Although native people had collective hunting areas, they lacked the political organization needed to claim legal rights over them, and thus never obtained legal rights to the forests. Large tracts of forests were therefore eventually occupied by migrants who claimed rights of use on them, and thus were granted land rights by the State. For example, according to Jose Rendon, a public servant for the Ministry of Agriculture since the 1970s, most of the Quechua-speaking families around the city of

Tarapoto were not organized into communities, thus, the Ministry of Agriculture could not recognize their ancestral lands.

It was not until 1974 that the Peruvian State enacted the first law that would protect indigenous peoples' rights in the Peruvian Amazon. Under the Law of Native Communities (*La Ley de Comunidades Nativas*), indigenous groups were given the option of claiming rights over a more extensive territory, including forest concessions, provided they declared them as necessary in order to maintain their ancient livelihoods such as hunting and gathering. Three years later, however, the 1977 Law of Forestry and Wild Fauna (*La Ley Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre*) reversed some of these provisions. This law established the principle that forests which were apt to be used for extraction of timber and non-timber resources within native communities' extended territories cannot legally belong to the native people. Under the Law of Forestry and Wild Fauna, these areas belong to the Peruvian State, who would also have control over the resources found in them. Extraction of timber and non-timber resources is only allowed by previous approval of a Management Plan (*Plan de Manejo*). Since then, these forests have remained the property of the State, who has granted concessions to the native communities only for traditional uses such as hunting.

In part due to these legal structures, most of the communities formed by native peoples in San Martín chose to establish legal titles as peasant communities rather than native ones, even when they had indigenous roots. They did not see the advantages of being a native community. In addition to this, in the 1970s and 80s, there were still plenty of available forests, far from roads and colonists, where it was possible to go hunting and fishing without the need to ask permission. Thus, at that time, native people

were not necessarily concerned about being recognized as such. Furthermore, as they wanted be rid of the stigma associated with being indigenous, they found it more auspicious to found peasant communities and be considered farmers. As a result, forests which could have been claimed for hunting, fishing, and extraction of forest products were not.

There are currently around 200 peasant communities formed by Quechua-speaking people in the Department of San Martin. Compelled by Peruvian State programs to define their status as peasant or native communities in the late 1970s and during the 1980s, most of them chose to be peasant ones. Consequently, they did not acquire legal rights on forested lands beyond their immediate surroundings, even though their parents and ancestors had used them for hunting and extraction of timber and forest products.

However, some communities in the department did choose to be recognized as native communities, and these are now represented by the Federacion de Comunidades Keshwas de la Region San Martin (FEPIKRESAM)⁴, which was established in 1987⁵. It was recognized by COICA and AIDSESEP and consequently incorporated into the structure of indigenous organizations of the Amazon basin. Their representatives participate in the meetings in the Northern Peruvian region and once in

⁴ There is another indigenous organization, the Consejo Ético de los Pueblos Kechwas de la Amazonía "Llaktakuna Tantanakudu" (CEPKA), founded in 2002, that has similar goals to FEPIKRESAM. Although the name may sound more politically and ethnically attuned with their heritage, it has in reality been much less successful in being considered the legitimate representative of the san Martin Quechua people. Neither AIDSESEP nor COICA has recognized it as such.

⁵ The five founding members of FEPIKRESAM were bilingual teachers from the town of Lamas. After attending a bilingual education workshop in Iquitos put on by AIDSESEP and the Universidad Nacional de la Amazonia Peruana (UNAP), they came up with the idea of creating a political organization to represent Amazonian Quechua people in the Department of San Martin (Pardo, Doherty, and Sangama 2001).

a year in the annual congress of AIDSESEP. Only 14 communities in the entire San Martin region, or less than 10% of those with Quechua-speaking roots, have opted for and received legal recognition as Quechua native communities.

Why did some communities choose to be recognized as native? On the one hand, this shows that ethnic identity has still persisted on some places, and that not all Quechua-speaking people became invisible natives. On the other hand, even the fact that a small handful of communities claimed native status was the result of the grassroots work of FEPIKRESAM. Toribio Amasifuen, the group's original leader, recalls that, in the 1980s and 90s, they visited numerous communities in San Martin to ask them to initiate the long legal process of becoming native communities. Most of the time, however, people in the communities refused, even though this would have granted them rights over nearby forests.

Nevertheless, as mentioned by García (1995: 38), when the Peruvian government opted to create the concept of the native community, the concept of "native people" was left aside. This was a clever strategy aimed at curtailing the legitimacy of native peoples' potential demands. Peoples usually have territories or can claim rights over extended lands, while a community is granted rights over nearby lands, but not extended territories. There are 1200 native communities in Peru, but no indigenous territories, with the consequence that indigenous rights are limited to a multitude of small patches without connections between them. As the Quechua villages in San Martin were established as native communities, they only have rights over the agricultural land and nearby secondary forests, but not in the peripheral and remote forests where hunting, fishing, gathering and timbering used to occur. In this way, most

of the Amazonian forests were left open to occupation by other potential actors, such as colonists, miners, and logging operations. In other words, the legislation was essentially written to encourage colonization of the Amazon, to grant lands for agriculture and ranching to Andean peasants, to giving incentives to clear the forests, and to secure the rights of the State over the so-called primary forests of the interior.

It was within this context that most of the Chazutino villages opted for establishment as peasant communities and received land titles for agricultural purposes. In Chazuta, where all of the 14 rural settlements⁶ are of Quechua-speaking origin, 9 opted to claim legal status as peasant communities, and 3 remained as smaller settlements, or *caserios*. Only one, the community of Chipaota, sought and received recognition as a native community. Felipe Cenepo from Chipaota remembers that when they were discussing whether to become a native community or not, he had to launch a speech in defense of term “*nativo*” in order to persuade his fellows about the benefits of being a native community:

We cannot mistake native for tribe. Tribes do not know civilized people, they do not know anything. They are different. The word “native” means “*natural*” from here... it is not a bad word. Being a native community has many advantages. We will be able to take care of our natural resources as we wish. As native community we will have a law to protect us. The Law of Native Communities...

Chipaota was the exception in the district. It was granted a larger area for hunting than the other communities, but not as large as to include the lake Laguna del Mundo Perdido and hunting places within the Cordillera Azul. However, the main reason why more settlements did not choose to be native communities was that, as of the 1980s,

⁶ Aguano Muyuna, Ramo Castilla, Banda de Chazuta, Tunun Tunumba, Canayo, Santa Rosa de Chazuta, Muyunayacu, Shilcayo, Tupac Amaru, Churiyacu, Cayanayacu, Ricardo Palma, Achina misa, Chazuta, and Siambal.

there were still plenty of free forests for hunting near or in the Cordillera Azul. Thus, the benefit for being native was rather marginal. Hunting and extraction of forest products was free of any legal regulation.

When the Peruvian government promoted the creation of communities, those with lands near the town of Chazuta did not affiliate with any community and remained as independent units, but most of the families in the rural portion of the district, and on both banks of the Huallaga, chose to join a community, placing their individually-held land under community title. Those families who had been moving towards Cordillera Azul, and had settled nearby, began moving back toward the main settlements near the Huallaga river, attracted by the educational and health services provided to the newly founded communities by the government.

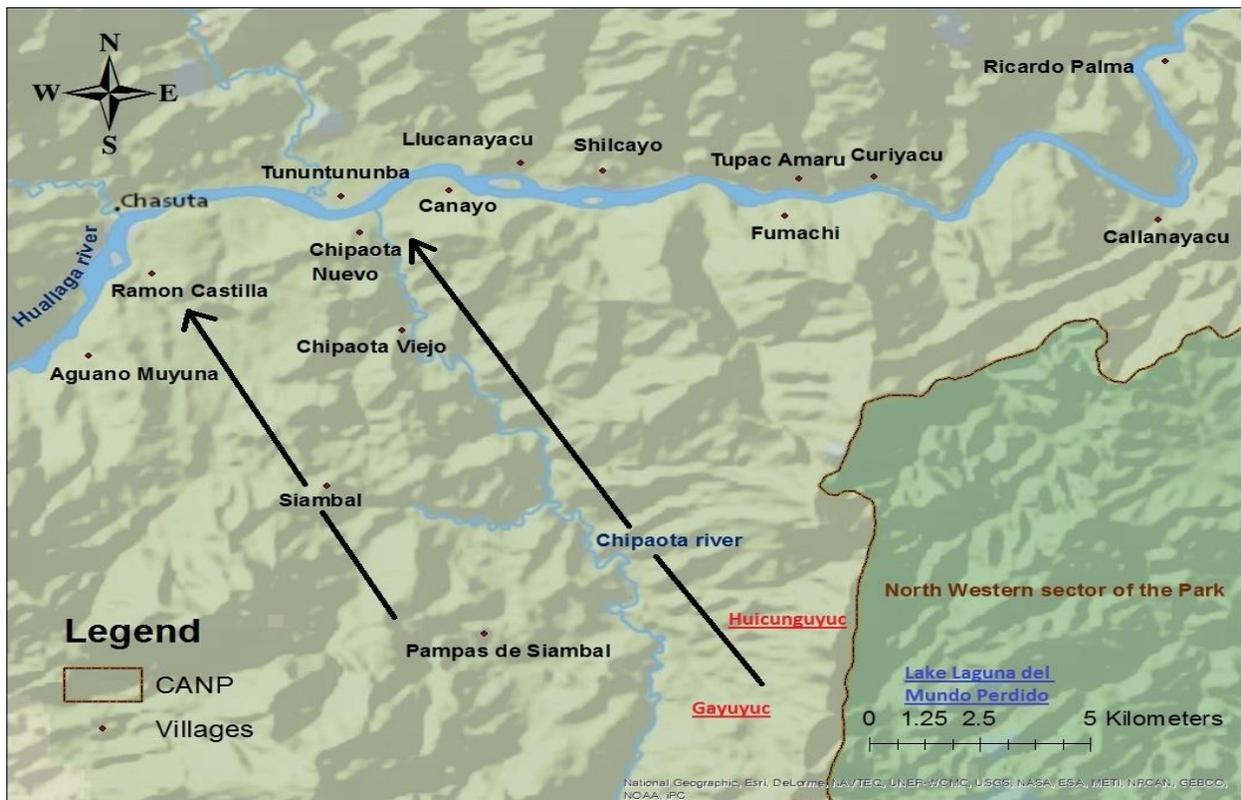


Figure 3-1. Moving in the direction of the Huallaga river. In red are the abandoned settlements of Huicunguyuc and Guayuyuc

Abandoning Cordillera Azul and Integration into Mainstream Peruvian Society

By the 1980s, there were still Chazutino families with *tambos* (huts) and hunting places within the Cordillera Azul, and in Huicunguyuc and Gayuyuc near the Park, but most families had already moved to the Chipaota Viejo (the old village of Chipaota). The old village of Chipaota, only a two hour walk from the Huallaga river, was formed by Chazutino families between the 1920s and 1940s. In the 1970s, the village absorbed most of the families who had once lived all along the length of the Chipaota river. Most of the families who had initially settled along the Chipaota river moved to the old village in order to legalize the formation of the community, and to solicit the creation of an elementary school and health center.⁷ According to the Peruvian Law, every settlement that can muster 25 children of school age is legally entitled to have a school and state-employed teacher. Nonetheless, many settlements and communities that fulfill the quota did not receive a teacher.

Why did Chazutino people on the periphery of Cordillera Azul abandon their life in the forests and move to the banks of the Huallaga river? It was certainly due in large part to pragmatic real-life concerns: education provides people with tools to defend themselves from the abuses of mestizo people, and increases their ability to receive benefits from mainstream society. Health centers provide people with Western treatments and medicines which help people survive otherwise deadly diseases. However, there is also likely an internalized belief that a more Western-oriented life can provide people with something that the shamans and traditional indigenous life in the forests could not. A historical approach may explain the subjective factors: Chazutinos

⁷ The old village obtained legal recognition in 1976.

have dealt with a Spanish-speaking world for at least three centuries, and during that time they may have internalized the values of the dominant society to some extent. When the Peruvian State assumed the ideology of development as a national project, consequently expanding the educational system, road network, and national market, the terrain was fertile for the Chazutino people to embrace this ideology.

Around the 1970s and 1980s, Chipaota and the other communities received legal recognition by the Peruvian government, and were granted elementary schools and health centers, provided that the people lived together in the villages. Chazutino people say that they moved because they wanted their children to “progress” in life, go to school and obtain a profession. However, the government failed to keep its promise, and did not build the elementary school. The people of Chipaota then decided to build one with their own hands.⁸ Working communally, in *minga*, they built the elementary school in the old village of Chipaota. *Minga* is the maximum expression of the community life. Even when they lived in dispersed family settlements, the network created and reinforced by the *minga* was the center of their social lives beyond the family unit, and remains so today.

To the disappointment of the people of Chipaota, no elementary teacher moved to the old village. For most of the potential candidates, the old village was too far from the town of Chazuta, and the teacher would have had to sleep in the old village of Chipaota. No teacher was willing to do this. Thus, some years after the construction of the elementary school in the old village of Chipaota, the people of Chipaota decided to

⁸ This is far from being uncommon in the Peruvian Amazon. As for instance, in the Bajo Urumbamba, Cuzco, communities invested a huge amount of labor and money to build the schoolhouse. Local people paid for the material and constructed the building, which “stands as a testimony to their commitment to their children’s education” (Gow 1991: 230). Well-built schools are found in many communities along the main rivers.

move the village to the shores of the Huallaga, only 30 – 40 minutes by boat from Chazuta, and thus a more convenient location where the community might get a teacher and a nurse. As one old man in Chipaota said, while we were resting in Chipaota Nuevo, at the shores of the Huallaga river:

We used to live along the Chipaota river, from here to the Park. We had our houses in the old village [Chipaota Viejo], two hours from here [the shores of the Huallaga river]. However, we agreed to resettle because there were no health post, no education, no religion...

In 1994, the new village was founded under the name of Mushuk Llacta of Chipaota (Mushuk Llacta means new village in Quechua), along with official recognition of the community as a native one. Also, it is known as Chipaota Nuevo to contrast it to the old village of Chipaota. Since then, the children of Chipaota have attended the village elementary school, and the families have had access to the services of the health post. Both the teacher and the nurse are paid by the State. Before the 1990s, most of the people of Chipaota did not attend elementary school. If parents wanted to send their children to school, they had to send them to the town of Chazuta, and this was only an option if they had relatives there and enough money to pay expenses. Most of the families did not. To this day, if students wish to continue their education after elementary school, they must cross by boat to the left bank of the Huallaga to attend the secondary school in the village of Tununtununba, or travel 40 minutes to the town of Chazuta, where a better secondary school is located.

Access to the health center has also been very important to the people of Chipaota. They know that they sometimes need western medicine in order to overcome a serious illness. In 2008, the wife of the president of the Chipaota community died from hemorrhaging while in labor, as there wasn't enough time to transport her from the

interior of Chipaota to the hospital in Chazuta. She had her house two or three hours from the Huallaga river. They know that if she had lived in Chipaota Nuevo, she might be alive now. Every death that could have been avoided reminds people that living close to a health post and hospital might save the life of their loved ones. In 2009, Nicolas Pizango, one of the founders of the old village of Chipaota, also died from an illness which could have been treated in Chazuta, but he did not want to leave his house on the banks of the upper Chipaota river, near the park. Elderly people were and are often reluctant to leave the interior, but the younger generation prefer to live on the shores of the Huallaga river.

In the village of Siambal, which has been inhabited by a dozen Chazutino families since the 1920s, most of the children eventually moved to the town of Chazuta to attend school, and did not come back. Siambal did not become a legally recognized community because its population was too small, but instead became a *caserio*, or small settlement, with a native *teniente gobernador*, or official representative of the local population. However, vast extensions of forests that otherwise were to be occupied by their descendants, were abandoned. The lack of a health post, until 10 years ago, was also a factor that pushed young native people to move to Chazuta town and Ramon Castilla village.

In the settlement (*caserio*) of Ramon Castilla, which is only 20 minutes from the town of Chazuta by boat or canoe, the population of native people grew because they had access to health and education. Some of their children started going to the town to attend secondary school, while others, mostly women, only completed elementary school in the village –an elementary school building constructed by the native people.

Chazutino people have dwelt on the shores of the Huallaga for centuries, but as population grew they started founding settlements in the direction of the Cordillera Azul. When access to education and health became concentrated in the town and some villages along the Huallaga river, Chazutinos moved back. This movement is chronologically linked to other changes among Chazutino people.

Dependency on Cash Money

Native households became dependent on the market economy too.⁹ For example, according to the father of Andres Cenepo, until 40 years ago you could still see the caravans of *quechueros*¹⁰ from Lamas coming to the town of Chazuta to get salt in exchange for their agricultural products. Some did not want to pay for the salt, and went further into the mountains where there are some salt mines and salt could be obtained for free. Now, no one gets their salt from the salt hills. Everybody buys it.

Then and now, the Chazutino are in constant need of cash income. Their cash income is mainly derived from cash crops, although they occasionally also sell some livestock, timber and non-timber forest products, and animals they hunted or fished. Nonetheless, their cash income is not sufficient to satisfy all their necessities, and they are far below the poverty line by Peruvian economic standards. The average household income in the community of Chipaota in 2003 was 500 Soles per six months, or less than 30 dollars per month. In the native community of Chipaota, cooking oil, rice, sugar, radio and lantern batteries, shotgun shells, matches, soap, kerosene, salt, and candles

⁹ There is a lack of scholarly work on the influence of market integration on the culture and well-being of indigenous peoples. It is frequently mentioned but rarely the focus of a work. The only exception found is the work of Ricardo Godoy (2001) comparing systematically the effects of market integration among some indigenous peoples of the tropical lowlands of Latin America (the Tawahka of Honduras, and the Mojeño, the Yuracaré, Tsimané, and Chiquitano of Bolivia).

¹⁰ Quechua speakers.

account for 99% of the daily expenses of households, while clothing, education and medicines are the three biggest occasional expenses for families in the community (Mayer, 2006). Money is needed even for formal schooling. In Chazuta district, the salaries of the teachers are paid by the state, but notebooks, uniforms, and everything else is paid by the families. The cost of these materials represents a huge burden for the families' income.

Language Loss and Adoption of the Spanish Language

The Quechua language lost its importance during this period. The language shift from Quechua to Spanish is closely linked chronologically, and perhaps in some sense causally, to simultaneous changes in beliefs, attitudes, and actual practices amongst the Chazutino households. Some authors, such as Posey (2001) and Padoch and Pinedo-Vasquez (2001), have suggested that maintenance of the native language may mark the difference between agroforestry practices which emphasize forest conservation, and conversion to a more lucrative land use –clearing for cultivation of cash crops. Research in several places in the Amazon basin has also found that when younger people replaced the native language with the dominant language, they lost a great deal of their culture's ancient knowledge (Maffi 2001). We do not know how closely intertwined these changes are at our research site, but we do know, at least, that they are chronologically linked, and are part of a tendency common to many Amazonian indigenous peoples.

Chazutinos spoke the Quechua language for at least three centuries, but most now speak only Spanish. Feliciano Shapiama, an old man born in Chazuta in the 1920s, remarked:

The real Chazutino speak Quechua. The *wiracocha* [white people] as well as the common people were *quechueros* [Quechua speaking people]. Everybody spoke Quechua... Now, kids say they do not speak Quechua, only Spanish... Quechua is beautiful ... in the past, everything was in Quechua.

It is often said today that children and teenagers do not want to speak Quechua, and the Quechua language is dying in both Chazuta and the department of San Martin as a whole. When Chazutinos speak Spanish, however, they do include many Quechua words.

Despite its recent precipitous decline, the Quechua language was alive and well in most of San Martin and in the town of Chazuta just a few decades ago. 91 out of 98 native people surveyed in 2010 had learned some Quechua, achieving various levels of fluency, when they were children. Six out of seven people who reported not learning any Quechua in their childhood were between the ages of 21 and 33. All of the 99 Chazutino people surveyed had at least one parent who spoke Quechua. Monolingual speakers of Quechua, however, are rare now. Only a handful of elderly people, mostly women, are monolingual Quechua speakers.

Decline in Hunting

Hunting also became less important for most Chazuta families. Since the 1980s, meat for the daily diet which had previously been obtained by hunting could be bought in the market without the risks and pains of going into the forests for days at a time. Hunting remained central to the conception of Chazutino identity, but for daily life, buying meat became more practical. Fresh meat might be bought from a colonist who had raised some livestock, or a shopkeeper (usually also a colonist) who had brought it in from converted pasture land around Tarapoto, or occasionally from one of the few

Chazutino dedicated to commercial hunting. Cans of tuna fish from the coast also became commonplace.

In addition to this, formal education for their children and access to health centers became as important to the Chazutino as finding good areas for hunting. Moving to the banks of the Huallaga river for easy access to education and healthcare meant that they had to move away from the best hunting areas, but it was for the future well-being of their children.

The perception among native people is that, 40 years ago, in the 1970s, people went hunting more often than 20 years ago, in the 1990s, and that game was also previously more abundant.¹¹ So, even when people went hunting less often, there was also less wildlife to be found on the right bank of the Huallaga river. One explanation for this is that, although native families relied less and less on hunting for daily meat, the total number of animals killed increased as a result of population growth. Consequently, by the year 2000, people were lamenting that no game was to be found on the right bank of the Huallaga, and that, if someone wanted to hunt, he needed to go farther, to the mountains of Cordillera Azul.

Hunting by no means disappeared from regular experience, however. Several times, I witnessed people coming from their *chacras* to the town of Chazuta or Chipacta village carrying birds or monkeys that they had just taken. They typically indicated that they had not set out with the intention of going hunting, it was just that, on their way to their *chacras*, they saw a monkey and killed him. Even when animals were not found nearby, people still went to remote forests to hunt now and then. Commercial hunting

¹¹ To the question in the survey: do you think that 40 years ago people went more often to hunt than 20 years ago? 80% of the native people said yes, 8% no, and 12% did not know.

did not disappear either. People from Tarapoto still came to Chazuta to buy large amounts of meat, basically paying some local Chazutinos to go hunting for them. But only a handful of families were involved in this commercial hunting.

By the year 2000, no one was living inside the Park.¹² Native families who were located near the Park were progressively moving towards the Huallaga river. However, people still went hunting to the Cordillera Azul: according to the survey, 73% of native people above the age of 25 had gone to the Cordillera Azul to hunt at least once before the creation of the Park in 2001.¹³ Most of these were men, but at least half of the women had also gone to the Cordillera Azul to help the men at hunting. Hunting was in decline, but definitely not over.

Changes in Fishing

Fishing, on the contrary, remained a widespread daily practice among Chazutinos with small changes. *Barbasco* had been used as a natural poison for centuries, but in the decades before the 2000s, fishing with dynamite became popular too. I do not have information on when dynamite was introduced, but it is plausible that this may have happened after military service was generalized in the 1950s, as happened with the Cocama people on the lower Huallaga river (Rivas 2004: 130). According to the survey, at least one third of the native people of Chazuta used to use dynamite to fish.

¹² I mean in the area of Chazuta district. In other parts of the Cordillera Azul, especially near the Upper Huallaga, there were people within the Park at the time of creation.

¹³ From a total of 85 people who could respond to this question, 62 said yes, and 23 no.

In parallel to this shift towards the mainstream society, colonists started arriving in great numbers to the district, and since then they have had a profound impact on the life of the Chazutinos as well.

The Arrival of Colonists to the Chazuta District

“Soy muchacho provinciano / me levanto muy temprano / para ir con mis hermanos ayayay a trabajar / no tengo padre ni madre / ni perro que a mi madre solo tengo la esperanza ayayay de progresar / busco un nuevo camino en esta ciudad ah ah donde todo es dinero y hay maldad ah ah / con la ayuda de Dios se que triunfare eh eh y junto a ti mi amor feliz sere oh oh / feliz sere oh oh feliz sere oh oh” (a very popular song among the Andean migrants in the coast and the Amazon –heard in every party of colonists)

Currently, at least one quarter of the people of the district are a migrant from the Andes or the coast, or have a migrant parent. The impact of the opening of roads did not hit Chazuta until the 1980s, which was comparatively late in comparison to the Upper Huallaga and Tarapoto area. The construction of the road was delayed by the San Martin government for unknown reasons. It was only after a number of petitions and protests were carried out by the Chazutino people, which included a local initiative to build the road by themselves and without government intervention, that the road was finally opened. The later construction of the road between Tarapoto and Chazuta delayed and reduced the impact of the arrival of colonists. In contrast to the districts of the Upper Huallaga valley and most of the Department of San Martin, where colonists became the majority of the local people, in Chazuta they never outnumbered the *naturales*. Colonists never controlled the politics of the district, as they did in other districts.

In the 1980s, colonists tended to settle on the left bank of the Huallaga river, near the town of Chazuta. In the 1990s, however, this pattern changed due to the scarcity of available lands on the left bank of the Huallaga river, and most newly arrived colonists

were settling on the right bank of the Huallaga and moving gradually closer to Cordillera Azul –especially towards the area of Siambal, where vast forests had been abandoned by Chazutinos.

Colonists are now found in every village and community in the district of Chazuta, but their local impact varies from place to place. In the native community of Chipaota and the village of Ramon Castilla, there are only a handful of colonist families, and although they are influential because they own the stores, there are so few of them that they cannot lead the communal interests. In Siambal village, however, they are now in the majority, and are leading the expansion of the agricultural frontier towards the Park. Approximately 200 colonists currently reside there, greatly outnumbering the few native families –those who did not move towards the Huallaga river.

