IN SEARCH OF A NOBLER PAST:
INCANISMO AND COMMUNITY TOURISM IN SARAGURO, ECUADOR

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Abstract

Historical notions of Noble Savagery have been contemporarily translated and massified in popular culture so that traits that "Indigenous People" are believed to possess, are conflated with those of the Noble Savage of lore and taken for granted as truth. The *Noble Savage* is the embodiment of the tourist's notion of the authentic; the more traits Indigenous people are assumed to share with the western notion of the Noble Savage the more authentic they are deemed, and the more attractive they are to the visiting tourist. In Saraguro tourism and incanismo mutually validate and reinforce each other. Tourists valorize their own preconceived notions of indigenous culture, and in turn validate incanismo through participation in Incaic cultural performances. Neo-Incans are objectifying and consuming their *own* dreams though the tourist gaze, and the resultant cultural commodification and the (re)appropriation of a nobler past has led to cultural revalorization of an indigenous elite.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The late arrival of the tour group from Cuenca that afternoon meant there wasn't time for the scheduled hike in the rural Saraguro community of Gera before night fell, so we drove to the observation point. There, looking out over the valley at the Pukara, rather than standing atop it, Raul dressed to the nines in traditional garb gave a variant of the speech I had heard him give many times before:

> The Pukara is a sacred place for the Incas, for worship, and a strategic place for the military. That one [he points out across the valley] is full of energy because it is a sacred place. They made many rituals there in the morning. It was always in the morning because they took energy from the sun so they had energy throughout the day… another Pukara is two hours from here; and that one was used for military defense.

Figure 1. Tourist Guide Raul (photograph by author)

> In that area [he points across the valley], there were many Cañaris, here there were more Incas. We are more similar to the Incas[1]...In this community [Gera] there is no immigration. People move to other communities but not to Spain, and because of this they keep their tradition because people are not coming with new ideas, so they continue to build one floor houses with adobe, and this is quite attractive to the tourists.

At this point Julio, the Oregon group's grey-bearded white professor from Quito asks Raul if he can say a few words. On receiving the nod, squinting through his oversized thick rimmed glasses, Julio enthusiastically begins:

> Everyone in this community is quite happy even though they don´t have the same commodities that we have in the big city. They have all the necessary things; you can even see it in the construction of the houses because they use adobe…to have an adobe house is ecological because they keep the heat in the house and don´t need to have heating. And internet; nobody has internet, not yet. Enjoy this kind of thing because it is not normal to visit a place without electricity and internet. They are quite happy, but it won´t be like this for long. We create for ourselves necessities that are not real. I realized when I was living in Europe and came back [to Ecuador] that in Europe they have old things

[1] From 1438 to 1532, when Francisco Pizarro's Spanish forces walked into the Incan capital Cusco in modern-day Peru, the Incan Empire (in Quechua: *Tawantinsuyu*) was the largest polity ever seen in pre-Columbian America. The Incas used conquest and peaceful assimilation to incorporate many disparate peoples. Centered in the Andean mountain range, the Incan Empire stretched from the north in modern-day southern Colombia through Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and in the south to northwest Argentina and northern Chile (see D'Altroy 2003). The Incas have since been idealized by anthropologists and travel writers, among others, and stand as a current icon of past indigenous glory resistant to classical and neo-colonialism.

but different values nowadays… Please please enjoy these things... you should see and remember these things because you will appreciate them in the future.

Raul, buoyed by Julio's enthusiasm veers from his usual discourse:

All the houses are quite far away from each other and during the night the silence is incredible, there is no noise, and we have just one lighter. Nowadays they can have a radio with batteries to know something from the outside, but we don´t have television. With community tourism we can have people come and stay here for one day, one week etc… During the day time you can just listen to the birds or the heart beat of the dogs or the cows mooing. It's very quiet and relaxed and we like it like that, we don´t want to have any luxury, we just want something to eat and we like the kind of life we are living here. I could explain many things about our style of life, but we don´t have enough time….

Raul pulls a ringing mobile phone from his pocket, and tells the person on the other end he is occupied. This leads to some sniggers and an exchange of humored glances among the assembled tourists. … He continues…

Here they don´t close their doors, because they aren´t afraid that people are going to steal anything, because people have much respect for each other, and it is different from the big cities. We know nobody is going to try and steal something. Perhaps if you have valuable things - but even in that case they won´t lock. They just put a piece of wood in the lock. The windows are small because it is cold during the night. Now things are starting to change a bit, but my great-great grandfather had a small window [in his house] just to let the cat out, or to see someone crossing the street.

Everything is made from tiles, adobe, or wood. Nobody has rheumatism, because everything is natural and made from the earth. Nobody goes to the pharmacy because they are very in touch with nature. Many people know the use of the medicinal plants, and if you ask your neighbor he will know, and you can cure the sickness. Everyone has a small garden where they have their medicinal plants along with the food they need. You don´t need to go to the shop,

> because more or less you can survive on that. The most important thing for them is their respect for [the earth deity] *Pachamama* because they can get everything from her, so they don´t need the store or the pharmacy.
>
> They are trying to get back Incan products, to revive them; they started to use materials that the Spanish conquistadors brought but now they are trying to reintroduce them. Before things were ceramic, the Spanish bought them aluminum with them. These kinds of things are more attractive to you than the modern things.

In this opening example we can witness the "Noble Savage" discourse literally brought to Gera; locally perpetuated, circulated and undoubtedly re-exported, bolstered and crystallized by real experiential evidence. Raul the local guide says nothing to sway Julio from his romanticized opinions of how people there live; in fact, he himself appears to be enthused by Julio's nostalgic yearnings. And in the course of fifteen-minutes mediators, Julio and Raul collectively, have portrayed the residents of Gera as living far from the Western "outside world" of capitalism and modernity. The guide is literally singing from the Noble Savage hymn book, with Raul matching his own imaged version of this local Eden to that of the idyll envisioned by the visiting tourist who has never before set foot in Gera.

Marshall Sahlins sees in the appeal of the "Indigenous" a desire to use "other societies as an alibi for redressing what has been troubling us lately" (Sahlins 1999:v). This stems from the Cartesian logic that:

> Unspoiled nature is pure; the Indian is part of nature; therefore the Indian is pure. Such purity then becomes associated with the wisdom that Westerners once had but have lost in the deluge of technological progress and its by-product, the destruction of the environment. (Ramos 1998:72)

Whilst these essentialist stereotypes have suffered obvious criticism for their paternalistic overtones and inherent inaccuracies (Ramos 1998; Stearman 1994), they do remain popular notions in the development discourse, which increasingly views culture as a resource, endorsed by organizations like the World Bank (DeFelippis 2002), and posits indigenous peoples' "social capital" as a source of untapped "stocks", which can provide the base for successful development activity (Mayer and Rankin 2002). Indigenous groups themselves partially appropriate these discourses and strategically use what they see as ancestral elements for the reinvention and consolidation of indigenous ethnic identity (Warren 1992:189-219).

This example also offers a glimpse into how guides learn to perceive or objectify their own culture through the eyes of visiting tourists, to become aware of a tourists preconceived understanding or worldview (Salazar 2010). Being a tour guide enables the perspective of seeing one's own culture through the eyes of an outsider, enabling them, and hosts generally, to learn and relay aspects of their own culture the visiting tourist appears to be most enthusiastic about. What interests the tourist feeds into what a good guide will then elaborate upon, leading to the question: Is the guide consciously emulating, as part of the performance, the kind of perceptions and dreams he believes the tourist expects and yearns for (Goffman 1959) by "staging authenticity" (MacCannell 1976)? Or are Julio and Raul dreaming the same dream, the same globally circulating "master narrative" of indigeneity (Bruner 2005)? As Salazar suggests:

> Historically laden fantasies are at the roots of many physical as well as imagined journeys to unknown destinations. Empowered by mass-mediated master narratives, such imageries have become global. They

> are sent, circulated, transferred, received, accumulated, converted and stored around the world. (Salazar 2010:xviii)

Where are these master narratives coming from; how are they travelling; who is receiving them; and how are they acted upon?

Fieldwork for this thesis was conducted from July to December 2010 in the indigenous communities surrounding Saraguro in southern Ecuador, where the international nongovernmental organization *Solidaridad Internacional*, a Madrid-based Spanish NGO, established the community tourism programme *Saraguro Rikuy* in 2003. The programme now operates as a self-managed local development initiative with the technical and financial support of the local NGO, Kawsay Foundation, that is itself dedicated to promoting local social development through the strengthening of intercultural education, family, community health and promotion of social rights. The community tourism project offers tourists the opportunity of "an interchange of experiences" (Saraguro, Cultural Tourism brochure, 2007:9) and a "full intercultural relationship" (Kawsay website) whilst aiming to contribute to community development and the conservation of natural resources and cultural traditions. To date, *Saraguro Rikuy's* local tourism initiative has involved itself with the construction of infrastructure and housing projects, the largest of which is the Hostel Achik Wasi (House of Light) for tourist stays· They also provide tourism-related training for participant families in the areas of customer service, guiding services, food preparation, and waste management among others. The stated goal of the initiative is to conserve the environment and customs and supplement participant families' incomes through tourism activities, without

destroying - but rather '*revalorizar*' (revalorizing) - the cultural values and customs of the community.

Within the framework of this community tourism project, I have attempted to discover both tourists' and local Saraguros' understandings of what indigeneity is, its historical origins, and how these visions are in contrast or concert with one another. Here I find a convergence of historical notions of Noble Savagery and the visiting tourist's contemporary notions of how Indigenous people are presupposed to live. In Saraguro local agents and moderators of transnationalism are adopting and performing these notions to serve the perceived tourist need. The tourist's presence results in those involved in the community tourism project objectifying their own culture. In the process, they commodify and (re)produce elements of their culture which correspond to perceived tourist demands and expectations by locally adapting the transnational discourse on indigenous peoples. These performances, or stagings, pattern host/guest interactions in a dialectical relationship whereby the tourists' essentialized understandings are used to gauge Saraguro culture and determine authenticity. The Saraguros *authenticity* is a constructivist notion that the tourist ultimately seeks in the "Indigenous Other" and in many cases is the motivation (and the primary local marketing tool to attract tourists) to visit.

These interactions and the subsequent objectification of culture feed into the local landscape more generally and factor into the development of the community

tourism project, and of a growing ideology of incanismo.[2] In Saraguro, a small group of predominantly middle-class educated indigenous elites with strategic ties to the NGOs involved in the development of the community tourism project are using the rhetorical spaces and resources they possess to further a separate agenda which posits them, the neo-Incans, as *the* authentic indigenous Saraguro. This movement, however, is in contradiction to the vast majority of rural agropastoralist Saraguros, whose lifestyles ironically exhibit many of the merits considered by both neo-Incan and tourist alike to be the romanticized Kichwa speaking rural idyll they seek, yet, are ultimately stigmatized for their adherence to the contaminating colonial religion of Catholicism and continued ignorance of *their* Incan heritage and the enlightened ideology of incanismo. Incanismo appeals as it allows the neo-Incans to (re)claim and (re)valorize an incaic historical cultural legacy as their birthright, cleanse their culture of colonial contaminations, make amends for their five-hundred year "postponement" at the hands of colonialism (Macas 2001), and return to a purer nobler past, very much in the mold of an essentialized indigenous authenticity sought by visiting tourists. Incanismo also essentially provides a means by which its local adherents can supplant *indigena* with Inca, and thus demonstrates a third-way between the historical stigmas of "Indianness" and the assimilation to mestizaje. As

[2] The phenomenon of Andean indigenous peoples specifically identifying with, exalting and claiming descent from, the Incas (see Salomon 1987; Ogburn 2005). Practiced by a local contingent of indigenous Saraguros, who are attempting to return to be able to be 'themselves' by reclaiming and revalorizing a purer nobler Incan past.

the movement begins to take on a life of its own, independent of tourist, NGO, indigenista, or other forces, incanismo becomes indigenized.

During the six months I spent in Saraguro my time was split between two families, the first of whom lives in Ñamarín, 3 kilometers from the urban centre of Saraguro, and the second in Gunudel, a barrio of Las Lagunas, and virtually a suburb of Saraguro town itself. I also spent many of my days in the urban centre of Saraguro volunteering at the tour operator*, Saraurko*, a fully staffed office on the central plaza, which deals with the day-to-day logistics and conflicts with Community Tourism members, and which is charged with selling the community tourism product to potential local buyers as well as globally via the Spanish language website (www.turismosaraguro.com).

Saraguro

Straddling the Equator from which the country derives its name, Ecuador is bordered by Colombia to the north and Peru to the south and east. The country of fifteen million is divided geographically into three very distinct regions: The Coast, Highlands and the Amazonas region; both the low-lying coastal and eastern Amazonas region experience a tropical climate whereas the highland Andes, which dissect the two regions, are more temperate and rather drier, befitting their altitude.

Figure 2. Map of Ecuador showing location of fieldwork site, Saraguro.

Saraguro is located in the southern portion of Ecuador at mid altitude (1800-2800 metres) somewhat lower in elevation than the remaining two-thirds of the highland region which stretch north towards the border with Colombia. Located on a main branch of the Pan-American Highway that runs the length of the continent, Saraguro is 64km north of the provincial capital, Loja, and 140kms south of Cuenca, the largest city in Azuay province. From Saraguro to the Community Las Lagunas the distance is 2 km; to Ñamarín, 3 km; to Oñakapak, 8 km; and to Gera, 15 km.

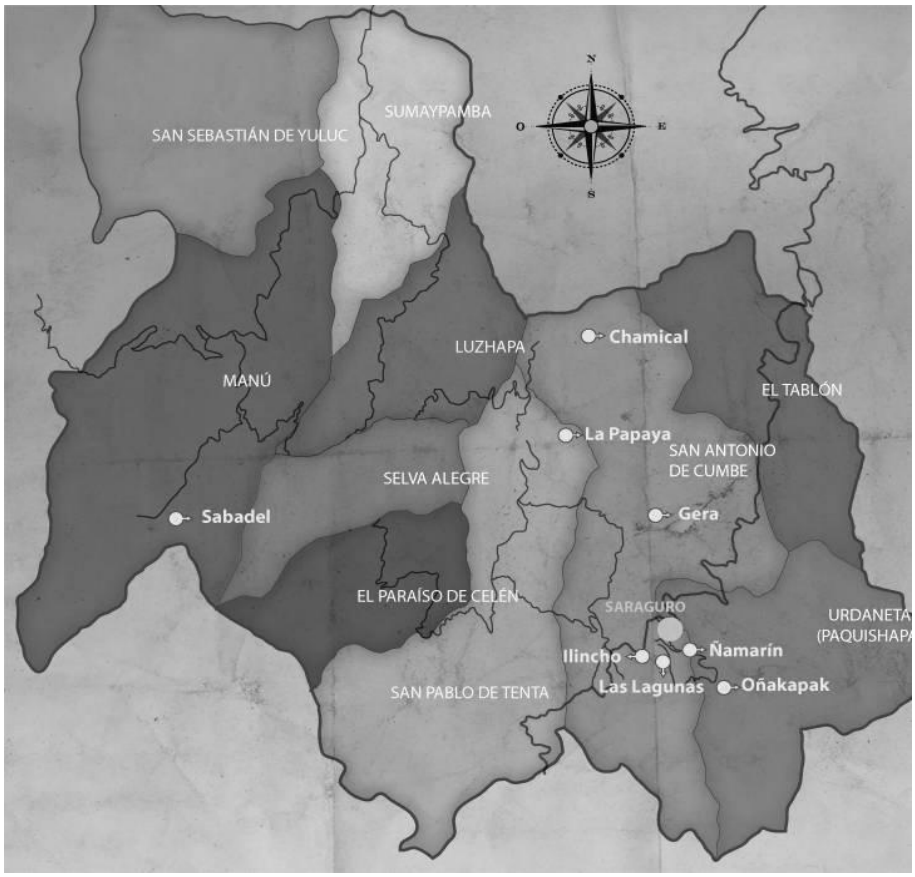

Figure 3. Cantón Saraguro, showing communities involved in tourism project.

The population of the cantón Saraguro is approximately 31,000 inhabitants with 88.85% settled in rural areas, while the urban area accounts for 11.15%. Female gender represents 53.58% compared to male, 46.42%. The town of Saraguro itself is the government center for the municipality and the Cantón (roughly county) of Saraguro, and the economic centre being equipped with various stores serving both the predominantly white *mestizo* population of the urban centre and the surrounding indigenous communities, and hosting a daily, as well as weekly market to which people from the local communities descend to buy and sell their wares. The surrounding communities are almost solely indigenous in their makeup. Traditionally agro-pastoralists, indigenous Saraguros own and control much of the

rural land surrounding the urban centre of Saraguro. The last couple of decades have witnessed the rise of an indigenous professional class and significant out-migration both within Ecuador and abroad. This, in turn, has led to changes in occupation, and relationships with the urban core, a trend seen most strongly (although not exclusively) in those communities in closest proximity to the city centre, namely Las Lagunas, Gunudel and Ilincho. Inhabitants of these communities are more likely to have attained a higher level of education, work in the urban centre themselves in non-agricultural employment, live in modern style houses and speak predominantly Spanish.

Anthropology of tourism

Daniel Boorstin's (1961) early research understood tourists as passive, and tourism as simply mindless escapism and a reflection of the tourists' superficial lives back home. Conversely, building on Goffman's (1959) "dramaturgical" front stage-backstage distinction, MacCannell's (1976, 1989) classic work observed that tourists strive to enter back regions of the places they visit in order to seek out the authenticities and sacredness of pre-industrial societies that were perceived to be lacking in their own, and to rediscover the sense of wholeness and structure absent from modern western urban life. Tourists, though far from monolithic consist of a variety of different typologies and indeed participate in myriad modes of travel (see Cohen 1978, 1988), seek an original purer state, an authenticity they believe once – and still does in isolated places – exist; an authenticity that they believe their own

culture has lost and, as will be developed in this thesis, a sentiment of loss that drives the local ideology of Incanismo.

In the promise of "an intercultural perspective," community tourism projects offer tourists the opportunity to glimpse these very back regions and thus offer themselves as a more 'authentic' touristic experience. "In our society, intimacy and closeness are accorded much relevance" (MacCannell 1992:94), as such, through community tourism tourists may be permitted to access and share back regions; thus theoretically enabling them to see beyond performance. This would theoretically enable the tourist "to perceive and accept others for what they really are" (MacCannell 1992:94), even if these back regions are set up with the specific intent of accommodating tourists. In this instance it can be seen how *authentic* living traditions become cultural products which may lead to the invention or reinvention of traditions that attempt to meet the tourist's conceptions of authenticity or Other (Greenwood 1989; Buck 1993; Helu-Thaman 1993; Webb 1994; Ashworth and Tunbridge 1996; Picard and Wood 1997). MacCannell (1973) calls the construction of these contrived and artificial back stages "staged authenticity", whilst Crick argues that in a sense all cultures are staged, invented and remade and therefore inauthentic (Crick 1988:65-6). Indeed, all cultures are alive and in process like a river which is constantly moving, and that which we enter in the middle (Bruner 1994:407), and as such, all cultural acts are authentic.

For even though, as Crick suggests, all cultures are inauthentic and as such no authentic culture exists, since all are constantly in flux and (re)inventing themselves (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), it is ultimately the case that "all genuine traditions

are spurious…all spurious traditions are genuine" (Handler and Linnekin 1984:288). In this thesis, far from attempting to identify that which is authentic or ersatz based on historical fact, my position is that the idea of an authentic culture is a subjective notion that is sought by the tourist based on what *they* perceived as authentic and thus is also a "social fact" that needs to be studied in order to ascertain the reasons behind and impacts of such a notion in host/guest interactions. I am therefore in agreement with Bruner (1994) and Cohen (1988) that the crucial question is to free the concept of authenticity from the object, the binary of true/fake; and focus on how and why people themselves think about culture as authentic in order to be able to:

> Understand the different meanings of *authenticity* as employed in social practice rather than to accept at face value the usually unexamined dichotomy between what is and what is not authentic. (Bruner 1994:401)

Who is able to define the Saraguro as authentic, and by which standards, is ultimately a construction of the present, and is therefore influenced by master narratives of the period, and therefore negotiable – ultimately varying according to the perspective of the tourist who gazes upon it (Cohen 1988). Bruner (1994) expands this argument, noting that the right, or authority, to authenticate is a matter of power:

> No longer is authenticity a property inherent in an object, forever fixed in time; it is … a struggle, a social process, in which competing interests argue for their own interpretation of history. (Bruner 1994:408)

Many tourists share MacCannell's (1999:13, 106, 155) belief that merely by viewing the authentic (assuming such a thing as an authentic culture existed) it is altered or corrupted, and thus those seeking authenticity are in a paradoxical search

which can never really be achieved. By visiting peoples and places considered virginal, untouched and pure the tourist may indeed actually destroy the chimera of that which they seek. The tourist concern with authenticity, unlike anthropological insights about the constructed nature of culture and its traditions, sees non-Western cultures as intact until they are contaminated or destroyed through Western contact and commodification. Although that is not to be naïve of the fact that this commodification may lead to negative consequences, as, for example, documented in prolonged fieldwork carried out by Frank Hutchins in an indigenous operated ecotourism project in Amazonian Ecuador, where he encounters local tensions in how culture is commodified and performed for tourists and how the proceeds from which are subsequently distributed (Hutchins 2010).

Tressider's (1999) study of mythological construction in his analysis of Irish tourism publications perceived the tourists' longing as an antithesis of post-industrial society, while Selwyn's (1996) study argues that tourism is part of the invention and re-invention of tradition, and that tourist attractions are based on myths, with the tourist being someone who chases them. This leads to questions of whether tourists consciously consume the creation of myths via global understandings of indigeneity or produce myth themselves; Larson has suggested that tourist photography is one such context, which in itself is about producing rather than simply consuming geographies and identities (Larsen 2005:422). Some research suggests that these images may then be propagated through a *hermeneutic circle* of photographic representations with tourists "demonstrating that they really have been there by showing their version of the images that they had seen before

they set off" (Urry 2002:129). This previously seen image could also be an image of indigeneity constructed from non-visual texts. Simmons (2004) argues that the remains of imperialism still linger in Western imaginations through the contemporary travel discourse in tourist brochures and travel magazines, with representations of otherness inextricably linked to popularized accounts of travels and explorations to foreign and imperial lands (Hall 1998; Clark 1999; Glage 2000; Graburn 2001). However, in promising a certain kind of tourist experience, that literature is instrumental in creating discourses of popular perceptions of peoples and places, which may appeal to the tourists desire for authenticity, myth and/or indigenous Otherness and thus help to define tourists' expectations of what they will see and what their experiences will mean.

Indigenous tourism

The idea of "indigeneity" indicates residence in approximately the same locality as before the present ruling nation took over, and having maintained at least in part distinctive linguistic, cultural and social/organizational characteristics that differ from those of the nation state. Yet anthropological definitions of "indigenous" and "indigeneity" are neither static nor theoretically unproblematic. These terms are political constructs, not anthropological ones, which denote a claim to legitimate political goals for a category of peoples (Thuen 2006; Bernard 2006), which can contribute to the promotion of indigenous rights (Theodossopoulos 2009; Kenrick and Lewis 2004). As with "ethnicity", "indigenousness" has to be confirmed by others, which can prove difficult. David Maybury-Lewis (1997:54) states,

"Indigenous peoples are defined as much by their relations with the state as by any intrinsic characteristics they may possess." People who *appear* more authentically indigenous according to traits designated through dominant discourse can be awarded the benefits of political recognition; the deployment of symbols of indigeneity, be they authentic or invented, can be strategically valuable in terms of global positioning for local gain (Bunten and Graburn 2009:8). However, the criteria for inclusion in the transnationally accepted categories are uncertain, leading to a double standard of evaluation: one relying on an external, essentialised criteria, laid down by the United Nations, international non-governmental organizations, and environmentalist activist groups; and the Other defined by internally accepted characteristics (Thuen 2006), such that Indigenous definitions of indigenousness are nearly always "hybrid constructions . . . tribal and modern, local and worldly" (Clifford 1997:154, 157).

In the economy of tourism, the term indigenous has obtained additional value and significance. Imagined as egalitarian, ecologically savvy, anti-capitalist and community-bound, discourses of indigeneity come to contain all that Western society is thought to have lost. Underpinning Edward Said's analysis of Orientalism are notions and constructed images of Other from afar. Discourse about the Orient emphasized difference and exiled it into an irretrievable state of Otherness (Kabbani 1986:6). Images and perceptions of the East became actualized, and as Edward Said argued, defined the West through its "contrasting image, idea, personality, and experience" (Said 1995:2).

Orin Starn (1999) has criticized the Latin American ideology of *lo andino* or "Andeanism" which he characterizes as an essentializing vision of Native South Americans (similar to Said's notion of Orientalism). Andeanism portrays the Andes as "an alien, fascinating land untouched by the West and modernity…an island of otherness removed from the world" (Starn 1999:19-20) by travel writers, the tourism industry and the romantic primitivism of American anthropologists between 1960 and 1980 (Weismantel 2006:86). Yet, this othering has become a critical part of marketing within the Indigenous tourism industry. Governments and private enterprises - foreign and local - define and recreate social reality to fit marketable definitions, which may in turn lead to cultural commodification (Cohen 1988; Greenwood 1977) and the manipulation of ethnic stereotypes that appeal to tourism (Cohen 1979; MacCannell 1984; Van den Berghe 1994). In making such a presentation, the cultural and geographical gaps between tourists and hosts are beneficial to marketing goals. As Ryan and Huyton point out in their research on tourist and aboriginal people in New Zealand:

> The process of making another culture exotic depends upon cultural difference and spatial distance, aided by poor communications or incomplete understanding of the people gazed upon. (Ryan 2002:957)

Blanca Muratorio (2000) analyzes the Ecuadorian elite's construction of "Indianness" surrounding the fourth centenary of the discovery of Americas in 1892. In this essay Muratorio documents the need to define Ecuadorian national identity on the world stage to display their ideology and power (see also Munro 2010) in which the Ecuadorian ethnic Other was imagined and manufactured in a way that used Indians as semiotic pawns, which ultimately left them no room for

interpretations of their own past, present or future. “Those class groups that were in a position to control the power of the state wrote the texts and selected and imposed the cultural traditions” (Muratorio 2000:108).

At the Colombian Exposition of Chicago (1893) Ecuador produced an illustrated tourist guide which included images of Indians posing in idealized studio portraits. These images portrayed the Indian as domesticated and civilized due to their tutelage at the hands of Christian missionaries, as “exoticism conquered” and “domesticity achieved”; a representation which, Muratorio argues, demonstrates that Ecuadorian elites were not yet prepared to sell the exoticism of the native population as a tourist commodity[3] (Muratorio 2000:112-113).

> Indians as well as Blacks were the savage other, the people whose culture was found lacking. In dominant constructions of national identity, Indians provided the primitive contrast for the Ecuadorean national subject through a series of oppositions such as Adult/Child, Industrious/Lazy, Catholic/Pagan, Civilized/Savage, and Urban/Rural. (Crain 1990)

At the Paris Universal Exposition of 1889, however, the Ecuadorian state portrayed the Incas as possessing “great noble character” as “a very advanced civilization.” Further, in a process Minguet (1973) labels “archaeological patriotism” we see:

> …the valorization and exaltation of the old Mexican and Andean civilizations as well as the appropriation of their corresponding pasts and the identification with the history that produced them. (Minguet 1973 cited in Favre 1986:283)

[3] This despite the fact that Thomas Cook had already begun advertising images of non-Western Others in its marketing literature.

The deliberate cultivation of a nationalism based in part on an appeal to the former glories of the various Indian empires meant that the indigenous past had to be valorized. Rebbeca Earle (2001) notes this created a paradox, because Indians were simultaneously deemed dirty and degraded and displaying few of the virtues ascribed to their predecessors, and so a double discourse evolved:

> The Indians had been noble creatures, and it was from them that modern America had sprung. After the conquest, the Indians had been sadly degraded [by sufferings inflicted by Spanish colonization], to such an extent that they now bore scant resemblance to their glorious ancestors. (Earle 2001:133)

The construction of the Indian Other in Ecuador at the end of the 19th century saw them as the "miserable race" closer to the animal world than to culture, and as children in need of protection (Guerrero 2000). At the beginning of the 20th century the backward hacienda Indian was seen as an ignorant drunkard. Later the Indian was to become the "problem" standing in the way of the modernizing project of the nation-state (De La Torre 2004), until becoming 'invisible,' in the words of President Rodríguez Lara, when he declared in the late 1970s: "In Ecuador there is no more Indian problem, we all become white when we embrace the goals of national culture" (Stutzman 1981:45).

In the period since 1979, Mary Crain notes that Ecuador has seen a "discovery" and revalorization of indigenous popular culture on the part of particular state agencies (see Hall 1981; 1986), as manifest in native music and

dance performances, and national exhibitions of native artisan products in which Ecuador is (re) presented as a nation of quaint ethnic communities, each with its own pristine cultural heritage (Crain 2000). Indeed, more recent literature distributed by Ecuador's Ministry of Tourism, as demonstrated in their *Ecuador love life* travel brochure (2009), builds on this trend, claiming Ecuador is "free from mass tourist exploitation" and as such is a paradise for "those who wish to have a unique and authentic experience." Under a heading entitled "Genuine cultural experiences," this brochure states:

> There are 13 distinct indigenous nationalities that inhabit within Ecuador's borders, and each asserts its unique cultural identity. Some of them, especially in the Amazon Region, have had little contact with the modern world and maintain the Cosmo-visionary traditions of their ancestors.

The origins of Orientalism, created by British and French colonists, are very different to Andeanism, created within postcolonial states, yet the two notions do share a romantic essentialism and a glorification of a vanishing primitive (Weismantel 2006:87). Said's Orientalist theory of how discourse is transferred from country to country and from political leader to author is relevant to NGO tourist relations and Andeanist notions in providing a foundation for luring tourists. In Saraguro I explored whether these notions were actively disseminated as known falsehoods, or whether or not the mediators were prone to essentialist romanticisms themselves. Interestingly, those within the community tourism project viewed those (predominantly neo-Incans) who partook in incaic rituals and festivals as disseminating known falsehoods; as performing folklore as a form of staged authenticity in order to attract and appeal to a perceived tourist need. Said

denounced those who internalized Orientalists' ideas of their own culture, yet Andean peoples' adoption of Andeanist visions of themselves, taken up consciously and proactively for economic and political reasons, could be seen as forms of resistance. For example, advocates of Indigenous tourism see it not merely as a means of alleviating poverty, but of transmuting cultural capital into the potential for economic and political gain as well (Adams 1995; Theodosspoulos 2009; Bunten and Graburn 2009).

Many see the process of commodification of indigenous culture itself as, "the objectification of the West of a cultural Other" (Cole 2007:946), frequently regarded, ''as a kind of institutionalized racism that celebrates primitiveness'' (Mowforth and Munt 1998:270). Hutchins whilst working with Kichwa communities in Ecuador demonstrates, however, that this commodification process doesn't necessarily lead to an eradication of cultural difference or loss of power. In adopting Marshall Sahlins'(1988, 1999) "cosmologies of capitalism" assertion that, "people may construct radically different understandings of colonial or capitalist forces presumably emanating from western metropoles" (Hutchins and Wilson 2010:xxiv), to his discussion of marketing tourism in Amazonian Ecuador, Hutchins finds communities reworking tourism to match their own goals.

Research undertaken by Zorn and Farthing into communitarian tourism in Peru shows how tourism and the constant tourist gaze serve to make indigenous identity more salient to the Taquileans themselves making them aware of their indigeneity as a positive attribute and allowing them to take pride in their cultural traditions (Zorn and Farthing 2007:684). From studies conducted in Toraja,

Indonesia, Toby Alice Volkman concludes that the tourist gaze "may become a model for local gazes too, put to work along with other kinds of cultural visions and revisions" (Volkman 1990:91). Similarly, in Saraguro it will be seen that the commodification of culture stemming from the objectification of essentialized notions of indigeneity can also form part of a regenerative process, which can foster and shape culture leading to empowerment in the forming of identity and pride in a certain section of the Saraguro population involved in the community tourism project.

Culturally appropriate tourism development

Throughout the last half century tourism has been seen as a neutral way to help postcolonial states gain financial stability (Harrison 2003:13).[4] Yet the promised economic stability has not materialized; many states continued to exist in a neocolonial relationship, with tourism accused of putting a "hedonistic face [on] neocolonialism" (Crick 1989:322). "Appropriate tourism emerged as a response to the political and sociocultural quests of the last two decades as well as to disillusionment with mass tourism" (Apostolopoulos 2000:27). Prior to the recent widespread growth of culturally appropriate development projects and Indigenous tourism, the 1990s

[4] The World Tourism Organization UNWTO documents that International tourism arrivals grew by 7% in 2010 to 940 million, and generated US$ 919 billion in export earnings. Yet statistics on "externalities" (environmental and cultural degradation, for example) are often unaccounted for and should be factored in as liabilities.

witnessed an international turn to multiculturalism (Kymlicka 2007) with World Bank adoption of "Ethno-Development" during an era dubbed the "Decade of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples" (1994-2004) by the United Nations. Against a backdrop of growing environmental concerns, a new sense of social justice and human rights--and in opposition to the "trivial and bland, devoid of important content, cheaply commercial, and unworthy of our better instincts and ideals [vacation]"--(Frommer 1988) appropriate tourism was spawned to emphasize small-scale development whilst recognizing needs other than those of material consumption in an attempt to preserve the quality and stability of natural and human resources (Jafari 2000). The aim of culturally appropriate development is to enhance economic development while still affirming community values and cultural integrity. Thus this new tourism came to share almost identical goals to that of sustainable development.

Interest in alternative tourism as a medium of encouraging community-based conservation and development is burgeoning (Cater and Lowman 1994; Miller and Malek-Zadeh 1996; Mowforth and Munt 1998). The *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* is in its 15th year. There are a growing array of terms that fall under the umbrella of appropriate tourism development including: soft tourism, development tourism, ethno-tourism, eco-tourism, fair tourism, sustainable tourism and solidarity tourism, with such meanings suggesting not only world view but wider issues as well (McCool and Moisey 2008:3). For example, eco-tourism sets out to educate the traveler and provides funds for conservation whilst directly contributing to the economic development and political empowerment of local communities and fostering respect for different cultures and human rights (Honey 2008:33).

Sustainable tourism is committed to minimizing impact on the environment and local culture while helping to generate income and employment for local people and respecting the involvement of local people in the decision making process; thus it shares almost identical goals to that of sustainable development. As Holden suggests:

> Alternative tourism is a process which promotes a just form of travel between members of different communities. It seeks to achieve mutual understanding, solidarity and equality amongst participants. (Holden 1984:15)

These myriad terms have mass market appeal. The community tourism programme, *Saraguro Rikuy*, is one of the latest incarnations of a growing array of terms that fall under the umbrella of appropriate tourism development. With a stated aim of developing and improving tourism products and services of project members, and to offer a variety of "authentic" products, *Saraguro Rikuy* sells itself as "a different kind of tourism experience," the basic concept of community tourism from their model is that of "coexistence" in the form of a cultural exchange between visitors and the community. Tourists are offered the opportunity of an "intercultural perspective" whilst aiming to contribute to community development and the conservation of natural resources and cultural traditions.

Today, close to a hundred communities are engaged in community tourism initiatives within Ecuador (FEPTCE 2007). In 2002 *turismo comunitario* acquired legal status under the Tourism Act, which also recognized the *Plurinational Federation of Turismo Comunitario in Ecuador* (FEPTCE) as the concept's interlocutor, in the organization, regulation and definition of community tourism.

Under this system, in order for any given community to offer "community tourism" it needs to be confirmed and mandated by FEPTCE. As such, private companies are not able to offer this service, in name. For example, in Saraguro, individual homes that wished to leave the community tourism program are informed that if they choose to go-it-alone they will no longer legally be able to define themselves as community tourism. Private companies see this as an attack on the free market, as, furthermore, officially recognized community tourism projects receive tax breaks (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernández-Ramírez 2010:204).

Advocates argue that culturally appropriate models provide the dual benefits of enhancing local cultural traditions while developing economic sustainability. At the same time critiques of culturally appropriate models raise questions about miscommunications and misunderstandings between the benefactors of development projects and the beneficiaries. Hutchins, for example, argues that "community tourism in the end offers social and economic "alternatives" in name only" (Hutchins 2010:28). Indeed, "culturally appropriate,""alternative tourism" and "sustainable development" may sound like new and attractive alternatives to the "old problem" of mass tourism, but in reality these terms can and have been used to mean almost anything (Butler 1992:31), and ultimately, "what may be appropriate for specific communities, regions, or countries may not be for others" (Brohman 1996:65). In the context of Saraguro, as will be demonstrated, an elite minority has taken the lead in enhancing and revitalizing local traditions and has also been those who have benefited the most economically. Furthermore, the rhetorical space they

possess due to their NGO connections allows them to use the tourism project as a soapbox in part to represent the growing local ideology of Incanismo.

Methodology

The four major groups of participants with whom I worked were Spanish solidarity tourists who travelled through a programme organized by a Spanish NGO, North American tourists visiting as part of locally arranged tours from Cuenca, independent tourists to Saraguro, and the Saraguro inhabitants themselves, who were both directly and indirectly involved in the community tourism project.

For the first two weeks of our stay in Saraguro we lived in the Hostal Achik Wasi. This was an easy entry point into Saraguro and was deemed a useful location as the Spanish tourists and North American group tourists would begin their own stays there. During this period my wife, fellow anthropology student Jennifer Jenson, and our two young children (30 months and 9 weeks) were also in attendance.

A key problem with ethnographic research involving tourists is how to situate oneself in a "contact zone" where sustained and meaningful encounters may transpire (Frohlick and Harrison, 2008:4-5). By nature tourists are generally a fairly amorphous group who move around and are thus difficult research subjects who lack any "habitus of collectivity" (Amit 2000:14). This location at the hostel allowed me to make contact with groups of American and Canadian students who arrived the first two weekends of my stay; and the initial stages of my research were spent largely in general participant observation with these two groups, attending the tours and daily activities which were arranged for them during their stay. To ensure

that I was a participant as opposed to a more detached observer I partook in most of the guided activities scheduled for the tourists. This initial period was helpful in establishing relationships which facilitated a sharing of experiences and a co-production of interpretations, as well as allowing me to become more integrated within the group. This also allowed me to observe the activities presented to the tourist in the places they visited and the information relayed to them via guides and other mediators in the community tourism project.

To situate myself favourably for the arrival of community tourism tourists staying in local homes we moved into a family home in Ñamarín, one of the surrounding communities. Living in the same household allowed the opportunity to view the tourists' experiences through the use of ethnographic methods, often times rare in the study of tourism due to their inherent transitory nature. This presented an occasion to overcome some of the anxieties inherent in tourism research concerning the otherwise extremely limited time spent with research subjects (Frohlick and Harrison 2008:14).

By examining the photographic practices of the tourists themselves, we can learn not only something about them and tourism more generally, but also about the interaction between Western and non-Western cultures (Garlick 2002:290). "The importance of the visual image in determining or shaping images and visitation is probably as great as it is unstudied" (Butler 1990:51). In the post-modern framework, promotional literature, postcards and photographic images taken by tourists are a form of "text" used to "represent" the world (Jenkins 2003:306), which "reflect and shape particular discourses of place and identity" (Pritchard and

Morgan 2003:111). In cultural analysis, texts do not need to be linguistic at all; any cultural artifact, visual images included, can be seen as a text (Fairclough 1995:4).

John Urry (1990) argues that tourism and photography combine to create a "tourist gaze" in which local inhabitants are positioned and defined by the camera lens, yet what creates a particular “gaze” depends upon exactly what it is contrasted to (Urry 2002:1). By analyzing certain representations and their consumption, research may begin to unravel understandings of indigeneity held by both groups and how these understandings may be performed during their encounter with each other. In analyzing promotional and tourist photographs I investigated evidence for the “circle of representation” (Jenkins 2003)--that is, the projection, perception and perpetuation of photographic images pertaining to the Saraguros-- and the “hermeneutic circle”, which results when images are recaptured from those seen in NGO marketing literature or the mass media and the resulting photographs are brought home to show “their version of the images that they had seen originally before setting off” (Urry 1990:140).

I had initially planned to gather and analyze the photographs of all tourists that I encountered whilst in Saraguro. Yet after only a month I had collected literally thousands, and begun to question the feasibility and worthiness of this method as the more photos I collected the more I realized I could select specific pictures to prove literally anything about tourists’ motivations or understanding of indigeneity. Furthermore I deemed the methodology flawed as, for example, group tourists were taken on virtually identical tours and presented with the same images or vista points to take photographs at/of. The collection of this data would only have served

to prove that the tourists' gaze, and that which the tourists subsequently take pictures of, has already been deemed photo worthy before their arrival. Besides which, I was able to witness the photographic practices of independent tourists who had greater agency of that which they deemed photo worthy. These actions I was able to witness in the context in which the photographs were taken, which provided much greater detail than if I were simply given a number of anonymous photographs. Also, the tourists I interviewed about photographic practices and their views on indigeneity more generally were very forthcoming on these subjects almost to the point that I believed they felt their opinions to be progressive and enlightened. I further recorded visual text myself in the form of photographs, to collect images of the tourists and the Saraguros whilst they were photographing and being photographed, with specific attention paid to the before and after scenarios. I was able to bookmark the photographic image capture, so as to give the photographic snapshot a specific context, or story, to enable me to further analyze the performativity of such an encounter. Attention also focused on how the Saraguros veiled, or indeed the tourists themselves edited out aspects of Saraguro culture that may conflict with a sense of indigenous authenticity, and indeed, how performances of indigeneity may transcend these essentialized notions. Important in the context of photographic performances of indigeneity is a determination of whether the Saraguros themselves are orchestrating the performance or whether they are taking cues from the tourists or NGO mediators.