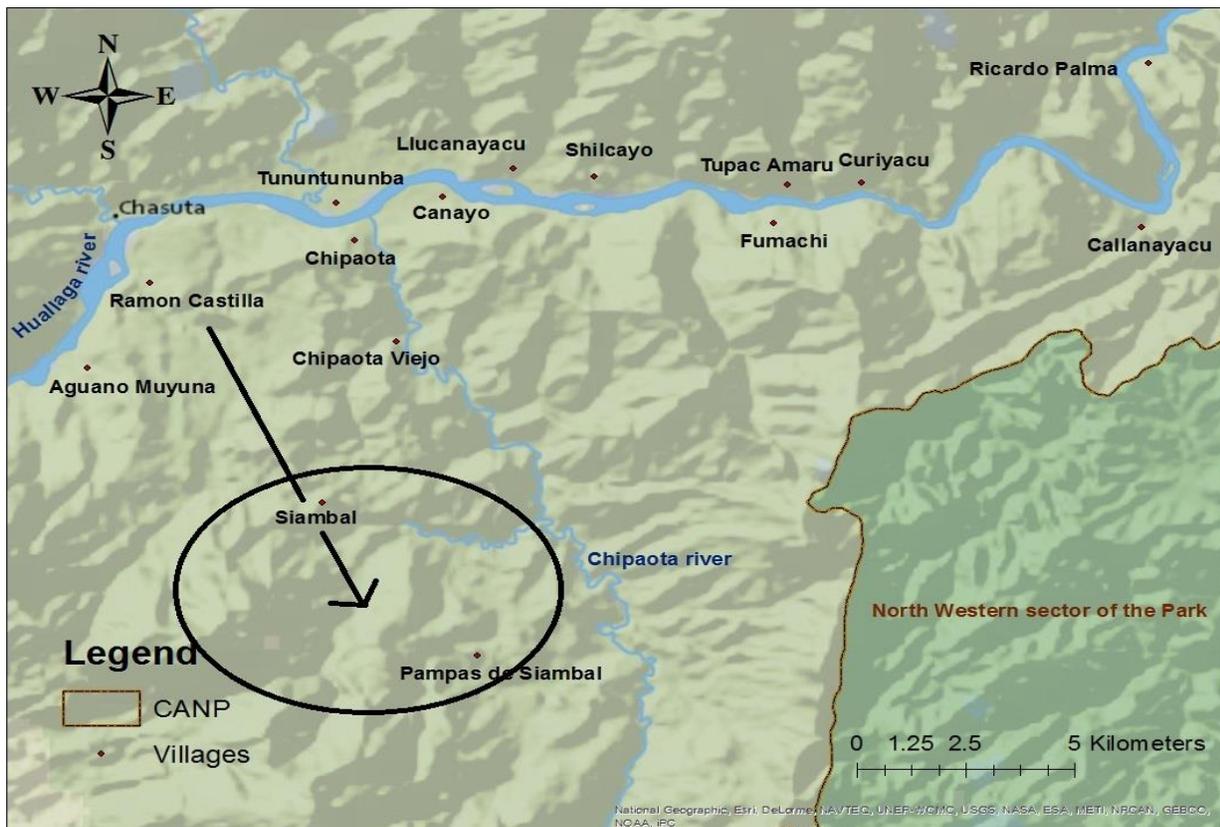


Figure 3-2. Concentration of colonists in Siambal

Most colonists have come from the Northern Peruvian Andes, specifically from the departments of Piura and Cajamarca. Out of 61 colonists surveyed, 28 have come from Piura and 13 from Cajamarca –two departments that suffer land scarcity and impoverished peasants. Most of them came in search of agricultural lands, and some to reunify with their families or spouses who were already there.¹⁴ Most of the migrants in Siambal are also recently arrived colonists: 30 out of 36 came in 2006 – 2010, while in Chazuta 12 out of 25 came before the year 2000.

The governor (*Teniente Gobernador*) of Siambal, Salomon Calderon, himself a colonist, explained this in simple words: “on the coast and in the Andes, people own on average half a hectare, but when they come to San Martin, they can buy 10 or 20 hectares because the price is much cheaper here.” Currently, prices are going up, but only to a certain point, because lands are still cheap. In 2000, Salomon came to Siambal and bought 10 hectares for 500 soles (150 dollars). In 2010, one could only buy a hectare with 500 soles, but this was still cheaper than anywhere else in Peru.

The first wave of colonists that populated Siambal and Pampas de Siambal in the 1990s sold their lands at a profit and moved away after their children got older. Some of them went to Chazuta, and others to other towns of San Martin. They moved to Chazuta to get their children into the school because, as mentioned by one colonist in Pampas del Siambal, “realistically, this [Siambal] is not a place to live unless you have an elementary and high school here. We need a road.” There is neither a road to Siambal nor a school in the village. For that reason, in 2010, colonists were interested in convincing the local government to build a road.

¹⁴ Of the 61 colonists, 33 came alone primordially looking for agricultural lands, 15 already had some relatives there, and 14 came to join a spouse who was already there.

Colonists, like native people, want to establish their permanent homes in places where public services are available. Thus, if no public school, health post, or roads are built, then the current colonists in Siambal will be transient, just like the ones who settled in Siambal in the 1990s: once they obtained land titles granted by the State as farmers, they sold the land to another wave of transient immigrants.

The presence of the colonists was not welcomed by the Chazutino people. There are cultural differences between the two groups, different phenotypes, and different Spanish dialects. Also, colonists usually come from a part of Peru where Quechua is not spoken. Native people refer to them as *paisanos* or *serranos*, both terms conveying a negative connotation. Colonists call the Chazuta *nativos*, which refers to the indigenous traits of the Chazutino people –thus, it is used by colonists in a pejorative way. They have brought with them prejudices against indigenous peoples. No matter how Chazuta people see themselves, colonists see the *naturales* of Chazuta as indigenous peoples, with all the negative traits that mainstream Peruvian society attaches to indigenous identity. Colonists may sometimes have condescending feelings towards natives, and sometimes overtly despise them.

Colonists want to progress in life (*progresar en la vida*). They have been driven to the area by economic need. Colonists, who are largely business-oriented, are primarily concerned with how they can earn more money to secure their future and their children's education. Colonists say that businesses in the district are run by colonists because: "migrants bring progress to the town." Native people, with a more relaxed attitude to work and a social network that provides them with help in case of emergency, are not as oriented toward hard work as the colonists are. Chazutinos spend less time

on the farm than colonists, and tend to reduce agricultural production when their needs have been met. Colonists, in contrast, are guided by an economic rationality oriented to accumulation of wealth. Once, in conversation, colonists commented with some scorn about how a native man was paid 10,000 soles for his property, and then squandered the money on alcohol. Another colonist added that native people “do not know how to invest their money.” Colonists think that native people envy them because migrants, after some years of hard work, progress in their lives, build concrete houses in town, and send their children to technical colleges in Tarapoto.

Colonists point out proudly that they work hard in their *chacras*. They open a new *chacra* whenever they can. Even when they do not have anything to do on their farms, they offer their services as day laborers, or *jornaleros*, to earn some cash. Natives, conversely, usually prefer not to work as *jornaleros* unless they have an immediate need for money. Nevertheless, beyond their animosity, some Chazutinos recognize that colonists are hard workers, and that their work ethic has influenced and changed the town. They have seen how quickly the *paisanos* have progressed, and Chazutinos now say that they want to work harder, in order to progress as the *paisanos* have.

Different Livelihoods, Different Perceptions of the Environment

In contrast to Chazutinos, colonists are driven by an Andean background which relies exclusively on an agropastoral livelihood strategy. Hunting, gathering, and concern for forest resources play little or no part in this agropastoral worldview. In other words, colonists do not have a profound relationship with forests or the ethnobotanical knowledge to extract benefits from them, and thus do not have values attached to forest regeneration. Consequently, they tend to expand the agricultural frontier and invest in

cash crops much more rapidly than native peoples, and with greater ecological consequences.¹⁵

Although it can be said that both native people and colonists have participated in the expansion of the agricultural frontier, at least one author doing research in another part of Peru has noted that both groups have been driven by different rationalities to use the space and natural resources. Bedoya (1991), after conducting research among the Ashaninka people and colonists in the Central Peruvian Amazon, pointed out that, while native people need extensive areas for hunting, fishing, and access to forest resources, colonists do not. Colonists aim to expand their agricultural land because they depend completely on crops and livestock. He found that the Ashaninka people in the Central Peruvian Amazon have a deforestation rate per family unit of 0.81 hectares per year, well below the deforestation rate of colonists, which is between 1.47 and 2.13 hectares (93- 94). In other words, deforestation rates among colonists double natives.

It is no surprise that the differences in livelihood strategies between Chazutinos and colonists are also striking. Colonists are farmers. Natives are as well, but they are also fishers and hunters, or at least like to think of themselves as such. As one colonist reported, he prefers to work in carpentry and his business rather than going into the forests or to the rivers where he might expose himself to accidents. Another one reported that he prefers to work hard in his *chacras*. He has 5 hectares. He, like many other colonists, explained to me that colonists do not cause deforestation, because deforestation would be to cut 10 hectares without working the land after that: “Colonists only take 3 or 5 hectares and work hard on the land.”

¹⁵ See Bedoya (1991) and Bernardi (2005) for examples of colonist communities in other parts of the Huallaga area.

Colonists in the area around Chazuta do not go into the mountains as the Chazutino do. A comparison between natives and colonists surveyed in 2010 illustrates this difference:

Table 3-1. Did you ever go into the forests/mountains?

	Natives	Colonists
Yes	92 (93%)	23 (39%)
No	7 (7%)	38 (61%)
Total	99 (100%)	61 (100%)

Almost all native people go once in a while to the forests for a number of reasons (such as hunting and gathering), but only a third of colonists do. So, when asked “why do not you go to the forests/mountains?” 56% of the colonists who never have gone to the mountains/forests said that *la montaña* is dangerous because of animals, snakes, traps, etc., and 42% said that they prefer to focus on their *chacras* and animals. The other reasons mentioned were that they do not know how to hunt, that they do not like it, that there is no reason to enter the forests, that they are not physically prepared, or that it is simply too far. Also, several women responded by saying that women just do not go to the mountains/forests.

In other words, for colonists, *la montaña* is dangerous and/or not relevant to their lives. In consequence, the traditional livelihoods of Amazonian people, such as hunting and fishing, are also alien to colonists. This goes in consonance with several multidisciplinary studies that have attributed to the colonist an “agricultural culture” (Bedoya 1991). Research on colonists has underscored the fact that they tend to have higher expectations of integration into the market, and seek credit to reinvest in more agricultural land and pastures (Chomitz et al. 2006), while indigenous people are more oriented toward self-subsistence (Bedoya 1991).

Consequently, in the case of hunting, the difference between natives and colonists is also wide. As we can see in the next table, only one the third of colonists has hunted at least once in their lives. The difference might have been even greater if they had been asked where they hunted, as it is likely that some colonists may have hunted in the Andes, but did not in the Amazon.

Table 3-2. Did you ever go hunting in your life?

	<i>Natives</i>	<i>Colonists</i>
Yes	83 (84%)	21 (34%)
No	16 (16%)	40 (66%)
	99 (100%)	61 (100%)

Moreover, as we have seen before, among native people, both men and women go to the forests. Although hunting itself is a male activity among the Chazuta, women also go to the mountains and forests to prepare their food and collect plants. Sometimes women also hunt, but usually nearby their *chacras* and when they happen to see an animal. Colonist women never hunt or go to *la montaña*.

Fishing is also marked by drastic differences between natives and colonists. 96% of natives have gone fishing at least once in their lives, while only 55% of the colonists have. Fishing is an activity that can be done near home, either in the Huallaga river or in its tributaries. Perhaps one of the reasons why colonists are not inclined to fish is because most do not know how to swim. Only 32% of the colonists know how to swim, in contrast to 97% of the native people. In some sense, as the concepts of *habitus* from Bourdieu (1998) or the *tasks* from Tim Ingold (1993) illustrate, the training your body received in childhood, the skills acquired, and subconscious fears, shape your activities and decisions in your adulthood. Consequently, natives and colonists have different attitudes and livelihood strategies regarding the environment.

The Colonists as a Threat to the Chazutino People

For the Chazutino people the arrival of colonists meant a threat to their lands.

The increasing rates of deforestation during the 1990s were, according to the Chazutinos, driven by the “greedy” colonists. One Chazutino put it this way:

“They do not take what they need. They come and take fifty hectares. They cut the forest to put sometimes cows. Sometimes they only have *chacras*. But they do not need that much. They are greedy and want to take everything that is ours. Our forests to open *chacras* ... our natural resources...”

It is not that colonists took without permission lands that legally belonged to the natives. In fact, in Siambal natives sold vast extensions of forests to the colonists. Probably these native families did not possess them legally, as they had lived there for decades, but they were socially considered the owners. In other cases, colonists occupied forested lands that were legally available –property of the Peruvian State as most of the forests. In both cases, once the colonist had cleared it, these lands were granted to him by the State. This way the State encouraged land conversion and expansion of the agricultural frontier –which was in accordance with the development model.

However, for Chazutino people the forests were an integral part of their livelihoods. Even when they were becoming integrated to the market, were working in agriculture, and were hunting less than before, the forests represented their identity as a people. There was less game in the surroundings, and although this may not have been directly caused by colonists (they do not hunt), Chazutinos noticed that the expansion of the agricultural frontier is linked to reduction of wild fauna. Thus, colonists were invaders of their lands. They settled and cleared the forests where native people had hunted and

gathered timber and non-timber forests products. Consequently, Chazutino people started thinking of colonists as being a threat to Chazuta¹⁶.

In addition to this, for Chazutinos the colonists represented a threat for their future. Chazutinos always complained that land has becoming scarce because colonists were taking too much. The forested lands in Siambal could have been abandoned, but for some Chazutinos they were forests that they or their children could use when needed. Forested lands sometimes are thought as safety-nets in case the market does not provide with the means for survival.

This animosity against the colonists was also tinged with environmental problems caused by colonist practices. People remember that some streams petered out because colonists had cleared the forests in the watersheds. It did not happen only in Chazuta district. In fact, the local animosity against colonists echoed the regional clamor against them too. The urban elites of San Martin had been concerned since the 1990s about the deforestation caused by migrants, illegal logging operations, and the fact that some streams and rivers were running dry. Not only they were witnessing firsthand the environmental problems caused by deforestation, but the prominent people in the town were also reading many articles in the regional newspaper “*Voces*,” and in the influential weekly magazine “*El Tarapotino*,” along with books such as the seminal “*Raices y Bosques: San Martin, Region para Armar*” by Maskrey, Rojas and Pinedo (1991). All of

¹⁶ Here it is important to say that colonists do not have common identity. They come from different regions and different backgrounds. Nevertheless, I suggest that a formation of a common identity, as a reaction to local animosity, should deserve an in-depth study. I observed that they remark their different backgrounds, but also a common experience as outsiders in Chazuta.

these media were questioning the “myth of progress”, the construction of new roads, and the ethos of unrestricted colonization.¹⁷

Colonists in all San Martin were the ones being blamed for the environmental damage. Articles such as “*Migracion: el fantasma que asoma*” reveals common prejudices towards colonists among the urban elite of San Martin:

“Migrants are not the most suitable people for a region such as the jungle, which has immense richness, various ecosystems and biodiversity of fauna and flora. On the contrary, the migrants are people in extreme poverty without education and culture, but with aspirations of conquerors. What is worse, they have deep needs in health, education, and other basic needs. Once they come, local and provincial municipalities should provide them with these services ...” (Translation is mine) (Reategui 2003)

Moreover, along with the colonists, there were also illegal loggers from other regions who used to come to Chazuta district before 2001 to extract mahogany and cedar. According to some people in Chazuta and some current Park employees, illegal logging took place not only on the right bank of the Huallaga river but also in the interior, in Cordillera Azul. Paradoxically, it was usually the native people who cut the trees for some cash money, and not the colonists who usually did not possess the skillsets needed for logging work. However, Chazutinos resented the fact that these illegal loggers always paid a miserable price –which Chazutinos accepted because they were in need of cash money.

In parallel, both natives and colonists were involved in coca cultivation.

Coca Cultivation

By the year 2000, most families in Chazuta district were involved in the cultivation of *Erythroxylum coca*. Cultivation of coca had begun as early as the 1980s,

¹⁷ Moreover, regional scholars started to romanticize the traditional live of the Quechua-Lamista people which relied on hunting and forest resources (e.g Panderero 2001).

but I do not have substantial data on the extent of coca cultivation in the area. . It is likely that eradication efforts in the Upper Huallaga valley, along with counter-insurgency operations against the Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), pushed coca cultivation further into the jungle, and also into communities in Central and Lower Huallaga such as Tres Unidos and Chazuta (Cotler 1999)¹⁸. Impoverished Andean and coastal peasants ventured into coca cultivation with the hope of improving their lot in life, as did Chazutinos.

Data collected indicates that from the second half of the 1990s until the early 2000s, coca plantations in Chazuta district provided a large proportion of the cash income for local households. The price of cocaine was also very volatile. At some point in the 1990s, the price for coca leaves in the Huallaga Valley reached nearly \$ 7 a pound, but not long after, it collapsed to less than 20 cents (Mullen, 2004). The price spiked in around 1998-1999 and remained high until around 2002, when it once again declined. In any case, for both native people and colonists, converting forest into coca cultivation became an economic alternative (Castro and Zavaleta, 2002; CIMA, 2006). Coca brought the money that people did not have at that time, providing the cash needed for daily supplies, from sugar to alcohol.

Coca leaf has been traditionally consumed in the Andes and in some parts of Amazonia. In the 19th century, Poeppig ([1835] 2003) and Herndon ([1853] 2000) reported that the Cholon people in the Upper Huallaga river cultivated coca for two uses: relaxing themselves and to sell it to Andean people. However, it was not until the

¹⁸ In fact, most of the period of the coca boom (around 1980s – 2000) overlaps with the time of the civil war. From 1980 to 1998, the country underwent an internal violence caused by the clashes between the State and two revolutionary movements: Shining Path and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. The civil war affected a great deal the life in Chazuta between 1985 and 1993, but the effects of the war are beyond this work.

mid 19th century to early 20th century that coca leaf started being exported to Europe and the United States for processing into cocaine. Cocaine was originally used medicinally, and was then marketed as the active ingredient in a variety of patent medicines and tonics, including the soda Coca Cola. Cocaine would eventually be banned for its negative effects, and its commercialization prohibited. In the 1960's, the United States government expanded its efforts against the commerce of cocaine by signing coca eradication agreements with the main producer countries, including Peru. In parallel, cocaine had been transformed in American society into a highly dynamic illicit commodity with an increasing number of users (Gootenberg 2008).

Thus, a plant which had been cultivated for centuries, perhaps millennia, and widely used among the native population of Peru, was transformed on three fronts: first, it was now illegal if cultivated for the purpose of cocaine production;¹⁹ second, its eradication was now one of the central topics in talks between Peru and the US; and third, due to the expanding illicit cocaine market in the US, a source of income for peasants and the impoverished urban working class.

Within this context, Chazutinos found in coca cultivation a means to obtain cash money. Chazutinos have not used coca leaf for traditional purposes. None of the 19th century travelers mentioned cultivation or use of coca leaves among the Chazuta people, and the Chazutinos that I interviewed have not chewed coca leaves. On the other hand, it is unlikely that they did not know of its existence and properties: Chazuta is at a crossroads between the Andes and the lower Amazon, and it has historically been a place of commerce between the two. Chazutinos likely became aware of the

¹⁹ Here the law and its enforcement are also not exactly clear. To what extent it is possible to draw the line between legal and illegal cultivation of coca?

lucrative illicit coca trade when cultivation was expanded in the Upper and Central Huallaga, and middlemen eventually came to the district to prospect.

The coca plant is easy to cultivate, and highly productive. Once it is planted, the coca bush does not require much supervision for the 3 or 4 months it takes to reach a harvestable size. Coca can be harvested up to five times per year. Coca farmers could obtain between 2 and 3 dollars per kilogram of dried coca leaf, depending on the season. In the 1980s and 90's, the market demand for coca leaves tripled in comparison to other cash crops. In the Upper Huallaga, the number of hectares in coca production increased from 24,000 in 1984 to 70,000 in 1986. By 1986, coca cultivation had caused the deforestation of 150,000 hectares in Peru, and by the end of the 1980s, the total area dedicated to coca cultivation in San Martin was around 300,000 ha (Bedoya, 1991, 109 – 110). Peruvian peasants in areas of coca production used to abandon any other cash crop and concentrate their efforts in coca cultivation.

For a long time, no real attempt was made to eradicate coca cultivations. In Chazuta, periodic police raids led to temporary elimination of coca by burning the plantations and piles of harvested leaves. However, coca provided most of the income for hundreds of thousands of peasants in Peru. Impoverished rural people chose to cultivate coca, but people from the dispossessed urban working class also migrated to the jungle to work as coca farmers. They would not get rich off this. Any overt attempt to punish the small farmers would have been politically unacceptable, and a social disaster. Therefore, coca cultivation continued throughout the 1990s in spite of the official war against drug cartels.

In addition to this, the high price of coca leaf encouraged the aforementioned migration of colonists from the Peruvian highlands and coast to the shores of the Upper and Central Huallaga valley over the past 30 years (Bedoya, 1991). Money that could be earned cultivating coca was one of the incentives for some colonists to come San Martin, but not the only one. For many colonists, as well as Chazutinos, cultivation of coca was another way to obtain cash money.

Everyone in Chazuta also remembers the violence that came along with the coca trade. One Chazutino said that coca chacras "...were profitable, but it brought violence to this place. People committed crime and killed for money". However, to what extent was the coca production itself associated with this violence? It was probably not the cultivation itself that brought violence, but rather, the Peruvian state: by prohibiting coca production, and therefore creating the conditions and criminal atmosphere under which coca was cultivated and marketed. Once an activity, such as coca cultivation, is considered illegal, its condition of illegality pervades into other areas of life which would otherwise be perfectly normal (Kernaghan 2009). In other words, activities such as marketing the coca leaves, carrying the money from the exchange, and buying also became subject to outlaw activities. For example, someone who had their coca money stolen could not report the crime. Chazutino people also recall that the money earned from coca cultivation was not invested, but rather, used for daily needs or wasted on alcohol.

Drug traffickers would visit the Chazuta district periodically to collect the coca leaves, pay, and immediately depart. They then hauled the coca leaves to hidden jungle labs where chemists processed the coca leaves and refined them into cocaine. The

cocaine was then smuggled to Lima and sent overseas, where an increasing demand for cocaine had encouraged its production in the Amazon. However, the money accumulated from its commercialization has been reinvested somewhere else, but definitely not in Chazuta. The illegal cocaine market may have provided incredible dividends for drug organizations, but for peasants in Chazuta, it was just a mildly profitable agricultural product.²⁰

Its environmental impact, nevertheless, was not negligible. Mature forests in the mountains of the Cordillera Azul were cut in order to open new *chacras*. Also, coca cultivation depletes the land quickly, so after one or two years of planting coca in one *chacra*, the farmer has to clear another *chacra* in order to continue cultivating coca. If coca were legal, then the *chacras* could be located near home, in the secondary forests surrounding the villages. As that was not the case, however, clandestine coca *chacras* had to be located deep in the forests, towards Cordillera Azul, to avoid being located by the police. Forced to cultivate coca far from home, the farmers unavoidably had to clear mature forests, creating patches of coca in the jungle.

Overview

In summary, the traditional life of the Chazuta people described in Chapter 2 was profoundly changed between the 1970s and the year 2000 by the ideology of development. We cannot underestimate the extent of these changes, the current quest for education and modern health facilities, and the dependence on the cash economy. The adoption by the Chazutino people of the “myth of progress” stopped their own

²⁰ The scale of drug trafficking in Chazuta was considerable lesser than in the Upper Huallaga. The district never experienced the flourishing market around cocaine traffic that was experienced in towns in the Upper Huallaga.

demographic expansion towards Cordillera Azul as they opted to settle near places such as Chazuta that could offer access to education, health services, and markets. As a result, the changes in their traditional livelihoods such as hunting, and the adoption of a more market-oriented agriculture, alleviated pressure on the forests of Cordillera Azul and paved the way for the creation of the Park.

Along with that, the opening of roads, arrival of migrants, expansion of the agricultural frontier, coca cultivation, and consequent high deforestation rates posed powerful threats to the forests of Cordillera Azul. The rivalry with and fears of being overwhelmed by the colonists created among the Chazutino people a favorable context for the establishment of a Park in Cordillera Azul. But, the Chazutinos' wide use of dynamite and natural poisons such as *barbasco* and *huasca*, as well as their involvement in coca cultivation and illegal logging, showed that native people are not naturally ecological.

This context, as we will see in Chapter 4, created the conditions that spurred the conservationists to work on protecting the forests of Cordillera Azul.