With so much emphasis on hosts and guests within tourism research, one risks ignoring "mediators"—such as government officials, tourism planners, travel

agents, tour guides, and travel writers--who promote and develop tourist destinations (Chambers 2000:30). I attempted to discover who produces tourist literature locally to explore the strategies and reasons behind some of the local organizational aspects of the project. Official organizational and program literature, as well as visual images on posters and promotional or educational materials, were reviewed. Consideration of visual documents included the audience for whom they were intended, the social context in which they were produced and received, and the cultural meanings they were influenced by and designed to influence (Davies 2008:202-203). Both quantitative content analysis and a semiotic analysis were used to recognize repeated themes or images and to understand the representations of the Saraguros and their environment connoted within (O'Reilly 2005:171-172).

Soon after my arrival I was introduced to the coordinator at the community tourism office in Saraguro, who found a role for me in promotion, alongside Natalia (a Spanish volunteer) who was in Saraguro with a local NGO, Fundación Kawsay. This volunteer work involved updating the turismosaraguro.com website. This proved a little tricky for me as I was straddling the line between wanting to study the promotional literature on the website and expected to contribute my own ideas. It was fine in the end because my co-designer was Spanish and therefore wrote most of the text and I was involved mostly in the design, logistics and technical aspects of the website.

I also offered to provide digital photographic equipment, graphics editing software, and an expertise in photography. I was subsequently asked to design four separate business cards which were distributed to hostels and tourism offices in

various cities throughout Ecuador, as well as two brochures, to which I contributed photos.

This role gave me privileged access to tourists and mediators, but also information regarding problems, family grievances, tourist traffic, tours and subsequent changes and developments with regards to the community tourism project in Saraguro. However within a very short time of my arrival in Saraguro I noticed a certain reinvigoration of a lagging project which clearly didn't have enough tourists to sustain it economically. I initially took this new found enthusiasm as a positive, however, one family in particular planned to invest a substantial amount of money in a new tourism based project on the assumption that waves of tourists lurked just over the horizon. This became somewhat of an ethical dilemma, so I arranged a meeting with the family who planned to build the $70,000 tourism complex and explained my concerns and listed evidence to support them (the family had only been involved in community tourism for two months). The family was happy to receive the information but said they planned to go ahead with the project, albeit in a slightly scaled down version. The museum was scheduled to be up and running by October 2010 and the hostel/restaurant/artisan workshop in December 2010. However, when I departed the field site in December 2010, construction had yet to begin on either, and it seems these plans may have been shelved.

As part of this volunteer role I was guided around Saraguro's communities involved in community tourism[5] which allowed me to see family accommodations provided to the tourists, meet those directly involved in tourism, attend meetings, and the like. The tourism community of Ñamarín also organized a night of traditional music, dance and food so that I could document it photographically to aid in the promotion of tourism there. I also attended a tourism fair in Guayaquil to help promote Saraguro, where I was able to talk to some of the representatives of other community tourism projects in Ecuador, which provided a valuable comparison point with the project in Saraguro.

One of the main decisions that arose was where to physically situate myself: with hosts or with guests? Both hosts and guests observed my embodied emplacement, which had a bearing on their perceptions of and interactions with me. As an ethnographer one can theoretically move between these two groups, yet this approach threatens to upset the carefully negotiated yet uncertain terrain between them (Frohlick and Harrison 2008:9). Volunteering at the local tourist operator allowed me to straddle this terrain, as whilst interacting with Saraguros I was

[5] Las Lagunas which has four homes involved in housing tourists (a capacity for 9 guests), Gunudel and Oñakapak which has one apiece (a capacity for 3 guests each) and Ñamarín which has one home with two available rooms (with a capacity for 5 guests). The family in Ilincho who hosted tourists was in the process of updating their accommodation as the previous room didn't have an en suite bathroom. The community of Gera doesn't have any accommodation for tourists yet is usually visited on tours by visiting groups as it is deemed the most traditional of all the indigenous communities in Saraguro

introduced as a volunteer and subsequently known to many of the community tourism participants as someone who was working in their interest.

During my 6 month stay in Saraguro I encountered approximately three-dozen Spanish solidarity tourists, close to a hundred group tourists and a dozen independent tourists. In interactions with tourists it was immediately apparent from my race, appearance and accent that I was not from Saraguro, despite my obvious familiarity with aspects of the location, the tour and local mediators. I usually spoke to the tourists in English, but if they preferred - as Spanish and French tourists generally did - we would converse in Spanish. By stating my research interests to the tourists I engendered a certain impartiality in the eyes of the tourist, and oftentimes seen as somewhat of a mediator myself, between tourist and local mediator.

I generally recorded my daily observations in a journal, as well as an audio log of taped interviews of which amounted around twenty. I translated those interviews conducted in Spanish in collaboration with fellow volunteer Natalia whose mother tongue is Spanish. In the naming of tourists and locals in this thesis I have used pseudonyms in common with popular names in the person's own country of origin.

Outline of thesis

In the first chapter I explore the myth of the Noble Savage by tracing its historical legacy and demonstrate how it has been used as a mirror to reflect that which is good or bad as determined by the society of the time. Then it will be shown

how this legacy continues to this day, has been massified, and continues to be manifest in associations of how contemporary tourists see “Indigenous peoples”.

In Chapter 2, I continue my exploration of the tourists’ motivations and demonstrate how they are linked to the search for an authenticity that they believe they have lost, and that which ultimately indigenous peoples in their most isolated and uncontaminated states are believed to maintain. Aware of these notions, local Saraguros objectify and commodify their culture in the form of stagings and performances which are deemed to reflect and fulfill tourism’s desires. These performances then come under a stringent evaluation by visiting tourists who determine authenticity based on their own essentalized notions of what indigenous people in their most pristine state should represent.

In the final chapter I focus on how this dialectical relationship between tourist and host within the community tourism framework has fostered the growth of a local incanismo movement practiced by a local indigenous elite. These neo-Incans see it as their birthright to (re)claim and (re)valorize an incaic cultural legacy in order to purge themselves of the cultural contaminations brought about by what they perceive as their five-hundred-year cultural postponement at the hands of the Spanish Colonization. In claiming themselves as authentic representations of Saraguro indigenous culture, elites associated with incanismo exclude the vast majority of non-practicing rural Saraguros, and as the ideology begins to grow from its relationship with tourism, it takes on a life of its own.

Chapter 2: In search of the Noble Savage

Achik Wasi Hostal is afforded an elevated position above the town of Saraguro, and from it roads descend so sharply down towards the main plaza that the grid-patterned streets ubiquitous of towns in the Americas have trouble sticking to plan. As the wooden *chiva* bus eases its way gingerly down the decline, zig-zagging through the road works - which during my subsequent six months in Saraguro, I would learn, multiply and move, but never quite go away - I hear the first articulation of the tourist group from behind me, "This is why it says in my guidebook most tourists stay in Saraguro one to two hours, NOT a week!"

Despite our pace, we bounce the short distance to the plaza on the *chiva's* wooden benches in a matter of minutes, where we circle left ninety degrees and begin the climb west, panning Saraguro and its surrounding communities beneath. Just before the road disappears over the ridge into the neighboring valley we come to a halt. Javier, the guide, introduces himself and then proceeds to draw attention to the community nearest our viewpoint looking out over Saraguro. With tourists peering out of the bus's open sides Javier explains how the scores of greenhouses in this particular community allow the inhabitants to grow non-endemic fruit and vegetables, none of which, he informs us, remain to be sold locally. As a result of this, the community's inhabitants are relatively wealthy in relation to many of the other communities surrounding the urban centre of Saraguro, and by way of validating this statement he points out the many larger "non-traditional houses" built there.

Back on board the *chiva* traverses the ridge and winds its way through a thin forest of lofty non-indigenous eucalyptus, which opens out into a yawning valley, the other side of which - Javier informs me - is the historical boundary between two local indigenous groups, the Saraguros and the Cañaris. After a quarter of an hour we reach our first collective glimpse of our destination, Gera, a community of fewer than 500 inhabitants. Javier again beckons at the driver to stop. He then explains to the group that this community, juxtaposing it with the last, doesn't have the same problems of immigration that befall many of the other communities; it is, as a result, a lot more "traditional" both architecturally and culturally.

The *chiva* stops at the small Catholic Church marking the centre of Gera, and people spill out of the sides, following the guide along the dirt track through the village. Being the middle of the day the high altitude sun is warming yet stark, and most people are out working in the fields, giving the place an under-populated feel. We stop at a gently sloping grassy bank by a house and are collectively informed will be staying here to eat lunch.

I introduce myself to a small group of the tourists and let them know I am here to study the community tourism project that has been set up here. I learn that their packed-lunches have been prepared by their respective host families they'd been staying with, in Cuenca, for the past few days. They compare packed lunches with each other and comment on how alike these are to those they'd prepare themselves back home in Alberta, Canada.

The guide exits the house with a man and they begin talking in the small courtyard, just below us, but out of earshot. One of the tourists from the little group I now inhabit states, “These people live such a simple life.” Nobody responds, so almost by way of qualifying his statement he continues, “Any person from any of these houses could just go to another house. In Canada we cannot do that – even with my friends I would have to phone them up and arrange a time and place to meet. They have community – these people don’t think about the individual, it’s the community that is important.”

This statement does get a reaction; his wife responding, “You don’t know what they think; you’ve never spoken to them!” “– “I can go ask them right now!” he replies, continuing, “Looking at these people we can see our beginnings …I bet I could leave my bag here and go on the hike and nobody would steal it.”

“You’re not leaving my bag here!” his wife protests. “- Well I know, but they wouldn’t steal it,” he retorts.

The guide then makes an announcement in Spanish about the bags strewn over the grass.

“SEE - I told you! We can just leave them here!” he exclaims, triumphantly.

Not wanting to be seen as taking sides in the discussion I offer rather meekly, “He said we should give them to that guy, and not to leave them here or else they may be stolen.”

His wife was right; he hadn’t spoken to anyone from Saraguro, and neither had she nor any of the group for that matter. These University of Calgary tourists were literally ushered off one bus and onto another when they arrived from Cuenca

a little over half an hour earlier. Yet Sulley and many of the other visiting group members I spoke to that day, or subsequent days, had estimations about what it meant to be indigenous and by default Saraguro, without ever having been here or having spoken to anyone from here before.

International tourists are often drawn to places like Saraguro in pursuit of a romanticized, pure indigenous Other. Various scholars have examined how the production of this "global, indigenous Other" in contrast to the corrupted, Western self, is a meta-narrative that informs Western understandings of indigenous peoples. It is my aim in this chapter to document these global understandings of indigeneity as witnessed through conversations with visiting tourists, and in the process attempt to mine the archaeology of their origins and their contemporary circulation. First I will trace historical development of the idea of noble savagery; the origins of which stretch back to Gilgamesh, ancient Greece, and the Garden of Eden. From that, I will then explore how the use of the myth of the Noble Savage has been conflated with contemporary perceptions of indigenous people more generally and used throughout history to reflect that which is troubling us lately, some drawing on it as a subliminal belief, others, with particular reference to Jean Jacques Rousseau, who deliberately constructed the myth to criticize the society in which he lived. Then I will examine the present-day usage of imagery of the Noble Savage, illustrating how the intellectual legacy that led to its production has been massified and taken for granted as "truth" in popular culture. Increasing degradation of the planet at the hands of industrial civilization and the resulting growth of the environmentalist movement since the 1960s and 70s has seen the contemporary

"reincarnation" of the noble savage, reborn, as the ecologically noble savage (Redford 1990).

Through the use of ethnographic examples and interviews I will illustrate how the formulation and perception of noble savagery throughout history emulates how contemporary tourists see "indigenous people" more generally. Tourists in Saraguro commonly held the view of "civilization as pollution" where they believed in the power of "modern society" as a source of contamination and corruption of traditional culture, an idea which highlights the perception of indigenous passivity. And in the tourists' preoccupation with preserving indigenous authenticity we see in this desire the belief indigenous people are thought to possess an inherent generosity and anti-materialism, communalism and community, attributes the increasingly alienated western tourists see as absent in their own society and as such construct, admire and covet in others. Finally I shall explore how having unwittingly been elevated to represent the utopian idyll in the imaginations of visiting tourists, indigenous people are placed on a pedestal, which ultimately risks their fall from grace to ignoble savagery should they then fail to live up to the visionary standards others have entrusted upon them.

The history of the noble savage

His whole body was shaggy with hair; he was furnished with tresses like a woman,
His locks of hair grew luxuriant like grain.
He knew neither people nor country; he was dressed as cattle are.
With gazelles he eats vegetation,
With cattle he quenches his thirst at the watering place.
With wild beasts he satisfies his need for water.
(Gilgamesh tablet 1.)

The Sumerian Gods created Enkidu, a primitive man living in harmony with nature, as a rival to the mighty Gilgamesh. On discovering this, Gilgamesh has him seduced by a harlot who tempts him from the wild, civilizing him through continued sexual intercourse. Thereafter, this mythical representative of humanity prior to civilization falls out of sync with nature, is lured away from his harmonious life, into the city and, ultimately to his doom.

In Greek mythology, circa 700BC, poet Hesiod's Golden Age is a lost paradise of everlasting spring where primitive communism, trust, simplicity, innocence and peace prevailed. The earth produced food in such abundance there was no need for agriculture, and the people were vegetarians as they had no need to eat meat. However, in succeeding degenerative ages – Silver, Bronze and Iron – there is a course of spiritual decay in which evil gradually replaces good; a story of lamentable decline.

In Genesis, Adam and Eve fall from grace when they commit original sin in the Garden of Eden, and are banished from living off God's bounty to toiling at agriculture. From that moment onward Christianity agonizes over humanity's ejection from its idyll in the Garden of Eden; in part, a nostalgic folk memory of a pre-agricultural way of life.

In ancient Greece, Homer and Xenophon idealized the Arcadians' way of life, to the point that "Arcadian" is now a contemporary adage referring to "innocent contentment," "an idealized country dweller" or relating to "an ideal pastoral paradise." Setting them up as an ideal example of human society, a host of Graeco-

Roman writers, including Ephorus, Strabo and later Horace, similarly eulogized the Scythians establishing a truism which would cast them in the role of "noble savage" from the fourth century BC up until the early 19th century.

Arcadia was a remote mountainous region, Herodotus and Ephorus claiming that the inhabitants of which were Pelasgians, the Greek name for the primitive indigenous people of Greece. The Scythians in contrast were not a specific people but a network of culturally similar nomadic tribes living primarily to the north and east of Greece. The eulogizing of these peoples, it can be argued, was based on their geographic locations *outside the realm* of civilization, living on the peripheries of the imagination, and with that distance their cultures' perceived connection to the past, and its purity, from all that we perceive is amiss with our own culture.

However, once prolonged contact was made with these noble savages the romance tended to wear off. In 8 AD, the Greek poet Ovid (a major source for the diffusion of the Golden Age myth) was banished to Scythia, and whilst there found little that was noble about the people. Similarly, the Romans were to ennoble the nomadic German tribes to the north, who Christian authors of later years were to vilify as the pagan murderers of evangelists. And with their eventual Christianization the once distant tribes came into the fold, became civilized, and Europe's fascination with the noble savage faded.

With the conquest of the New World in 1492, the myth of the noble savage again gained currency as accounts of "savage" lands, and the explorers who had overcome their prejudices about European superiority through contact with their way of life, became commonplace. The newly discovered "Indians" of the New World

became the new Scythians of antiquity, and in many cases surpassed even that; comparable to that of the classical conception of the golden age.

> They [the Indians] lived in the golden age: they did not know any measure of land; nor did they have any judges, or laws, or letters, or trade. They lived day by day and did not make plans for a longer period of time. (Pietro Bembo 1551 cited in Hertzhauser 1729:353-354)

In the opinion of Michel de Montaigne, in his essay "Of Cannibals" (1580), their lives surpassed even that:

> I regret that neither Lycargus nor Plato knew the American Indians; because it seems to me, that which we see with our experience in these peoples surpasses not only every description, with which poetry has enhanced the golden age, and all its fantasies concerning a happy state for mankind, but even the conceptions and desires of philosophy. They could not have imagined a purer and simpler naiveté than that which we see with our own experience…I would tell Plato that there is a people that does not know any form of trade, has no knowledge of letters, no science of numbers, no titles for magistrates nor for political supremacy, no use of servants, no wealth or poverty….Even the very words that mean lie, treason, simulation, avarice, envy, slander, forgiveness, are unknown. (Montaigne 1580:395 cited in Reinhold 1993:401)

The term "Noble Savage" is habitually accredited to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, yet ethnomusicologist Ter Ellingson sets out to disprove this in his book, *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, stating that rather, Rousseau's purpose was to criticize French society, not to laud natural states. Rousseau was engaging in a thought experiment based on hypothetical humans in

> a state that no longer exists, perhaps never existed, and probably never will, of which one must nevertheless have an accurate idea in order to judge our own present state properly. (Rousseau 1755 cited in Damrosch 2005:240)

Combee and Plax (1973) argue Jean Jacque Rousseau's method was primarily introspection; the phenomenon of savagery had long been viewed as negative, juxtaposed as it was to "civilized" like "infidel" to "Christian". This, Combee and Plax argue, provided for no criticism of "self", and so Rousseau attempted to create the savage Other, a new stereotype which could be portrayed in a good light thus allowing a comparison suggesting room for civilization's improvement. A return to savagery was neither desirable nor possible. The idea was to implant the belief that we the "civilized" are not good enough *yet*. Rousseau consciously created a reproach to contemporary society. And looking back to Gilgamesh, Genesis and Greek mythology, Rousseau was simply continuing the trend of seeing the noble savage not as living breathing man, but a utopian idyll.

The cultural self-criticism made possible by the 18th century Enlightenment undoubtedly contributed to the blossoming of the "Noble Savage." Moving into the 19th century, Edna L Steeves (1973) argues that many characteristics of early Romanticism show a close relation to the cult of the noble savage:

> the cult of nature – the effect of natural scenery, especially its more awesome aspects…a belief in the religion of nature; the cult of the passions, especially the strong, unbridled emotions, such as passionate love shown by primitive and unsophisticated men…anti-intellectualism, a distrust of the educated and sophisticated, and an admiration of the humble and lowly – such as the uncouth peasant, the innocent child; the cult of the past, the desire for a Garden of Eden before civilization corrupted the world. (Steeves 1973:96-97)

As the 19th century wore on, however, the idea became less credible. With religious and commercial colonial expansion, progresses in geology, and anthropology and the new science of evolution throwing new light on these

"primitive peoples" who, Steeves argues, remained curiosities, the positive luster began to give way to more negative treatments of non-Western peoples to the extent that they began to appear decidedly ignoble.

> Early modern explorers, colonists, and missionaries who actually lived among the peoples of the New World demonized them (sometimes literally) more often than they ennobled them. (Carhart 2004)

In Spain, Stelio Cro argues, this fall from grace happened much earlier; during the 17th century, when utopian thought and action were increasingly seen in Spain as hostile forces which must be crushed:

> Spanish officials came to see the Noble savage of the Reductions as a rebel within the state, a threat to the rest of the colonies and, eventually, as an enemy…. (Cro 1989:6)

This romanticized figure began to be attacked. And since much of the evidence to support him was based on romantic theorization he became a sitting duck for anyone who wanted to take a shot. The fact that the actual physical representation of him was a theoretical mirage in many ways made it easier for his authors to shape him into any image they desired. The native of the New World had to be proven to be inferior "lest the European conquistador incur the sin of doing unto others what he would not do unto himself" (Ramos 1998:59). The more dishonored was the Indian the more honored his creators became.

Ter Ellingson's thesis argues that John Crawfurd, a British anthropologist, resurrected the term "Noble Savage" in a paper given in 1859, and attributed it to Rousseau in order to contrast the Noble Savage with the civilized white and in the process attempted to legitimize race as a category of analysis. In resurrecting the

straw man Noble Savage he then set about destroying him, arguing the life that he actually lived was unworthy of respect. Following in the path of Plato, in The Republic, nineteenth century romantics began to use the Noble savage's image as a way to highlight the virtues of Western civilization.

Yet despite this concerted attack on the myth of the noble savage, he hasn't disappeared from the popular imagination; far from it. In fact, in his absence from the collective conscience he has gained an attribute which one could argue contemporarily defines him upon his rebirth above all else: "The *ecologically* noble savage."

Perhaps the major reason for this was the birth of the environmental movement, which Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* 1962 is widely credited with helping launch. It begins; "There was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings" (Carson 1962:1). In her introduction, A *Fable for Tomorrow*, the author builds a seductive picture of a perfect little rural town before "some evil spell…shadow of death" (Carson 1962:2) arrives, tearing it all down in the most dramatic and disturbing manner. With the reader still in a state of shock, Carson concedes the town "does not actually exist, but it might easily have a thousand counterparts in America or elsewhere in the world" (Carson 1962:3).

In the mythical Golden Age, or the Garden of Eden, nature provided in such abundance, there wasn't a need to hunt, or eat meat, and there was no need for sustainability as nature was a limitless replenishing larder. The notion of the noble savage living in harmony with nature as its ecological guardian, and his inherent

sustainability, appears to be an attribute more recently acquired, brought about by the paralleled growth in the environmental movement and its search for a savior; to the extent that nowadays the savage's *ecological* nobility is his defining (or most sought after and valuable) characteristic.

The neofunctionalist ideas of Marvin Harris (1964: 1974) and Roy Rappaport (1983), among others, came to the fore in the 1960s, and with those, the belief that people once lived in near perfect equilibrium with the natural environment. Michael Alvard (1993) and Kent Redford (1990) critiqued this "harmony with nature" aspect, with the latter arguing that it "inspired this century's reincarnation of the noble savage….The idealized figure of centuries past had been reborn, as the ecologically noble savage" (1990:27), a topic I will explore in more detail below.

An intellectual legacy massified in popular culture

Another (unwitting) champion of the environmental movement was Chief Seattle whose 1854 speech was reprinted widely, cited in myriad books on environmental issues, and adorned many a student's wall across North America in the 1970's and 1980's. However there is no verbatim transcript in existence. Version one appeared in the Seattle Sunday Star in 1887, version 2 was written by poet William Arrowsmith in the late 1960s, and version 3, the most widely known, was written by screenwriter Ted Perry in 1971 for a film about the plight of the Earth which departed sharply from all previous versions of Seattle's speech (see Kaiser 1987). This version soon generated its own offspring, and Version 4 was a shortened edition of version 3 included in an exhibit at Expo 74, in Spokane,

Washington. “The reality is that the current version of Chief Seattle’s speech represents but the latest rendition of an evolving work of fiction” (Abruzzi 2000:73).

The success of the speech says something salient, however; and who better to pose the question than the actual author himself, Ted Perry, in an interview in Newsweek (1992). “Why are we so willing to accept a text like this if it’s attributed to a Native American?” he asks. “It’s another case of placing Native Americans up on a pedestal and not taking responsibility for our own actions.” (Perry, cited in Jones and Sawhill 1992) The destruction of the planet, deforestation, over-fishing, and global warming, are now generally considered to be symptoms of the western culture of industrial civilization. If the culprit behind this is progress, economic development or modernity or even civilization itself, then the remedies for its shortfalls cannot be found in the culture of perpetuator, but in the past.

Instead, Western society engages in a nostalgic search for a lost past where people lived sustainably in harmony with nature. There we find an indigenous people living simple sustainable lives and see a glimmer of hope; the answer lies here, in how we *used* to live; only by returning to this can we save the planet and ourselves from our modern selves. The portrayal of indigenous people in the role of earth savior is a sign of desperation, of nowhere else to go.

The “Noble Savage” has consistently reemerged in various incarnations in the latter half of the twentieth century onwards; with movies, including, *Jeremiah Johnson* (1972), *The Emerald Forest (1985),* the eco-pacifist Lakota in *Dances With Wolves* (1990), *At Play in the Fields of the Lord* (1991), the Disneyfication of *Pocahontas* (1995), *Princess Mononoke* (1997), John the Savage in the novel *Brave*

New World and popular science magazines like *National Geographic*, to name but a few. Its most recent proponents are the Na'vi in James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009). The creators of the movie thought it pertinent to leave Earth altogether, for *Pandora*, where they could create the noblest savages of our wildest dreams. Indigenous people of earth, no matter how "uncontacted," apparently just don't make the grade anymore, and we may have even "exhausted the metaphoric potentiality of primitive man," (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994:438) at least at the box office.

In *Avatar* we revisit the crime scene of the New World explorer, where savages roam noble, and greedy colonialists kill edenic lives for valuable minerals. In the movie, the human white man makes contact, becomes accepted and seduced by the sapient humanoid indigenous inhabitants of the fictional moon Pandora, switches sides, and becomes one of their most respected warriors. The ex-marine ultimately leads the subaltern to victory against the evil excesses of homosapien capitalist civilization. In the process he redresses the evils of civilization's colonial history, and we feel elated that we have been vicariously absolved of our collective guilt. Doubtless, audience members around the world connected the Na'vi with indigenous peoples past and present. Evo Morales, Bolivia's first indigenous president, praised the film for its "profound show of resistance to capitalism and the struggle for the defense of nature" (Associated Free Press 2010). Carson and Perry are simply following in the tradition of Heriod and Rousseau, or the most popular contemporary exponent, James Cameron's, Avatar; romanticizing a fictional scenario

in an effort to highlight and criticize the perceived problems of contemporary society.

Civilization as pollution

> …for we regard the Scythians the most straightforward of men and the least prone to mischief, as also far more frugal and independent of others than we are. And yet our [Greek] mode of life has spread its changes for the worse to almost all peoples…. (Strabo cited in Johnson 1959:252)

Here we see the Scythian contrasted with the Greek civilization, at the same time Strabo explains the noble qualities of the Scythians he is criticizing the contemporary Greek mode of life, as it was viewed at the time, "spread[ing] its changes for the worse to almost all peoples", in an early critique at what today would doubtless be categorized under globalization: the idea that *our* civilization corrupts the Other. The idea that civilization, or its Trojan horse, globalization, corrupts and ultimately destroys indigenous culture and all its inherent goodness was a common belief amongst the tourists visiting Saraguro. As one tourist put it, the indigenous people of Saraguro face "a struggle to maintain their culture, values and traditions and not be bulldozed or washed away by outside forces." Another tourist worried about "…them being able to engage in the broader world that has been dropped down upon them."

Phrases such as "bulldozed," "washed away" or having the world "dropped down upon them" imply a sense of destruction or imminent doom, and highlight the perception that the indigenous Saraguros live in a precarious state at risk from "outside forces" or the "broader world", which hang over them like the Sword of

Damocles. Their isolation from the sands of time has left their culture pure and authentic; any cultural hybridity or even historical change – least not change from the corruption of modernity from the west - will see them wither away. Some anthropologists, as Marshall Sahlins explains, have echoed these sentiments in what he calls "despondency theory", which sees indigenous people as passive victims of western domination and their inevitable collapse due to modernization and global capitalism: "A corollary of despondency theory was that the others would now become just like us - if they survived" (Sahlins 2005:45).

Some tourists even felt that they themselves, in some way as carriers or harbingers of modernity or civilization, merely by their presence, were polluting:

> I wish they are not gonna be touched, but it's not gonna be possible, civilization is always gonna touch…I think I feel guilty just being here, what's my impact? It doesn't matter how quiet I am or what I do, just me being here….

The indigenous Other in this instance is seen as a passive recipient who needs to be protected from too much contact with outsiders who by merely being there will lead to a corruption of their hosts. Most tourists agreed civilization would "touch them" eventually, and for some that factor in itself was their primary motivation for them choosing to come here *now*, before the culture was irreparably altered or "lost". Globalization, civilization or modernity, and by proxy the tourist, are seen as the polluting factor, which should be prevented as much as possible from coming into contact with the culture of the indigenous Saraguros. Something untouched is virginal, and once it is touched by our hand, the hand of western civilization, it loses its purity.

> The *Garden of Eden* is the destination of a voyage to the dawn of creation itself, where "our primitive ancestors", who have not eaten of the tree of knowledge that is "modern civilization", can be found. (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994:438)

In our first meeting, Sulley, who had grown up in Ghana, had said, "Looking at these people we can see our beginnings." Herod's Golden Age enjoyed an "everlasting spring" where there were no seasons; therefore there was no time, no past, no history and no beginning. When explorers stumble upon previously "uncontacted" tribes they believe they are seeing people living in the past, living museum pieces; yet in the present they *live* in the beginning, their history beginning on contact. By visiting people who have come into minimal contact with western civilization it is believed one can attain glimpses of what life was like in the past. For this to be possible their culture needs to be static, lived in an everlasting spring with change only occurring or beginning on contact with us.

Nobody I met suggested the Saraguros were in any way uncontacted. Yet Saraguro's perceived geographical isolation in the Andes, and its "distance" from civilization, engendered belief that the people had been less exposed to modernity, to the *now,* or perhaps more accurately, *our now*. This geographical distance, or isolation, allows the indigenous Saraguros to maintain connections to the past. The strand connecting them has yet to be severed, rendering them static, the "stereotype of Indian societies as hermetically sealed, static and historically doomed" (Salomon 1973). An Italian volunteer working in a community tourism project in Muisne, on the Pacific Coast, explained:

> Today they [the Saraguros] live like their grandfathers. Always in the mountains the community is more closed and the change is very slow… in the coast there are more tourists and it is more commercial so the culture is more of a mixture. Here it is more closed and more authentic and real.

But this begs the question: What is it that the tourist wants to protect about their indigenous culture? Should all cultures be protected or isolated from each other to prevent them from washing each other away? As Plato's *Laws* suggested, in the 4th Century BC Greeks should be limited in their association with foreigners and in their propensity to travel, as people have a tendency of mimicking and inheriting the cultures with whom they come into contact. Why were none of the tourists I met worried about their own respective cultures (or western civilization) being bulldozed by that of the Saraguros? Of course for tourists, or anyone for that matter, to want to maintain or protect something, it must have some redeeming characteristics in the eye of the protector.

One tourist from Oregon said he felt the indigenous culture in Saraguro was "much stronger" than back home because "in America, the English settlers killed off many of the indigenous people to make space for themselves"; here in Saraguro, he said, "they just kinda stuck around."

That indigenous people living in North America had already "lost" their culture was a common assumption amongst the tourists from Canada and the United States. Another tourist from the Oregon group said he lived about 5 miles from a reservation and had been there many times, but could see no ways in which their lives were different to "ours". When I asked him why he had been to the

reservation so many times he said it was primarily to buy fireworks. This prompted other members of the group to talk up the financial benefits of the reservation system for the indigenous people who lived there, particularly down in places like California where they were "allowed" to build Casinos, which meant they were able to make a "tidy profit."

The Noble Savage of North America is a figure of the past and does not exist in the present. There seemed to be no concern that the indigenous cultures of North America were under threat from civilization or that contact with them should be limited in order to protect and preserve them as was the case with the Saraguros. The damage had already been done;"settlers killed off" not only the North American Indians but also their culture, and yearning for attributes of their culture deemed worthy of protection, was now confined to the past, contemporarily eulogized in movies like *Dances with Wolves*.

This idea of looking upon indigenous people as yet untouched by our culture can be also be interpreted as "We've come a long way, we are you in the morrow" (Diamond 1981:177 cited in Ramos 1998:41). *They* are in a stage of pre-civilization or pre-modernity and without them inhabiting such a stage, the yardstick with which to measure one's own society would be absent, whether that assessment is critical or one lauding the perceived advances of our own culture, or civilization. David Diamond traces this "inverted mirror" viewing to Plato's Republic: "In opposing the primitive, Plato helps us define both it and the state" (Diamond 1981: 177 cited in Ramos 1998:41).

Generosity and anti-materialism; communalism and community

Indigenous people viewed as anti-capitalist and living in a culture of little greed or envy was a popular assumption made by many of the tourists I spoke to whilst in Saraguro. Yīng, a Chinese travel writer, believed that "indigenous people live very simple but you can feel they are very happy they don't have too much money but they enjoy their life." A French lady who had travelled widely with the express intention of visiting indigenous communities felt indigenous people had a much weaker attachment to money than "us", and by way of example she said they would "give you things without expecting anything in return." This view of "our" attachment to money may be attributed to contemporary conceptions of capitalism and consumerism and the perceived greed these provoke in those living in western civilization. The Noble Savage becomes a moral corrective to the excesses of Western life:

> I think they [people in Canada] are envious but they don't know how … [we could] go from defining ourselves as, 'I have a bigger house and a better car and more education' to now all of a sudden I'm gonna worry about my neighbor and we're all gonna have the exact same house. I don't know without a catastrophe how you'd actually go back?

The notion of an anti-capitalist communal lifestyle gone awry, or lost, and only retrievable in the past or without a catastrophe, begs the question: "Go back" to *when*? As has been demonstrated, a similar nostalgic yearning stretches back down through the ages. For example, Miguel de Cervantes, in *Don Quixote*, (1605), attributes similar traits to those living in the Golden Age:

> Happy the age, happy the time, to which the ancients gave the name of golden, not because in that fortunate age the gold so coveted in this our iron one was gained without toil, but because they that lived in it knew not the two words 'mine' and 'thine'! (Cervantes 1605, Part I, Chapter XI)

Another common assumption amongst tourists visiting Saraguro was that the indigenous people lived more in "community."

> There is more community in this indigenous place than where we come from [Canada] - there isn't that notion of 'I', there is more the notion of 'we' the community. I get the sense that they are happy and, 'we are each our brother's keepers' is alive in this society, I can sense that….This is a life where you know you can count on others when you need them and I think this is an enviable situation. This must be the way most societies used to be; even Ghana, in Accra, you can't depend on other people to help you out.

Again the reference to how things "used to be" and that ability to be able to count on others as an "enviable situation", and that "*even* Ghana", a place which Sulley presumably believes hasn't been touched by the hand of modernity as much as his present hometown of Calgary, one cannot depend on others.

Lisa, a tourist from Wisconsin, ascertained that in the way the indigenous Saraguro dressed lay a conscious effort to create and maintain a more communal, less individualistic environment.

> There is a TV in my room so they see how other people dress…they are proud of their culture. They don't care about how different one looks. [Their style of dress] cuts down on individuality. It's another way to say "we are about community and not individuals."

This idea is borne out in a study by Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins of the popular science magazine *National Geographic* that found readers believed the clothing worn by indigenous people stood for an entire mind-set. "Local costume

suggests something about the social stability and timelessness of the people depicted" (Lutz and Collins 1993:92 cited in Conklin 1997:714). (Indigenous clothing as a sign of indigenous "authenticity" will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4.)

The idea of indigenous people and community was echoed by John-Pierre, a retired tourist from France, who had travelled extensively throughout his life, visiting many indigenous communities throughout the world, including ones in Indonesia, Mali, Morocco and Peru; believing that, in general, indigenous people were more communal, and that in France "we have lost this." When I asked him if he knew of anywhere in Europe where they had a similar communal ethos, he said, "No, not anymore."

One could garner from this that Europeans *once* lived like that, as though this communal phase was commonplace and perhaps even universal, once upon a time. Yet a nostalgic yearning still remains:

> If you really talk to a non-indigenous, truthfully, they will tell you that all the show is just show, if they had their way they would want all this to be away and to live their life as an indigenous person; where they don't have to worry about material things. But they don't know how to let go. When you strip it down they all want simple lives and they all want - and I know I want it - is community. People are tired and unsatisfied, none of our friends [in Canada] are happy. How many rich people with all the money they have do stupid things; because they are still not satisfied, not happy with all the means they've got? The 'individual theme' amongst non-indigenous people is what the problem is, and I have a strong feeling that if they could do it all over again they would want "we" instead of "I".

Sulley believes that the people in Canada - if we were able to tap into their core needs and desires, or indeed, if they were true to themselves - all desire to live

in community, to live "simple lives". The evidence of this can be seen in their unhappiness with their current lifestyles and all its superficial excesses. The way to rectify this unhappiness is to live without material possessions and eliminate the individualism that permeates western culture. And the way to achieve this is to live like an indigenous person, which would mean having to "do it all over again"; again this notion of going back and starting over from a new beginning. *They* are *us* in the past; "What could be clearer evidence of temporal distancing than placing the Now of the primitive in the Then of the Western adult" (Fabian 1983:63). When I asked Aldo, an Italian volunteer working in Ecuador what he believed the tourist's primary motivations were for visiting Saraguro, he offered:

> They want to live in the community. We in Europe and USA we have lost the tradition. [Here] they can find what they've lost. Our society doesn't have a relationship.

The ecologically noble savage

Pamela, a Finnish woman who was in Ecuador volunteering at a fair trade banana plantation on the Pacific Coast near Machala, believed that indigenous people lived closer to nature and were kinder to animals. Jean Pierre said the main difference between indigenous and non-indigenous was the former's connection to the natural. After he told me this I pointed out to the fields, where maize crops grew, greenhouses stood and cows grazed the pastures and asked him if he thought this was really much different from rural France. He said indeed it was, because the methods here were more ecological, which in modern jargon I translated as more organic.

This belief was echoed by another French tourist, Aurelie, who said in her experience indigenous people lived "more naturally". I asked if she thought there were any people in France who live like this, and she said yes, in the centre of France she personally knew a man who lived on a small farm without electricity and running water, and that it was possible to visit him on the weekends and buy food, as she had done on occasion. "More naturally" in these cases seemed to translate as a more rustic, rural, ecological lifestyle, with Jenny from Calgary believing:

> We think we have the right to see indigenous people as inferior; it happens in Canada, they think they are superior.... We must remember that indigenous people are in tune with nature and we can learn a lot from them.

"We" can learn from "them" – they can provide a potential antidote to our discontents. They possess redemptive possibilities, something which people in Canada, or the west at large, have lost or been corrupted away from. Indigenous societies in their most romanticized and essentialized grand narratives are thought to possess an often unique body of cultural and environmental knowledge, community values, interconnectedness and spiritual enlightenment. As Sulley said:

> We think we know it all "hey, we manufactured this." We know for a fact that the practices of indigenous people have always been making do with what is available to them. There is a rare chance that an indigenous community is going to do something to destroy mother earth. They believe tsunamis are because the earth is being maltreated; this is how God is punishing....They live and believe in nature, they get everything from nature, and they don't question things: they attribute it to either punishment or blessings of the Gods…non-indigenous people like me and you have gone beyond this to a state where we've allowed reason to come into everything we do and we rationalize everything.

Every time western civilization begins to develop ailments it considers to be harmful or destructive, the antidote - it seems - can be found in a nostalgic past, lost in time, sheltered from our culture's corruption living out their utopian existence in some isolated jungle or forgotten valley.

> …When we dream of the ecologically noble Indian whose knowledge will save us from the consequences of modern development, we dream an old dream, whose roots stretch back to the Garden of Eden and beyond. (Redford 1991:29)

The ignoble savage

The modern Indian, Ramos (1998) argues, is like an inverted clone conjured from the specifications of what deep down its creators themselves would wish to be. The product created, which she calls "The Hyperreal Indian" comes to exist as if in a fourth dimension, a fictional hologram exalted to stand on a pedestal of our imaginations.

> Assigned the absurd role of guardian of humanity's reserves of both natural resources and moral purity, Indians become charged with the "white man's burden" in reverse, whether they want it or not. (Ramos 1998:72)

Ramos argues that for all its sympathetic and benign inclinations the motivation conceals paternalism and intolerance; when the *Hyperreal Indian* doesn't live up to these noble attributes, he unwittingly falls from the pedestal he was placed upon. In the process of falling from grace, he becomes all that is left for him in his creators' imagination: the ignoble savage.

For Paula, an Italian tourist, indigenous people had become just that. On telling her a little about the community tourism project in Saraguro, she said she didn't really believe in these types of ecotourism projects, because in her experience they were just the same as any other forms of tourism. The locals needed to be trained more generally to respect the environment, she said, because it was no use having ecotourism if the locals "polluted and disrespected the environment through their ignorance." She said on many occasions she had carried around garbage in her bag all day because she couldn't find a bin anywhere, and then would get upset by "locals tossing theirs wherever they pleased."

I asked Paula what she felt, in general, was the difference between indigenous and non-indigenous people. She said that in her experience, she felt that they were generally much simpler and un-educated. By way of an explanation she described how the indigenous people she had met would ask the same questions to her over and over; pertaining to where she was from, what she earned, and how many brothers and sisters she had etc. As such, her conversations with indigenous people never really developed beyond this level, which left her "disappointed and frustrated." She said it was the same sometimes in India with the "more traditional people." I asked if she ever tried to steer the conversation into other areas, and she said she had, but "it was difficult since they didn't seem to understand simple concepts such as development and freedom."

This idea of "traditional people" providing limited conversational depth was also held by the Chinese travel writer, Yīng, who said that "in China, the difference is that the indigenous traditional people don't like to talk too much about their

political situation. In South America they are prepared to share…but in China they are very traditional thinking."

I asked Paula if she admired anything about the cultures of the indigenous people she had encountered during her travels, and she said she used to have a mythical view of how indigenous people around the world lived, but that now it had gone.

She spoke of her disenchantment with her time spent in Japan, a country she had long associated with "Zen and spirituality"; yet she found urban sprawl similar to that in "Third World Asia" with "ugly electrical wires everywhere." She spoke of her disgust at how people's spirituality had close ties to consumerism and a desire to succeed financially (see: Hugh-Jones 1992, who recorded similar reactions in those who expected native Amazonians to be icons of spirituality). She was further disenchanted by Cambodia and Laos, and in India she worked in a nunnery for three months where all her illusions with spirituality and the east, she said, were finally shattered.

More recent revisionist attacks on the idea of "uncontacted tribes living in harmony with nature" have also seeped into the popular press, and with those come the very real danger of overshooting the mark. If the widely believed myth of the "ecologically noble savage" is attacked by revisionists, the noble savage may literally have nowhere left to go. He will fall from grace and doubtless lose the backing of conservationists to the extent that his (*our*) environment will not be entrusted to his hands since upon proving himself to be an unworthy guardian, he has denied indigenous groups their legitimate claims.