Figure 3-3. The Chipaota Elementary School. (Photo: Alberto Giovanetti)



Figure 3-4. Grocery store in Chazuta town, own by a colonist. (Photo: Alberto Giovanetti)

CHAPTER 4 PRESERVING NATURE: CORDILLERA AZUL NATIONAL PARK

On May 21st, 2001, Cordillera Azul National Park (CANP) was officially created by Supreme Decree N° 031-2001-AG between the basins of the Huallaga and Ucayali rivers. It consists of an area of 1.3 million hectares and has a 974 km perimeter, occupying portions of the departments of San Martin, Loreto, Huanuco, and Ucayali. Upon its creation, CANP became the third largest protected area in Peru. The existence of a mountain range crossing the forested region from south to north makes Cordillera Azul the largest reserve of montane forests in Peru.

For conservationists, there was no time to dally. The creation of the Park was a necessity due to the impending menaces, not only to Chazuta, but to the entire Cordillera Azul, by colonists taking land possessions, agricultural expansion and coca cultivation, illegal logging, and uncontrolled hunting and fishing. Its creation, however, was a surprise for the 170,000 people in the surrounding area who were now suddenly located in the Park's buffer zone. A visit had been paid to the area to inform local authorities about the creation of the park, and several workshops were held in the main cities. Local people, however, were neither informed about the creation of the Park nor asked for permission or consent- perhaps the authorities did not inform the local people, or intentions were unclear, or the process simply moved too fast, but this was the end result.

In this context, Chazuta and the Chazutinos are located in the buffer zone of the northwest portion of the Park. As we saw in the previous chapters, however, the Park includes a portion of the traditional lands of the Quechua speaking people –where they traditionally hunted, though they did not occupy it permanently. The Chazutino people

are the only Amazonian ethnicity on the Huallaga side of the Park. In the buffer zone of the Ucayali side, there are Piro, Shipibo-Conibo, and Cacataibo peoples. In addition, there are claims that some Cacataibo groups in voluntary isolation live in the east-central portion of the Park. With the exception of Chazuta district, colonists are the vast majority of the population in the Upper and Central Huallaga valley –local native people were simply absorbed by the successive waves of colonists who have arrived since the 1970s.

In this chapter, I will document how the creation of the Park changed the livelihoods of the Chazutino people. In doing this, and for practical reasons, I make a distinction between the imposition of rules/restrictions resulting from the establishment of the Park, and the implementation of development programs supported by the conservationists of the Park staff. The first category consists of a set of prohibitions and regulations which protect the Park, such as restricting hunting and prohibiting the use of dynamite for fishing. The second category refers to the integrated conservation and development programs which have been implemented to alleviate pressure on the Park.

Accordingly, I have divided this chapter into three sections, in order to elucidate the creation of the Park and its programs, but also to understand how they have matched the demographic, social and political tendencies of San Martin. In the first section, I will describe the creation of the Park, the reaction of the local people, and the approach taken by conservationists toward local people. In the second section, I will detail the restrictions and rules imposed by the Park, and their direct effects on the livelihoods of the people in Chazuta. Finally, in the third section, I will explore the

integrated conservation and development programs implemented in Chazuta since the creation of the Park, and their complex origins.

In Chapter 5, I will explore the social and political responses of the Chazutinos to the park and conservationist policies, and how these responses echo broader trends among indigenous peoples and *naturales* in the Amazon basin. For this chapter, however, I will limit the analysis to the direct impacts of CANP's establishment.



Figure 4-1. Cordillera Azul National Park and the Chazuta district

The Creation of Cordillera Azul National Park

Protected areas have been established in different parts of Peru since 1950, and the first national park was established in 1961.²¹ In the 1960s, the forests and biological diversity of the mountain range called Cordillera Azul were identified by Peruvian conservationists as an important area to be protected. Under the Forest and Fauna Law (*Ley Forestal y de Fauna*) of 1963, the area was categorized as a Bosque Nacional, or national forest. As such, Cordillera Azul became land which was under the purview of the state; logging activities were permitted, but only after proper authorization was obtained.

Nonetheless, no measures or regulations were implemented to protect the forest. A combination of factors worked to prevent the implementation of any conservation or management measures. The Cordillera Azul was quite remote and inaccessible at the time, there was no evident threat to its forests, and there was no government funding provided for management programs. In addition to this, the activities of the native people in the area were not taken into consideration at all. From the State's point of view, it was not of importance to know whether there were settlements or native peoples within the Bosque Nacional, or whether they hunted, fished or extracted timber or non-timber products from the forests.

By the mid-1990s, however, it was evident to many conservationists that the forests of Cordillera Azul now faced threats from illegal logging, coca cultivation, and agricultural expansion, especially on the Huallaga side of the area. Moreover, the

²¹ In 1950 the Reserva Nacional Cueva de las Lechuzas was created and in 1961 the first national park, Parque Nacional Cutervo, was established in the northern Andes. For a brief history of the creation of protected areas and the Peruvian conservationist movement, see Pedro Solano "La Esperanza es Verde" (2005)

Peruvian government had expressed interest in granting private companies forest concessions for timber extraction. Paradoxically, according to Lucia Ruiz, the current president of CIMA, while Peruvian specialists working for a governmental agency were calculating the value of the forests in order to put a price on their concessions, illegal loggers were already destroying them.²² It was in this context that conservationists began lobbying to create a Park. As one of them mentioned, “if we hadn’t done it, no one else would have protected Cordillera Azul.” In the words of Lily Rodriguez from the Asociación Peruana para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (APECO) to a Chicago Tribune journalist, they had to move fast “before human development moved in” to the interior of the Cordillera Azul.²³

The world of Peruvian conservationists is a small and urban one, and is concentrated in Lima. Most Peruvian conservationists studied forestry and graduated from the Universidad Agraria de la Molina in Lima. They have friendships and connections with North American conservationists. Some Peruvian conservationists have studied in North American universities and speak English, and some Americans have worked for a long time in the Andean countries, and speak good Spanish. Thus, it did not take long before the Peruvian conservationist community contacted Avecita Chicchon, a Peruvian anthropologist from the University of Florida who was working

²² In the words of journalist William Mullen, “Even before the Cordillera Azul was declared a park in 2001, dozens of illegal loggers had set up small operations there, cutting scattered but extremely valuable stands of mahogany and cedar for overseas luxury furniture markets. Preservationists also fear that local farmers, many of them long economically dependent on coca, the plant used to produce cocaine, may covet the park’s untouched lands.” (Chicago Tribune article)

²³ In an article in the Chicago Tribune, “Rescuing a jewel in Peru”, by William Mullen (2004), there is a detailed chronicle of the creation of the Park.

with The MacArthur Foundation, and submitted grant applications that secured a contribution of \$200,000 to fund a campaign to protect the area.

Lily Rodriguez joined efforts with Debra Moskovits from the Field Museum of Chicago. In the year 2000, a Peruvian – American team of scientists traveled to the Cordillera Azul and conducted a biological inventory. They found 12 species of plants new to science, and listed 1,600 of the estimated 4,000 to 6,000 plant species in the area. 71 mammals, 500 bird species, one new to science, and eight new species of frogs among 82 amphibian and reptile species were also recorded.

The next step was to petition to the government for the creation of a Park in the Cordillera Azul. In lobbying terms, it meant convincing the right people in the government of the biological richness found in these forests, and the importance of conserving them. Peruvian NGOs often complain that the government is driven by the economic interests of extractive companies and by political campaigns. While this may be true, there are also strong connections between conservationists and government institutions such as the Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales (INRENA), which was in charge of the national system of protected areas at that time. Conservationists also have connections with the Ministry of Agriculture, and now with the Ministry of Environment, which was created in 2009. It is not uncommon for people from the conservationist community to have friends in the Ministry who were classmates or co-workers, or to have relatives who work there. It is also fairly common for conservationists to move back and forth between working for NGO's and working for government agencies.

In 2000, conservationists took advantage of the political transition in Peru. After president Fujimori was overthrown in the middle of 2000, the interim government of Valentin Paniagua took control. His government was in power for the year which passed between then and the 2001 regular elections. In contrast to his predecessors, Paniagua had no political interest in favoring coca farmers and loggers.

When the Park was created in 2001, the public in San Martin was already sensitive to the need to protect the department's forests, and inclined to support policies which would stop migrations from the Andes. The opening of the "*marginal de la selva*" and other roads, which had once been claimed as the necessary first step for the development of San Martin, began to be seen as a curse for the region. In fact, APECO had already worked with the San Martin government and developed a baseline document for zoning San Martin (APECO 1995). Therefore, the centralized government of Peru and the conservationist community from Lima did not need to worry about opposition from the urban sector or economically powerful groups in San Martin.

A proposal for the creation of CANP was submitted in April 2001, after political consultations between conservationists and their friends in the government. As a final act of courting the President and his Cabinet, conservationists took them to fly over the Cordillera Azul. The story about the flight still provokes jokes among conservationists working for CANP, but also sheds light on the importance of winning over powerful people in government and society. Ten years later, while working for The Nature Conservancy, I witnessed firsthand the time and energy spent on lobbying government officials and wooing private donors. Lobbying is actually recognized as equally

important as protecting the current parks, and it occupies most of the work in the offices of the headquarters. Lobbying is a condition *sine qua non* for creating parks.²⁴

Finally, on May 21, 2001, Paniagua signed a law making the Cordillera Azul a national park. It became the ninth national park in a country with poor public funding for protected areas. Young and Rodriguez (2006) estimated that, of 59 protected areas, “only thirty-six of the existing protected areas in Peru have some kind of administration, and of those, six have only a park chief, assisted by a single park guard.” (244)

From its inception, INRENA²⁵ made it clear that no funding was available for CANP, and that they expected foreign private institutions to sustain the Park. Therefore, in July of 2002, the Center for Conservation, Research and Management of Natural Areas (Centro de Conservación, Investigación y Manejo de Áreas Naturales - CIMA) was created and dedicated to administering the Park. CIMA, as both a civil society institution and NGO, received the Contrato de Administración de Cordillera Azul for 20 years. It is one of the few protected areas in South America officially managed by civil society. The Peruvian State remains the owner of the Park and, consequently, the Park Manager. The administrative staff and park guards were appointed by INRENA before 2009, and are now appointed by the Servicio Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas por el Estado (SERNANP). All of them, however, are paid by CIMA.²⁶

²⁴ The argument I have heard multiple times from conservationists is that without money and political lobby, the system of national protected areas would simple cease to exist. No grassroots organizations have the goal of supporting a protected area alone; when they do, it is because a conservation NGO or an environmental agency from the government is working there and brings some additional benefits. Without the Ministry of Environment or Agriculture, INRENA, or SERNANP people would cultivate the lands and go for gold mining in the watersheds, but no one would protect the Parks. It is simply not profitable.

²⁵ In 2009 the INRENA ceased to exist and its functions were incorporated in the Ministry of Environment

²⁶ There are 105 people employed as CANP workers, including the park guards. No other protected area in Peru has that many employees.

The Chicago Field Museum maintains a low profile, but a key and powerful position in the park's administration, providing the main financial support to CIMA. However, the Park's operating budget of around 2 million dollars per year, although one of the highest in Peru, is just barely sufficient. As a consequence, CIMA has been forced to channel part of its work into fundraising, in order to secure the budget for the coming decades.

Drawing the Borders of Pristine Forests: Meeting Old and New Paradigms of Nature Conservation in Cordillera Azul

In Peru, under the Law No. 26834 of Protected Areas (*Ley de Áreas Naturales Protegidas*), the land within a national park is owned by the national government, and any use of park resources should be limited to non-commercial activities. Hunting and fishing as traditional practices are permitted, but only for native communities who can argue pre-existing use of the Park.

Conservationists from INRENA and APECO, worked together to carefully draw the borders of Cordillera Azul National Park, and to avoid including settlements and agricultural land within the park boundaries. They used satellite maps and land title records, to delineate the Park's borders thus avoiding, according to them, any future land title conflicts.²⁷ In completing this task they ignored or simply did not care about hunting and fishing activities.²⁸ The priority was the creation of the Park and

²⁷ The surveying was not completely perfect. It so happened that, after delimiting and creating the Park, they discovered the existence of one single cattle rancher inside the Park –in the south west sector- who did not have legal land tenure. Due to the impossibility of moving him out of the Park, they allowed him to remain on his land under certain conditions.

²⁸ In 2003, two years after the creation of the Park, they obtained accurate information on the extent of hunting areas within the Park and buffer zone: 47,850 ha within the Park, and 220,000 in the buffer zone. (Watanabe et al. 2004)

establishment of its boundaries; the impacts that the Park may have had on local livelihoods and social relations were simply ignored.

In my experience, when conservationists face the question of the impacts of creating a protected area on local people, their answers reveal some fundamental assumptions. The conservation community generally assumes that, over the medium and long term, the existence of a protected area will be beneficial to local people: the number of wild animals will increase, watersheds will be protected and therefore provide a stable water supply for local agricultural lands, an environmental consciousness will arise among the people, etc. Conservationists also typically assume that the benefits to society as a whole will outweigh the costs. This may or may not be true, but as research on modernization process and mega projects have shown, it is usually the poor and marginalized sectors of society which suffer the impacts of these imposed modernity and projects (e.g Berman 1983, Bunker 1985).

In the case of Cordillera Azul, the argument for creating the Park was built on the same basic assumption held by many Amazonian conservationists: that Cordillera Azul just like most of the Amazonian rainforest, is covered by pristine forests, free from human settlements but under threat from them. For example, in reference to CANP, the web page of the Field Museum of Chicago states:

The Park protects a pristine area of Andean forests that is bigger than the state of Connecticut and is extraordinarily rich in biological diversity. Creation of the Park marks a major victory for conservation, but the work is just beginning to ensure effective protection of Cordillera Azul's animal and plant communities.

In this statement, the Field Museum underlines three characteristics of CANP which make it unique and justify its establishment: its geographical dimension, its pristine forests, and its biological diversity. Its geographical dimension was achieved

because no man or community had legal titles over these tracts. The abundance of mammals and birds is also attributed to the state of being “pristine” forests, and the scarce human activity in the area. Also, as we can read next, conservationists established a causal relationship between abundance of wildlife and human activity:

The abundance of large game mammals and birds and the harvest of only the most valuable timber— and only in areas close to the main rivers — indicate that humans have been present only rarely in the northern Cordillera Azul in recent decades, or likely centuries (although ruins 400 to 500 years old have been found in the Pauya, RAP 1999). A very low level of visitation by humans is not surprising, given the extreme inaccessibility of the interior portions of the Cordillera. We saw no indication of permanent settlements anywhere within the proposed park except for small intrusions to the west and north. (Alverson, W.S., L.O. Rodriguez, and D.K. Moskovits 2001: 108)

The equation behind this statement is abundance of wildlife equals no human presence. Therefore, and in accordance with the traditional approach to conservation, the objective of protected areas is to protect nature from human activity, and secure the independent evolution of nature. Humans, as the other independent entity, should evolve without changing this natural evolution. Humans might overhunt large animals or involuntarily cause the extinction of some species, and forests and wildlife would then evolve in a totally different direction (e.g Redford and Stearman 1993). This is sometimes referred to as the fortress approach to conservation, because of its police-like control of a protected area, in which human activity is completely forbidden or put under severe restrictions (e.g Adams and Hulme 2001; Hulme and Murphree 2001; Redford and Sanderson 2000).

Current research in anthropology and related disciplines has focused on debunking the assumptions which underlie this paradigm. The so-called “virgin” rainforests of the Amazon basin (and in the other two big forested regions of the world: the lowland Congo basin and the Indo-Malay region of Southeast Asia) are not as

pristine as originally thought, but perhaps anthropogenic in origin (Heckenberger et al. 2003; Willis et al. 2004). Research in several parts of the Amazon has proven that people managed the rainforests and, to some extent at least, altered their species composition. Human occupation led to long-lasting effects on the biological composition of the forests, and may have even increased biodiversity at the local scale (e.g Posey 2001). A long-term historical approach reveals that the “pristine” forests are the result of millennia of transformation before 1500, and a historic product of introduced European diseases which caused the demographic collapse of indigenous peoples after.

Nevertheless, while this anthropogenic approach to Amazonian forests is rapidly gaining adepts within the academic world, it has yet to gain traction in the world of conservation. Indeed, at the time that CANP was created, the fortress approach to conservation remained solid, and research on anthropogenic forests was not yet popular, even in the academic milieu. Therefore, in order to protect the rich biological diversity of Cordillera Azul, CIMA was expected to implement rules and regulations to keep people out of the Park. This traditional model of conservation had dominated the conservationist milieu of Peru until the 1990s.

In parallel to this fortress approach to conservation, a new paradigm emerged in the 1990s, based on integrating local people into the protection of forests. This is the so-called community approach (e.g Alcorn 1993, Schwartzman et al. 2000; Borgerhoff, Mulder and Copolillo 2005; Schmink 2004), which posits that native people can become stewards of the forests and protected areas, be trained as park guards, and aid in the development of integrated development and conservation projects. Within this new paradigm, buffer zones started to become an important part of conservation strategies.

It became clear that national parks are essential cornerstones for biodiversity conservation, but inadequate to insure the continued existence of the majority of natural landscapes (e.g Bustamante 2003; Putz et al. 2001). In other words, conservationists realized that the biodiversity and forests outside protected areas should be integrated into a system where local people could use natural resources in a sustainable fashion - otherwise, even the biodiversity within the parks could be seriously affected.

In fact, most of conservationists involved with CIMA and the management of the Park agreed with the need to develop a strategy for the buffer zone. Young conservationists at CIMA had been trained by the conservation literature of the 1990s, which promoted the social component and the importance of indigenous peoples for conservation. Most of them also had previous experience working in the Amazon and dealing with native people. These experiences in other protected areas of the Peruvian Amazon had showed conservationists that forming alliances with the native people would pay off in terms of creating a social front against the arrival of colonists. As a result, when they developed the management plan for CANP, they already had an inclination to support indigenous people, and to consider them natural allies. As Miguel Macedo, an anthropologist from CIMA, said, the fact that a portion of the CIMA staff have undergraduate studies in social sciences, plus some years' experience working with the local people in the surroundings of other protected areas, has influenced CIMA's institutional approach to conservation and the mentality of its staff.

This new generation of conservationists is still conservative in terms of maintaining protected areas isolated from human activity, but they are more likely to make alliances with local people, and to promote sustainable development as a means

of strengthening the buffer zone against potentially more dangerous threats. They are still far from seriously considering the contemporary anthropological perspective, in which nature is not an independent variable but a social construction (e.g Escobar 1998; Brockington and Schmidt-Soltau 2003; West et al. 2006), but they do make jokes about these “post-modern” trends. In the words of one conservationist practitioner, it is better to have a forest somehow disturbed by restricted hunting than to have grass for cows.²⁹ Put in another way, faced with a binary choice between native people and colonists, they would opt for natives, and dismiss colonists as destroyers of the forests.

Management of the Buffer Zone

Conservation activities found support in the Article 61 DS N° 038-2001- AG of Law of Protected areas issued in 2001, which allowed the establishment of a buffer zone to protect the integrity of the Park. The buffer zone was delimited on both flanks of the Park: the Huallaga and the Ucayali rivers. It included in its area 170,000 people, or approximately 270,000 if counting the total population of the neighboring districts. Most of the neighboring communities are to the southwest, along the Huallaga valley, and primarily inhabited by colonists from the Andes and the coast. This is also where most of the deforestation has occurred. In any case, the effort demanded of a single NGO is truly remarkable: to coordinate and make alliances with such a large number of people, and to monitor the threats to the Park over such a large area.

From the beginning, CIMA and the Park staff recognized the importance of working with local people to secure the integrity of the Park. This would be the first time

²⁹ Sometimes, conservationists have to put up with the realities of the field. For example, during one of the trips to survey the limits of the Park, they were invited to have lunch in a native community. To the upset of the biologists, the supper included the meat of a monkey which they were trying to preserve from local extinction.

in Peru that the managers of a protected area included the social component in the management strategy to such an extent. In my years of contact with the Park Manager Ruben Paitan and the staff from CIMA, I have witnessed how genuinely proud they are of the collaborative work they've done with the local people in the buffer zone.³⁰

In 2003, after months of work collecting information in workshops around the Park, CIMA completed the Social Asset Mapping (Mapeo de Usos y Fortalezas – MUF). Not all of the communities were willing to work with CIMA, and a large proportion of colonist communities rejected the efforts of CIMA to conduct workshops, collect information, and establish local connections. Nonetheless, 53 communities were surveyed in the 2003 MUF. The MUF was a baseline, and an important way to indicate entry points for working with the community. Since then, the MUF have become a tool to monitor the project's impacts on communities, and to solicit feedback. New MUFs were conducted again in 2005 and 2008, and all communities within the critical areas were invited to participate. In 2008, more communities, a total of 89, agreed to work with CIMA in the elaboration of the MUF.

In the process of gathering information from the communities and developing the MUF, sectors where roads or rivers provide access into the park from established community boundaries, and where new colonists can obtain land tenure, were identified as critical areas. The first Master Plan (*Plan Maestro*), which covered the years 2003 - 2008, was built on both the MUF and the critical areas and threats to the Park which

³⁰ On the contrary, Chazutinos do not find anything extraordinary in the social component of the Park management plan. They neither can compare it with other parks in Peru, nor accept the programs as something undeserved.

had been identified in the field. This Master Plan, and the subsequent ones, set the management procedures, rules, objectives and goals for the Park and the buffer zone.

CIMA has prioritized working with the communities in critical areas, and tried to develop extensive interactions with them. For CIMA, these are key communities to work with in the buffer zone. The communities were selected on the basis of their strategic locations, which would help prevent illegal entry to the Park, and also on the basis of their willingness to collaborate with the Park. These communities have provided park guards, help locating coca plantations within the Park's boundaries, support in expelling illegal loggers, etc.

In addition to this, CIMA has focused on creating a network of alliances with local governments, authorities, and institutions. It has also supported the formation of the Management Committee (*Comité de Gestión*) of PNCAZ, which is comprised of representatives from civil society and the regional governments. Agreements were made with municipalities and the Regional Government of San Martín in order to coordinate their fight against the threats to the Park, and to promote sustainable development in the buffer zone.

Most CIMA personnel have conducted most of their fieldwork in the buffer zone, and this work has been oriented towards creating alliances to fight the threats to the Park (expansion of the agricultural frontier, coca cultivation, over-hunting and over-fishing, etc). Accordingly, half CIMA's budget is spent in the buffer zone.

Reactions of Chazutinos: “They Do Not Let Us Use Our Forests”

People of Chazuta were upset when they learned about the creation of the Park. In the words of one of the former Chazuta majors: “When the park was created we did oppose it because they [the people involved in the establishment of CANP] were stingy

with its resources. These are our forests, but they denied us access to them.” (Blanca Varela). According to various sources, they considered starting an uprising to oppose the Park. Some people mentioned that the leaders of FEPIKRESAM came from Lamas to incite people to revolt, saying that the Park is for the *gringos*. The representatives from FEPIKRESAM, however, denied this. Even now, when talking about the Park, some people add that it is the park of the *gringos*. When someone complains about the rules of the Park, he or she says that the Park belongs to the *gringos*, or that now the Park belongs to Americans and the NGOs, and they make money off the Park.³¹ When they see positive things about the management of the Park, they just say that the Park is good because it protects nature.

According to several key conservationists such as Ruben Paitan (Park Manager of the CANP), Lily Rodriguez (APECO), and the personnel from CIMA, a consultation process was carried out before the creation of CANP. They carried out a number of workshops in the main cities near the Park: Tarapoto and Tocache in the department of San Martin, Pucallpa in the department of Ucayali, and Contamana in the department of Loreto. Local political figures participated in these workshops. They also held interviews in Chazuta with the Mayor and stakeholders. However, the process was neither systematic nor intended to reach the grassroots level. For Chazutinos, the people selected to participate in the workshops could by no means have represented the interests of local Chazutino people.

³¹ That is usual in times of elections when people express most of their discomfort with the Park. A guy from Chazuta, Ambrosio Apagueño, in 2009 said that if the left wing runner for president Ollanta Humala was elected, the Park would disappear and its resources could be used by the Peruvian people. Actually, by 2011, Ollanta Humala was elected president of Peru but to this date nothing has been done by the government to reverse the strengthening of the national system of protected areas.

In defense of the conservationists, Lucia Ruiz has pointed out this was just standard procedure at the time. In 2001 there was still no legal procedure or obligation to request permission from the local people. Furthermore, there were fewer social scientists working on protected areas than there are today, and they would usually be the specialists who would be concerned about requesting the informed consent of the local people. In fact, as noted by Jaso Angulo, a forester from Tarapoto, conservationists did realize that native people may have some rights to the forests of Cordillera Azul. They had noticed in the initial surveys conducted in 2000 that local people used to hunt and fish within the Park, and that the forests in Cordillera Azul contributed to their livelihoods. Conservationists also knew, however, that no legal property (either individual or communal) overlapped with the forests of Cordillera Azul, that no permanent settlements were located there, and that hunting and fishing are no tools for claiming land rights under Peruvian law. From the Peruvian conservationist perspective, therefore, it was possible to create a park which avoided all private and communal property in the surrounding area, and in this way secure the wild nature of Cordillera Azul for posterity. This has been a common trend in the creation of protected areas in Latin America, where many have been established without considering indigenous rights, livelihoods, territories and history (e.g Oviedo 2004).