> In spite of whatever questions we may have concerning their 'primitiveness' or original degree of isolation . . . they are an indigenous minority people whose rights and lands should be protected. (Headland 1992:222–23)

In reality, conservationists, politicians, the popular media or general public may not handle the shift in perception with quite such even-handedness, particularly when it is the endangered *environments* that the indigenous people inhabit that environmentalists are *primarily* interested in protecting, or eco-tourists interested in seeing.

Once the indigenous people are no longer seen as ecological guardians living in harmony with nature, but rather as a threat from within, the danger is that the "pristine" or "endangered" areas in which they live could be made into national parks. The people may be forced to live under restrictive "sustainable" conditions, which are deemed by conservationists to be ecologically sound, in the interests of protecting the environment over and above the wishes of the inhabitants. Or they could be removed wholesale if the environment they inhabit is deemed more valuable to us, than those who currently inhabit it. That is, of course, if the loggers and miners don't use the new evidence to support their own claims at the resources first or the state to use the land for transport such as highways or oil pipelines. It also further limits the choices that indigenous people themselves can make, for if they play the role of ecological guardian they will becomes icons of environmental and political movements. On the other hand, if they choose to sell their "sacred" or "aboriginal" land to the highest bidder or open it to resource extraction and

development they are publicly pilloried by the very same groups (Conklin and Graham 1995).

Paula once held a mythical view of indigenous people, presumably built on the romanticized view of "ecologically noble savages," whereas nowadays, through personal experiences, she believed that they "polluted and disrespected the environment through their ignorance." For Paula the "simple life" of indigenous people sought by other tourists, and once herself, is now translated as them being "uneducated" and "ignorant", leaving her frustrated. She showed further disgust at how people's spirituality was linked to consumerist desires and financial success. This seemed to be particularly painful for her to accept as it destroyed two myths simultaneously: indigenous people maintain a spirituality lacking in the west, and the notion that they are anti-capitalist.

After spending the better part of an afternoon with Paula I believe she felt the "Noble Savage" was still out there somewhere, but she had grown pessimistic and weary in her search, as everywhere she looked for him, he had succumbed to the evil influence of western civilization and all its ills. In the next chapter I will explore how Paula's, and many other tourists' desire to seek out authenticity in indigenous cultures, is intimately tied to the dream of visiting those living in locations beyond, or before, the contaminations of civilization.

As illustrated in this chapter, the myth of the Noble Savage has been (re)constructed throughout history to reflect preoccupations with civilized society. The Noble Savage myth also closely mirrors many contemporary tourists' preconceptions of what Indigenous people represent. In the following chapter I shall

explore how in the tourism lexicon this translates as authenticity, an attribute the tourist ultimately seeks. I shall explore how tourism operators capitalize upon an essentialized indigenous "otherness" to shape these products according to stereotypes propagated by the popular media, state institutions and/or themselves, and how in tourists' encounters involving indigenous peoples, global constructions of indigeneity are important in shaping tourist expectations and interpretations of cultures they understand to be indigenous.

> The true noble savage arises from a combination of disillusion about the here and now with illusion about the there and then. (Fairchild 1961:127)

Chapter 3: In search of authenticity

It had been five weeks since I had seen an independent tourist in Saraguro when I received a text message just before midday, something to the extent of, "tourist near bank heading to market in cowboy hat and dark glasses." I hurriedly lathered my two-year-old with sun block, put on his hat and threw him up on my back, grabbed the weekly shopping list, and dashed out the door.

One can never really know when an independent tourist will show up, but one can be pretty sure that when they do it will be Sunday, market day. This isn't surprising when one reads the information given for Saraguro in the guidebooks most commonly used by independent tourists. The Lonely Planet and The Rough Guide both follow the same pattern: describing the Saraguros' resettlement, or *mitimaes*, by the Incans over five-hundred years ago, followed by a fairly detailed description of clothing, and rounded off with advice on when to visit. "The Sunday market draws Saraguros – dressed finely for the occasion – from the surrounding countryside" (St. Louis, Burningham, Dowl and Grosberg 2009:214) "…just about all of them come into town for the Sunday-morning market for fresh produce, cattle and household goods, and Sunday Mass…" (Adés and Graham 2003).

I saw Paula standing at a market stall beside a huddle of traditionally dressed indigenous women who appeared to be buying vegetables. She held a small silver point-and-shoot camera which she directed at the women every time they turned away from her, before quickly bringing it back down to her waist, presumably so the ladies would remain unaware they were being photographed. I approached her and

asked if she was a tourist. She said she was, and perhaps assuming I'd identified this by her camera-toting conduct, she insisted rather defensively that she didn't usually take pictures of people, because she didn't feel comfortable doing it. As part of our introductions, I told her we didn't see many tourists coming to Saraguro, and that as a result, the people may be open to having their picture taken. She told me it would be fruitless to ask permission, because in her experience people would either say no or ask for money.

I asked her how she knew of Saraguro, and she said she'd read about it in the Lonely Planet - which she immediately insisted she used really *only* for bus times. She then revealed, she "loathed it", as it's "the gringo book". The Lonely Planet, she claimed, was used by tourists who come to countries such as this solely because "it is cheaper to get drunk in than back home" and the readership generally all stay in the same hostels and "never really experience the culture." In the traveler/tourist dichotomous spectrum, *real travelers*, a group with whom Paula self-identifies, are seen as searching for authentic culture whereas the Lonely Planet backpacker is increasingly seen by these real travelers as a form of mass tourism and therefore anti-authentic (Cohen 1989, 2004; Duffy 2002; McGregor 2000; Wilson 1997).

The independent tourists who visited Saraguro generally came because they believed it was less corrupted or more traditional than other places in Ecuador. They contrasted it favorably to other "touristy" places with indigenous populations; in particular, the popular northern Ecuadorian market town of Otavalo, where the selling of locally produced handicrafts and textiles has seen the weekly Saturday (now a daily market) market turn into a must-see stop with visitors to Ecuador.

MacCannell's (1973) classic definition of "authenticity" drew heavily on Goffman's (1959) distinction between "front" and "back" regions; the front being the place where hosts and guests meet one another, the stage where the show is presented to outsiders, and the back where performers or hosts retreat between performances – where "real life", "truth" and "authenticity" are experienced. Even though this concept of authenticity has suffered deserved criticism as it assumes an authentic culture (Bruner 1991; Cohen 1988; Volkman 1990), it nevertheless provides a useful model for examining a particular type of tourist motivations – those who seek to avoid "touristy" destinations and self-define as backpackers or travelers. In this chapter I will explore the tourist's quest for authenticity as manifest in the guise of indigenous people and their culture, since they are perceived, by virtue of their geographical location and limited exposure to the "contaminations" of modernity, as living more authentic lives.

I shall further explore how tourist photographs are scripted according to circulating mythologies and representations of indigenous people in guidebooks on television and the popular travel media (see Haldrup and Larsen 2010) and how the use of clandestine photography attempts to insure and document these depictions of "real life" and authenticity. Ultimately, the objective authenticity sought by tourists is a constructivist authenticity (Bruner 1994) based on the tourist's preconceived notions of what indigenous peoples and cultures represent.

I will analyze Community Tourism's appeal to a desire for an authentic intercultural immersion, demonstrating how it taps into tourist desires of entering into back regions and living with indigenous peoples in their home environment,

thus allowing them to experience and share in their lives. Tourists lacking in local information and knowledge will turn to guidebooks and brochures which they hope will provide insight into the places they plan to visit (Adams 1984:472). I shall explore how indigenous Saraguro culture is packaged and sold to tourists through various locally produced tourism brochures, and how, even though they did not create the images and portrayals of the Indigenous Other that have circulated globally over centuries (Said 1978), these brochures attempt to tap into the tourists' desire to seek out an unchanged static and timeless indigenous authenticity. They emphasize depictions of Indigenous Saraguros that contrast with daily western life (MacCannell 1976; Urry 1990), and in doing so satisfy a quest for authenticity that motivates citizens of "inauthentic" (late)-modernity to visit the Other (Cohen 1988), and ultimately allow tourists to project their own preconceptions of indigeneity onto the already established "ideological edifice" of indigenous peoples and their culture (Ramos 1998).

Then we will turn to the process by which hosts objectify their culture (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernandez-Ramirez 2010) under the "tourist gaze" (Urry 1990), and how they deem their culture to be a product "from without," which is then manipulated, commoditized and staged for visiting tourists, with particular emphasis on the various manifestations of a locally performed incaic cleansing ritual. In tourists' encounters involving indigenous peoples, global constructions of indigeneity are important in shaping tourist expectations and interpretations of cultures they understand to be indigenous. I will attempt to understand the extent to which these global productions of indigeneity imbricate with local

understandings and to what extent these notions are disciplinary, in terms of compelling the Saraguros to behave in a particular way before their tourist guests, thus performing a preconceived notion of what they believe tourists' expectations of them might be. As any interaction is a dialectical relationship and a negotiated reality, analysis will further focus on the manner in which tourists themselves react and assist in the production of these performances.

Lastly we will see how local moderators' claims to traditional and intact cultures lead tourists to evaluate and contest indigenous cultural authenticity by searching out what they consider to be contaminations in the form of western hybridizations, as signifiers of inauthenticity. Ultimately, I will question if the tourists' quest for authenticity is a doomed one, as their mere presence in seeking it out leads to the very cultural changes, hybridizations and contaminations (at least in their minds) that they deride (MacCannell 1973).

The quest for authenticity

A Filipino/Canadian couple who were travelling around South America in an imported 4X4 stopped over at La Operadora one morning to gather some information on Saraguro. They were quite upset when they discovered that there was a local community tourism project up and running, since that immediately rendered Saraguro "touristy" despite my assurances that the number of tourists each family received in any given year barely stretched to double digits. "Touristy" in this context is the anti-authentic well on its way to losing its cultural authenticity and, therefore, somewhere that the intact or real culture can no longer be seen. With

the spread of globalization and its perceived powers to standardize, there is a perception that authentic destinations and cultures are increasingly under threat and will inevitably become "touristy" generic "vacationscapes" (Gunn 1988) contaminated with "pseudoevents":

> These 'attractions' offer an elaborately contrived indirect experience, an artificial product to be consumed in the very places where the real thing is as free as air. They are ways for the traveler to remain out of contact with foreign peoples in the very act of 'sight-seeing' them. They keep the natives in quarantine while the tourist in air-conditioned comfort views them through a picture window. They are the cultural mirages now found at tourist oases everywhere. (Boorstin 1961:99)

This perception gives the search for authenticity increasingly more urgency and value. Almost like modern day salvage anthropologists, the perceived discovery of authenticity takes on greater power, and the ability to document it photographically and to return home with a few "genuine" relics which prove, "I was there" or even, "I was there *before."*This thus allows those who seek and experience authenticity to distance themselves from the perceived inauthenticity of mass tourism, of those deemed to be ensconced in an ''environmental bubble'' (Cohen 1972).

Paula said she liked to travel "off-the-beaten-track" and by way of evidence she proceeded to tell me that whilst she was in Otavalo the previous Monday, "when there were no tourists around," she had stumbled upon a church service she'd presumed was bereavement for someone. After observing for a while she'd asked someone who had died, recounting how "touched" they had seemed that she, "a *gringa,"* was showing interest in them, and so they invited her back to their home.

Here she found people drinking and a shaman who recited Christian prayers as well as "more shamanistic ones." She assumed he was "on some kind of drugs" since he continued his mantra throughout the evening regardless of all the "chaos" around him, and said they had dressed her in indigenous clothes, "not in a touristy way, but because they wanted me to be one of them." The following day Paula tried to find her way back to the house by asking people in the village if they knew of the house where the son had just died. She eventually found it, but said people were still drinking and didn't show too much interest in her at all this time, so she left soon after her arrival.

Paula unabashedly desires "to get off the beaten path" and "in with the natives" (MacCannell 1973:594). In visiting a place that presumably only the locals know about, this experience, she believes, differentiated her from the Lonely Planet readers who she claimed go to Otavalo "just to buy marijuana and Che Guevara T-shirts" and other local products which were "probably made in Taiwan." For Paula, Lonely Planet readers are led by the desire to pursue Latin American stereotypes and ultimately cannot differentiate the authentic from the fake, reflecting Boorstin's criticism of mass tourism under commoditization, that the "tourist seldom likes the authentic . . . product of the foreign culture; he prefers his own provincial expectations" (1964:106). Many tourists attempt to shed themselves of the label "tourist", "a derisive label for someone who seems content with his obviously inauthentic experiences" (MacCannell 1976:94) and self-define themselves as "backpackers" or redefine themselves "backpackers" to "travelers," which it is believed is more in tune with their own search for authenticity. "The touristic

critique of tourism is based on a desire to go beyond the other "mere" tourists to a profound appreciation of society and culture" (MacCannell 1976:10).

Paula believes she is equipped with the knowledge to see the authenticity of the original. She visited Otavalo for the same reasons as other tourists do, to purchase souvenirs from the celebrated indigenous market. Yet an experience she personally took credit for engineering differentiated her from other tourists; her demand for authenticity sees her invited into the ultimate "back region" (MacCannell 1973), where grieving relatives mourned in a village far from the beaten track. There could be no tourist performance here and no inauthenticity. The tourist has experienced authenticity. In Otavalo itself, Colloredo-Mansfeld has witnessed this search firsthand.

> Many [tourists] begin their market day, not in the Poncho Plaza where the crafts are, but in the animal market. Standing amidst cow manure and screaming pigs while watching *indigenas* bargain with white-mestizo middlemen, foreigners seem satisfied that they have come to a true Indian market. (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1998:195)

Goffman's theory of social performance is doubly relevant with regards to the indigenous Other, perceived to be living in the purity of the past. "From Rousseau we learned that what destroys our authenticity is society" (Trilling 1974:92). If we can strip away the rules and norms imposed by modern society, underneath we may discover the Noble Savage of Rousseau's fame; the embodiment of authentic experience, living out this humble life far from the contaminations of modernity, his instincts and feelings intact (Bendix 1997:16). Wang (1999) and MacCannell (1976) both see a longing for authenticity as a result of alienation created by modern

society, and tourism emerging from this quest is founded on a belief that authentic experience lay outside the bounds of contemporary society. This is particularly relevant for independent tourists visiting indigenous communities in Saraguro, because as a form of ethnic, cultural tourism, representations of ''the Other'' or ''the Past'' are actively sought (Wang 1999:350).

We left the market and walked down the hill to the plaza, continuing to talk, whilst Paula intermittently flicked out her camera and snapped nonchalantly at old women in traditional hats – two-feet from their faces – as we crossed paths, without so much as a break in her stride.[6] It seemed the capturing of that image was far more important than any stylistic or compositional considerations, or for that matter consideration of the person's consent at being photographed.

This clandestine photography wasn't uncommon. A Canadian couple said they had a hard time taking pictures of people, feeling awkward and nervous and so it "always ended badly." They preferred to make videos and take photographs from what was deemed a safe distance. In these examples we also see the "reverse gaze" (Gillespie 2006) at work, with tourists embarrassed by the awkwardness of the photographic subject gazing back upon them. Another tourist from Finland demonstrated how she would take clandestine shots of people without their

[6] Also known as a "snapshot" this style of photography is popularly defined as a photograph taken quickly and without artistic intent. Snapshot was incidentally first documented by the Oxford English Dictionary as being used as a hunting term in 1808 by English sportsmen Sir Henry Hawker, meaning a hurried shot taken without deliberate aim when shooting birds.

realizing it; as we sat and spoke she would intermittently swivel her torso in the direction of someone she deemed photo-worthy and press the shutter release button, without lifting the camera from where it was positioned at her stomach.

In deciding which direction to point the camera and when to push that button, the tourist is producing images for themselves and a future audience. "If a tourist decides that what he wants out of his holiday is to experience life in some past…the inhabitants of these places are expected to look and behave "traditionally" (Robinson and Picard 2009:142). Those photographs portray a message of how the tourist wants to be seen. The tourist constructs a place to conform to their predetermined vision of a place, bolstering the image of how they wish to be seen there.

Very rarely do tourists take pictures of the mundane, the domestic or the unattractive, aspects of everyday life from which many people are trying to escape when traveling or on holiday, as these images may clash with their creation of the perfect holiday fable. Yet in the world of Indigenous tourism, the native in traditional costume buying broccoli is actively sought after; the mundane and the domestic authenticates the unique and exotic. Having no more than a superficial, guidebook-written, preconceived notion of how the people of Saraguro live doesn't arm the tourist with the necessary experience to determine whether one is witnessing something objectively authentic. These candid shots become a way of ensuring there is no performance, no choreographed posing or smiling, and no picture postcard. Authenticity and the capturing of real life are guaranteed in the subject being innocently unaware that they are even on the stage.

Whilst seeming to portray true depictions of peoples and cultures, photography as part of the dominant ideology of society serves only to reproduce and enhance stereotypes already "out there" (Sontag 1979; Albers and James 1988; Urry 1990). Those being photographed are commodities to be consumed; far from even asking someone whether they would allow their photo to be taken, the tourists I observed had no interest in talking to these people at all. "To make the Other into an object is to distance oneself, and to allow fantasy to operate" (Bruner 1994:455). Traveling to Saraguro for market day, with the promise that "just about all of them come into town," the capturing of the image in itself was enough to take home the entire story, for as seen in the previous chapter, the global narrative on indigeneity produces an "ideological edifice" about indigenous people that seems not to require further inquiry (Ramos 1998). The only contradictions that may disprove the myth from the tourists' perspective are manifest in material in-authenticities which aren't the ones being photographed. Through the lens they are manufacturing an image of indigeneity that conforms to their stereotypes, and doubtless the stereotypes of those who will subsequently share in the viewing of those images.

Paula was employed in public relations for a large publishing company in Milan which worked with National Geographic and Lonely Planet. She said she had disliked the Lonely Planet since meeting its founder, Tony Wheeler, who had been at her office to promote a new book. In her mind he was "just some hippy" who'd simply written down where he'd been and where he'd stayed which was, "no big deal." He was filled, in Paula's opinion, with ignorant stereotypes about Italians, which didn't stretch much beyond Mafiosi, pizza and pasta. Italy was only associated

with Mafioso because of Hollywood, she claimed, and Italians only ate as much pizza as they now did due to cultural influences from America.

If the ideological godfather of The Lonely Planet Guidebook Empire couldn't see real from fake, what chance his readers? Paula's fundamental quandary arose from her assumption that the authentic was being misrepresented, which she still believed could be found beyond the tourist trail inhabited by the Lonely Planet consuming masses. Authenticity was "out there" of that there was no doubt, yet to find it one must search outside the pages of a guidebook. Paula was angry at being taken in and duped herself; angry, she said, because Wheeler's Italian stereotypes were the same incorrect stereotypes that circulated about the "mythical Japan" she had believed in, and read about, before going there. She said, "there weren't even that many temples" and those that were there, "*claimed* to be old", but then she'd discover that they re-did the roof every 20 years, so in effect they weren't old at all! Paula believed there was an attempt to deceive her on two levels, first by the guidebook representations of Japan, and when in Japan, by the temples themselves "claiming" to be old.

Considerable effort is made in Japan to preserve historic buildings, as an excerpt from *The Art of Japanese Architecture* (2007) attests:

> *Preservation* is the practice of taking steps to save architectural members that are decaying, and reinforcing structures that are in danger of collapse. For example, the five-story pagoda at Honmonji Temple in Tokyo was built in 1608. After 400 years, the pagoda had developed a number of serious problems…Normally all of these parts would be replaced. Because of fear that the building would lose its cultural value if this were done, however, the damaged parts were

> injected with carbon fiber. In this way 70 percent of the damaged parts were preserved. (Young and Young 2007:16)

Mindful of losing "cultural value" and doubtless a sense of authenticity, architects replaced as little of the temple as possible, though in Paula's mind, Japanese pilgrims/experts or authorities that consider a temple to be authentic only adds to her frustration, for in her mind it cannot be.

Bruner's (1994) concept of authenticity, based on research in the context of making 1990's New Salem resemble 1830's New Salem where Abraham Lincoln once lived, sees conflicting meanings of authenticity: 1) verisimilitude; "It looks like"; convincingly resembling and believable to the public, 2) genuineness; a "complete and immaculate simulation", 3) originality; literally original as opposed to copy, "but in this sense, no reproduction could be authentic, by definition", and 4) authority; certified and legally authentic - and legitimized "the issue of authenticity merges into the notion of authority" (Bruner 1994:399–400). As predicted by MacCannell, this striving for, evaluation and recognition of toured objects as authentic is very real and very relevant to tourists. This "objective authenticity" involves an absolute and objective criterion used by tourists to measure authenticity (Wang 1999:351). Paula is on a quest for authenticity; objective authenticity, or in Bruner's definition, the third sense, "originality", regardless of the second sense "genuineness", or the fourth sense "authority.".Yet it is ultimately Paula who is deciding, based on her preconceived notions, what is and what isn't authentic. In Paula's power to determine authenticity, what is being highlighted here, in effect, is

constructivist authenticity, which could ultimately lead Paula to believe in "verisimilitude", or something that "looks like", that is, it is to *her*, the authentic.

The experience that Paula relayed about the encounter with the grieving family was, to her, authenticity. Since there were no other tourists around, the event therefore couldn't have been staged, and she experienced real life "as one of them."In contrast, Otavalo's Saturday market was considered crass commercialism staged for coach loads of mass tourists in an effort to extract their money from them. In such an arena of commoditized inauthenticity what would be the point of selling locally produced textiles when one has already so obviously sold out, and when "fakes" "made in Taiwan" would be sufficient in deceiving the hapless tourist lacking the ability to discern and appreciate "real culture".

What the tourist consciously searches for is objective authenticity, yet in reality, even upon discovering it, they are experiencing constructivist authenticity, a socially constructed process that is "negotiable" (Cohen 1988:374). Yet far from being doomed as Levi-Strauss's (1955:43) modern traveler, forever "chasing after the vestiges of a vanished reality," in their *mind* they *are* experiencing authenticity in the object. This allows them to retain the original/fake binary, whereby original is cherished as the exclusive superior and as pure, and fake occupies the remainder of the spectrum befalling the original contaminated with even the slightest bastardizing hybridization. In this respect the traveler is no different to the tourist. Both have the ability to experience authenticity in their own way, despite theoretically possessing different benchmarks in ascertaining its existence. The traveler believes experience has led them to a profound appreciation of culture and

the ability to discern and seek out "truth" and "authenticity." The tourist, from the perspective of the traveler, is the anti-authentic "who never really experiences the culture." While the traveler ventures "off the beaten track" to Saraguro in order to experience authenticity, the tourist remains ensconced in their own environmental bubble.

Packaging an authentic indigeneity

A Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Visa card advertisement features a woman walking alone in Machu Picchu. The caption reads:

"Susan went to Peru for the people. Specifically, the ones that have been dead for 500 years."

A tourist's destination choice is ultimately based on preconceived definitions of people and places found in magazines, novels, documentaries and guidebooks, further driven by the marketing arms of government agencies and private enterprise with vested interests to encourage tourists to visit specific areas. Influence of literary forms in the establishment and promotion of eighteenth and nineteenth century tourist sites has been superseded by visual forms of media. This shift is well-known by tourism marketers and is thus important for understanding contemporary tourist motivations and behavior (Jenkins 2003). It is also important in understanding how local Saraguros objectify their own culture in the process of marketing it to the preconceived motivations of tourists.

Since Saraguro is, as yet, far from well-known it generally flies under the tourist radar and receives scant direct attention from the Ministry of Tourism's marketing department,[7] who concentrate more on the country's core competencies, namely The Galapagos Islands, The Amazon region and within the Andean region, Otavalo. Nevertheless, the community tourism project is built on the idea of autonomy. This allows - and if they are to become known to tourists - obligates the Saraguro to produce much of their own marketing literature. Importantly in the community tourism project the Saraguro are the ones doing the selling,[8] and therefore are able to exert control over the commodification of their own culture, and to a large part the direction of the tourist gaze. This is built on the ideological edifice of what indigenous peoples in Ecuador, Latin America and the world more broadly are thought to represent. A situation, Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernandez-Ramirez argue, avoids much of the

[7] 'Saraguro indigenous community' ranks 78th on the ministry's www.ecuador.travel website's "100 Must-See Ecuadorian Destinations and Activities."

[8] Among the operators of the communities involved in the community tourism project in Ecuador there is a desire to join forces and open a central community tourism office in the capital city of Quito. This will be exclusively for commericalisation and not for organizational matters (For which FEPTCE is the organizational and political representation of community tourism). The idea is that FEPTCE should focus exclusively on the organizational aspects of community tourism and not extend and undertake activities that are not the competency of FEPTCE, since their management of commercialization through their marketing arm, the Centre of Information and Commercialization of Community Tourism in Ecuador (CITURCE), is deemed largely ineffective.

> alienation that occurs in indigenous tourism, when neither the commercialization nor the production of the objects, services, rituals and activities sold in the tourist context are controlled by the communities. (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernández-Ramírez 2010:215)

In, *Community Tourism Magazine, Nature and Culture of the Peoples of Ecuador*, Saraguro is featured under the title, "Fantastic Destinations in our Communities"; two-thirds of the two page piece is taken up with this photograph:

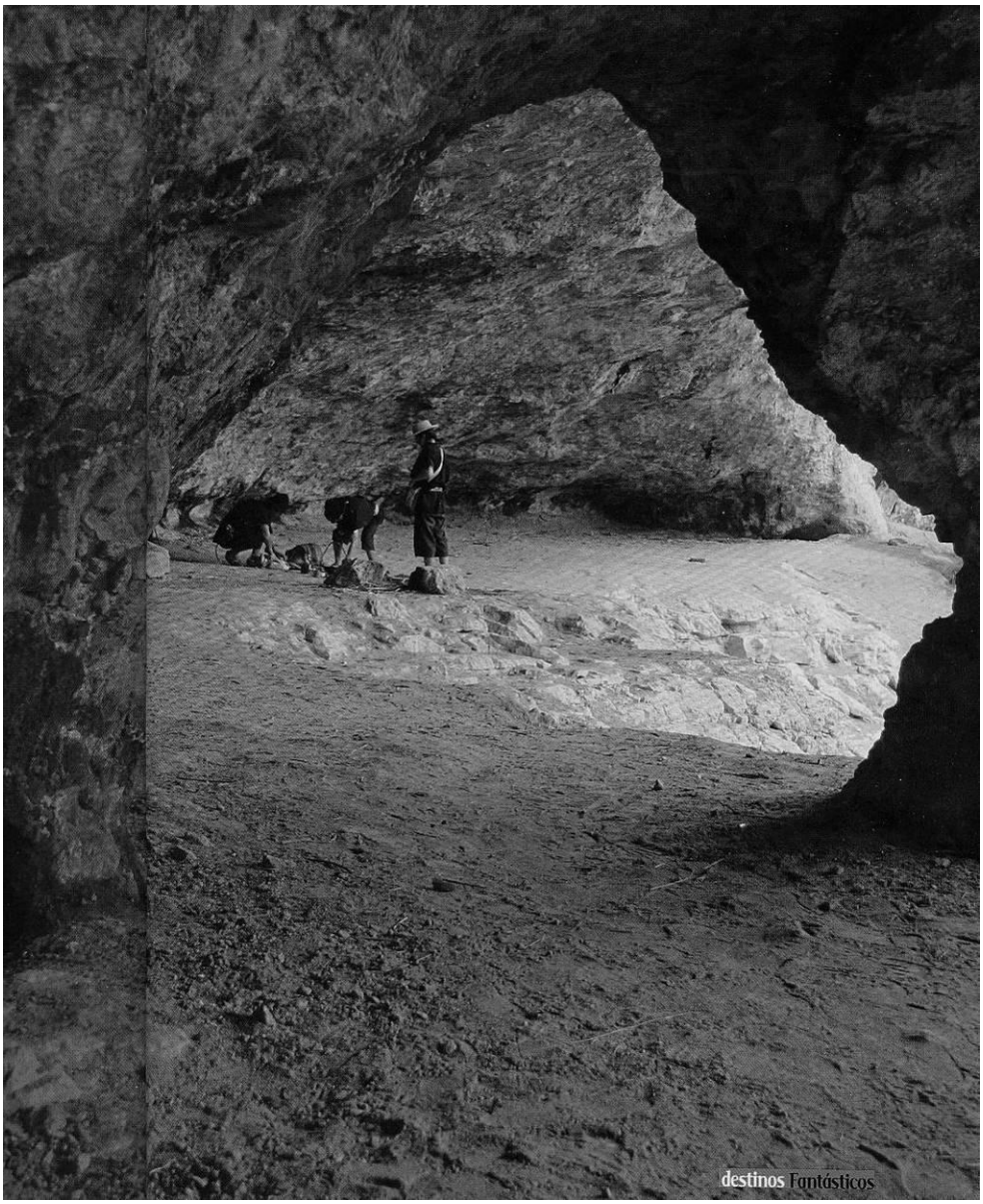

Figure 4. "Fantastic destinations." (*Revista Turismo Comunitario*, pp. 42-43).

Three figures dressed in black, one of them wearing a white hat. Two of them are crouched over and a third is observing. The scene has a very voyeuristic feeling to it, enhanced by the fact that the photograph is taken through what appears to be a cave overhang, accentuating the feeling that the three mystery figures are unaware they are being photographed. There is seemingly no performance, and therefore no staged authenticity. We are looking into the very back region, and witnessing authenticity. There is no cutline or caption attached to the image. The paragraph of text accompanying the photograph informs the reader that the cave is located on the "*sitio sagrado del "Banos Del Inca*," sacred site of the Inca Baths, where the Saraguros "perform sacred rituals," and what is actually taking place is a "Blossom Ceremony." This information further heightens the sense of the authentic, as now the viewer is positioned in a hallowed place peeking through a cave overhang witnessing a sacred ritual. The reader is then presented the opportunity of participation in this very scene:

> Visitors can participate in some of these rituals with guides by contacting the tourism network Saraguro, who will also be able to host you in homes of families in the community and organize trips to artisan workshops and visits to other communities in Saraguro. (*Revista Turismo Comunitario***,** *naturaleza y cultura de los pueblos del Ecuador*)

Locally produced tourist brochures generally fall under the guise of ethno/cultural tourism. The brochures are not selling local architecture or geographical features; they are predominantly selling "their" culture and "themselves". However, returning to the opening example of Susan, visiting Machu

Picchu to visit the people who died 500 years ago, in contrast, local Saraguro mediators' key marketing strategy is one of bringing Inca to life. This is accomplished by seamlessly tying Saraguro cultural heritage to that of Inca - and that despite "a catastrophic usurpation of land" by the foreign Spanish invaders - five-hundred years of resistance has enabled these *living local heirs* to maintain their Incan culture.

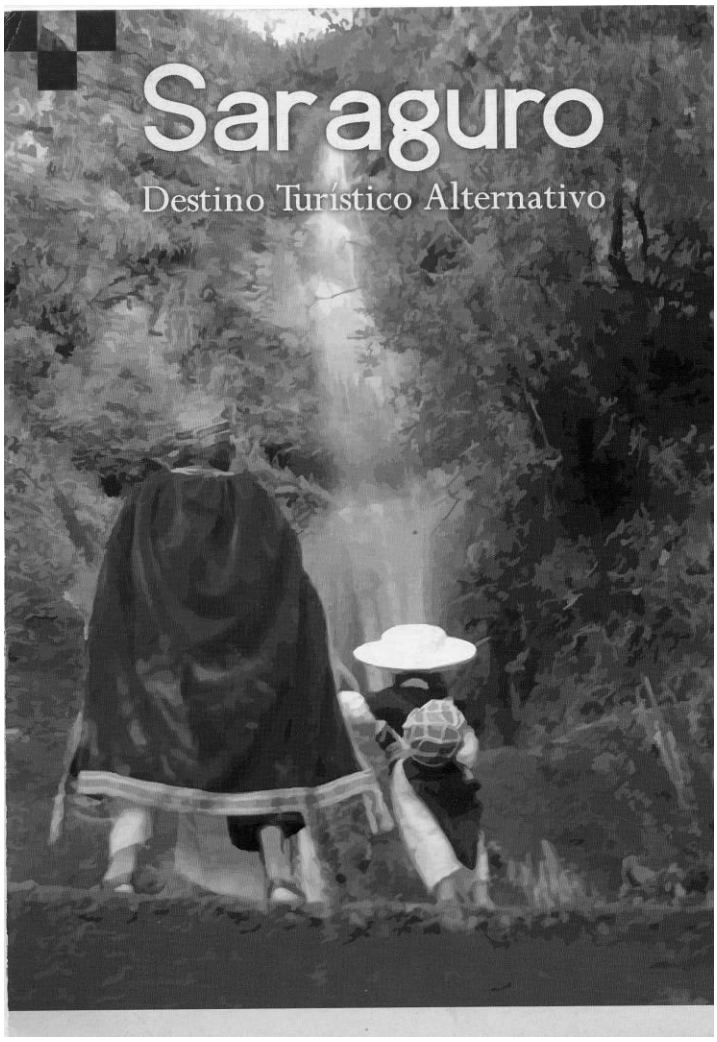

Figure 5. "Saraguro alternative tourist destination." (*Fundación Kawsay*).

On the main cover of this locally produced brochure we see a man with his back to the camera, dressed in a purple robe and wearing a gold colored crown, evoking Incan royal dress. This is something that would usually only be seen worn as part of a neo-Incan festival, or *Raymi*. The man is holding the hand of a little boy who is dressed in full local Saraguro regalia replete with bag and white pants, looking up at a waterfall surrounded by green vegetation. Again it would be a very rare and special occasion that a child is dressed in such "full" traditional dress. One is not aware of what they are doing, but it would appear the two are sharing a moment of reverence towards the waterfall.

Stylistically, the image has been edited in a post production editing program, like Photoshop, and an artistic filter has been applied, most likely "Palette Knife" or "Watercolor."This has created a softening of the details or sharpness, resulting in a dreamier ambiance to the picture. This enhances the feeling of connectedness between the two figures and the natural environment in which they are shrouded. The blurring also disguises the fact that both are standing on a concrete viewing platform (a connection to modernity that may compromise the general aim of the picture). There is a definite atmosphere about the picture: a mystery, an exoticism and timelessness. The photograph comes with no caption or further explanation. Inside, under a heading entitled *Saraguro*, the brochure reads:

> Its inhabitants still retain their Incan customs including their dress, language, handicrafts, traditional architecture, and rituals at the solstices. The use of medicinal plants, food and drinks, music, Andean dances, myths and legends are the elements that identify this historic people. (*Saraguro Destino Turistico Alternativo, Fundación Kawsay*)

The reader learns that this "historic people" retain their Incan customs, which slips by the premise that the indigenous Saraguros are, or were at one time, Incan, and that any of these customs may have been recently reappropriated or revalorized. The brochure goes into more historical details, under the next heading, *Historical Dates*:

> The Paltas were the first inhabitants of this territory. They were displaced by the Cañaris, who were later conquered by the Incas, one of the hardiest tribes of the plateau with excellent human qualities. Ethnic and cultural elements of their identity that remain until today. (*Saraguro Destino Turistico Alternativo, Fundación Kawsay*)

Uniquely, for these locally produced tourist brochures, attention is dedicated to the area's history *before* the arrival of the Incas, yet it is scant when compared to the coverage given to the Inca, who are brought to life through the conveyance of their noble qualities as, "one the hardiest tribes …with excellent human qualities."The short description of these three peoples leaves the reader no doubt which is the noblest; furthermore, one may presume that this nobleness does "remain until today" in the present-day indigenous Saraguro population.

> In the early days of the colony around 1550 the first foreign settlers arrived late to Saraguro, given the isolation and difficult access, the process of colonization was very slow. Saraguros currently live with the mestizos who colonized and settled in this territory. (*Saraguro Destino Turistico Alternativo, Fundación Kawsay*)

The Spanish here are the first "foreign" settlers, so either contemporary Saraguros don't consider the Inca foreign or else the Saraguros, as self-proclaimed Incans, wouldn't refer to themselves as "foreign." Besides this, colonization was "very slow" suggesting the cultural impact of Spanish colonization in Saraguro was gradual

and with little impact; this would support the idea that contemporary cultural elements traceable to Inca are relatively undisturbed and intact. Saraguros, the brochure informs us, actually still live with their colonizers, who are identified racially as *mestizos,* but who, the reader may surmise, maintain an entirely separate culture.

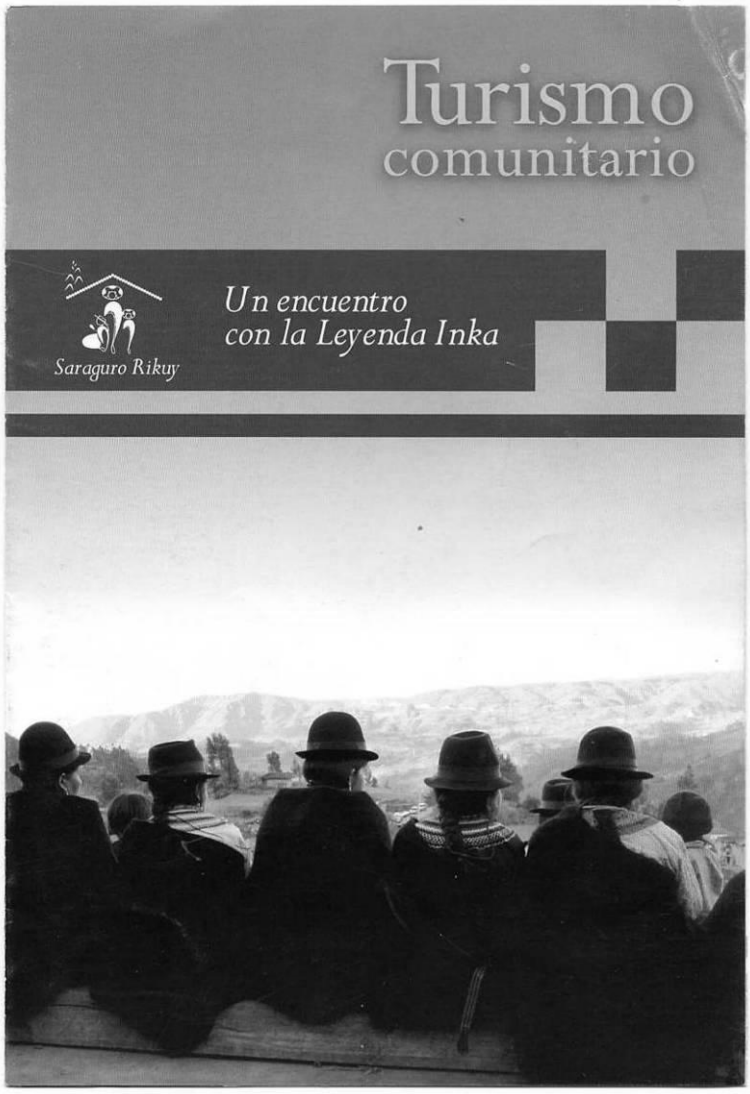

Figure 6. "An encounter with the Incan legend." (*Saraguro Rikuy*).

In the brochure entitled *Turismo comunitario* the words *Un encuentro con Leyenda Inka, "A*n encounter with the Incan legend," are the only other words on the

front page, above a picture of five women dressed in black Saraguro dress sitting with their backs to the camera seemingly staring off into the mountains. The photograph comes with no caption and is therefore timeless in that it gives us no clues to its age and could have been taken realistically anytime in the last 50 years. Again one would assume those being photographed are unaware they are; there is no performance. The photograph is solely offering an indigenous ethnicity – an indigenous ethnicity with Incan roots.

Opening the brochure, under a heading entitled *Saraguro*, the text reads:

> In the province of Loja you find one of the most important ethnic groups in Latin America: The Saraguros, Kichwa, who retain their ancient traditions and customs inherited from the Incas. (*Turismo comunitario, Un encuentro con la Leyenda Inka. Saraguro Rikuy*)

In the brochure, *SARAGURO, Pueblo Milenario.* Saraguros *"*retain their traditions inherited from the Incas through their history and everyday experiences." In *Saraguro Tourist Information "Ancestral History and Culture*" (an English language brochure):

> The people of Saraguro are descended from Inca nobility, and were part of Tawantinsuyu during the conquest. In Saraguro two distinct cultures live together, one descended from the Inkas, the other descended from the Spaniards. Each is clearly distinguished by their clothing and cultural traditions.

Again there is reference to "two distinct cultures," however in this instance the indigenous Saraguro are not only defined as retaining elements of an Incan cultural heritage, but now literally "Inkas of the blood" and "noble" blood, to boot. The indigenous Saraguros are descended from the elites of a once great opulent power. Interestingly there is no reference to the Spanish as colonizers or settlers. It

is almost as if the indigenous Saraguros are attempting to reclaim the nobler ground; it is they who are descended from Incan nobility and the Spanish, far from being former destroyers of their once grand culture, hardly get a look in.

The uninitiated visiting tourist, the brochure suggests, could clearly distinguish who is who by their clothing and cultural traditions: two distinct peoples, from two distinct origins living separate cultures: neither together nor side-by side, an idea supported by the indigenismos of the early 20th century in notions of the erosion of native nobility and purity due to its contamination at the hands of Spanish colonization. This notion is further reflected in the tourists' desire to see indigenous authenticity preserved by isolating it from hybridizing contaminant cultures.

A recurring myth in marketing of tourism to the developing world identified by Echtner and Prasad (2003), the "myth of the unchanged," is used to fix destinations in the past. Locally produced tourist brochures are attempting to capitalize on this "myth" by encouraging the tourist to journey back in time to a world of ancient Incan civilizations where the present day's *living embodiment* of Inca can nowadays be seen to be living in noble simplicity.