Within this context, AIDSESEP, the national representative of Amazonian indigenous peoples, claimed that the creation of the Park violated the rights of the Cacataibo people, who lived in voluntary isolation in the southern part of the Park –far from Chazuta district. Indigenous organizations had been trying to create an indigenous reserve in the southern part of Cordillera Azul in order to protect the aforementioned

Cacataibo people. However, negotiations had been unsuccessful before 2001, and were apparently paralyzed by that year. Conservationists in other parts of the Amazon have supported the creation of indigenous reserves, but this time, they did not. According to Lucia Ruiz, the Peruvian government didn't intentionally create a Park to ignore indigenous rights. Rather, it was just that the conservationists delimiting the Park and the President of Peru were unaware of AIDASEP's petition to create an indigenous reserve. Whether it was true or not, at that time AIDASEP was going through an internal crises; and therefore, it was not enough strong to mobilize the public opinion against the creation of the Park. In other sectors of the Park, local people and organizations protested, although not for the Cacataibo people but for their own local interests. Finally, though, no revolt against the Park took place in either Chazuta or the other districts of the buffer zone.

It is important to stress that opposition to creation of the Park was much stronger in the districts of the Upper Huallaga valley, where colonists comprised the majority of the population. They saw that the creation of the Park set a limit to their advances for more agricultural land. The promoters of the Park were threatened with bodily harm, and workshops were cancelled for fear of violent reactions. Coca farmers, in particular, were vehemently against the establishment of the Park.

In Chazuta, the reaction against the Park was mild by comparison. People indicated in interviews that, at that time, most of the local people were opposed to the Park, but ultimately, they did nothing. The survey, however, indicates the exact opposite: from 96 people who responded to the question "how did you personally react to the creation of the Park at that time?" 33 answered that they disapproved and 62

indicated that they had supported it. It thus appears that perceptions of one's opinions may change over time. From the current perspective, these positive answers may be linked to the fact that the Park is now seen as a positive factor in Chazuta. Even when I first went to Chazuta in 2007, people already had a favorable impression of the Park. By 2010, people in Chazuta were undoubtedly on good terms with the existence of the Park. To the question, "do you think the Park should continue to exist in the future?" 138 out of 148 people answered positively. Only 10 indicated that they felt the Park should cease to exist. No difference was found between the opinions of natives and colonists. Many say that now, one can see animals which were nearly extinct a decade ago, but there are also other factors which we will explore in this and Chapter 5.

For Toribio Amasifuen, the former president of FEPIKRESAM, the indigenous organizations and the local governments were still not strong enough to oppose the mandate of the Peruvian government at the time the Park was created. The problem was not whether these organizations were properly consulted, but rather that the Park was created over native lands and traditional Quechua turf. There was not, however, any way to claim native possession over these lands, because there were no land titles or legal jurisdiction over the area. Thus, they were powerless to do anything.

FEPIKRESAM did not publicly contest the Park's creation.

The Municipality of Chazuta's response to the Park's creation was ambivalent. They did not approve of the Park, but also avoided reacting against it. They were, in fact, already in contact with the regional government and the conservationists, and knew that the media in Tarapoto was in favor of creating the Park. The urban public

opinion then, as now, was that colonists and illegal loggers should be stopped, because they were depleting the watersheds and destroying the forests.

In any case, the creation of CANP reinforced the local perception in Chazuta that the power and final decisions were concentrated in Lima, and that local decisions or interests are always overlooked in favor of the interests of rich people and foreigners. An NGO such as CIMA, located in Lima, would consequently have political connections and power. Moreover, the perception is that the State is more concerned with the needs of these rich people and foreigners than the wellbeing of the local people.

Building Alliances with the Chazutino People

In the district of Chazuta, CIMA rushed to establish relations with the district government and the communities in the buffer zone from the very beginning. A permanent employee of CIMA was assigned to live between Chazuta and Tarapoto, and was tasked with developing a strategy to improve public relations, lobbying for the Park, and providing technical support to the communities and the Municipality. Wellington Cachique was the first CIMA employee in Chazuta, and he played a key role in the creation of a network of alliances and agreements between the communities, the local government, and the Park. Thanks to him, CIMA implemented workshops with the Municipality and some communities to build capacity, improve the use of natural resources, develop zoning guidelines, provide legal assistance, and design sustainable development projects.

For Chazutinos, CIMA and the Park became, practically speaking, the same entity. When they complain about the Park or CIMA, they sometimes curse the two as if they were one and the same. Between 2002 and 2010, many people attended activities, events, workshops on conservation, or training courses provided by CIMA, or have

been employed in some specific work related to the Park. Also, by 2010, most of the people working in the Municipality had, at some point in their career, worked for CIMA on one project or another, and consequently were familiar with CIMA's objectives for the Park.

CIMA also extended its network in the communities, those on right bank of the Huallaga river (the buffer zone). Among the communities on the right bank, the native community of Chipaota has been a key ally to CIMA since the beginning. Chipaota is not only located in a critical area with easy access to the Park, but is also the only legally recognized native community in the district, and therefore, under Peruvian Law, could could request permission to manage forests outside the community.

As seen in Chapter 3, several paths cross the lands of the Chipaota community and penetrate the forests of Cordillera Azul. Consequently, even before the formal creation of the Park, conservationists established relations with this community in order to gain ingress into Cordillera Azul. Most of the CIMA and Field Museum expeditions to the Park have departed from this single native community. Males from Chipaota are usually hired as porters for these expeditions.

Relationships between CIMA and the people of Chipaota –and, to a lesser extent, people from other communities and settlements- have developed since then. For example, in one of the first trips to survey the borders of the Park, a group of men from Chipaota guided the recently appointed chief of the Park, Ruben Paitan, and other conservationists, through the forests of Cordillera Azul to the Laguna del Mundo Perdido. On this trip, they even named a hill Puyu Sirina, which means “low lying clouds,” because, after they woke up early one morning, they saw from the top of the hill

the clouds down there as it was a bed³². As a result of this and other trips, Ruben Paitan and his future wife Melita became godparents to some of the children in Chipaota.

On at least two occasions, in both 2007 and 2008, I witnessed a group of around ten men going to Laguna del Mundo Perdido to prepare the camp for the arrival of a group of American tourists and potential funders. These visitors had been contacted by the Chicago Field Museum and, given their interest in Cordillera Azul, invited to visit. CIMA personnel in Lima and Tarapoto brought the logistical support needed for the operation. The potential donors would arrive in a helicopter and camp for several days within the Park, enjoying its nature and the beauty of the lake Laguna del Mundo Perdido –which, as we saw in Chapter 3, has profound historical meaning for Chipaota people. It is no wonder that some people in Chazuta talk about the *gringo's* park.

Andres Cenepo, the park guard for the district, is also from Chipaota. He lives for at least half of the month at checkpoint 11, the only official entrance to the Park in the district. When someone wants to enter to the Park, he or she should first check in at checkpoint 11; Andres or a volunteer park guard will grant permission to enter in the Park. In local terms, being a park guard is an excellent job in terms of pay and prestige. Every three months, two voluntary and temporary park guards are chosen from a pool of applicants to support Andres Cenepo in his duties. They come from the nearby communities, and are usually *naturales*. They receive some financial aid and training for 3 months, and this is why many men from the communities want at least to be temporary park guards.

³² Tercero Izuiza told me that, during this trip, thanks to his knowledge of the forests, he saved Ruben's life. He was completely thirsty after many hours of walking, and on the verge of passing out. So, Tercero went off the path and found a vine that provides clean water ("*la sogá amanchona*").

Every two weeks, Andres Cenepo pays several men from the community of Chipaota to carry supplies to the check point. He also coordinates with the authorities of Chipaota to conduct patrols around the land of the community and the borders of the Park. The goal of these patrols is conduct surveillance on potential illegal loggers or colonists who may be encroaching on community lands.

In the neighboring communities, however, the *naturales* are not so content with what they perceive as the preferential treatment given to the people of Chipaota. They complain that the number of voluntary park guards has been disproportionately in favor of Chipaota, the temporary work as guiders and loaders always ends up in the hands of people from Chipaota, and that when foreigners come to the district, the first community they visit is Chipaota. According to Wellington Cachique, it was not accurate to think that CIMA did not want to work with other communities in the district, but that the fact remains that Chipaota happens to be strategically located, as a native community it has rights over a communal forest, and that the people in Chipaota were open to receiving CIMA and Park personnel. As a result, the first agreements were made with Chipaota. CIMA has also worked with the other communities, including Ramon Castilla and Siambal, albeit less intensively.

From 2002 until now, the people of the communities of Chipaota and Ramon Castilla, and the town of Chazuta, have become familiar with CIMA and Park personnel. Almost everyone can list some of them by name. Most of the work and collaboration has been done with *naturales*. This can be explained by two factors. One, the pre-conceptions of conservationists made them likely to work with *naturales*; and two, many

of the colonists have arrived since the creation of the Park, and are not politically organized.³³

When I surveyed knowledge about the Park and workshop attendance among natives and colonists, the difference between the two groups was remarkable. This may show that the conservationists were not interested in working with the colonists, or that the colonists simply did not care about the Park. Perhaps it was a self-fulfilling prophesy.

Table 4-1. Do you know that there is a Master Plan for the management of the Park?

	Natives	Colonists
Yes	40 (40%)	6 (10%)
No	59 (60%)	55 (90%)
	99 (100%)	61 (100%)

In Chipaota, knowledge of the existence of the Park's Master Plan was even higher than in the town of Chazuta. 26 out of 32 people surveyed, or 81 %, knew about the Master Plan.

Similarly, when asked about attendance to at least one workshop or meeting concerning the Park, more natives recalled attending at least one.

Table 4-2. Did you ever attend a workshop or meeting regarding the Park?

	Natives	Colonists
Yes	42 (42%)	6 (10%)
No	57 (58%)	55 (90%)
	99 (100%)	61 (100%)

³³ This situation is different from other districts, where colonists are the majority of the population and have formed entire communities. In Chazuta, conversely, colonists may be in the majority in the village of Siambal, but have no interest in forming their own organizations. In the nearby district of Picota, the colonist community of San Juan has had several years of working together with CIMA in order to protect the watersheds of its main river. With the legal help of CIMA, they even registered 1000 hectares of communal forests in order to avoid the arrival of other colonists who could deforest the area and cause the river to run dry.

In Chipaota, the difference was also higher. 18 out of 32 people surveyed, or 56%, attended a workshop or meeting regarding the Park.

Interestingly, no difference was found in the native group between men and women in workshop attendance: both men and women attended with similar frequency.

The close relationship with CIMA and the Park has paid off for Chipaota in terms of some support for the community. Chipaota now has a forest reserve, of which it is the legal administrator, but not the owner. As we will see later, they have the right to harvest the vines of the piassaba palm from this forest reserve, and use them for commercial purposes.

Chazutinos were affected by the Park in two ways: by the rules and regulations aimed at protecting its biodiversity, and by the projects initiated to improve the well-being of the people in the buffer zone.

Implementing Rules and Regulations

A set of rules were implemented to restrict human activities within the Park and protect its biological diversity. No settlements are allowed to be established within the Park, and entrance is limited and granted only for traditional activities of the native people such as hunting or fishing. In addition, the harvest of the vines and leaves of the Piassaba palm (*Aphandra Natalia*) for commercial purposes is forbidden, because previous over-exploitation of the resource led this palm to near local extinction. Regarding the buffer zone, the Peruvian legislation on protected areas allows a park to impose regulations on its buffer zone, provided they are in accordance with the objectives of conservation and sustainable development for the nearby villages.

These restrictions are updated with new information collected from the MUF every few years: 2003, 2005, 2008 and the next one in 2012. Species in danger are

identified, and new rules are imposed to protect them. However, these data should be taken with some caveats. Sometimes the effort to justify conservation leads the authors to exaggerate the threats or the number of species in peril of local extinction, and sometimes these data do not reflect the great diversity of cases around the Park. For instance, in the first MUF, CIMA made a general estimate for the Park, and found that hunting areas in the buffer zone occupied 5 times more space than within the Park: 220,000 ha in the buffer zone, and 47,850 ha in the Park (Watanabe 2004). This fact may imply that the impact of CANP creation has been less than claimed by local people. Truth or not, the buffer zone in the Chazuta sector is, in fact, much narrower than the buffer zone on the Ucayali side of the Park, and is also more densely populated; thus, it is very likely that the 5:1 ratio does not apply to them. We do not have an estimate of the area within the Park which had been previously used by Chazutinos, but we do know that, historically they have used the lands now within the park boundary extensively.

CIMA has heavily relied on the support of local communities to prevent hunting expeditions and the advance of *chacras* within the Park. Park guards are typically chosen from local communities –which is also very practical, because the paths to the Park usually cross these communities. In Chazuta, as in most of the districts around the Park, permission to enter is granted by the park guards, or by the president of the nearby community, such as Chipaota. In order to enter the park in the Chazuta sector, all visitors must be registered at checkpoint 11, which is located in a place in the uplands of Chipaota community named Robashca. If Andres Cenepo is not there, a

volunteer park guard takes down the name and purpose of the person soliciting entrance.

Virtually everyone in the communities of Chipaota, Ramon Castilla, or Chazuta, just by virtue of being a native of the district, is granted permission to enter to hunt. However, the guards are suspicious if anyone who is not native tries to enter. The objective, explicitly written in the Park's Master Plan, is to control the entry of non-natives, and to implicitly discourage them. In practice, colonists do not go hunting, and it is therefore very unlikely that they would venture out into the woods. If, however, a colonist or native set out to engage in another activity, such as coca cultivation or illegal logging, they would not register themselves at the checkpoint.

Restricting Hunting within the Park

Hunting is allowed only for subsistence, and the hunter may only take up to 30 kilograms of meat out of the Park. Animals cannot be killed in time of reproduction, and certain species cannot be hunted. Also, there are prohibitions on killing certain species at certain times of year (*vedas*). The use of traps or snares is also forbidden. Melbin Saurin (male, 54 years, Chazuta) complains that, now, "there is a regulation imposed by the Park that prohibits to set up traps". He adds that, now, one can only use their breechloaders –which is not exactly true, but as no one has used traditional blow-pipes (*pucunas*) in the last sixty years; in practice people can only use their firearms.

Most people complain about these restrictions, which are seen as unfair treatment. For instance, a 35-year-old woman from Chazuta says that "Now everything is controlled. When you go hunting you cannot hunt all you want. You can hunt only what they want." (Mirna Navarro Panaifo). Another from the community of Chipaota, a 38-year-old single man who lives alone near the Park:

For us, nothing good. We are not allow to hunt [actually they can but with restrictions]. There are fishes that weight nine pounds, but we cannot catch them. Inside [the park] there are maquisapas [a type of monkey] but we cannot hunt them. Guard parks take what you hunt... They do not care about natural resources, they care only about little snakes... people from outside [gringos] are allowed to enter in the park, but we the people who live here cannot. We cannot kill sachavacas [South American tapir], deers, sajinos [collared peccaries]. The population of these animals is increasing but we cannot hunt them. (Feliciano Sangama)

For many families, the wildlife within the Park was a sort of storehouse of meat which was available when they could not afford it in the market. “In the past, when we were hungry we used to go hunting, any time. Now, things are different.” (Raul Chujutalli, 36 years, Chipaota). In fact, 32% of native people surveyed on hunting (100 people exactly) pointed out that the rules and restrictions on hunting momentarily affected their economy. Hunting was a chance to have free meat at the table.

We must, however, take peoples’ comments on the impacts of regulating hunting within Cordillera Azul with a grain of salt. The interior of Chipaota and the area around Siambal have also been traditional hunting areas, and in practice they were not affected by the regulations –if there was less game there, it was certainly not a result of the establishment of the park, but rather, previous overhunting. In fact, a study on hunting in the community of Chipaota showed that natives have been hunting unsustainably, and by 2005, most of the wild animals were near extinction in that part of the buffer zone (Sanchez 2006).

Thus, what was the immediate impact of hunting restrictions on local livelihoods? It is difficult to measure now, but it would not be true to say that the wellbeing of native people was not affected by the restriction of hunting in Cordillera Azul. Aside from the fact that most families had previously hunted to bring some meat to the table, a few families were also dedicated to selling meat from hunting. They were directly affected by

the restrictions. They say that the regulations on hunting “affected in the commercial part because they hunted for selling the meat” (Juan Tuanama, 44 years, Chazuta); or “We were affected in the economic part because we used to hunt to sell the meat” (Atenio Panaifo, 50 years Chazuta).

Nevertheless, as we saw in Chapter 3, for pre-existing reasons, hunting in the Park and the buffer zone had already been in decline for at least three decades. The availability of meat from the market for daily needs, a reduction in game found near the villages, the education of the children, and the work demands of the cash crops (coca, cacao, etc) caused a steady decline in hunting activities. For example, hunting in the past had been a social activity, with entire families going hunting in groups of up to 30 people. These hunting parties would often go to the mountains of Cordillera Azul, where game was abundant. By the late 1990s, however, it was only rarely practiced in this manner. Only Chazutinos who are older than 35 years old can still remember these social events- where children bore the supplies and fished in the streams, wives prepared the food for the group, and men hunted.

In this context, the creation of the Park and its restrictions became another factor that has diminished hunting both inside and outside the Park. Before the creation of the Park, 73% of the native people, both men and women, had entered Cordillera Azul for the purpose of hunting. Since its creation, only 28% have hunted inside the Park. If three out of four people hunted in Cordillera Azul before 2001, now only one in four do.

People mention three reasons why they do not go hunting as often as in the past, not to say with entire families. First, they point out that they are dedicated all day long to productive activities such as the cultivation of cacao, which has replaced coca as the

main cash crop. 48% of *naturales* reported that their involvement in cacao cultivation takes up most of their working time. Second, their children have to go to school, which forces at least one parent to stay at home. Finally, for people outside of the community of Chipaota, the process of obtaining permission to hunt is another factor by itself. 34% of native people surveyed on hunting mentioned that they do not go hunting to Cordillera Azul because the process of asking permission, giving their names, filing out some papers, and having the park guards check the weight of the meat is simply unbearable for them. It is not that the guard parks behave in a arrogant or haughty manner with the people. Perhaps it is because asking for permission from an equal is more difficult than asking for permission from someone who has a pre-existing authority. The people of Chipaota now feel more empowered by the control they can exert over game and forest resources in Cordillera Azul, but Chazutinos from other communities do not feel the same way.

However, the Chazutino outside Chipaota do see some benefits. For 10% of the “*naturales*” the creation of the Park did not affect their hunting activity at all. For 8%, hunting is better now because there is more game- in the mountains, near the villages, in the buffer zone, and within the Park. As hunting decreased and game populations increased within the Park, more and more animals coming from the Park began inhabiting the buffer zone. This increases the frequency of occasional, opportunistic hunting, when animals are encountered and killed near the village or the *chacra*.

For the community of Chipaota, the restrictions on hunting, the regulation which stipulates that entries to the Park should be checked-in at checkpoint 11, and the

authorization granted by the park guards, usually from Chipaota, or the president of the community, have meant an empowerment against other peoples:

Now, hunting is only for the people in the community. In the past, people from outside the community used to come and hunt inside the park. But, since there is a checkpoint, only people from the community enter in the park [not entirely true, people from Chazuta in general can enter in the park]. Now, only with an authorization from the community is it possible to enter the park. (Asuncion Isuiza 70 years old)

For the people of the left bank of the Huallaga river, this, of course, is not a good deal. Ambrosio, from the community of Tununtununba, located directly across the river from Chipaota, says that:

In Chipaota, there are bad people who do not want people from Tununtununba to hunt in the park despite the vast extensions of lands up there in the Cordillera Azul. To hunt in the Park we have to ask for a permit in Chipaota. We can only take 30 kilograms of meat. There are a lot of animals and plants near and inside the park.

Illegal hunting within the Park still happens, but only every once in a while. These hunters, who usually are Chazutinos, enter the Park by following other ancient paths in the nearby communities, thereby avoiding the only checkpoint in the district: checkpoint 11 in Chipaota. The park guards, however, do not have the power to make arrests- they can only confiscate products taken from the Park. To actually arrest poachers, they need to call the Peruvian National Police. Nevertheless, calling the police may potentially create divisions and animosity within the communities and extended families. Thus, park guards prefer to warn the poachers and set the confiscated products in fire.

Within this context, it was an unusual event turning in 14 hunters to the police in November of 2010. The San Martin newspaper Voces reported that the poachers were caught by park guards in Chazuta district while putting traps and snares within the

Park.³⁴ In the Chazuta sector of CANP, these incidents have not escalated to the point where people are killed. Nonetheless, these incidents have occurred all around the Park, and in other protected areas of the Peruvian Amazon. In Pacaya Samiria National Reserve, two biologists and one park guard were killed in 1997 by illegal poachers (Bodmer and Puertas 2007).

Sustainable Fishing

Fishing is also restricted within the Park. However, no one would go to the Park only to fish, as there are plenty of fish in the streams and the Huallaga river. If people fish in the Park, it is because they are hunting, and are only fishing to provide food for themselves while they concentrate on hunting. However, almost all *naturales* go fishing at least once in a week, while only half of the colonists have gone fishing at least once in their lives, and the other half have never fished. Knowing this, conservationists were much more concerned about the use of unsustainable techniques and over-fishing in the buffer zone.

³⁴ In the newspaper "Voces" on November 24th, 2010, the following report was published: "*Catorce cazadores furtivos que colocaron tramperos en áreas de protección de la Cordillera Azul, ubicada en el distrito de Chazuta, ayer fueron intervenidos por guardabosques, quienes además incautaron 18 armas de fuego, para la caza de animales de la zona. Los intervenidos fueron puestos a disposición del Ministerio Público y de la División de Investigación Criminal (DIVINCRI), cuyos agentes tomaron manifestación a los guardabosques, al mismo tiempo revisaron minuciosamente las armas para conocer la procedencia y descartar si fueron empleados en hechos delincuenciales en el interior de la región. Los cazadores son naturales de la localidad de Canayo y Santa Rosa de Chipaota, cinco de ellos ya fueron identificados por lo que vamos a proceder a citarlos para conocer sus versiones*" manifestó el comandante José Eduardo Garay Ruiz, jefe de la DIVINCRI de San Martín. Los cazadores fueron ubicados en varios campamentos que tienen los guardabosques en la Cordillera Azul en la zona, asimismo fueron encontrados cuatro escopetas y catorce tramperos, así como municiones y otras herramientas que utilizan desde hace varios años para la caza de animales. (author: Hugo Anteparra). <http://www.diariovoces.com.pe/?p=17806>

The use of dynamite, the poison Thiodan³⁵ (an insecticide used in agriculture), and the natural poisons *huaca* and *barbasco*, are all forbidden within the Park, and also in the buffer zone. Workshops on sustainable fishing were taught in the communities of the buffer zone, to both natives and colonists, and they were very successful in getting the message out to people. Posters and radio commercials funded by CIMA have also disseminated the message.

Table 4-3. Do you know that it is recommended by the Park to not use *barbasco* or dynamite for fishing?³⁶

	Natives	Colonists
Yes	88 (92%)	29 (85%)
No	8 (8%)	5 (15%)
	96 (100%)	34 (100%)

Moreover, it seems that it is not merely that people know that they should not use them. People are in fact not using dynamite and natural poisons in the Chazuta district anymore. Before the creation of the Park, 66% of the natives accepted that they had used *barbasco*, and 29% had used dynamite; while only 18% of the colonists had used *barbasco*, and even less dynamite, 10%. Now, virtually no one uses *barbasco* or dynamite. So, this is a considerable change brought by the Park.

Table 4-4. Do you use *barbasco* or dynamite for fishing?³⁷

	Natives	Colonists
Yes	1 (1%)	0 (0%)
No	95 (99%)	34 (100%)
	96 (100%)	34 (100%)

³⁵ Because of its threats to human health and the environment, this substance has been banned in more than 80 countries, including the European Union, Australia and New Zealand, several West African nations, the United States, Brazil, and Canada.

³⁶ Note that only people who fish were asked. 96% of the native people fish, while only 55% of the colonists do.

³⁷ There were, in fact, two different questions for *barbasco* and dynamite, but as the answers to both questions were identical for every respondent, I put both in the same table.

Also, the workshops on sustainable fishing emphasized when to fish certain species, which techniques are sustainable and which ones could lead to extinction of some species, etc. Now, posters conveying the message are found in every community of the district.



Figure 4-2. Typical poster elaborated by CIMA: Seasons for fishing and prohibitions

In summary, the creation of the Park has not affected the frequency of fishing, but it has led to the abandonment of unsustainable practices such as the use of dynamite.

Promoting Sustainable Development in Chazuta

In parallel to the rules and restrictions imposed by the Park, conservationists fomented and supported projects in the buffer zone which were considered sustainable and attuned to conservation goals. The idea has been to build strong networks and alliances through local projects involving native people, with the ultimate goal of protecting the Park from the threats of coca production and the expansion of the agricultural frontier. From the beginning, conservationists knew that engaging the native

people was a key element to securing the buffer zone of the Park. As Wellington Cachique said: “We want the local people to be the guardians of the Park, become conscious of their natural resources, and take care of them.”