"Inca" is certainly one of the major draws of tourism to South America, with Machu Picchu alone attracting some 2000 visitors daily. Historically, the Incas were present in the region of Saraguro for less than a century, and had only really consolidated power in Ecuador for approximately thirty years before the arrival of the Spanish in 1532. In the tourist brochures the emphasis is on the Saraguros' cultural connections and maintenance of traditions and customs from the *Incas*. One

is not certain where the Saraguros themselves were originally relocated from by the Inca State. The history of the Saraguro indigenous people effectively begins with their collective arrival in Saraguro 500 years ago, under the *mitimae* resettlement system, as an *Incan* culture, which nowadays it is able to proudly retain despite 500 years of "foreign" colonization at the hands of the Spanish. This seems to be important for the indigenous Saraguros as it cements their "indigenousness", their connection to the land (however short) *before* the arrival of the Spanish, and – as a result – their authenticity in the eyes of the tourist.

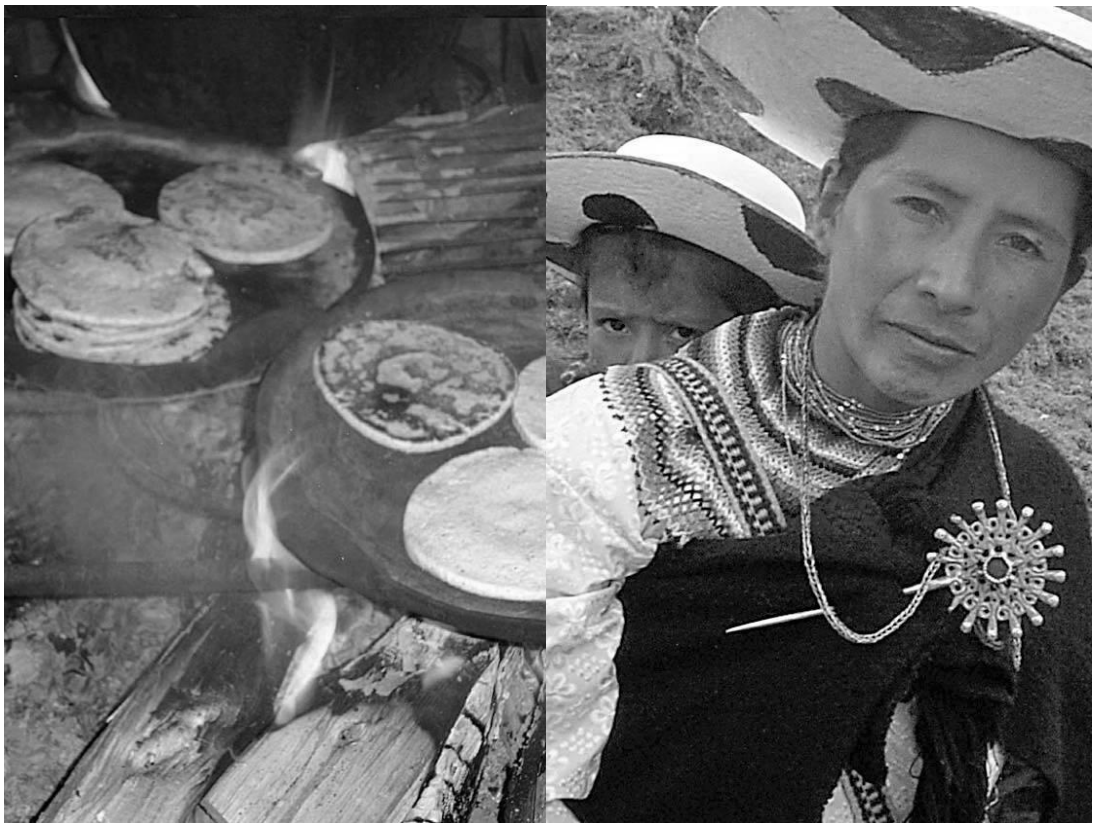

Figure 7. and Figure 8. Simple lives (*Saraguro Turismo Comunitario/Cultural Tourism brochure,* 2007).

Through the production of these brochures, mediators in Saraguro are not attempting to create demand; aware of what it is the tourist wants to see they are

attempting to tap into an already present demand that circulates globally. Tourists already seem to have an idea of what indigenous life in Saraguro will be like, without having previously been there, due to a lifetime of interaction with literature, film, the popular press, tourist marketing and so on. These brochures serve to reinforce these notions, cementing indigenous Saraguros' claims to authenticity by intimately and seamlessly tying their contemporary culture to the uncontaminated pre-contact culture of an opulent Incan empire.

> The currently dominant tourism discourses draw upon and extend mythologized (colonial) visions of Otherness from popular culture, (travel) literature and academic writings in disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology and history. (Salazar 2010:43-44)

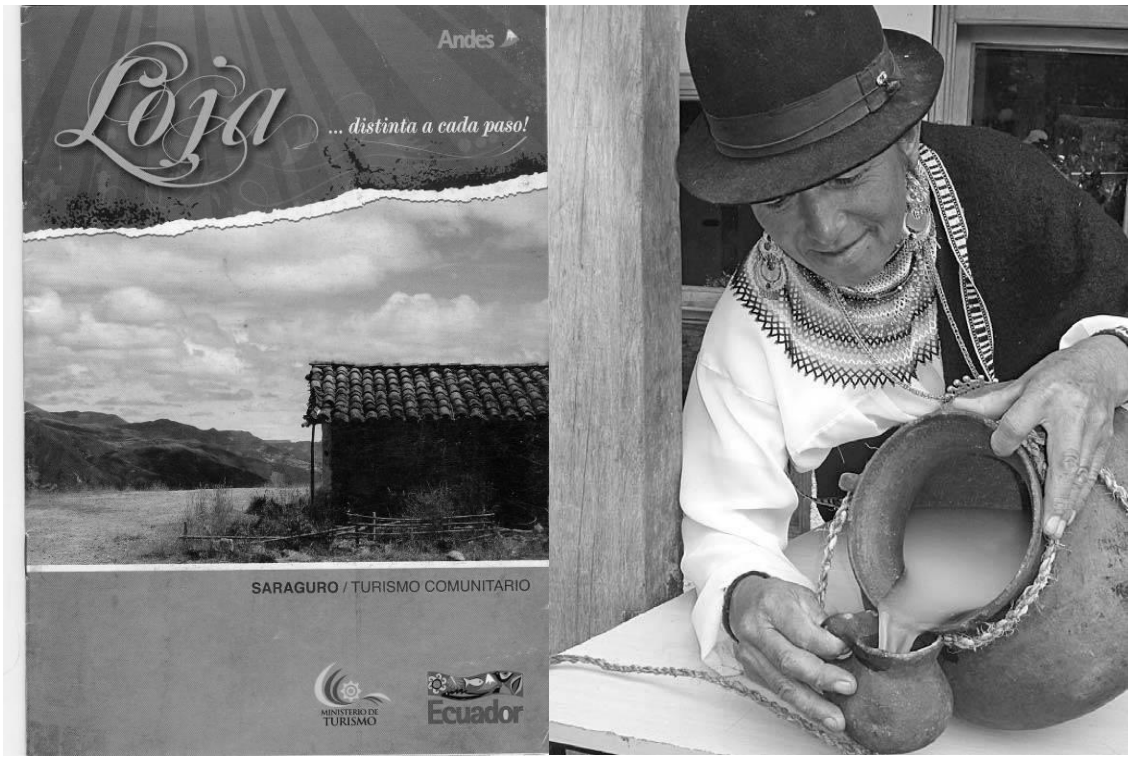

Figure 9. and Figure 10. Representing the rural idyll (*Ministerio De Turismo*).

The images used in the tourist brochures provide a stark contrast to the tourists' own Western culture; showing un-spoilt Saraguros in traditional dress

living simple, uncomplicated lives in a romanticized rural idyll, happily at work in pre-industrial activities. There are no images of indigenous Saraguros as lawyers, doctors, dentists, or teachers living in modern houses or driving SUV's,[9] which serves to maintain the novelty from the tourists' own place of residence or work (MacCannell 1976; Urry 1990). Once the myth of the unchanged is established or maintained, Saraguro claims to an Incan indigenousness authenticated, and the gaze directed away from evidence that may conflict with and threaten to challenge these premises, the tourists are free to project their already held perceptions and dreams of indigenous peoples, and their culture, onto the "ideological edifice."

In this following section I shall explore how Saraguros involved in the community tourism project develop awareness of tourist expectations and motivations, in the process of interactions with visiting tourists, allowing them to then objectify and commodify their culture under the tourist gaze.

Objectifying, commodfiying and performing authenticity

The five young ladies were animatedly crowded into the kitchen wearing full traditional dress when we arrived. At the monthly Ñamarín community tourism meeting a week earlier, it was decided that a night of traditional music, dance and food would be organized so that I, in my new marketing role, could take photographs to help promote the lagging local tourism industry. The meal wouldn't

[9] This omission is significant for the very reason that the producers of these tourist brochures and the proponents of the Incanist movement in Saraguro more generally, are those very same University-educated local-elites working in offices, and living "modern" lifestyles.

be ready for at least an hour, however, and in the meantime Irma, the community's tourist guide, suggested we could all take a walk across the village to garner opinion on a house they were considering converting into a museum.

The girls walked ahead in a single line spreading across the length of one-lane road that thread its way through the village. As we passed, people in their homes or working in the fields looked on, smiled, waved, and wolf-whistled the mini-parade. Emmanuel, the local community's tourism chair, trotted ahead to take pictures of the girls, and after each they would all excitedly gather round the camera to view the results.

Figure 11. Gathering to view themselves (Photograph by author).

The prospective museum was an older adobe-style house which clearly hadn't been lived in for many years. The ceiling was completely caked in soot as

were the cobwebs which hung from the ceiling like hairy stalactites. “Do you think it would be better to restore it or else just leave it the way it is?” I was asked, then encouraged to take some pictures of the girls who lined up inside.

Arrays of different cameras were then passed through my hands, as the girls maintained their pose, before the spectacle returned to *Banos Del Inka* restaurant. There I took some pictures of Maria in the kitchen at her request, as she roasted a guinea pig over the fire. On seeing this, Javier, who runs the community tourism office in Saraguro, suggested an older lady with a more iconic spotted felt-hat take her place in the frame; seeing this, Emmanuel excitedly stripped off his tracksuit top, borrowed the hat from the old lady and took his turn posing for pictures as well.

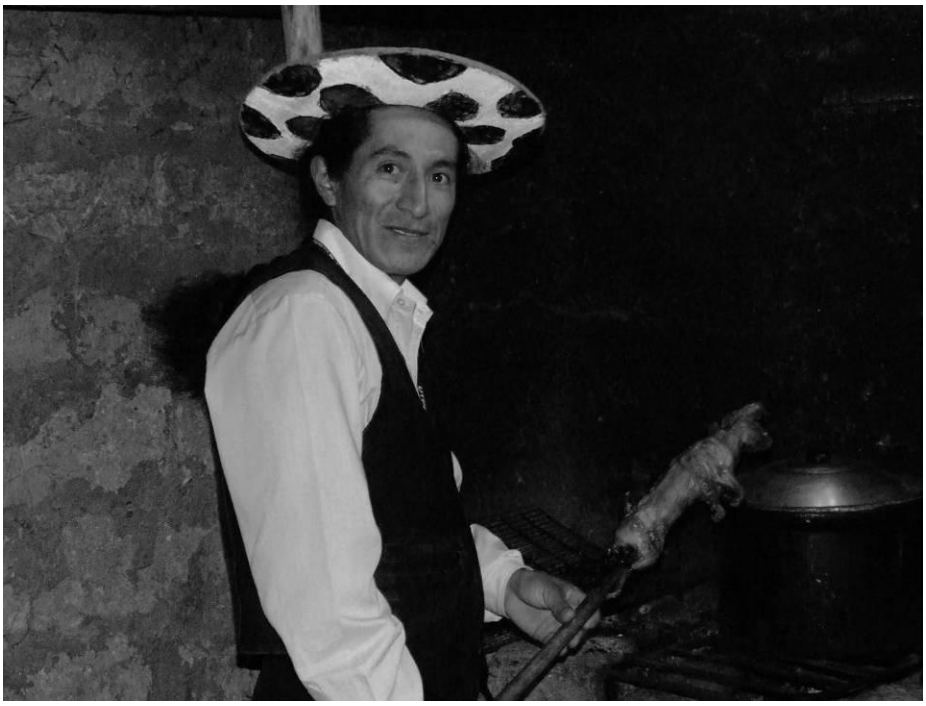

Figure 12. Emmanuel posing in traditional hat (photograph by author).

Then everyone cleared out the kitchen into the main room and settled on a collection of benches and chairs. The girls took up their starting positions holding

dye staffs and kerchiefs, Emmanuel punched play and local music sounded from a CD player heralding a colorful dance punctuated with flash-bulbs. After the song had finished the girls retired to the kitchen area to change their shirts from white to red, before reappearing to dance the second and last song.

Figure 13. Posing in traditional dress (photograph by author).

After the dancing was complete, *huajango,* a local liquor made from fermented agave, was passed around whilst Javier listed his concerns with the local community tourism project, amounting to organization, investment and lack of promotion. He told those assembled that Natalia, a Spanish volunteer, and I would be assisting with the website and promotion, which he hoped would help, but in general he felt Ñamarín was falling behind other communities, in particular, Lagunas. After Javier finished, Rafa, prospective hotel owner and father of two of the

dancers, piped up – they as a community would indeed need to improve and plans were afoot to invest in its future… Tourists certainly enjoyed the type of folkloric performance we had just witnessed, he said; however, the real reason they wanted to partake in community tourism was simply to see how the Saraguros "really live."

Those involved in the community tourism project in Ñamarín are aware of the importance of marketing their "product", and that the product is not only folklore but more specifically their culture, the way they live. Furthermore they are aware of how to perform and manipulate representations of themselves for the camera in attempts to package a product that will appeal to their perceptions of tourist motivations. Communities attempt to exert control over how they wish to portray and construct themselves to the world, and even though the inhabitants of these communities are immersed in their daily practices and cultures, they begin to see themselves "from without" thus enabling them to take a step back and view themselves from the same perspective as a tourist/outsider. This further allows them to begin turning elements of their lives into commodities for tourist consumption (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernandez-Ramirez 2010:213).

> Objectification is fundamental for the tourist business to occur; that which was not previously considered 'saleable' must be objectivized: everyday life, archaeological ruins or the environment. (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernandez-Ramirez 2010:212)

The intercultural interactions experienced by local tour guides, shamans and community tourism hosts with visiting tourists gives Saraguros a picture of what motivates the tourist to visit Saraguro. Through the experience of evaluating patterns in these questions and responses given, they begin to build a picture of

what a tourist's preconceived notion of indigenous people is, as well as the elements of the culture that they seem to be fond of. From this point they can then commodify for the tourist market.

The first family we stayed with in Ñamarín relayed how they had become involved in community tourism, demonstrating how an idea of tourist motivation is initiated. One day Javier from *La Operadora* had come around and convinced the family of the economic benefits of accommodating tourists in their home. They were enthusiastic but wondered where they would house the tourists: Would they divide their upstairs bedroom in two, and what of their three children? They had recently built an extension to their house, which was to be their new kitchen. Javier saw this room and said it would be perfect; it was "simple" and had a fireplace in the corner. "Tourists will like that," he said. He further convinced them that tourists would prefer the "simple" "traditional food" they already ate, and so their adaptations to the tourists' demands would be minimal; if anything, changes could actually be damaging. To demonstrate this he relayed how one family had served yogurt to tourists for breakfast and the tourists complained because they wanted to eat what the families themselves usually ate for breakfast. With the financial support of local NGO *Fundación Kawsay* the family went ahead with the project and added a bathroom to their new kitchen and transformed it into a bedroom for tourists, complete with fireplace and *mote* cooking pots in the corner:

Figure 14. Tourist bedroom (photograph by author).

This objectifying of their "simple lives" to appeal to tourist motivations clearly found its way into decoration of tourists' bedrooms; all these rooms in the community tourism houses had this traditional window dressing applied to the décor to make them seem more authentic. This had the effect of reaffirming the tourists' belief they were staying in the home of an indigenous family and also were entering into the back region by littering it with paraphernalia it was believed represented local indigenous rural culture, and which a tourist could expect to find and appreciate, thus mirroring their motivations for being there.

Figure 15. and Figure 16. Tourist bedrooms (photographs by author).

These examples demonstrate how tourists bedrooms were stages, containing rustic looking hand-made wooden furniture complete with other local paraphernalia which amounted to flutes, drums, dream catchers, mote pots, ponchos, hats etc: décor, incidentally, that was never seen in the families' own bedrooms. Our own host family relayed how they never realized all that "old junk" had any value, yet now they decorate the rooms with it for tourists. When a group of tourists arrived to stay at the house where we were staying, some of this "junk" (a leather saddle which hung from the ceiling) was relocated from the room in which we were staying to the room to be inhabited by the incoming tourists.

MacCannell (1973, 1976), introduced the concept of ''staged authenticity'' in the context of ethnic tourism, whereby he claimed that hosts sell their culture in order to appeal to visiting tourists. Cognizant of the tourist's desires, having objectified their own culture and seen it through the gaze of the tourist, the hosts then manufacture false "back regions" to create an environment they feel satisfies the tourists' motivations for being there. What MacCannell called "staged authenticity" clearly does take place in Saraguro. The Saraguros understand the tourists' desire to see them in their day-to-day "real life."

Tourism as a business is constantly evolving to meet market demands. Community tourism borrows from the already well-established genres of eco-tourism, alternative, green tourism and ethnic tourism and becomes the most "authentic" organized tourist experience to date – that of inviting the tourist into very back region itself. There they may encounter "real life" when not on the stage; inside the family home they live with, and like, the local *indigenous* people. By

visiting the indigenous Other – the visitor is not just experiencing authentic culture, but *the* authentic culture; that is, culture uncontaminated by the West.

Yet, far from all visiting tourists stay with families. Tourists on group tours generally stay for just one night in Saraguro and that night is spent in the community tourism Hostal Achik Wasi, located in urban Saraguro. These tourists experienced the "the real life" of Saraguros as part of their tours, which have been organized by mediators. They have designed a schedule which involves the showcasing of various local cultural manifestations in order to satisfy the perceived tourist need: *huajango* ceremonies, museum visits, traditional meals, music, dancing and incaic rituals are all arranged in an attempt to entertain visitors with representations of Saraguro culture. However, in the interest of space and the scope of this thesis I will focus primarily on one of these illustrations, the cleansing ritual.

Driving up the bumpy road the three kilometers to Ilincho the guide spies two of the shamans wearing T-shirts, their backs to the bus, at the window of a local store. Realizing they are in no state to receive a busload of tourists, the guide instructs the driver to detour around the hill. Our usual pit stop is now switched to a hike along muddy paths through scenic pastures, adding ten minutes to an approach that usually takes two. As we came up to the *pukara*[10] it was apparent the people there were still preparing, and upon seeing our imminent arrival a man dressed in black ran over and sat on a rock overlooking the valley. This has become something

[10] *Pukara* is locally defined as a hill or ridge which has some incaic connection, for example, thought to have been used as a strategic lookout or sacred place.

of a ritualized tradition in itself with tourists clambering to take, and have their picture taken with, the man on the rock immediately after the ritual has taken place:

Figure 17. Tourists photographing man on the rock (photograph by author).

To give the shamans more time to prepare the ritual site the guide further stalled the group by giving them a preparatory explanation about what the ceremony would entail:

> I need you to concentrate because they are going to cleanse us, and we need all the energy, and at the end it will be great. For the ritual you need four shamans, and a *chakana* [Inca cross – see for example, the flower arrangement in Figure 18. below], representing the Southern Cross; it has the four sides, which are the same, and each one represents the four sacred elements, air, water, fire and earth…

When everyone up at the *pukara* seemed prepared we continued onwards to the sound of pop music emanating from a nearby home. One of the tourists commented that it would be "funny" if this were going on whilst we were having the

ritual. We were greeted by two women one of whom gave a flower and a sprig of rosemary to each tourist, the other wafting each in turn with smoke from a bowl of smoldering leaves. The tourists were then ushered between two football-sized rocks that lay on the ground into a larger configuration of rocks which had been assembled into a circle, with maize cobs and flowers prearranged at the center. The two late arrivals we had seen from the bus now arrived from between some trees wearing black ponchos carrying a drum and a flute, and sat down beside the circle.

Figure 18. Tourists attending cleansing ritual (photograph by author).

When all the tourists were arranged inside the circle they were informed that they could opt to leave now if they wished, as this was a voluntary ritual, but that after the ritual had begun leaving the circle was forbidden. A woman then raised her hand and proceeded to back-out, but was admonished by a female shaman who told her to stop. She would have to walk counter-clockwise around the circle and exit

between the same two rocks between which we had entered. Then the tourists were further informed:

> You are now in the sacred place for the Incas, please, you cannot take pictures because you will break the connections between each other and the shamans. At the end you can take pictures and ask questions.