One thing the conservationists had in their favor was that, in San Martin, the regional development policies which had been followed for more than 40 years- based on opening new roads, converting forests into agricultural land, and expanding monoculture- had failed. Or, at the very least, this was the prevailing urban public opinion at the time. This model entered into crisis when the civil society of San Martin began suffering from environmental problems such as the drying-up of main streams, hard competition for land between natives and colonists, uncontrollable deforestation, and the violence associated with coca cultivation. In this context, the model of sustainable development, understood as a way to integrate conservation of rain forests and watersheds with better living conditions, emerged as an alternative. Young professionals, engineers, and developers from San Martin, usually complaining about the centralization of power in Lima, started envisioning a model of development based on zoning the land according to its best use, small-scale development projects, agroforestry, and controlled migration. As mentioned by Chibnick (1994), advocates of sustainable development are also usually concerned about economic equity and social justice, and tend to appreciate the historical, cultural and environmental management of native peoples. They therefore they try to reconcile it with modern development. In this context, they favor small-scale development projects over large-scale enterprises which may benefit the nation, but negatively affect the local area.

This was expressed by the Representative of the Civil Society in the Regional Government In the magazine “El Tarapotino”:

This is the moment for a change in attitude. It is necessary to have a different political leadership, one with a clear notion of SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. We need a different political leadership from the head to toe. It should prioritize and invest vigorously in ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC ZONNING, which is the best tool in the fight against poverty... (Landa 2003: 20) (The translation is mine, the capital letters are from the original version in Spanish)

Local conservationists and developers flocked to the regional party Nueva Amazonia, which heralded the concept of sustainable development for San Martin. Jaso Angulo is one of these *San Martinenses*, young professionals who try to reconcile development with conservation of nature. He worked for USAID in the program which promoted substituting coca for cacao, and now works for the Municipality of Chazuta. His father occupied a high position in the Agricultural Bureau of the government of San Martin, and is a follower of the traditional model of development based on the expansion of the agricultural frontier. Jaso points out that this is a typical generational difference: older people tend to believe in development by expanding monoagriculture, while younger people are attracted to agroforestry systems, organic fertilizers, and what falls under the umbrella term of sustainable development. He complains that agroforestry is not supported by Peruvian law. To set up an agroforestry business or project, either by one individual or by a community, the entrepreneur is required to have biological and faunal inventories, pay for the inspections of his lands by government officials, hire a lawyer, and sometimes offer bribes to speed the process, before getting the permit. However, if one farmer wants to focus on monoculture, the law supports him, and he gets access to credit, training, technical support, etc. In his own words:

“The economic activity in rural areas to be profitable and sustainable should not be in contradiction with conservation. Where there are deforested areas we want to plant trees, and do agroforestry. Where there are forests we want to give them an economic value to deter those who may want to cut them to gain money.... But, the centralized government is in Lima and they take decisions. They do not help us at all.” (Jaso Angulo)

In this context, Chazutinos have also embraced the discourse of protection of natural resources and sustainable development, along with the general public of San Martin, both rural and urban. The coca eradication program and cacao production, the program for micro-zoning the district, and the piassaba project developed by the community of Chipacota have been the expression of the confluence of interests between conservationists, local people, policy makers, and the developers of San Martin.

The Coca Eradication Program of 2002 – 2003

By 2010, most of the families in the district were cultivating cacao, in patches ranging in size from half a hectare to four hectares. Cacao provided them with most of their cash income. Cultivation of cacao requires substantial work from all of the members of the household, but it is profitable, and people see it as a reliable investment because its price is not prone to wild fluctuations. The number of cacao chacras increases every year, and Chazutinos as well as colonists see cultivating more chacras as a way to secure the cash money that their children need for their education.

In the year 2000, in contrast, most families were cultivating coca, and were dependent on it. At that time, as seen in Chapter 3, coca provided most of their cash income. Coca, however, was an unreliable source of income. Police raids could always find and burn their *cocales*, or coca *chacras*. In addition to this, the price of coca was also very unstable. Coca had been cultivated in the area since the 1980s, but with

irregular frequency. In the late 1980s and the first years of the 1990s, the presence of the guerilla movement and the army, and the large number of coca plantations in the Upper Huallaga, discouraged the cultivation of coca in the area. By the mid-1990s, however, farmers were once again encouraged to cultivate coca, due to its increasing price.

Nowadays, when Chazutinos see these years in perspective, they point out that they cultivated coca because they needed money: at that time, there was no other cash crop that could offer them a similar income. But Chazutinos regret the violence that is associated with the coca years. As seen in the previous chapter, this violence may have been triggered by the Peruvian state itself: the prohibition of coca cultivation for cocaine production, and the “war on drugs”, may have introduced violence in the area. It created the conditions for the formation of drug cartels, which have since sought to control the chain of exchanges from the coca farmer to the consumer. In any case, whether the violence was ultimately caused by the State or the drug cartels, or both, Chazutinos did not want that for Chazuta.

In parallel, conservationists had identified the expansion of coca cultivation as one of the main threats to the integrity of the forests of the Cordillera Azul. They feared that local coca farmers along the Huallaga river would turn towards the Cordillera Azul and desire those untouched lands. For conservationists, the cultivation of coca not only attracted more colonists to the borders of Cordillera Azul, but also it provided an incentive to local people to enter the Park and clear patches of forest.³⁸

³⁸ In fact, it was not only coca, there were illegal loggers too. Logging alone, nevertheless, does not destroy the forests. It causes degradation.

Within this context, conservationists had to find an alternative to, as one journalist pointed out, “pump some of the money raised for the park into development plans for the buffer zone that would strengthen the valley’s economy” (Mullen 2004). The solution came from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) through its Alternative Development Program (Programa de Desarrollo Alternativo – PDA).³⁹ USAID had somehow embraced the discourse of sustainable development in its war on drugs, and was actively promoting the substitution of coca with either cacao or coffee, depending on the climate and soil. This regional plan to eradicate coca from the Andean countries found fertile soil in the department of San Martin and among the young and progressive professionals of the region. In addition to this, conservationists found that cacao cultivation was consistent with their conservation and sustainable development goals. In other words, there was a confluence of interests: i) the war on drugs supported by alternative crops; ii) conservationists’ concerns about the expansion of coca fields into the Cordillera Azul; and iii) the willingness of Chazutino people to find an alternative to coca. These three factors converged in 2001.

The idea of cultivating cacao came directly from USAID and the PDA. Research on cacao varieties and the experience of cacao cultivation in Costa Rica had created the scientific and empirical knowledge needed to promote investment in cacao in the Andean countries (Young 2007: 183). Cacao was already being promoted by USAID, in the context of the war on drugs in the Andean region, with the objectives of generating additional income for farmers, protecting Amazonian watersheds, promoting free trade, and developing an alternative crop.

³⁹ PDA has been managed by Chemonics international since 2001

Cacao was seen as an environmentally friendly commercial crop which was well-suited to the climate and soils of the department of San Martin. The cultivation of cacao could also be integrated into agroforestry systems that protect biodiversity and allow reforestation. Cacao groves blend in with the rain forest. Because the cacao tree is a shorter understory tree, and requires shade to blossom, farmers consequently also need to plant also taller trees, which can also be commercial species, in cacao groves.⁴⁰

Cacao farming requires the use of fertilizers and pesticides and can therefore be quite expensive. It is also a labor intensive crop. Nonetheless, most of the world's cacao crop comes from small farmers, and they depend in large measure upon government support. In the department of San Martin, the regional government and USAID (through the PDA, CIMA, and local NGOs) were to become the main supporters of the small farmers, and would provide them with technical assistance, cash incentives, fertilizers, etc.

San Martin's newspapers and magazines, as well as, young professionals responded with enthusiasm. However, this support from young professional and conservationists to cacao should be analyzed through the lenses of the pervasive discourse against coca cultivation which has been funded and encouraged by USAID. It may, in fact, have its origins in USAID's previous investment in training opponents of coca cultivation. The USAID support of the war on drugs has included public campaigns, workshops, and training programs in the region, along with rhetoric about alternative crops and sustainable development. Is it possible to link USAID's investment

⁴⁰ In fact, as one advocate of cacao as an alternative commercial crop said: "Because the cacao tree is still tied ecologically to the tropical rain forest, the more we can incorporate certain features of the rain forest into the design of commercial plantations, the more likely we are to maintain production at suitable economic levels in the long run" (Young, 2007: 180 – 181)

in public campaigns to eradicate coca with the positions of developers and conservationists? I believe it is, but this is a topic for future research, as the data collected in this work cannot conclusively establish this relationship.

These intertwined objectives, protecting the forests and generating more income, and the fact that the personnel from USAID frequently worked together with CIMA and the Park, meant that, in the beginning, both programs were identified as the same external entity by the local people. As external agents, they were seen as having a particular social and political agenda, which sometimes coincided with local interests and sometimes differed from them. People now remember that they were at the beginning suspicious.

Cacao Cultivation in Chazuta

The project was implemented on both banks of the Huallaga river, from the Upper Huallaga to Chazuta, as a voluntary program, in which families who agreed to substitute coca for cacao received a cash incentive of 660 soles (around 200 dollars at that time) and 10 sacks of natural fertilizers.⁴¹ Most Chazutino families did not enter the program during this first phase. Some did in Chipaota and Ramon Castilla- Tercero Izuiza and Miguel Cenepo, for instance, who have been cultivating cacao since 2002. Most families, however, took their time before agreeing to invest in cacao. Nonetheless, as time passed, more families began to see some of the benefits of cacao cultivation: a steady cash income, a good replacement for coca, and the associated security it offered. Consequently, more people joined the program.

⁴¹ Mostly *guano de la isla*, a fertilizer made from seabird guano, which was one of the main Peruvian exports in the 19th and early 20th century.

These programs aimed at eradicating coca and promoting cacao have proven to be successful until these days, but initially, they encountered opposition. The way the initial intervention occurred can explain this initial opposition and the ambivalent feeling towards that period of change. On the one hand, the anti-drug police burnt coca plantations when they were located, thus leaving the family without the income they expected. On the other hand, the alternative commercial crop offered, cacao, takes 3 to 4 years to reach maturity and produce benefits. They liked the idea of eradicating coca, but the replacement crop did not offer benefits from the beginning.

In contrast, we can see that opposition to the program was active in the Upper Huallaga- where colonists were and are the majority of the population, and have grassroots organizations that support coca cultivation. In some cases, according to the staff from CIMA, colonists threatened the physical integrity of the PDA and park guards.⁴² Coca cultivation still has not been eradicated from the Upper Huallaga, although production is lower than it was in the year 2000.⁴³

By 2004, most of the Chazuta communities and villages had signed an agreement with USAID to abandon their coca fields. In Chipaota, there is now a bridge that crosses the Chipaota river and connects the community with the nearby community of Canayo. This bridge was built with USAID money, as an incentive for replacing coca for cacao. In the village of Ramon Castilla, USAID funded the construction of the central

⁴² A somewhat understandable reaction, considering that the anti-drug police (DEA) continued with periodical raids to fumigate coca *chacras*.

⁴³ Richard Kernaghan in his book *Coca's Gone: Of Might and Right in the Huallaga Post-Boom* (2009) provides us with an exploration of the Upper Huallaga in the years immediately following the mid-1990s decline in the commerce of unrefined cocaine.

plaza. In other villages, soccer fields, or the building for the elementary school, or the kindergarden, were built by USAID.

The perception now is that the coca eradication program affected negatively, although temporarily, the economy of the households in the first years (2002 – 2004). Those who decided to cultivate cacao in substitution, however, were reaping the benefits by 2005.

USAID, the government of San Martin, CIMA and other NGOs working in San Martin also supported the formation of grassroots and umbrella cacao organizations. These organizations were formed with the objective of eliminating potential intermediaries who could control the prices and keep the financial benefits to the cacao producers at a minimum.⁴⁴ Chazuta Allimacacao⁴⁵ and Oro Verde are examples of this type of cooperative, and are currently the primary organizations to which Chazutinos and colonists market their cacao.

The association Chazuta Allimacacao includes 400 cacao producers in the district and has 14 cacao-gathering centers –one for every village of the district. In total, they counted 1500 hectares dedicated to cacao by the year 2010. The purpose of establishing a cooperative is to control the price of cacao, avoiding the possibility that the intermediaries could manipulate the price or divide the farmers. Chazuta Allimacacao works directly with the cooperative Oro Verde. Oro Verde operates in the

⁴⁴ In Peru, the intermediaries between the market and the farmers have garnered a negative image, and have been accused of impoverishing the Peruvian peasantry. The government, supported by social science studies, has attempted to eliminate them since the Agrarian reform of the 1970s, albeit unsuccessfully.

⁴⁵ The name “Allimacacao” is composed of two indigenous words, one autochthonous and the other from Central America: allima means “good” in Quechua, and cacao is a borrowing term from Nahuatl used in Quechua and Spanish.

entire department of San Martin, markets the cacao, and provides technical support to improve seed stock. In 2010, most of the rural farmers of San Martin were already involved in cacao cultivation. By then, they were focused on improving the process of drying recently harvested cacao, in order to improve quality and command a higher market price. Farmers were earning 5 soles per kilogram of cacao; with better seed stock and curing techniques, they could get up to 7 soles.

Engineers from the PDA and Allimacacao hold monthly workshops in the communities and villages to train farmers in agroforestry and improved cacao cultivation techniques. These workshops are called “Escuela de Campo”. Natives and colonists say that they have been successful, and that production is better now, thanks to the engineers. They have learned, step by step, how to nurture the *cacaotales*.

Cacao specialists have taught natives and colonists how to divide the land to maximize cacao production, how to fertilize the soil, how to create shade and plant other species, how to graft to improve growth and production, and how to prune the cacao trees to allow sunlight reach the lower trunks and limbs. Now, people know that, in one hectare, they can have up to 110 cacao trees. Initially, they did not plant in a way which maximized space, and did not employ grafting techniques to improve production. Following these improved methods is an investment. The soil analysis, paid for by the farmer, costs 70 soles, and is an indispensable part of deciding which fertilizers to use. The best chacras received an incentive of free fertilizers from Allimacacao.

To what degree do these workshops reflect an unequal power relationship between USAID, CIMA, and the young professionals on one hand, and the people of Chazuta on the other? The answer may lie in a grey zone where both groups act out or

assume the pre-existing vertical relations of a hierarchical society. The external agents act as the experts in cacao cultivation, and natives and colonists take on their role as dispossessed peasants. Both, however, may simply be using each other in order to meet their own goals, material needs, or interests.

Natives and colonists in Ramon Castilla, Chipaota, and Siambal are associated with Allimacacao, and spend a considerable proportion of their time in their cacao chacras. They say that it is better to spend time in the cacao chacras than to spend time hunting. There is one exception to this: a group of recently arrived colonists who are located in Pampas del Siambal, very close to the Park. These farmers are not associated with Allimacacao, and market their cacao directly to buyers. They have also established coffee plantations, because the relatively high altitude of Pampas del Siambal favor this crop (1500 feet), and because some of them previously grew coffee in their places of origin in the Northern Andes.

Natives recognize that migrants work harder than them in their cacao *chacras*⁴⁶. The cacao specialists say that colonists take the technical recommendations seriously, and follow them. They buy fertilizers when recommended, while natives wait to see if they work or not. One example of these hardworker colonists is Jose Mendoza, one of the few colonists in the community of Chipaota. He proudly says that his cacao *chacra* (*cacaotales*) is well done. He has maximized space, and planted on a grid: one cacao plant every 9 square meters, providing 3 meters of distance between each cacao plant in every direction. He has interplanted the cacao with mahogany, which will both provide shade to the cacao plants and provide a yield of commercial hardwood in 15 years'

⁴⁶ In Siambal, the few native families who still live there say that migrants work their lands all day long and have almost no social life.

time. Maize, beans, manioc, and other crops fill the rest of the space. Moreover, because his *chacra* is on a slope, he has erected a barrier to avoid erosion and leaching of nutrients. All of this following the instructions of Allimacacao.

This agroforestry system helps to: 1) add value to the *chacra* with commercial hardwoods, 2) diversify production, and therefore prevent total loss of income in the event that cacao prices collapse, 3) promote biodiversity and food security, and 4) Allow the recycling of nutrients by using fallen leaves as a mulch and fertilizer. The objective for many families now is to cultivate more than one hectare, and expand their plantations until they reach 3 or 4 hectares. In 15 years, they will have the commercial hardwoods to harvest, as well.

By 2010, the department of San Martin was considered by the mass media as a model for replacing coca for cacao among the regions of the Andean countries where coca was and still is produced (e.g Chauvin 2010). The government of San Martin, along with the main political party Nueva Amazonia, advertised the success of cacao cultivation in their political campaign. Conservationists and developers agreed with their claims. According to Jaso Angulo, San Martin had passed from having 35,000 ha of coca in 2002 to no more than 3000 hectares in 2010, with those remaining hectares located mostly in the Upper Huallaga valley.

Young professionals from San Martin affirm that the success of the cacao program was based on the historical coincidence of finding farmers willing to invest time and effort, a favorable social and political environment, and the money from USAID. Some people in San Martin wanted a new model of development after the failure of the policy of incentives for migration and expansion of monoculture. When they saw cacao

and agroforestry, and the possibility of protecting forests, they took it. According to Jaso, “the main support for these programs definitely came from the people of San Martin.” But he added, “from Lima came problems against the implementation of these programs”, recalling all the laws and legal papers that favor agricultural expansion at the expenses of forests.

Within this context lies at least two questions. First, is cacao truly economically sustainable? According to USAID and the government of San Martin, it is. However, we also cannot forget that its success depends on the international cacao market. If international cacao prices plummeted, it would not be the first time that price of a commodity from the Amazon collapsed: cycles of boom and bust have been common in Amazonian history. Second, to what extent have these programs improved the lives of the Chazutino people? It seems that the impact has been positive. In broad terms, as we can see in the next table, when asked about their lives now and ten years before, the *naturales* of Chazuta generally answer that they are better off now.

Table 4-5. Comparing your situation now to the year of 2000, now you are:⁴⁷

Better	79 (84%)
Same	14 (15%)
Worse	1 (1%)
	94 (100%)

Moreover, 76% (71 out of 94 answers) said that they are now financially better off than in 2000, because they are earning more money from the cultivation of cacao.

To what extent is the cultivation of cacao sustainable in the long-run, since it depends on the global market? This is still an unresolved question. For the moment,

⁴⁷ Asked only to native people who were in Chazuta in 2000

however, it is providing an alternative for local farmers, both native and non-native, and is well integrated with conservation efforts.

Land Zoning in Chazuta

The regional government, young professionals, and the civil society, were all together in agreement to classify all of the lands of the department according to their better uses, and to segregate uses that were incompatible. This was part of the ideal of sustainable development for the department of San Martin. In the years 2004 – 2006, young professionals were hired by the Regional Government in collaboration with CIMA, and the local governments in the buffer zone of CANP, including Chazuta, in order to zone the lands. As they moved to Chazuta district they started to promote their vision of sustainable development among the workers of the Municipality, stakeholders, and young Chazutinos. One of them, Jaso, proved to be very influential in Chazuta and able to create a network of people who also envisioned an integration of development with conservation.

In this context, the personnel of CIMA wanted to do something more detailed and set an example for future local development programs. Therefore, they proposed to the San Martin government and the municipality of Chazuta to undertake a microzoning process in three communities: Chipaota, Ramon Castilla, and Siambal. It was to be the first microzoning of the department, and of the buffer zone of CANP. CIMA would provide the financial means to carry out the project.

In 2007, the office of Ordenamiento Territorial of the Municipality of Chazuta began working on the micro-zoning, visiting every family in the aforementioned localities and delimiting each plot of land according to its best use. They had completed this task by the beginning of 2008, and CIMA helped them to produce the maps.

The zoning process itself opened the eyes of some locals to the reality that their resources were being depleted by illegal logging, etc. They also learned about the opportunities they could take advantage of. For example, with the assistance of technical personnel from USAID, CIMA, and Allimacacao, farmers now open *chacras* of cacao following the zoning plan established by the regional government of San Martin.

However, the success of the micro-zoning is still debatable. On one hand, by 2010, most farmers were following the micro-zoning when cacao cultivation was involved. Deforestation had also stopped, except in the area around Siambal, where the arrival of colonists was still advancing the agricultural frontier. On the other hand, local farmers were reluctant to follow the micro-zoning when it concerned staple crops.

Moreover, the close relationship between the Municipality of Chazuta and CIMA staff with the natives resulted in them working more with native families than with the colonists in Siambal. According to Jaso, they have worked with the natives in Siambal very well, but, the migrants were reluctant to work with CIMA and the Municipality because they were afraid that their lands could be taken away. Consequently, proportionally more natives knew about the microzoning than colonists.

Table 4-6. Do you know about the microzoning? (asked only to those people whose lands fall into the buffer zone)

	Natives	Colonists
Yes	54 (67%)	19 (46%)
No	27 (33%)	22 (54%)
	81 (100%)	41 (100%)

It is not a surprise that, by 2010, more native families were following the space division, and restrictions and recommendations on natural resources uses, laid out by the microzoning.

Table 4-7. Do you follow the microzoning instructions? (asked only to those who knew about the microzoning)

	<i>Natives</i>	<i>Colonists</i>
Yes	39 (48%)	13 (32%)
No	42 (52%)	28 (68%)
	81 (100%)	41 (100%)

Not a coincidence that the community of Chipaota, which received the most attention and workshops, had a better response than Ramon Castilla and Siambal. Everyone in Chipaota knew about the microzoning process, and almost all (30 out 31 surveyed) follow it.

Currently, the microzoning is still an ongoing process difficult to evaluate yet. What is clear it is that native people, and among them the community of Chipaota, are more inclined to follow it.

Communal Forest and the Piassaba Project in Chipaota

In 2007 CIMA, in its efforts to secure more forested areas in the buffer zone, saw opportunity in Chipaota because, as a legally recognized native community and key actor in the protection of the Park, the community could claim customary subsistence and uses on nearby forests for hunting, fishing and extraction of forest resources. As such, CIMA helped the community to obtain the legal recognition of 5000 hectares of forest adjacent to the community. This was not the first case in which CIMA aided in the creation of a communal forest. In 2007, CIMA helped the colonist community of San Juan, in the district of Tres Unidos, south of Chazuta, create a communal forest in the watersheds of the Ponaza river. To this date, these two are the only cases on the Huallaga side where communal forests have been created.

In Chazuta, Tres Unidos, and other parts of the Peruvian Amazon, the legal work required to establish a communal forest- hiring a lawyer, and going through the bureaucratic process in Tarapoto and Lima, is far from the actual capacity of any one community. It is very unlikely that a community by itself could afford the expenses involved. Thus, the collaboration of external agents is always needed.

It is also important to note that, legally, this communal forest still belongs to the State, although the community has a concession of unlimited duration. This forest cannot be used for agricultural purposes. The potential uses of the resources in the forest are legally bound by the results of the microzoning. But for native people, it is better to have rights over these forests than to let other people take eventual possession of it them. Moreover, as we will see in Chapter 5, they could eventually obtain profits from the community forest if they enter a carbon credit program –which is likely, but not yet supported by Peruvian legislation.

According to both the community forest concession and the micro-zoning, the community can legally harvest the forest's timber and non-timber resources if they can prove sustainable management of a certain product. However, as mentioned by Lucia Eslava, another young professional concerned with the sustainable development of the region:

There are so many requirements to obtain a permit that no community can do it by themselves. They need to turn in biological inventories, environmental impact assessments, details of the enterprise, along with filling legal papers for which they need a lawyer. They cannot pay lawyers, biologists, and go to Lima to turn in the documents and sign all the legal work.

As a result, most native communities extract timber and non-timber resources from the forests without legal authorization. They do this simply because they know that no one is willing to enforce the law.

The problem for conservationists is that, when no community-based sustainable harvest program is developed, extraction is family-based, with no community control over the resources. What may happen is the well-known “tragedy of the commons”, where a common resource is exploited until its extinction (Hardin 1968). Moreover, by practicing illegal extraction from forested lands, local people risk legal penalties. This previously concerned them little, because, just as it was with coca cultivation, law enforcement activity against these actions was virtually nil. Things are changing now, however, and it seems that in the near future, the regional government of San Martín will enforce the law to curtail illegal extraction of timber and non-timber resources.

In Chipaota, however, the close relationship between the community and the personnel of CIMA bore fruit with the creation of a communal company to sustainably harvest Piassaba palm (*Aphandra natalia*) fiber. The fiber of the Piassaba palm has been extracted from the forests of Chazuta for domestic purposes for a long time.⁴⁸ According to Reyes Saurin (2009:112), however, it has only been since 1950 -when a businessman founded a company to market it to the city of Iquitos- that Piassaba palm fiber has been commercialized. These fibers were and are collected to produce brooms. Native families often extracted the fibers, usually by simply cutting the entire palm down, thus killing it. They sold the fibers to intermediaries in the town of Chazuta, who then shipped them to broom factories in Tarapoto or Iquitos.

By the year of 2002, conservationists from the recently created CANP realized that the Piassaba palm was near extinction as a consequence of uncontrolled extraction. No studies had been done before on how to extract and manage the fiber. In

⁴⁸ In the local Quechua language this palm is known as “*virote-huas*”.

2003, however, an American doctoral student contacted CIMA in order to do research in the area. He was directed to the community of Chipaota, where he was welcomed to live.⁴⁹ Wayne Mayer spent the next several years in the region studying the Piassaba palm and the best ways to manage it.

By 2008, CIMA and the community of Chipaota had the results of Wayne Mayer's study, and the willingness to initiate a project to extract the fiber from their communal forest. Without some financial support, however, they could not set up the communal enterprise. Providentially, Rainforest Partnership, a recently created NGO in Austin, Texas, was exploring the area looking for local sustainability projects to invest in, and contacted Jaso Angulo. One thing led to another, and Jaso, knowing about the communal forest of Chipaota and the fiber, contacted Wellington Cachique from CIMA. As a result, meetings were carried out in the community of Chipaota, to plan a business enterprise to sustainably extract Piassaba palm fiber from the community's forest.

In January 2009, the local Rainforest Partnership team and the community of Chipaota went to the communal forests and carried out an inventory to create a management plan for the Piassaba palm. This trip was led by Uliver Cenepo, who provided Wayne Mayer lodging during his fieldwork, and befriended him. This study found that the forest contained 65,000 piassaba palms, and, based on the research done by Wayne Mayer, advocated the use of a new extraction technique that would not require cutting down the trees, thereby allowing the trees to regenerate every few years.

⁴⁹ Chipaota was already the model community for conservationists from CIMA. They say that working in Chipaota is easy, and that people are accessible. Communities are not always friendly to doctoral students, whom they think will take knowledge away without remuneration. In this case, the good relationship between the community and Wellington Cachique undoubtedly helped to open the community.

Wellington Cachique from CIMA became a pivotal figure in developing a community business to extract Piassaba fiber. He wrote a proposal with two aims: i) strengthen the local leaders and people, ii) develop a management plan for sustainable extraction of Piassaba fiber. In October 2009, after months of delays, the management plan was finally registered and approved. Since then, this community business has set an example for future community development projects. The regional government of San Martin is now promoting the management plan as a model for sustainable development to be replicated elsewhere.

Within the community, Uliver Cenepo promoted the creation of the community business in the communal meetings every Sunday. Consequently, he was appointed as the manager of the enterprise, which was named ECOMUSA. 40 families (76 people, including both men and women) from the community of Chipaota made the commitment to harvest and market piassaba palm fibers from the 2000 hectares of communal reserve designated for piassaba extraction. Rainforest Partnership also provided the members of ECOMUSA with basic training in finance and business management.

A long legal process to have the community company legally incorporated began. Their plan to extract piassaba had to be approved by the Direccion Forestal de Fauna Silvestre, an office within the Ministry of Environment, in Lima, but no one in the community could have travelled to the capital to push the approval. It was only due to the connections that CIMA and Rainforest Partnership had, and the help of young practitioners from San Martin with college degrees from Lima, that the proposal could have been approved. The same is true in Tarapoto, where the president of the Region

of San Martin is pro-conservation, and professionals such as Jaso have connections, that the legal part could be approved.

However, not all the families from Chipaota participated in the community business. Some people could not join the company because they did not have a national identification card (DNI), which is a requirement for almost any legal or financial procedure. Without a DNI, it is impossible to have a bank account, enroll in school, set up a business, etc. Those who were excluded from ECOMUSA because they couldn't get a DNI in time are resentful of the company.⁵⁰

The families who are not participating in the enterprise have said that, since the company is not including all of the community, it should not use the communal piassaba palms that grow in community forests. In fact, the president of the community at the time was also reluctant to sign the community approbation to the company because of these internal divisions. However, as some of them said to me, the excluded people were just complaining, and they were not going to take revenge, because, after all, the people in the company are in the same family as them.

By mid 2010, ECOMUSA started selling sustainably harvested piassaba palm fiber in the local markets of Chazuta and Tarapoto. Moreover, they were thinking about reinvesting the profits in implementing a broom-making workshop, so that they could produce brooms in the future. Nevertheless, one of the unresolved problems for ECOMUSA was that the intermediaries still paid more for a kilogram of the fiber than the company did, 3.5 soles (or 1.2 dollars) versus 3 soles (or 1 dollar). Consequently, there

⁵⁰ The Peruvian government has made various efforts to register undocumented people and give them DNIs, but the process usually requires the undocumented people to go the city of Tarapoto for several days or weeks. Consequently, many undocumented native people delay getting DNIs.

were still farmers who preferred to sell the fiber to the intermediaries rather than to the company.

In addition, in Ramon Castilla and Siambal, where harvest remained family-based, the fiber was still being extracted unsustainably. It was therefore illegally extracted, because, according to the laws concerning forest products and the micro zoning, every timber or non timber product required an approved extraction plan before it could be harvested. Consequently, in the village of Ramon Castilla, as in other places, native people started complaining that, even though there are Piassaba palms nearby, CIMA has not helped them to form a company. So, by the end of my fieldwork, CIMA and Rainforest Partnership were planning to expand the experience of Chipaota to the other localities, and form new community companies.

As a consequence of the Piassaba project, opportunities for new enterprises started being developed. In one case, following the successful example of ECOMUSA, a group of people in Chipaota became interested in producing handicrafts. A group of young American volunteers, who first contacted Rainforest Partnership at the University of Austin, Texas, helped to introduce this idea of making handicrafts. In another case, a private company from Iquitos, Amazon Ivory, became interested in setting up a button factory in Chazuta, using the seeds of the piassaba palm. This company was also looking for international partners to help build capacity among the local people, eliminate intermediaries, and give the enterprise a marketable façade as a native community enterprise, thus allowing access to fair trade markets. However, by the time I finished my fieldwork, the lack of public services in Chazuta, such as 24 hour electricity or a bank, had proved insurmountable barriers to setting up this business.

In summary, it is unlikely that the community business could have been created if institutions such as CIMA had not initiated alliances with the community, and if doctoral students such as Wayne Mayer (who contacted CIMA first) had not come to Chazuta. Now, native people have a greater awareness of the opportunities they have to set up community businesses, create alliances with conservationists and NGOs, and, at the same time, manage local natural resources sustainably. A discourse on conservation and indigenous lands also emerged among native people, as we will see in Chapter 5.

Moreover, the people of Chazuta are now more sensitized to the unequal relations with external agents. They complained that most of the money assigned to the project by Rainforest Partnership, around 25,000 dollars, has gone to pay the salaries of conservationists, developers and lawyers in Tarapoto and Lima. In contrast, farmers have not received any cash for their work in the company and the conservation of the Piassaba palm. There were several bitter arguments between Uliver and Jaso about this issue. However, Uliver conceded that the lack of professionals in the community gave them no option but to depend on professionals from Tarapoto.

The objectives were different for conservationists and native people: the former wanted to secure these forests against an eventual arrival of colonists, and the latter wanted to secure these forests to be used by their children. Nonetheless, the collaboration has worked well to this day. For the people in Chipaota, these forests have belonged to the community since time immemorial; their ancestors have hunted there, but they did not have land rights. Thanks to CIMA, they now have rights over these forests, and in this way, they say, watersheds are protected, and eventually their children could use these forested lands.

Overview

The creation of CANP took place without previous consultation with the local people in general, and the Chazutino people in particular. INRENA / SERNANP, along with CIMA, followed the traditional model of conservation, the fortress approach, and, in accordance with the Peruvian law on Protected Areas, access to the Park was only allowed for customary purposes –hunting, fishing, extracting vines, etc. However, once the park was created, locals were targeted by conservationists as potential allies in securing the buffer zone and maintaining the integrity of the Park. CIMA focused on building alliances with the Chazutino people, and, especially, with the community of Chipaota.

The impacts of CANP creation can be divided into two categories: The restrictions that affected hunting, fishing and extracting resources from the Park; and the integrated conservation and development programs developed in the buffer zone by a combination of external actors: CIMA, USAID, the Government of San Martin, Rainforest Partnership, and the Municipality of Chazuta. This allowed feedbacks and mutual support. For example, in the process of zoning the land of the district, CIMA provided the government with technical support, or when a group of young Chazutinos wanted to receive training on ecotourism, CIMA funded some workshops, and so on.

Overall, Chazutino people consider themselves better off than they were ten years ago. The Park and the active intervention of CIMA in the buffer zone and the Municipality of Chazuta played a significant role in this, but it is by no means possible to isolate their impact from other agents, tendencies, and the economy of the country in general –which has improved significantly since the year 2000.

In this chapter we have focused on the actual impact of CANP and the work of CIMA in the buffer zone. In Chapter 5, we will explore the broader responses of the Chazutino people to the current trends: the strengthening of indigenous organizations, the creation of protected areas, conservationist work with indigenous organizations, and the desire to have a better future.



Figure 4-3. The bridge that crosses the Chipaota river. Built by USAID as part of the incentives promoting cacao cultivation. (Photo: Alberto Giovanetti)

CHAPTER 5 NATIVE STRUGGLES: RIGHTS, LANDS, AND DEVELOPMENT

By the time the park was created in 2001, the Chazutino people had become increasingly concerned about the future of the forests within the district. These were forests that they had used in the past for hunting and extracting resources, that had belonged to them historically but not legally, and that their children might not be able to enjoy in the years to come. They were witnessing the continuous advances of colonists over these forested lands, but at that time, they could not yet articulate an organized response to the threat posed by the incessant arrival of colonists. Thus, they did not oppose the creation of Cordillera Azul National Park, which imposed an unwanted level of protection over the most remote forests of the district –forests that Chazutinos were no longer using intensively, but still considered their turf. In fact, as we saw before, neither the Municipality of Chazuta nor the Federación de los Pueblos Indígenas de la Región San Martín (FEPIKRESAM) protested the creation of the Park, and the opposition to the Park expressed by the majority of Chazutinos was merely vocal.

Since then, however, Chazutinos have slowed the advances of colonists over the forests of the district, and protected key forests in the watersheds. Several peasant communities have started the process of becoming native communities, or will soon do so. In addition to this, they have adopted a political discourse that emphasizes a locally-based sustainable development in which their identity as *naturales* of Chazuta and stewards of the forests is essential.

The *naturales* like to contrast Chazuta with those districts in the Upper Huallaga valley and the neighboring district of Tres Unidos. These are places where colonists have outnumbered natives, cut down most of the forests, and taken control of local

politics¹. The Chazutinos assert that they will defend their land, and will not allow *paisanos* to destroy their place. They add that, although they support the Park and are grateful of the benefits it has brought, conservationists would have faced much stronger opposition if they had waited until 2010 to create the Park². They say that, in 2001, they were unaware of the value of their lands, and were naïve about the bad people who were coming to Chazuta to steal their land.

The experience of the Chazutino people is not unique in the Amazon basin. Nowadays, in fact, local people and indigenous organizations are included in most meetings or workshops regarding Peruvian Amazonian forests, while ten years ago it was still possible to neglect or ignore them. Conservationists admit that, today, a park as big as CANP could not be created without the prior consent of local people. Indigenous leaders from COICA, AIDSESEP and FEPIKRESAM go further, and declare publicly that they oppose the creation of any new protected area because the protected areas, as well as the colonists, have occupied indigenous lands and encroached upon indigenous peoples. Despite that stance, conservationists and indigenous peoples, or *naturales* as in Chazuta, have found common ground and formed alliances from the top of their organizations to the grassroots level.

¹ Conservationists also underline the support of the Chazutino and how they have controlled the threats to the Park. For example, in districts dominated by colonists, conservationists have found roads in some places which lead inside the park, built and maintained by colonists. Even though there are no roads connecting the villages in the buffer zone to the Park's interior, colonists built some roads and paths which were subsequently discovered on satellite maps; no local people reported them. Conservationists explained that this situation could not happen in Chazuta because the native people there are the main collaborators with the Park, and would immediately know if colonists had built a road.

² Lucia Ruiz, the General Manager of CIMA, agreed. She even added that, by the year 2001, just as it had been in the preceding decades, no one asked local consent to create a Park. "Things were just not that way...now things are different."

In this chapter, I document and examine how the accomplishments of Chazutinos in the protection of their lands are the outcome of four different factors. The first is the daily effects of the creation of the Park (interaction with CIMA staff, feedbacks, etc), and the direct menace posed by the colonists, which urged them to stop the arrival of more colonists. The second is the growing political influence of indigenous organizations and the increasing international interest in protecting forests, and the third is the evolution of regional politics in defense of Amazonian resources. The fourth and final factor is the Chazutinos' own assumed pursuit of sustainable development, an updated form of the ideology of development (or "myth of progress") discussed in Chapter 3, as an ideal that may combine protection of nature with economic and social opportunities.

The creation of CANP, the imposition of rules on the buffer zone (Chapter 4), and the constant presence and influence of conservationists in Chazuta were not the only factors that shaped the responses of Chazutino people to colonists and led to their current struggles for lands and development. Undoubtedly, however, the Park marked a turning point which coincided with regional trends that began in the 2000s. The Chazutinos' local struggles for their lands, the strengthening of their collective identity, and the improvement of their economic well-being as a result of cacao cultivation, all reflect regional demands and social trends which coincided with the creation of the Park. Sometimes these struggles have led to alliances with conservationists, and sometimes they have caused friction with them.

I do not intend to make of this chapter an ethnography of the local, the regional and the global; my pursuit is more humble than that. I only seek to emphasize how the local community can be rapidly influenced by global decisions, and thus, how local

livelihoods and politics are shaped to some extent by external forces. Anthropologists have noted that, historically, global connections and long-distance relationships and exchanges have tended to shape the production of the local culture. A good example of this is Eric Wolf's seminal work *Europe and the People without History* (1982).

Furthermore, these global and regional connections accelerated in the last decades of the 20th century due to faster and cheaper means of communication and transportation (e.g Ulf Hannerz 1996). Amazonian peoples are not alien to global connections; nor, by extension, are the Chazutino people.

Research in the last decade has produced some examples of scholarly work that brings together ethnography and political ecology, shedding light on the importance of indigenous lands in understanding native peoples' claims and current struggles in Amazonia. For example, Paul Little (2001) explored the history and the struggles of different actors (indigenous peoples, mestizos, conservationists, multinationals, etc) in the Jari region in Brazil, and the Aguarico region near the head of the Napo river in Ecuador. Omaira Bolaños (2008) examined the revival of indigenous identity among people of mixed descent in the lower Arapiuns River region in the Brazilian Amazon, and how claims of ethnic identity are intertwined with land rights issues and global discourses on conservation and economic development. Michael Cepek (2009, 2012) studied the emergence of the environmentally-oriented political movement of the indigenous Cofán people, in the lowland forests of the Northern Ecuadorian Amazon.

In addition to this, several authors (e.g Chirif and Garcia 2007, Fontaine 2006) have stressed the importance of the rise of the indigenous political structure and movement as turning points in Amazonian history, marked by the founding of COICA

and the nine national Amazonian indigenous organizations in the 1980s and 1990s. Since then, indigenous peoples have been able to counter, to a certain extent, the process of ethnic assimilation into the national societies, and to start fighting for their land rights.

Indigenous organizations and peoples are often the spearhead of current Amazonian land struggles, which include rejecting the creation of new protected areas and demanding the right to control their own natural resources. It is important to keep in mind, however, that they are neither the only actors involved, nor are they the majority. Non-indigenous Amazonian people, including, for instance, most of the Chazutino people or *ribereños* with no ethnic identification, have the same interests as indigenous groups, but they usually channel their interests and needs through the local governments (*municipalidades distritales*). Only a few indigenous and non-indigenous leaders completely oppose oil exploitation- what both demand is that their people be consulted, compensated, protected from contamination, and allowed to participate.

I have subdivided this chapter into four sections. In the first, I describe the local and particular efforts made by Chazutinos to stop the advances of colonists. In the second section, I examine how their attempts to secure legal rights over their lands are linked to becoming native or the revitalization of their local identity, which is also linked to the increasing influence of the indigenous movement in the Amazon and global concerns over the future of tropical forests. In section three, in order to elucidate the connection between the local and the global, I explore the participation of Chazutinos in the regional uprising in 2009 against nine decrees that threatened the rights of the Amazonian peoples. Finally, in section four, I try to link the Chazutinos' land struggles to

their own aspirations for the future. In doing so, I once again connect their desires for sustainable development to global trends.

Securing Forested Lands in Chazuta

When the Park was created, most of the mature forests in the district were unprotected, and thus susceptible to deforestation and occupation by colonists. There were but two exceptions to this. First, there were the nearby forests used by the community of Chipacta, which, as a native community, had legal rights of use over them. Second, there were the remote forests of Cordillera Azul, protected by the Park, which were no longer attractive for permanent settlements due to their distance from the town of Chazuta. Lands used for agricultural purposes, including secondary forests in the slash-and-burn rotation, were owned *de facto* by individual farmers. Due to gaps in the legal tenure of Amazonian lands, the farmers did not legally own these holdings in most cases, but their tenure was recognized by local social convention.³ In fact, most Amazonian lands for which some ownership is claimed, whether it be by an individual farmer or a community, have not yet been legalized.

In this context, the incessant arrival of colonists and the natural demographic growth of the *naturales* were both reducing the extent of available, desirable lands on both banks of the Huallaga river, and, consequently, putting pressure on the nearby forests.⁴ This became a factor of concern for the Chazutino, because forests are not only a place to hunt for meat and gather plants: they are also seen as a buffer that

³ At this moment, it is not clear if the process of land titling should be carried out by the Agency for the Formalisation of Informal Land Ownership (COFOPRI), or by the Regional governments' departments of agriculture. There is a legal vacuum concerning this issue.

⁴ For *naturales* of Chazuta, the colonists attitude regarding the land is a major problem. Chazutinos say that *naturales* have 20 hectares and that is enough to them, but colonists come and take 50 or 70 hectares.

protects native people and their children from future hardships, lack of cash money, etc. Furthermore, due to the influence of the regional media and conservationists, native people have learned about the importance of the forests in maintaining the hydrologic function of the watersheds.⁵

On the left bank, the deforestation of the hills near the village of Tununtununba became representative of the effects of the arrival of colonists on the Chazutinos. They took possession of the forested hills, cut them, and obtained individual titles. As a consequence, the natives of Tununtununba lost the forests where they used to extract vines, medicinal plants, etc –game for hunting was already locally extinct, as on most of the left bank. Natives have since complained that their children could no longer use these forests, and that the flow of water from the streams had been reduced since the hills were cleared. Some individual disputes and physical altercations between the two groups worsened the animosity.

On the right bank, the Chazutino people and conservationists focused their attention on the area around Siambal because colonists had already outnumbered native people, and were expanding the agricultural frontier and establishing cattle ranches. However, the forested and deforested lands in Siambal had, to a certain point, not been used by the natives. As described in Chapter 2, most of the native families in Siambal had permanently resettled in Chazuta in order to have access to formal schooling and Western medical care. It is true that there were more native families in Siambal 40 years ago than there are today. Most of them left in the 1980s and 1990s.

⁵ Newspapers, the magazine “El Tarapotino”, the radio, and of course conservationists, have been repeating in the San Martin department that forests in the watersheds should be protected to avoid streams petering out.

The Amasifuen family, for instance, once occupied part of the Siambal lands. Their ancestors had moved to that area in the early 20th century to extract rubber. All of their descendants then left the area in the 1980s, and are now living in Chazuta town, and the cities of Tarapoto and Iquitos. After they moved out of Siambal, they sold their land to several early migrants, who subsequently marketed it to the already visible waves of colonists in the 1990s and early 2000s.

There were a considerable number of colonists in Siambal around the year 2000, but by 2003, many more migrants arrived followed by their relatives and friends. By 2008, there were around 200 colonist families in the area of Siambal. Most of them had little to no contact with Chazutinos. They went to the village of Ramon Castilla only on Sundays to get supplies and play soccer. They rarely went to the town of Chazuta, and most of them barely knew the name of the Mayor of the district. Colonists in general do not feel represented by the Municipality, while natives in most cases have family ties and friends there. As for example, when asked about their knowledge of the political representatives of the district, the differences are striking:

Table 5-1. Do you know the names of the Mayor and the Aldermans of the Municipality of Chazuta

	<i>Natives</i>	<i>Colonists</i>
Know all the names	81 (82%)	20 (33%)
Know only one name	15 (15%)	15 (24%)
Know no name	3 (3%)	26 (43%)

The lack of knowledge about the Municipality is even worse in Siambal: 58% of colonists did not know even the name of the Mayor. This illustrates how alienated are the colonists from the political representatives of the district, especially those living in Siambal and the newly founded colonist village Pampas del Siambal.

By the year of 2009, at least half of the colonists were living on a plateau called the Pampas del Siambal, five miles from the village of Siambal in the direction of CANP. That year, they decided to officially form a new village. This way, they would have an official representative (*teniente alcalde*), and, according to the Peruvian Law, an elementary school and a health post would be provided by the State. For the migrants on the Pampas del Siambal, this official recognition would have meant that their children could attend an elementary school and have a health post on the plateau, without having to walk to the village of Siambal for these services. They petitioned for legal recognition of the new village; but, as we will see, the proposal encountered fierce opposition from Chazutinos and conservationists.

In Siambal, along with Tununtununba and other places in the district, Chazutinos saw the increasing reduction of the forested area as an impending menace to their own future access to available land. They also perceived that the major local environmental problem, the decreased flow of the streams, was directly caused by deforestation in the watersheds. Again, colonists were (and still are) blamed for the ensuing reduction of fresh water. For example, when in 2005 a severe drought hit the whole Northern Peruvian Amazon, the San Martin media and conservationists did not hesitate to blame the colonists. In reality, however, the 2005 drought affected the entire Amazon basin, and was considered one of the worst in 40 years. The drought could have been the result of global climate change, as was suggested by several sources in international news (Gosman 2005), but in any case, the underlying cause is still unclear (Zeng et al. 2008). On several occasions, however, I witnessed conservationists from CIMA remarking that the streams in the Shambuyacu and Ponasa valleys, some 30 miles

south of Chazuta, had dried up because of the local deforestation, and commenting to the *naturales* that if no measures were to be taken to protect the watersheds, this could happen in Chazuta too.⁶ Native people agreed, and blamed the colonists.

In this context, Chazutinos have responded in several unique ways, usually relying on developers and conservationists for legal and technical support to stop or mitigate the advance of colonists.

Marking the Communal Lands

As early as 2003, the people of Chipoata were encouraged by Wellington Cachique and the workshops held by CIMA to more actively establish the community's borders. They decided to physically mark the limits of the community and form a group of volunteers to patrol the borders every month, in order to keep illegal loggers and colonists out of the communal lands. They have also occasionally gone beyond the borders of the community to inspect the watershed, which actually lies in Siambal. In 2010, in an area in Siambal called Chimbio, one of the patrols found four colonist families recently installed there. The president of the Chipoata community argued in the Municipality that these families should be expelled, because, according to the microzoning these lands of the buffer zone were exclusively reserved for protection of the watersheds. The Municipality agreed, and the colonists were asked to relocate, and they did.

⁶ The drought was particularly severe in the districts of Tres Unidos, Shambuyacu and Ponaza. It even left colonist farmers without drinking water. Cistern trucks had to be sent to the area to bring water to the farmers. In 2007 and 2008, workshops on conservation of watersheds and forests were carried out in those localities in order to raise consciousness of environmental problems among colonists there. Nevertheless, as of 2010, conservationists still had many doubts about the success of workshops with colonists.

In the years 2008-2010, as part of their interest in protecting the watersheds and preventing the expansion of colonists into Chipaota lands, the community of Chipaota demanded the expansion of their communal lands to the west, to include some parts of the Siambal area. They were unsuccessful in obtaining an extension of their lands, but this did shed light on their concern for the forests in the area of Siambal. What they did obtain, thanks to CIMA, were rights of use over a forest reserve in the east, which is now being exploited to extract the piassaba vine.

The initiative of the Chipaota community has been imitated in other settlements. For example, in Siambal in 2010, in consonance with the microzoning, the few native families in the village proposed to create a forest reserve in the area to protect watersheds.

Facing Colonists and One Italian

In 2006, along with the poor Andean settlers in Siambal, an Italian entrepreneur arrived and bought 700 hectares of forested lands, with the idea of converting them into land for cattle ranching and agriculture. These forests, however, although in Siambal, were also in the headwaters of the Chipaota river. The people of Chipaota consequently become concerned about the possible reduction of fresh water, and its contamination with chemical fertilizers. Therefore, using their connections with CIMA, they claimed that, since these forests were in the headwaters of the Chipaota river, they should be protected in accordance to the land zoning plan. The Italian agreed, but he decided to start an agroforestry operation, combining the cultivation of commercial crops with commercial timber plantations, and apparently used chemical fertilizers which contaminated the water anyway.

As a result of this, and the bad reputation earned by the Italian in Chazuta of being a swindler, the Municipality of Chazuta, with the legal support of CIMA, put the Italian's operations to an end. At that point, he had such a bad reputation, even accused of blackmailing Chazutinos who opposed him, that he was almost expelled from the district. The only people who could support him were the colonists in Siambal. For them, the Italian was a businessman who was creating employment, and thus, extra income.

Colonists, however, have also become politically isolated in the district. As individuals, long-term colonists have obtained prestigious positions in the district, either because some of them have made money in their businesses, or because they have the formal education that natives lack. Some of them, such as Gervacio Chinchay in Ramon Castilla, have lived in the district for more than two decades, support the Park, cultivate cacao, and are married to native people. Marin Rojas, a colonist in Chipaota is second only to the president of the community in local government, and stands up for the rights of the native people.

As a collective group, colonists have no political representation or credibility in the district. Their opinions and beliefs are usually in opposition to those of the natives. Most of the colonists in Siambal were not affected by the creation of the Park because they had not yet arrived, but they do not like the Park because they cannot extend their agricultural land or convert the forests into cattle pastures. Some of them say that, if conservationists want to protect the forest, they should compensate the farmers for the loss of land. Colonists argue that, as Peruvians, they have the right to occupy lands that no one uses, and that, as farmers, they should be free to decide to clear some forests or not. They also remark that they have come to Siambal to work hard and make a

living. In the last ten years, they have been encountering increasing opposition and hostility from the native people.

As part of the systematic restrictions on colonists, the Municipality of Chazuta rejected the petition from colonists in Pampas del Siambal to grant the village official recognition. Rumors of a new colonist village, closer to the Park than any other village in the district, and located near the watersheds of Chipaota river, provoked the municipal authorities, who, accompanied by the police, went there to inspect the area. Native people reacted, using the derogatory term for colonists, “that the *paisanos* in Las Pampas de Siambal want to have their own village and to not obey the microzoning.” Chazutinos even threatened colonists with the use of violence in case they would not obey the mandate of the Municipality. Everybody knows that several massacres have occurred in other parts of the Peruvian Amazonia between natives and colonists. In January 2002 Aguaruna indigenous people killed twenty colonists in the jungle region of the department of Cajamarca (S/N revista agraria 2002). In August 2010, three natives and three colonists died in a clash near the city of Moyobamba, in the department of San Martin (El Comercio, August 11 2010). In both cases, native people attacked colonists in order to retake indigenous lands.

In the end, colonists in Chazuta saw their proposal blocked before they could ask the regional government to found a new village. However, they are well aware that native Chazutino may use firearms to enforce the orders of the Municipality –which is very much dominated by the Chazutinos. In the same way, the Municipality rejected the colonist proposal for changing the status of the village of Siambal from *Caserio* to

Centro Poblado Rural, a change in status that would allow them to have a secondary school for their children, instead of having to send them to the town of Chazuta.

Both proposals were fiercely rejected by the Municipality and conservationists, because these actions could create the conditions which would encourage colonists to settle permanently in Siambal, and would attract even more migrants to that area.⁷ The colonists, however, are still there. It is very likely that the current families will eventually move to Chazuta once they get some money from their *chacras*, and sell their lands to a new wave of migrants. In Chazuta, their children will have access to secondary school, and could aspire to higher education in Tarapoto city.

In addition to these specific actions to halt the advances of colonists into the local forests, Chazutinos have been influenced by the Amazonian indigenous movement, and by global discourses on forest conservation.

Becoming “Native” and the Ownership of the Forests

In 2001, the community of Chipaota was the only legally recognized native community in the district. By 2010, however, at least eight villages and peasant communities had initiated, or were planning to begin, the long process to become legally recognized as native communities.⁸ Becoming a native community now has tangible benefits in the Peruvian Amazon. If the village or peasant community applying to become native can prove the uses of certain forests for customary hunting and

⁷ Ruben Paitan, the General Manager of the Park at that time, commented to me that he had it in mind to work with the Regional Government of San Martin on a plan to create poles of attractions in towns such as Chazuta to pull migrants out of the buffer zone. The idea would be to provide economic incentives, major health centers, and good education beyond high school in Chazuta and other towns in order to discourage colonists from occupying new lands. He learned about this model in a course on protected areas in Fort Collins, Colorado in 2005.

⁸ They were Ramon Castilla, Tununtununba, Callanayacu, Canayo, Ilucanayacu, Ricardo Palma, Shilcayo, and Tupac Amaru.

extraction of non-timber resources, then the community can be legally granted the category of native, and therefore obtain the rights of use over the selected forests. Consequently, these forests cannot be occupied by other peoples, especially migrants.

Since 2009, moreover, native people see that external agents are putting an economic value on the forests and offering money for forest protection, or promising to offer it in the future. Worldwide, forests are becoming increasingly important as international negotiations on global warming continue to stress their role in keeping the planet stabilized. Under the name of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), these efforts seek to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, and transferring money based on this value to their owners, whether they be governments, private individuals, or communities. Consequently, protecting the forests, as well as securing the ownership of them –to which becoming native is an important step, has become key in the local politics.

Why did most descendants of indigenous people not apply to form native communities in the 1970s and 1980s? As explained in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, the pervasive discrimination in the Peruvian society against indigenous peoples, the lack of benefits for being labeled native, and the lack of potential economic incentives to own and protect the forests discouraged most of them. Besides, there were enough forests for hunting and extracting resources, and native people were not really concerned about securing access to them for the future. However, since the substantial arrival of colonists in the 1990s and the ensuing pressure on the forests where they used to hunt, the idea of having legal rights over these forests became more accepted. Even better,

when they saw that they could receive money for protecting the forests as part of the global effort to mitigate climate change.

Nevertheless, in practice the process of securing status as a native community is extremely bureaucratic and slow. Communities and villages usually do not have the resources and connections needed to hire lawyers, and to send community representatives to Tarapoto and Lima. In addition to this, the titling process for native communities has existed in a legal vacuum since the 2000s: it is not clear if the titling for native communities is the responsibility of the Organismo de Formalización de la Propiedad Informal (COFOPRI), or of the Direcciones Regionales Agrarias. More suspicious minds suspect that the recent governments in Peru have blocked the recognition of more native communities in order to pave the way for private investments in the Amazon, namely logging companies, oil and gas exploration.

Amazonian rural people (natives or *naturales*) resented the Peruvian central government, based in the capital Lima, because they could see how fast private companies were granted large expanses of forest for oil and gas exploration, or for oil palm plantations, while land titling for Amazonian communities was paralyzed, and forest ownership denied. Moreover, Amazonians complained that, even though Peru has signed the International Labor Convention (ILO) No. 169, neither the government nor private investors informed or consulted with local people about their plans.

In this context, indigenous organizations have taken a proactive role in both helping native people to constitute native communities, and in denouncing the central government for neglecting the rights of Amazonian peoples.

COICA, AIDSESEP, and Indigenous Struggles for Their lands

The Amazonian indigenous movement started to organize in the 1980's, but it was not until the late 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s that it gained political power at the regional level. The regional representative of indigenous peoples (COICA), the main Peruvian organization (AIDSESEP), and the Quechua people's federation of San Martin (FEPIKRESAM), have all stressed that the recognition of indigenous lands is an issue which is fundamental to the future of the indigenous peoples. They have emphasized that, without legally recognized lands, indigenous peoples are doomed to extinction.⁹ As expressed in the Indigenous Amazonian Regional Summit that took place in Manaus, Brazil in August 2011, in the words of Valentin Muiba, technical advisor of COICA:

To us, the land is our home, our market place and our pharmacy. It is there we are born, grow, find our sustenance and extract our medicines. Indigenous Peoples cannot live apart from their lands. There is a powerful cultural identification between an Indigenous individual and the place where he was born. (WWF 2011)

COICA has brought the global discourse on forest conservation into the indigenous struggles by emphasizing that indigenous peoples are the stewards of the Amazonian forests.¹⁰ Both COICA and AIDSESEP have disseminated this political discourse through their publications, interviews with leaders, workshops, etc. They point

⁹ This association between indigenous identity and its environment has to be analyzed at least in two levels. In the material level, people without land would obviously be physically dispossessed and vulnerable to migrate and change their identity. Therefore, their attachment to the land is based on material needs, and the political representatives will defend it. In the ideology level, it is been said that in the indigenous cosmology the division between nature and culture/society is not as radical as in the Western world. Consequently, to change the environment implies to break the social relation that humans maintain with nature. More research is needed to understand the drivers behind indigenous politics.

¹⁰ Marisol de la Cadena (2010) suggests that we cannot understand indigenous organizations and politics without paying attention to the indigenous cosmology, where nature and society, human beings and non-human beings, are intrinsically linked.

out that the current deforestation rates, contamination, and environmental problems in the Amazon have been caused by external agents, while indigenous peoples have nurtured and protected the forests. It is not strange that leaders of FEPIKRESAM and leaders of the communities in Chipaota have the same discourse: “Why aren’t we the park guards? Why are outsiders the park guards? We are the real park guards” said Juan de Dios Sangama, president of FEPIKRESAM. He complained that other people receive the money for conserving nature, but not the native communities. Sometimes the money goes to conservationists, sometimes to the regional government of San Martin, but, according to him, it never goes to the native people.

Thanks to COICA and AIDSESEP, this discourse is found everywhere in the Peruvian Amazon. They have been very active forming a political structure unique among indigenous peoples worldwide. There are 400 indigenous federations in the nine Amazonian countries, connected through a network of national organizations. At the top of them is COICA, which acts as coordinator and representative in international events. The work of COICA and AIDSESEP has been aimed at the strengthening of grassroots organizations such as FEPIKRESAM and the recognition of the native communities. They have usually carried out the legal process to form native communities, and paid for its costs. In doing so, AIDSESEP has been key in training indigenous leaders and informing native communities about their rights.

In 2008, a new protected area was created in San Martin: Area of Regional Protection Cordillera Escalera. It was established by the urban elites of San Martin as a part of their efforts to protect the watersheds against colonists. However, several Quechua speaking communities were located near the protected area and were

consequently negatively affected. AIDSESEP organized several workshops with FEPIKRESAM in order to inform local people on how to defend the indigenous rights over these lands, and where to go to petition access and use of the resources within the protected areas. They also have been giving legal advice to the local communities.

COICA and AIDSESEP have also worked at the political level to support indigenous rights, and to defend indigenous lands and peoples against the advances of mining, oil, and logging companies, megaprojects that affect indigenous livelihoods and lands. These projects are often developed on territories that have belonged to indigenous peoples historically and socially, but not legally. The capacity of COICA and its national organizations to mobilize indigenous peoples in support of their fellows across the region can be seen in the opposition to several recent projects. They mounted protests against the construction of a road crossing the Indigenous Territory and National Park Isiboro Sécure (TIPNIS) in Bolivia, and the Belo Monte dam in Brazil. Protests against the concession to private companies of large tracts of forest for oil and gas exploration led to the Bagua events in Peru in 2009, which ended up with thirty-five people dead.

COICA and AIDSESEP have formed alliances with a number of pro-indigenous NGOs and institutions in order to achieve their goals. In the last decade, they have also worked with conservation NGOs such as The Nature Conservancy, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and become involved in regional programs such as the Initiative for Conservation of the Andean Amazon, funded mainly by USAID- even though they often have different agendas. These dependencies have led to criticism from within the indigenous movement itself, arguing that some indigenous leaders have

sold their souls to the interests of American and European conservationists. Others argue that the indigenous movement has achieved such regional relevance today because of the access to funding and technical support provided by these conservationist organizations.

Conservationists and Indigenous Peoples: Alliances and Frictions

The official position of indigenous organizations is to reject the creation of new protected areas in the Amazon. They argue that the great majority, if not all, of the protected areas were established without consulting or obtaining consent from indigenous peoples. Also, protected areas occupy indigenous lands and restrict the access of indigenous peoples to resources, which, in combination with other factors, such as the arrival of colonists and oil exploration or mining, ends up encroaching on native communities. According to the Instituto del Bien Comun (IBC), 7 out of 21 protected areas in the Peruvian Amazon were created on lands inhabited, and another 9 on lands used by, indigenous peoples in customary fashion (IBC 2012).

Thus, it is no surprise that indigenous leaders have ambiguous feelings regarding protected areas and conservation NGOs. Old indigenous leaders as Valentin Muiba remember with clarity that “before the year 2000, conservationists did not want to talk with indigenous people. Now they want to, because they have realized that they need indigenous peoples.” As another indigenous leader put it: “it is not love of indigenous peoples, it is love of the forests.” For some indigenous leaders, it is still not clear why some NGOs want to protect nature. They sometimes think that there is a hidden agenda, such as protecting the forests now, but eventually exploiting their resources later.

In spite of ambiguous feelings on both sides, some conservationists from major conservation NGOs are actually defenders of indigenous rights within their own organizations, and are pushing for more collaborative work. They have now recognized the political power of indigenous organizations to mobilize public opinion, and know that they are the strongest front against the major threats to Amazonia.

For instance, Helcio de Souza from TNC – Brazil is one of these supporters, and is lobbying for strengthening indigenous organizations to protect national parks. He said that, until the beginning of the 2000s, no one would have thought that TNC could support indigenous peoples, but that now, things have changed a great deal. He mentioned that, for him, it would not be a surprise if TNC accepted a co-management of protected areas with indigenous organizations within 10 years.

Until now, these alliances have worked well, and indigenous organizations have not openly pushed for returning control of the protected areas back to indigenous peoples. It would be difficult to prove prior inhabitation, as well, because just as with the Chazutino, protected areas were often created in areas where permanent settlements had been abandoned, and which local indigenous people used only for hunting. There is also economic and technical support from conservationists. COICA is partly funded by TNC, since both have their headquarters in Quito, Ecuador, and it also receives constant support for its publications, workshops, and maps. WWF, AIDSESEP and CIMA have their main headquarters in Lima, a city that also plays an important role in the Andean Amazon region, and this facilitates communication between them when required. The cities of Manaus, Iquitos and Tarapoto are also preferential places for COICA and conservation NGOs to organize meetings and training workshops. Outside

of the region, meetings may take place in Panama city, or take advantage of the UN Forum in New York to gather an important number of indigenous leaders and practitioners in the evenings.

These events and international connections have given indigenous leaders an understanding of international politics and global discourses on conservation and development. They sometimes use this knowledge to garner support for their cause. Now, indigenous leaders can word their arguments to capture audiences' attention and interest. As Juan Reategui from AIDSESEP in the workshop "Visiones Amazonicas" put it, in order to capture attention: "there is an intrinsic relationship between indigenous peoples and the forests that no one can break."¹¹ He added emphatically that indigenous peoples should manage protected areas, not only because it is their right, but also because they are the best guardians of them.

Now, indigenous organizations are asking for co-management of protected areas. Conservationists are not confident that indigenous peoples would keep the biodiversity within the parks intact. They are, however, willing to help with the creation of new protected areas which are labeled as indigenous or forest reserves, where there may be a system of co-management. There are some examples of this in the Northern Ecuadorian Amazon, where legislation passed in 2009 gave the Cofan people the right to co-manage the portion of their territory which overlaps with protected areas. There are also some examples of co-management of protected areas in Bolivia.

¹¹ A workshop that took place in Quito in October of 2009, organized by COICA and WWF, in which the latter organization intended to draw a common ground between conservationists and indigenous peoples, but unsuccessfully. Indigenous leaders from COICA and the national organizations eluded any commitment.

These international discussions regarding the future of forests and the rights of indigenous peoples are echoed at the local level in Peru. This is primarily because AIDASEP devotes considerable resources to organizing meetings and workshops with their grassroots organizations. In fact, if it weren't for the connection between FEPIKRESAM, AIDASEP, and COICA, the Chazutino native people would not have feedback about the politics of protected areas and indigenous rights at the regional level, and their alliances and challenges in Chazuta reflect the regional level. In workshops such as the one organized by COICA and TNC in Tarapoto in February of 2011, Quechua indigenous leaders, including some Chazutino, met top leaders like Juan Reategui, and also networked with Ecuadorian, Bolivian, Colombian, Surinamese, and Venezuelan indigenous leaders.

It was through these workshops and meetings that native people learned about the global discussion on implementing a scheme for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD). This scheme deserves especial attention because it has bolstered even more the role of forests in Amazonian politics, among indigenous peoples and *naturales*.

REDD and the Forests of Chazuta

By mid-2009, some Chazutinos, especially in Chipaota community, were asking my opinion about carbon sequestration and the REDD program. They had heard about it in several informative workshops organized by AIDASEP and FEPIKRESAM. For example, Felipe Cenepo, the former president of the community, was really intrigued by this carbon sequestration program, and its benefits and potential dangers. He did not hide his high expectations regarding REDD.

Not long after this, the REDD was proposed and approved at the 13th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 13), which took place in Bali, Indonesia in December 2007. At this conference, the governments of the world agreed to design market and financial incentives in order to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases from deforestation and forest degradation. The idea was to offer economic incentives to a private owner, a community, or the government to protect forests under threat of deforestation. This way, the carbon stored in the trees would remain onsite, and not be released into the atmosphere. However, it was also agreed that implementing a worldwide carbon market to channel money into protecting forests, and putting a price on the amount of carbon prevented from release, would time take and effort. An agreement on the design of the program would therefore not be finalized until 2012 at the earliest. Many questions regarding indigenous and local people also lingered, such as: how can forest communities and indigenous peoples participate in the design, monitoring and evaluation of national REDD programs? How will REDD be funded? How will countries ensure that benefits are distributed equitably among all those who manage the forests? And finally, how will the amount of carbon stored and sequestered as a result of REDD be monitored?

Meanwhile, there was ample room for private initiatives on REDD, and much speculation and preparation. NGOs and private investors began examining REDD schemes. In Peru, COICA and AIDSESEP in Peru also saw the potential dangers. Both organizations have since alerted indigenous federations that, if indigenous territories are not first secured, then REDD schemes could lead to the same problems that have been

seen with the extraction of oil and other resources: capitalization on the resource to the detriment of indigenous rights, leaving no benefits and reducing the extent of indigenous territories.

Conservationists also jumped into REDD in order to secure protection for the forests outside the protected areas, and, in some cases, to fund protected areas. CIMA, for example, explored opportunities to fund the Park with a REDD program. Two companies, Winrock and Terra Carbon, were contracted to measure carbon stocks in CANP. A dozen men from the community of Chipaota, along with a few from other villages, accompanied the carbon measurements specialists into the Park, and thus learned that carbon could be sold. The regional government also showed interest in REDD, and workshops and events regarding REDD were held in Tarapoto.

By 2010, the people of Chipaota openly declared that they wanted a carbon project to be implemented in the communal forest of Chipaota –the 5000 ha forest granted to the community with the help of CIMA, as we saw in Chapter 4. They complained that the Peruvian government had granted forest concessions to logging companies and oil companies to destroy the environment and forests, but that indigenous peoples were left aside. Marin, the keeper of the only shop in Chipaota and himself a colonist, had taken up the native cause as the main advisor to the president of the community:

Indigenous people have protected the forests for millennia, but the Peruvian government does not care about this, they only care for the benefits of the rich people. They make laws to destroy indigenous rights... a carbon project will help the community to protect the forests. The money will help to keep the agricultural zones as they are now, and not expand them... oil and gas companies, and United States of America by buying the oil and gas, destroy the forests, and they want the destruction of all the forests... native people care for the forests. When the wind makes a tree fall they curse the

wind. What would they not do for the forests if they received money for that? (Marin)

In addition, there were rumors that FEPIKRESAM was planning to implement a carbon-credit project among all of the Quechua speaking communities with the support of a French NGO. People were talking about a project that would provide them income for 40 years, in exchange for protection of forests that they would have protected anyway.

In the end, by 2011, REDD projects were not to be implemented, because neither Peru nor any other country had yet established regulations on REDD. Consequently, any investor who put money up in advance might see it disappear if national laws prohibited the sale of carbon credits. For Chazutinos, however, REDD projects gave the local forests a monetary value that they had never had before. These forests were also facing another menace, this time from the Peruvian government.

Defending Amazonian Lands: the Bagua Events

In May and June of 2009, a general uprising of native communities, also widely supported by non-indigenous peoples, took place in the northern Peruvian Amazon. The incident that triggered this event was the passage of nine legislative decrees that threatened Amazonian land rights and natural resources by allowing exploitation of gas, oil, minerals and hardwoods without previous local consent. Native communities blocked important roads in the region for around two months.

A contingent of 50 Chazutino men, along with detachments from other Quechua-speaking communities, armed themselves with their hunting rifles and blocked the road between Tarapoto and Lamas. They were replaced every two weeks by new contingents of men from Chazuta. Groups of women would visit periodically to supply

the men with food. In their own words, they were defending the rights of the Amazonian indigenous peoples and their lands against foreign companies and the Peruvian government, which traditionally have usurped native lands and exploited their resources without leaving anything to the local Amazonian people.

Chazutino people would have fought back against the police if they had been attacked. No violence broke out in San Martin department, however, and Chazutinos went home safe at the end of the action. That was not the case 100 kilometers to the east, in the city of Bagua. Peruvian police there forced the opening of the roads, and around thirty-five people died in the ensuing clashes. For indigenous leaders, the uprising reflected the desire of the Amazonian people to control their local resources. It was seen as the culmination of a struggle of 30 years by native communities to gain title to their ancestral lands in the midst of an unprecedented interest in gas and oil exploration by the Peruvian government.

Conservation NGOs were silent, or at least refused to openly take sides. They did not want problems with the Peruvian government, and feared being stigmatized as international agents arming or supporting Peruvians against Peruvians, and consequently being expelled from the country. On a personal level, however, they expressed their support for the indigenous movement, and continued to fund indigenous organizations in integrated conservation and development projects. CIMA continued to work with the people of Chipaota, even though they had participated in the uprising. Neither TNC nor WWF discontinued their financial, political and technical supported of COICA and AIDSESP.

This single event illustrates the confluence of interests of the Chazutino people, the indigenous organizations, and conservationists. “El Baguazo,” as the uprising is remembered after the bloodshed on the road to Bagua, shed light on the alliances and discord between indigenous organizations and conservationists, and has showed that the time is past when an external agent could come to the region and impose their interests without previous consultation.

The political origin of the uprising can be traced to an article written by the former president of Peru, Alan Garcia Perez, which was published on October 28th of 2007 in the conservative Peruvian newspaper *El Comercio*. Titled “Dog in a Manger” (*El Perro del Hortelano*), this was a controversial article in which he stated that many communities in the Amazon own vast areas of land, but only make use of a small fraction of their land for agricultural purposes (2007). In other words, he suggested that large expanses of Amazon forests had been kept unproductive and useless in the hands of indigenous peoples. Although he was not the first person to opine that native and peasant communities do not take adequate advantage of forest resources, as president of Peru he was a policy-maker who could induce changes in public policies in Amazonia. In this sense, Alan Garcia Perez was following the lead of a group of liberal economists who claimed that Peru’s problems resided in the lack of individual property rights and an appropriate legal framework for them. Garcia Perez therefore promoted a set of decrees to open the lands of the Peruvian Amazon to private companies, at the expense of not yet legally recognized indigenous lands.

Conservationists did not actively participate in protests against these measures, but they did condemn the violence and approve the mobilization against the Peruvian

government. It has been suggested (Dudenhoefer 2009) that conservationists did not intervene because they have historically neglected indigenous peoples, as has been noted before by Chapin (2004). My experience, however, has shown me that their lack of open participation was the result of their political limitations, rather than an intentional indifference. In covert ways, they were in fact supporting indigenous peoples.

AIDSESEP, which spearheaded setting up the roadblocks, was accused by the government of being behind the violence, and their leaders were sought by the police. Pizango, the president of AIDSESEP, ended up requesting political asylum in the Nicaraguan embassy. At the same time, in New York city, COICA was participating in a parade in front of the Peruvian consulate, put on by the United Nations Forum for Indigenous peoples and organized with the help of Amazon Watch. The event had little to no coverage in international news, but it was well-reported in the Peruvian media and among indigenous organizations. Perhaps more importantly, it underscored the alliances between COICA, AIDSESEP, and the indigenous organizations involved in Bagua. This reinforced the role of COICA as representative of indigenous organizations.

For indigenous leaders such as Felipe Cenepo, the Bagua events showed them that they are not alone in their struggles. Suspicious as always, Felipe pointed out that the bloodshed in Bagua was the result of many people being interested in the Amazon, both bad and good people: “they want to take something from here: protect forests and animals, or extract resources... and they will do everything”. He added that indigenous organizations should be prepared to fight for their rights.

On June 5th, 2010, one year after the Bagua bloodshed, parades in remembrance were organized in the main cities and towns of the Northern Peruvian

Amazon. Indigenous leaders from ORPIAN, AIDESEPP and FEPIKRESAM, among them the president of the community of Chipaota, went to Bagua to participate in the main ceremony honoring the people killed in the clashes.

In Chazuta, men and women from the communities of Chipaota and Tununtununba paraded through the unpaved main road of the town, in remembrance of their indigenous brothers who had been killed. People were talking about the martyrs of the “Baguazo,” the responsibility of the government, and Pizango’s asylum in Nicaragua. In the central plaza of Chazuta, the presidents of Chipaota and Tununtununba, the teachers of the schools, and even a police lieutenant, all made speeches about the loss of lives in defense of Amazonia. The event began with greetings in the Quechua language, but the main speeches were in Spanish. They reminded us that native people are not indigenous peoples, savages, but *naturales* from the place. “*No somos infieles / we are not infidels*” –using the Christian word for pagans. They pointed out that native people fought in the conflict with Ecuador, but that once the war was over they were forgotten by the government, the same government that has allowed companies to destroy the Amazonian habitat. At night, celebrations continued in the community of Chipaota, funded by FEPIKRESAM and a political party, the “Partido Nacionalista.”

For Chazutinos, even the mestizos, the uprising was necessary in order to defend Amazonian resources and the right to decide what to do with them.

Sustainable Development: Native Communities, Conservationists and Forests

In the aftermath of the Bagua events, it has become clear that the Regional Government of San Martin, as well as Chazutinos, have integrated into their political discourse the protection of nature and the right to control over Amazonian natural

resources that is conferred by being *naturales*. Supporting this discourse, the concept of sustainable development has become pervasive in the print media, radio, and the speech of the Chazutino average citizen. This is promoted as an ideal where protection of the forests can be combined with economic progress, where local people can decide their future instead of waiting for the central government in Lima to decide, and where access to education and health care are provided.

A new political party which has adopted this discourse of sustainable development, Nueva Amazonia, took control of the regional government in 2007. This was reflected in the Municipality of Chazuta, where a new local government agency, the Bureau of Environment and Land Zoning, was created, and in the new slogan of the district: "*Chazuta, distrito ecologico.*" Some programs aimed at revalorizing the local identity were also implemented. These included the creation of a center for producing traditional Chazutino pottery, a local museum, restoring the traditional paths to the city of Tarapoto which had been used before the construction of the road, and participation in cooking festivals around the region.

In parallel, the old model of development is gradually being replaced by the model of sustainable development. The old model led to uncontrolled expansion of the agricultural frontier. In the 1970's, only 12% of the area in San Martin was categorized as agricultural land, but by the year 2000, 30% was being used for agricultural purposes. Things are now changing in the region, and there is, for example, one law that mandates people to obey zoning and micro-zoning designations. In theory, people can no longer cultivate whatever they want, wherever they want. In practice, however, it

would be very unpopular to enforce the rule unless there were other relevant factors, such as stopping colonists.

Sometimes, natives recognized that they too cleared extensions of forests:

In the past, our forefathers cut the forests. They opened chacras. Five, six, seven hectares. That was bad. Now, things have changed. Now, we seek the conservation of our lands. People open their chacras only to have enough food. We do not open more than we need. ... the community is now protecting the forested mountains, we do not cut as we used to do it. (Sangama Panaifo)

In Chazuta, some colonists have habituated themselves to the new reality as well, especially those living among native Chazutinos. There are colonists working for the Municipality who have embraced the ideal of sustainable development. One of the alderman in the Municipality is a migrant from the coast. He came to Chazuta in the mid-1990's to work as a coca farmer, married a Chazutino woman, and became "native". There are many colonists like him.

Underlying the discourse on forest conservation and emphasis on the rights of *naturales* to decide the use of their resources is the desire to overcome the inequalities, prejudices, and discrimination that permeate Peruvian society. For both natives and non-natives, formal education is seen as the vehicle for individual success in society. As Toribio Amasifuen said: "the native wants his children to have formal education. In the forests and mountains, the native is wise. He knows his environment. But he also needs to go to school, in order to live in the cities."

Formal education is associated with the opportunity to defend oneself from abuses of power. Chazutinos believe that, because they lack formal schooling, they do not know their individual and collective rights. For example, after the uprising that led to the Bagua massacre, FEPIKRESAM pressured by their native communities, began asking the governmental office Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo de Pueblos Andinos,

Amazónicos y Afroperuano (INDEPA) for workshops on ILO convention #169. In the same way, AIDSESEP organized and funded workshops to inform native people on their rights.

For the native Chazutinos, their lands are the only asset they have. It is the possession of land that allows Chazutino families to be independent. With no lands, they would have to live from hand to mouth, as laborers or maids. They see this in the poorest families in Chazuta, who, because of their need for cash money and number of children, have to send a daughter to work as a maid in a middle class family in Tarapoto, Trujillo or Lima. For instance, the daughter of German Panaifo was 14 years old by 2009, and she was working as a domestic servant in Lima. She earned only 150 soles per month (50 dollars). A hundred and fifty years ago, Quechua families supplied the mestizo families in Tarapoto with domestic servants. It is now likely that the number of domestic servants coming from native communities has declined, but the practice still exists, and remains an option for many impoverished natives.

In this context, for Chazutinos it is essential to secure their ownership of the forests. As we have seen, indigenous peoples and Chazutinos have learned that their forests provide them with hunting meat and timber and non-timber products, and in this way is a safety net and source of available lands for their children, Now, with programs such as REDD, the forests can also be a source of economic income. But, first they have to obtain legal ownership of the forests, and avoid having them fall into colonist's hands.

Becoming a “native” community as a means to take control of the forests is viable and increasingly attractive. However, this decision can be controversial at the local

level, because it might imply excluding other users of the resources, and halt the advances of other communities searching for agricultural lands. When Chipaota was granted a forest reserve, native people in Tununtununba complained that they now could no longer hunt in these forests.

Some communities can apply to change their status to native because they can claim customary uses of certain forests. In the case of Tununtununba, however, that is no longer an option, because migrants were allowed to establish individual titles over the watersheds, hills, and shores of the rivers, and now the migrants do not want to become a community, because they would then lose their individual titles. This is the dilemma that some native villages are now facing.

Recovering the forests occupied by Cordillera Azul National Park is not a viable option. Until now, no national park has been legally reverted. Also, thanks to CANP, they have seen an increase in wildlife. In July 2009, a herd of around 80 collared peccaries descended from the mountains of Cordillera Azul and ran through the buffer zone near the village of Chipaota. Native people hunted all of them. In the aftermath, they were happy, as they had not seen a herd of collared peccaries in five years. Overhunting in the past had made peccaries almost disappear in the nearby forests. Now, thanks to the restriction on hunting within the Park, wildlife were increasing. In addition, conservationists have proven to be a source of help in their struggles to halt the advances of colonists.

There are tensions between conservationists and native people, as well. Individual conflicts happen periodically. Once, in 2009, the park guards burned a pile of piassaba fiber that they had confiscated because it had been collected within the Park.

People protested, asking how someone from their own community could impose outside restrictions on them. These incidents usually do not go any further. Native people also find that they still have much to gain from conservationists and young professionals, with all their connections to the outside world.

In the meantime, a revival of the local Chazutino identity is also underway. As such, May 27th has been chosen as the day of the native language –the Quechua language. That day, groups of dancers wearing traditional dress dance in the main street of the town of Chazuta.

Overview

In the last fifteen years, Chazutinos have witnessed an unprecedented reduction of forest lands. Not only did the Park cut off the forests of Cordillera Azul from the Chazutinos, but the arrival of colonists and the subsequent occupation of forests in both banks of the Huallaga river also caused a reduction in the amount of available forests. As a result, Chazutinos, with the support of conservationists, responded by putting restrictions on the activities of colonists.

In parallel, they have experienced a revival of local/ethnic identity. Bringing together global discourse on conservation and the influence of indigenous organizations, Chazutinos have reaffirmed their identity and rights over their ancestral lands. In doing so, they have gained consciousness of the economic value of their forests, and have embraced the ideal of sustainable development.

To what extent have the creation of the Park and the work of conservationists triggered these changes in Chazuta? This is a difficult question, because these changes are intertwined with the threat of colonists taking their lands, the influence of the

indigenous movement, and the economic valorization of the forests by global negotiations on climate change.

The recognition of native lands is still in its first stages. In Peru, native people simply have a different notion of land tenure than conservationists, or any Peruvian mestizo. For urbanites and the law, land property is, above all, legally titled, or, if not, at least confined to your house and agricultural fields. You can claim property on the agricultural land you use, but this is the only way to assert property rights without a legal title. Forests used for hunting and fishing belong to the State. As mentioned by Lucia Ruiz in 2001, conservationists did not need to consult local people to create a new Park. Today, however, no one could create a Park in the Peruvian Amazon without previously consulting the local people, establishing the appropriate alliances, and negotiating with the local municipality and native organizations.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS

In this dissertation I have told the story of the Chazutino people, a story intersected by the arrival of conservationists and the creation of Cordillera Azul National Park on forests which are part of their history. The title of this dissertation is, in fact, a hidden homage to Eric Wolf's book *Europe and the People without History* (1982). Wolf chose this title to challenge those who think that Europeans, as the torch-bearers of Western Civilization, were the only ones who made history. In this work, I attempt to challenge the idea that the Cordillera Azul mountain range has no history of human occupation, and is covered by virgin forests. The establishment of many protected areas has been justified as a protection of "pristine forests" –forests which are, therefore, without history. For the Peruvian State, these vast Amazonian lands were occupied by savage, wild people who had neither history nor citizenship. Thus, for decades, the official ideology encouraged migration to the amazon in order to populate these "uninhabited" lands.

This research explored the socio-historical context that allowed the creation of Cordillera Azul National Park in the department of San Martin, Peru and the subsequent social effects of the Park's establishment among the Chazutino people. As we saw, the park was established within forests that had previously been the territory of this native people. The Chazutino people form an indigenous group which is the result of the ethnogenic process that began in the 16th century with the arrival of Spanish missionaries and the demographic collapse of the indigenous population. The Quechua-speaking people of San Martin emerged from the havoc of the Spanish conquest. They were also known as the Lamista people, and one particular branch of the Lamista was

known as the Chazutino people. The Chazutino relied on the forests for their traditional livelihoods. They expanded their settlements in the direction of the Cordillera Azul mountain range until the mid-20th century. At that time, however, they then began a cultural and economic shift to the mainstream Peruvian society. This included embracing the discourse of economic development, pursuing opportunities for formal schooling, and adopting Spanish as their native language. As part of this shift, the Chazutino abandoned their settlements in Cordillera Azul. This abandonment, coupled with the fact that they had never acquired formal land tenure, allowed the creation of the Park in 2001.

In parallel, the Chazutino also faced the arrival of migrants from the Andes and the coast in other parts of the district –mainly in Siambal in the right bank, and Tununtununba in the left bank. Colonists took forests located not as far as the Cordillera Azul, therefore somehow more important for Chazutinos. Chazutinos did not rely heavily on these forests, but rather, saw them as a safety net and inheritance for their children. Thus, these forests remained important even after they abandoned them.

Conservationists lobbied for the creation of Cordillera Azul National Park because they were increasingly concerned about the increasing number of migrants and the subsequent conversion of forests into agricultural land. In Chazuta, the native people found in the conservationists the support they needed to control the influx of migrants and protect their forests. Thus, despite the fact that the park had been created without local consent, conservationists were ultimately able to form alliances with the native people. The district of Chazuta has become an emblem for conservationists of how the work with local people and involvement in local politics can bring benefits by

reducing threats to protected areas. Conservationists see Chazuta as an example of integrating environmental protection with the struggles of local people for their lands. By 2010, conservationists saw the Park and buffer zone in the district of Chazuta as more or less freed from external threats. The one exception, the advances of colonists in the zone of Siambal, was also under control to some extent. In contrast to the situation in Chazuta, the situation in the Upper Huallaga had not changed much since 2001, with colonists continuing to threaten the Park's integrity.

In addition to this, Chazutinos are now in the process of becoming "native." They have found that by asserting their "nativeness" they can build a political platform to defend their interests. In other words, achieving the status of a legally recognized native group, with ancestral possession of the lands, and therefore changing the status of peasant communities to native communities, is functional to securing more communal lands and rights on exclusive use of the resources of the forests. Land, as a place of cultural value and key for recovering identity, is vital to regain access and control of the district. In fact, current research is showing ongoing revitalization of indigenous identities in other parts of the Amazon when the circumstances are favorable (e.g Bolaños 2008, Mora 1995).

Within this context, Chazutinos emphasize their close connection and bond to the land (as *naturales*) and embrace the ideal of sustainable development as a way to fill their needs: better formal education, health services, access to credit, among other aspirations. They have tinged their needs with the "green discourse" of sustainable development. By 2010, the Municipality was using the slogan of "Chazuta, Ecological District" in their campaign to promote Chazuta as a tourist place. In Chipaota

community, a group named Ecological Conservation Front ("*Frente de Conservacion Ecologica*") was formed in order to spot new colonist settlements near Chipaota and in the watersheds located in Siambal.

It is difficult to envision what could happen in the coming years, but there are some visible trends which may give us clues. In the next section, I will venture to speculate about these trends. In the section after that, the last one of this work, I will point out the potential future research opened by this dissertation.

The Future of Chazutino People and the Fate of the Forests

Chazutinos will continue moving toward the banks of the Huallaga river and the town of Chazuta. Colonists who have settled in Siambal will eventually move too. Both groups want their children to have formal schooling, access to health services, and economic opportunities. But, most adults do not want to go further, beyond the district. Old Chazutinos say that they prefer to live near Chazuta town than in the city of Tarapoto. Many people in the communities have lived and worked temporarily in Tarapoto and Lima, but only a few indicate that they would prefer to live there forever. In Chazuta, they are more or less guaranteed food, shelter, and independence. As one old man said, "In the cities you do not live well. If you do not have a job, you starve to death. Here, there is plenty of food. Whenever I want I go to the mountains to hunt."

Native people will still go hunting every once in a while. Currently, for instance, whenever an Andean bear appears outside the limits of the park, in spite of hunting prohibitions on the species, Chazutinos shoot it. People still use firearms and know how to shoot and hunt, but most only hunt opportunistically, when an animal is spotted in a *chacra*. For them, hunting is still seen as both a fun activity and a way to continue cultural traditions. However, young people are less concerned with hunting and with the

forested lands in the Park, because they have never hunted there. Very likely, they will hunt less than their parents did in the past.

There is a generational change and traditional occupations could be forgotten once the older generation passes away. For instance, the butcher of Chazuta town, Romanel Pizango, laments that he is old but none of his children will replace him in his job. Every year, the old people who resettled their villages to be near the Chazuta town are dying. Nicolas Pizango, one of the founders of the old village of Chipaota, died in 2010. He did not want to leave the hinterlands of Chipaota community, but all of his children, who are adults, were living in the town. Younger Chazutinos have other interests, such as earning money cultivating cacao or other cash crops, or getting a technical degree to work as skilled workers in Tarapoto city.

Everyone talks about the need for money to support the education of their male children, to get medicines, or to build a concrete house. Thanks to cacao production, Chazutinos have now more money than ever, thus they can help their children in their education, but is still not enough. For example, Juan De Dios Sangama said:

Now, we think of the future. We have children who are studying in college. They will be doctors and engineers. But, it is very difficult for us to provide support for our children to attend college in Tarapoto or elsewhere. It is money. In the past we lived off the forests ... now we need to protect the forests but also provide to our families.

Currently, only a few of the young Chazutinos have the chance to study in the cities, and those few will probably not return to Chazuta. But, it is normal to finish high school, and that is unprecedented. The respect they had for shamans in the past, now they have for doctors and engineers

I may predict loss of ethnobotanical knowledge among the younger generation, as has been noticed in other tropical areas (e.g Maffi 2001, Zent 2001). In general, it is

plausible to think that younger people know less about plants than older people. However, when Chazutinos are sick, and if they do not know what Western medicine they should take, they still go to the nearby forests to collect a medicinal plant. They only need a few people to be the repositories of the ethnobotanical knowledge. The rest can take advice from them when they are sick.

In any case, along with this shift towards the mainstream society, there is a revitalization of the local culture. In 2010, the University San Martin de Porres, located in Lima, published a book written by a Chazutino man about their customs and environment. In addition to this, there is a local concern for protecting the archaeological remains in Chazuta town. Madre Juanita, the town's nun, has turned her house into a small museum of Chazutino crafts and stones of pre-Hispanic origin. Moreover, by 2011 Chazutinos were enthusiastic about the success of the presentation of Chazutino cooking in several events outside the district.

Chazutino people feel empowered too. Now, because of the economic growth of the country in last decade, the Municipality and the public services have larger budgets, and consequently they invest more in local projects and are less susceptible to external influences. The microzoning could prove to be key to implement new integrated development and conservation programs in the future. REDD projects are being discussed among conservationists, the government, and indigenous organizations, and the idea is beginning gain traction. Now, in the year 2013, it is reasonable to think that a mechanism will eventually be found to channel forest protection funds to the Amazonian municipalities and communities. If that is obtained, and the market value of an hectare

of mature forests is higher or equal to an hectare of agricultural land, then Amazonian forests could be protected.

In the meantime, a seemingly irreversible cultural shift is occurring; nonetheless, the people of Chazuta are still Chazutinos, and see themselves moving into the future as Chazutinos.

On Future Research

Despite the increasing number of studies on Amazonian peoples, there are several pervasive assumptions and gaps. Ethnographers neglected the study of Amazonian people who present themselves as *ribereños*, mestizos, or peasants. More research is needed on the identity of these peoples, and on the local terms to identify themselves and the others. The terms *naturales* or *chazutinos netos* underline the condition of being local and rooted, and mark the difference between the Chazutino and other peoples; but also hide their indigenusness. These terms draw the symbolic boundaries between “us” and the “others,” which correlates with the territorial borders of the district and the forests where they hunted. Probably, most of the detribalized Amazonian communities are aware of the culture of their ancestors, but they know that these ancestors were labeled by the Peruvian society as wild people when their inferiority was stressed, and as forest people when their life was romanticized. In both cases, they were manipulated and exploited by outsiders. Being “civilized” and having a non-indigenous identity are cards needed to play as equals in the mainstream society.

Scholarly work has ignored the cultural and economic changes which have occurred among Amazonian peoples over the past few decades. A socio-cultural shift is happening among Amazonian peoples, a shift that everybody notices but no one focuses on. Research is needed on the role of formal education in this cultural change,

and on how formal schooling provides protection against abuse and exploitation. Moreover, we should delve into the influence of colonists among Amazonian peoples. For example, as recognized by the natives of Chazuta, colonists have stimulated commercial activity in Chazuta and showed them the benefits of formal education. Thus, colonists in fact can be considered as another source of change among native people. In addition to this, we need to explore how colonists are changed by the time they spend in the Amazon. It seems that colonists who have spent considerable time in the area tend to adopt a more eco-friendly attitude regarding agriculture and forest conservation.

We need to study this socio-cultural shift, but being carefully enough to not see it as an unilinear change. It is probably not appropriate to consider these changes in education and dependency to the markets as a mere transition from tradition to modernity. Amazonian peoples have had their own dynamic of change that does not follow the national patterns. If this transition to “modernity” is happening, then how can we explain the *mingas* and the emphasis on the independent life in the communities versus the dependency of the cities? Chazutinos and other Amazonian peoples (e.g. Gow 1991: 8) are vehement in their criticism of life in the cities, where people have to work for someone else and food is not free.

Research on political ecology could address the political alliances between indigenous peoples and conservationists, environmental laws, and how different approaches to indigenous peoples and colonists have induced different responses to protected areas and forest protection.

More in-case studies on the impacts of protected areas and local people are needed too. While the creation of protected areas has often been condemned in the Amazon as “green colonialism,” there is a dearth of in-depth case studies which address their impacts on local people. It is common for social scientists to have negative opinions on the impacts of protected areas, often for very good reason. Several studies (e.g Chapin 2004) have portrayed the imposition of protected areas as a new form of colonialism that has negatively affected indigenous or local peoples. In this study, I did not intend to deny the existence of this power relationship, but, rather, to contextualize the creation of a Park within the history of an Amazonian people.

Finally, a thorough history of Chazuta and its people has yet to be written. Unlike some other parts of Amazonia, it is possible to construct the history of the Chazuta area in some depth. Missionaries and travelers have provided brief accounts of the Chazutino. They are sketchy and fragmented, but in combination with archaeological and linguistic analysis, along with the oral narratives, they could provide a good account of the local history.

APPENDIX A
GUÍA DE ENCUESTA

DATOS GENERALES

Nombre del entrevistado:	
Hombre	Mujer
Edad	Ocupación principal: Ama de casa Agricultor Pescador Motorista Comerciante Otro _____
Número de hijos	
Estado civil: Casado/Unión libre Separado Soltero Viudo	Instrucción: Ninguna Primaria incompleta Primaria completa Secundaria incompleta Secundaria completa Superior

RESIDENCIA

Chasuta Ramón Castilla Chipaota Siambal Otro:	IDENTIFICAR SECTOR DENTRO DEL POBLADO DE RESIDENCIA Sector:
Lugar de nacimiento (distrito, departamento):	
<p>PARA LOS QUE NACIERON EN OTRO DISTRITO</p> <p>¿Si es que nació en otro lado por qué vino a vivir aquí? (MÚLTIPLES RESPUESTAS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parientes ya radicados aquí - Cónyuge/pareja es de este lugar - Buscando tierras para agricultura - Otro _____ <p>¿En que año vino aquí?</p> <p>¿Antes de venir aquí estuvo en otros pueblos? ¿Cuáles pueblos?</p>	

¿Qué le gusta de vivir aquí? (EXPLORAR SI LE GUSTA POR LA NATURALEZA, GENTE, OPORTUNIDADES ECONOMICAS, ETC)

¿Qué no le gusta de vivir aquí? (EXPLORAR SI LE GUSTA POR LA NATURALEZA, GENTE, OPORTUNIDADES ECONOMICAS, ETC)

PARA LOS QUE NACIERON EN EL DISTRITO DE CHASUTA

¿Si bien usted nació aquí, por qué vive aquí y no se ha mudado a otro lugar?

¿Qué es lo que le gusta de vivir aquí?

¿Qué no le gusta de vivir aquí?

IDIOMA QUECHUA

¿Qué idiomas aprendió cuando era niño?

Quechua
Castellano
Otro

Su conocimiento del quechua es:

Bueno
Poco
Nada

¿Los padres hablan (hablaban) quechua?

Mamá Papá

SI ES QUE EL ENTREVISTADO SABE ALGO DE QUECHUA

¿Cuándo usted era niño en que momentos usaba el quechua? Por ejemplo, para hablar con sus: (VARIAS RESPUESTAS)

Padres
Amigos de la infancia
Ancianos
Escuela
Otros

¿Actualmente, usted en que momentos usa el quechua? o ¿con quien habla en quechua?

SI ES QUE EL ENTREVISTADO ES MIGRANTE

¿Usted ha aprendido algo de quechua desde que esta aquí en el distrito? ¿Como que?

PESCA

¿Usted sabe nadar?		Si	No
¿Usted ha ido a pescar al menos una vez en su vida?		Si	No
Cuántas veces ha ido a pescar en el último año:	¿Usted ha entrado a pescar dentro del Parque Nacional Cordillera Azul desde que este se creó?		
	Si	No	
¿Antes de que se creara el Parque, iba usted de pesca con más frecuencia dentro de lo que ahora es el Parque?	Si	No	
¿Entonces, en que medida la creación del Parque ha afectado la actividad de la pesca?			
¿Usted cree que hace veinte años la gente iba a pescar más que ahora?			
Si		No	No Sabe
¿Usted cree que hace cuarenta años la gente iba a pescar más que hace veinte años?			
Si		No	No Sabe
¿Antes usted usaba barbasco para pescar?	¿Y ahora?		
Si	No	Si	No
¿Antes usted usaba dinamita para pescar?	¿Y ahora?		
Si	No	Si	No
¿Usted sabe que dentro de las recomendaciones del Parque está no usar barbasco ni dinamita en la pesca?	¿Qué herramientas usa usted para pescar?		
Si	No	Tarrafas	Redes
		Nasas	Anzuelos
		Venenos	Otros:
¿Conoce usted de otras recomendaciones del Parque para pescar racionalmente?	¿Cuáles?		
Si	No		
SI ES MIGRANTE Y NO SALE A PESCAR			
¿Por qué motivos usted no va a pescar?			

CONOCIMIENTOS DEL PARQUE NACIONAL CORDILLERA AZUL Y EL MUNICIPIO

SI ES QUE EL ENTREVISTADO VIVIA EN EL DISTRITO CUANDO SE CREO CORDILLERA AZUL	
¿Cuál fue su reacción inicial cuando se creó el Parque Nacional Cordillera Azul? (PEDIR AL ENTREVISTADO QUE HAGA MEMORIA)	
Se opuso a la creación del Parque	Le molestó pero no dijo nada
Indiferencia ante el Parque	Aplaudió la iniciativa de crear el Parque
Le pareció bien pero no dijo nada	Otra:

¿Usted cree que debería seguir existiendo el Parque Nacional Cordillera Azul? Si No	SI RESPONDIO SI O NO ¿Por qué?
¿Sabe que existe un Plan de Manejo del Parque? Si No	¿Usted alguna vez asistió a las reuniones de capacitación/información del Parque? Si No
¿Usted sabe donde están los límites del Parque en su sector? (SI SE PUEDE QUE DIGA DONDE SON ESOS LIMITES) Si No	
¿Dígame en pocas palabras para que sirve mantener el Parque Nacional Cordillera Azul o sino sirve para nada?	
¿Desde su casa a cuantas horas de caminata se encuentra el Parque?	¿Dígame el nombre del alcalde de Chasuta y de los regidores? LOS QUE RECUERDE

COMENTARIOS (CUALQUIER COMENTARIO EXTRA DEL ENTREVISTADO, SU ACTITUD, PREGUNTAS QUE TENIA, O ALGUNA DIFICULTAD QUE HUBO DURANTE LA ENCUESTA)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Rafael Mendoza was born and raised in Lima, Peru. He became fascinated with anthropology when at the age of eighteen he took an introductory class at the Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru. After obtaining his bachelor degree in this field, he gained experience working for diverse organizations in Peru and Ecuador.

In 2002, he started the master program in socio environmental studies at the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO – Ecuador). Interested in the Andean Amazon, Rafael made several trips to the jungle in Peru and Ecuador, and in 2005 conducted research in the Canton Baños, Ecuador.

In 2006, Rafael entered the PhD program in anthropology at the University of Florida, where he received generous funding from the Moore Foundation and the Tropical and Conservation Development Program. His fieldwork was supported by a Compton Fellowship in 2009. The opportune help of an Eddy Fellowship allowed him to finish writing his dissertation. Upon completing his dissertation in 2013, Rafael began working as a conservation practitioner and professor of anthropology.