It would be difficult to describe a generic cleansing ritual as each of the half-dozen I attended was substantially different from the last, in terms of proceedings, length of time, numbers attending and location. At some ceremonies tourists were asked to align themselves in a circle male/female/male. At other ceremonies tourists were asked to remove their socks in order to heighten the connection to Pachamama, "for a more powerful experience." One time tourists were told to sit down, close their eyes and then stand up with eyes closed and slowly open them. Other times tourists stood throughout and were asked to raise their hands, in turn, towards the four cardinal points. At one ritual tourists were asked to cleanse themselves by hitting their bodies with marigold bunches, other times the tourists were hit by a shaman and sometimes there were no flowers or ritual flagellations whatsoever; tourists were cleansed by having smoke wafted over them. Tourists, however, always had alcohol spat over them as part of their cleansing; sometimes one-by-one at the center of the circle, other times where they stood in the circle and on one occasion, tourists who opted for a special cleansing were taken individually into some trees, asked to remove their clothing, and had oil rubbed into their bodies.

Figure 19. Hosts and guests posing for photos (photograph by author).

A section from my field notes:

…We all got spat on in turn. Then a small sea shell worth of alcohol was offered to be drunk, but on this occasion the first woman that was offered the alcohol, refused it.[11] The Yahcak then put a little in the woman's hands and told her to rub them together, and then cup her hands to her face and inhale the fumes. The next woman in line wasn't then even offered the alcohol to drink but again had a little poured into her hands, and this was repeated to everyone in turn…Then a shaman said we'd all receive beans. The first woman in line who had refused the alcohol only took one bean from the large bowl of multicolored beans. Upon seeing this each person in turn took just one bean, some spending time to pick a particular color. The previous rituals in which this had happened tourists were either handed half a dozen beans or a small handful of beans was selected by the tourist. It was interesting how everyone in the group followed the lead of the first woman, and how accommodating and malleable the ritual was to tourist-led change.

[11] Though tourists sometimes refused to drink the alcohol, the tourists never declined to have alcohol spat over their faces by a complete stranger. All those that refused alcohol were from the United States and under the age of 21.

There wasn't any particular facet that created the ritual but a collection of varying practices within the ritual space that had the cumulative effect of ritual. The intercultural encounter was a playground of creativity; a co-produced negotiated reality, whereby the audience's performance served to reinforce and modify proceedings by assisting in the on-stage performance, triggering textual readjustments in the script. The ritual was continuously constructed week-by-week, visit-by-visit, in the present, as a result of actions and questions put forward by the tourists in a dialectical discussion that assists the constructivist process. Culture is being constructed; the objectification and resultant commodification lead to appropriation:

> In *turismo comunitario*, appropriation is the flip side of commodification and necessarily appears when the latter does; it is fundamental in order to understand the dual nature of community-based tourism: at the level of the communities and at the level of the market. The object, element, practice or ritual that – having previously been objectified – is turned into a tourist product can be appropriated by communities and commodified for the market. (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernandez-Ramirez 2010:204)

Adams (1995) similarly uses "appropriation" in the context of describing the way in which Torajan host communities of Sulawesi, Indonesia, appropriate and insert anthropological research and tourist activity into their own cultural practices thus underlining the notion that "Cultures are invented, remade and the elements reorganized" (Crick 1989:65), and that "all viable cultures are in the process of "making themselves up' all the time" (Greenwood 1982).

"The motive behind a pilgrimage is similar to that behind a tour: both are quests for authentic experience" (MacCannell 1973:593). Yet, if the tourist, or

MacCannell (under the assumption that an original, pure, authentic culture lies out there somewhere to be discovered and experienced), were to know of the incidence of these ritual variations or appropriations, it would doubtless denigrate the experience. From the simulacra of real/fake, the ritual would be deemed a copy based on an original, rendering the ritual staged, inauthentic, ersatz, pseudo or fake.

If these cleansing rituals are copied from an original script, they are copies, and if not, can they be considered original and therefore authentic themselves? In time, the ritual may begin to take on a more settled script. As the dialectic between tourists and performers is played out, the changes and alterations may produce an established ritual, with this "emergent" ritual one day becoming authentic itself, not just to tourists who pay to gaze upon it, but also to those subsequently performing it.

> Since authenticity is not a primitive given, but negotiable, one has to allow for the possibility of its gradual emergence in the eyes of visitors to the host culture. In other words, a cultural product, or a trait thereof, which is at one point generally judged as contrived or inauthentic may, in the course of time, become generally recognized as authentic, even by experts ….(Cohen 1988:379)

After the rituals finished, tourists were told they could take photographs and ask questions.[12] Usually the first and most commonly asked question pertained to whether these rituals were performed by the Saraguros for themselves, and if so when. The tourists were generally told that these rituals are performed within families, in other sacred places, for weddings, confirmation, or, four times a year for

[12] The taking of photographs usually involved more enthusiasm, time and energy than the questions.

the *Raymis*, and other times they were told such rituals occur twice weekly on Fridays and Tuesdays.

This was a question I was also personally asked by tourists: How many times had I seen this and was it different, and whether I'd seen the ritual performed without tourists being present. These questions were clearly focused on determining whether the ritual was authentic, whether it was staged specifically for tourists and, if so, how it differed from an authentic ritual that wasn't performed under their gaze. One group asked how long the Saraguros had been doing these rituals, and I said, to my knowledge, less than a decade. Tourists seemed quite strongly taken aback by this, so much so that I felt I needed to add some context to my answer in saying that there are people in Saraguro who had been Protestants for less than a decade and nobody questions their authenticity. They agreed, and in doing so confirmed that those who strive for an authentic indigenous identity are held to a greater set of standards in maintaining their unbroken lineage to a distant purer past.

On another occasion a young woman asked me if the ritual had been put on especially for them, and another tourist answered that it must have been because it had been said they usually conduct them on Fridays and Tuesdays and this was a Monday. The woman said that this made her feel "cheap". "Cheap" because she earnestly gave herself over to an experience she subsequently determined was staged. They had offered a part of their culture, she had offered a part of herself in good faith in submitting to the ceremony, and on discovering it was staged, she had unwittingly sold a part of herself. This had left her feeling embarrassed, cheated,

used and fake; for ultimately if the object or experience is deemed inauthentic, then the individual's experience itself will also be deemed inauthentic (Waller and Lea 1999).

A tourist asked the shaman why they perform this ritual for tourists: "*People from Saraguro have a lot of things in their culture they keep to themselves, but this is one of the things we are willing to share with you*." Here the tourist is being offered a privileged glimpse into Saraguro culture, invited into the back region to share in an authentically sacred experience. The shaman proceeds to add that the ability to perform the ritual is a gift she received – nobody ever taught her how to do it, she is still learning from old people how to do it, through observation. The ritual we had just partaken in was new, as for many years it wasn't possible to do this for people from outside the town, further emphasizing the secretive aspects of this ritual. We also understand that there is an unbroken timeline, whereby this ceremony has been performed out of sight by old people, and then the shaman reveals it is new, that is, revalorized, but doesn't go into details – as though it has been a secret knowledge lain dormant, now able to flourish again.

On occasion a tourist asked what they hope that foreign outsiders take away from this experience. The Shaman hoped the tourist would learn and value the importance of the ritual for them, adding:

> The real indigenous people are really keeping these traditions; the ones who are not real are not following these. For the indigenous people, this is really important because this is our religion.

Here the tourists are led to believe there are "real" indigenous people and that although others are not faux, they have moved away from *their* religion, *their* culture, having been contaminated by western hybridizations. This marks the cleansing ritual as an authentic ceremony performed by the authentic people, performing their authentic religion. A tourist asked, "Was the ritual performed in Spanish for our benefit?" To this the shaman answered:

> The young kids don't take the ritual as respectfully if it is performed in Kichwa, because they don't understand… Now Spanish is really important to us and we are losing our language because of that.

The subtext to the questions is whether a ritual such as this should be performed in Kichwa. Although the shaman starts by saying they do this for the kids, she concedes that this is perhaps not how it should be done, but that Spanish has permeated into all facets of their life, even the ritual. The shaman doesn't reveal to the tourists that her own Kichwa is limited, though does go on to add that when she was thanking the gods she used Kichwa. It is thus insinuated that this is the most important time to use Kichwa, as presumably in an Incan ceremony, the Incan Gods would appreciate being spoken to in Kichwa. This information, delivered to the tourist, served to maintain the ritual's authenticity in response to perceived contestations.[13]

[13] Incidentally the Shaman who answered this specific question was subsequently stripped of her role in performing further rituals since her performance (in answering questions) was deemed unsatisfactory. This decision was unilaterally taken by the local guide/mediator in attendance, without any consultation as to what the tourists felt about the performance.

The question and answer sessions that take place after cleansing rituals would certainly aid in the objectifying of the ritual as they allow those performing to gauge tourist's impressions;[14] and therefore feed into the staging of future performances, answers given to subsequent questions, and understandings and shapings of local notions of indigeneity more generally.

After these question and answer sessions were completed I would generally ask tourists about their impressions of the ritual. Edward, a well-travelled tourist and self-identifying skeptic from Canada, thought the ceremony was a lot more sincere than many he had seen in India, for example. Sulley also saw sincerity in the rituals:

> There is a genuineness in the culture here …I also see that they have gone that length or that distance to share the culture with an outsider, because we've had the opportunity to participate in the ritual ceremony…There has been that genuine "this is our culture" and all they ask of us is we show respect….

Sulley isn't skeptical of the authenticity of the performance by the actors, viewing it as a genuine attempt at portraying their culture. Yet the ritual itself, he surmised, could not be authentic because it was performed in a foreign language.

> I think that what makes ritual practices indigenous and true is language; because if you go to Ghana, we speak English in everything

[14] For example, feeding into the idea of Indigenous people as ecologically noble, a tourist once asked a shaman through a translator (from English to Spanish) "I was just kinda[*sic*] wondering what her thoughts were on how we treat the environment and some of the problems, in general, in the world."

> we do, the indigenous communities communicate through their indigenous practices, and these things are in their own languages.

Sulley directly equates "indigenous" with "true", and to be true, the rituals should be performed in their "own" indigenous language. He doesn't suggest the ritual is staged or commoditized for tourists, yet it is ultimately flawed. Here he shows the same misgivings as Paula in defining authenticity; for even though the locals may themselves consider something to be authentic, the visiting tourist has a separate personal set of standards in determining authenticity.

Other tourists felt the ritual was not only authentic in terms of performance but that it had powers to cleanse and cure them, as a genuine spiritual experience. Others took part in the belief that it would cure them of their afflictions:
"It was awesome! I actually did this before [the previous year] and it was a different ceremony. It was much more intense than this one, but I thought it was a good experience, especially because I haven't been feeling well…."

Another woman I spoke to said she opted for a private cleansing as she was just getting over a cold, and another to remove "bad energy." "I need to be cleansed; I haven't been bad, but I just had bad energy. It's just energy, it's good to have it come out, and just start again."

Other tourists analyzed the reaction of their fellow tourists, for example Ryan, from Oregon believed that:

> There is stuff going on there that I buy into (breathing, meditation, relaxation). To calm you so you can feel more connected to the earth. A lot of time people allow others to believe they have profound feelings because that is what they feel is expected of them.

There is stuff the tourist "buys into" which insinuates something is being sold. Yet he believes other tourists are performing too, as they are themselves part of the performances inhabiting the same stage, and therefore feel they need to follow the script to aid in the performance. This topic was also touched upon by the family in Ñamarín, with whom I boarded:

> If you go to a Shaman, they all lie – they say they can cure you. Many tourists say [to us] their life in the city is stressful and they say these rituals help because they feel so much better. But of course it works – they are outside the city, it's a meditative state. They'll [Shamans] take you and bathe you in cold water – this will snap you out of anything! But they'll return to normal… tourists generally ask us lots of questions about it. But we tell them we don't take part in such practices, and that shamans lie. Some tourists seem to embrace this message, and some don't….

The family believes that tourists come searching for something and in the form of these incaic rituals, it is being provided for them. Yet the tourist is ultimately duped, they don't have the local knowledge to fully evaluate the situation. The family has theorized as to how and why tourists may claim to have had a genuine experience. The tourists are seen as dupes, naïve victims, who seek out a spiritual answer to their problems and experience in something that can be explained rationally in the context of their situation.

Local guide, Irma, confided that she doesn't like to partake in the cleansing ceremonies for tourists because she didn't believe in them and saw them as simply an exercise in making money from tourists. She said she'd prefer to implement something along the lines of a non-religious sauna and/or herbal massage as an

alternative. Interestingly, Irma never refused to partake in any rituals she attended, even though she didn't believe in them. She said she saw it all simply as a job, and a way of extracting money from tourists.[15]

Other tourists, by taking the decision to opt-out, also gave authenticity to the ritual. A university student from Iowa I spoke to about her refusing alcohol during a ritual said she had thought about opting out of the ritual all together due to her own Christian religious beliefs, but that it was difficult decision to make because she was worried about causing offense, and she wondered whether it would cause more offense to sit out the ceremony or remain inside as a cynic. By opting out, the tourist gives the ritual authenticity by showing that one believes it has powers that may be contrary to one's own beliefs.

On one occasion the local guide began handing out customer feedback sheets to the group after a ritual was completed. When it came to evaluating price some tourists said they hadn't been aware they were actually paying for the ritual, leading some to argue that if it were an authentic ritual it should have been free.[16] It would seem for some tourists, that as soon as something is paid for it is commoditized, staged and therefore cannot be considered authentic. "Where the tourist is made to

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[15] Indeed, her refusal to attend would almost certainly result in other guides being used to conduct tours in her place.

[16] It is interesting to note that so many tourists (despite being on organized tours) would believe that these rituals were organized gratuitously, which says something salient about the tourists' perception of the indigenous as anti-capitalist.

pay for what he sees, the sight always seems to be faked up and "promoted" (MacCannell 1999:156).

MacCannell argues the tourist is on a pilgrimage to find authenticity and, upon discovering it, he himself feels authentic by merely being in the presence of it. In the rituals I attended there was definitely a belief and respect shown by the tourists toward the ritual, its magical qualities and its sacredness. People wondered what to do with their magic beans and their flowers. Fifteen minutes after one ceremony a tourist asked others if he could blow his nose, and people were worried this would be taboo in such a sacred place. Another woman asked why they were being asked to fill out these customer satisfaction sheets, here, at this holy place, questioning the local guides' own commitment to the sacred and, in turn, the commodification and authenticity of the entire thing.

Tourists were willing to accept the magical or spiritual aspects of the ritual; that it could cleanse them, remove bad energy, and cure illness. Yet if they were to subsequently discover that the ritual had been de-authenticated, by taking place on the "wrong day", or that it was performed for money – specifically as a tourist attraction, the ritual was rendered fake, commodified, and the magic was gone. For magic to work, one has to believe in it, and it has to be authentic; echoing Levi Strauss (1963) in claiming that shamans affect cures because participants and observers of their performances believe they have the force to which they lay claim, further emphasizing the constructive nature of authenticity.

Contaminations of authenticity

Indigenous people who fail to live up to the tourists' expectations of authenticity run the risk of being labeled illegitimate and faux (Conklin 1997; Jackson 1995; Ramos 1998). The "construct that equates indigenous authenticity with lack of Western goods lives on in contemporary public attitudes" (Conklin 2010:132-133) was emphasized in this conversation between three tourists, as we drove back from Gera on the first day of the "Wajango Tour,"[17] having just visited the museum.

Sarah: "They say they have an intact culture, but they have volleyball, toothpaste, plumbing and I saw a guy with an Abercrombie and Fitch pullover."

Zoe: "Yeah, the guide has a Lacoste T-shirt!"

Tony: "No culture is completely untouched."

Sarah: "…oh yeah, I know; it [the tour] was alright though."

Here we see Sarah insinuating dishonesty, by highlighting obvious cultural in-authenticities. She implies the Saraguro are fakes; their culture cannot be "intact" despite what "they say", since it has adopted such obvious outside contaminations. Zoe agrees and has obviously been mulling over the guide's Lacoste™ T-shirt, as she

[17] After driving to Gera "an indigenous community which maintains traditional house styles, clothing styles and the Kichwa language. The excursion is continued on foot to pucaras, pre-Columbian terraces, and to a natural overlook for a sweeping view of the Yunguilla valley and the Paquizhapa River. During this trip one can observe a number of archaeological sites and breathtaking scenery, as well as drink wajango, a delicious fermented beverage made from the century plant, which has long been produced in the region." (Tour description taken from *Saraguro Tourist Information* brochure)

enthusiastically adds it to the list of contaminations. Tony, almost by way of defending these "contaminations," states that perhaps it is a bit harsh to judge them on such stringent criteria as "no culture is completely untouched", and so maybe they are expecting too much, setting the bar too high. Interestingly, Sarah then rather defensively suggests that she is aware of this, and that she enjoyed the experience despite its inauthenticity – as though the other tourists may have surmised from her comments that her highlighting of these contaminations had the potential to ruin her experience.

> The preoccupation with authenticity is a symptom of doubt, a preoccupation with the relationship of what is given to something that is posited as prior. Authenticity speaks in the language of copies and originals, the spurious and the genuine. (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gamblett 1994:459)

At issue here is authenticity, the guide's claims to the community's authenticity and the tourists challenge to that claim. For a tourist it would seem that the guide in his Lacoste shirt has lost part of his authenticity and has been "contaminated" or has even surrendered somewhat to western culture. Not only is the guide's clothing denied hybridization; if the Saraguro are claiming an "intact culture" their culture more generally is also denied any outside contamination, be that in the form of toothpaste or volleyball. Hybrid and heterogeneous objects are considered inauthentic and excluded from the pure category.

"Intact" denotes purity and purity means freedom from foreign elements or admixture. One foreign element contaminates the purity of the whole. Tony is right in suggesting that cultural hybridity is the norm, yet the local guide throughout the tour has attempted to claim an "intact, traditional culture" for the residents of Gera,

delivering what he believes the tourist seeks and fearing delivery of the wrong product or dream. Yet we also see here the risk of a claim to authenticity; such an impossible claim to purity immediately instigates a search for validation by the tourist, who begins sifting through what is bona fide and not. By claiming authenticity, the guide is placing himself and Saraguro culture on a pedestal; if contaminations are then sought-out and discovered, he becomes a liar or a fraud in the two poles of the true-false spectrum. This then ultimately risks the fall from grace suffered by the ignoble savage. Once the Saraguros step away from their traditional lifestyles they will cease to be of interest to visiting tourists, the culture will simply be staged, and the whole affair considered touristy.

This striving for, evaluation and recognition of toured objects as authentic is very real and very relevant to tourists. This "objective authenticity" involves an absolute and objective criterion used by tourists to measure authenticity (Wang 1999:351). If one were to judge something for authenticity one would look for irregularities and anomalies. The lack of the foreign and unknown serves to authenticate. Yet for the tourist in a foreign land in search of authenticity the foreign, the unknown, the exotic *is* the authentic they seek. In an ironic twist, for the tourist, authenticity is the unknown or strange and the inauthentic is the known or familiar. The tourist doesn't have an exact preconceived idea what the authentic actually looks like, so they match it against that which they *know* to be inauthentic and alien: "Western culture" or "modernity". The native is the unknown, the foreign is the familiar. It is the only way the visiting tourist can have any bearings in an environment where they lack local cultural knowledge in discerning authenticity.

The search for the inauthentic authenticates the unknown authentic; if there are no known in-authenticities then it must be authentic. Things appear authentic to visiting tourists based on their own prior perspectives and beliefs (Wang 1999:351), which ultimately means authenticity is relative and negotiable (Cohen 1988).
As has been seen with the Noble Savage myth in the previous chapter, this authenticity can be a projection of a tourist's romanticized dreams or stereotypes onto the host (Bruner 1991; Silver 1993). It is constructive authenticity, the result of social construction; and the tourist is ultimately in search of *symbolic* authenticity (Culler 1981). Page: 118

This quest for the authentic is important, as we see a conversion of tourist notions of indigeneity and noble savagery and the subsequent recognition of this search by Saraguros, who then attempt to represent themselves as "authentic" and "untouched". How this shift then translates and contributes to informing cultural practices locally, in having tourists evaluate if and how authentic these experiences are, will be explored in more detail below.

A mixture of cultures is no longer authentic. Any culture tainted by ours can no longer be authentic. If the reason to travel is to search for the Other, the exotic, the authentic, the tourist doesn't want to find traces of themselves, their culture, that have already been there and eternally altered the Other. On one occasion a group looked through a selection of locally made jewelry assembled from tiny colored beads, everyone was quite enthusiastic until somebody discovered one of them had the name "Chris" woven into the design. This name was clearly non-local and its mere presence polluted the other offerings, rendering the whole lot

inauthentic, and nobody purchased anything.[18] On another occasion a tourist had been poised to buy a locally produced poncho until he discovered it was made of acrylic. In the eyes of the assembled tourists this rendered the poncho inauthentic, despite how, or by whom, it had been made, they believed the acrylic was most probably from China and therefore the poncho was tainted.[19]

Annabelle, a tourist from Oregon told me she thought it strange that some of the adults wore traditional clothes yet their children wore "American clothes." Pamela, a Finnish tourist, said she had seen a man in short black traditional pants wearing a rock T-shirt. She said it was a strange mix and wondered why he was wearing the pants with the T-shirt, as if wearing the pants was a futile exercise in defining identity, when that identity had been clearly surrendered by wearing the rock T-shirt.

One Sunday I approached a couple from Ontario sitting at the local market in Saraguro; assuming correctly that they had perhaps been directed towards the "wrong" market (the weekly Sunday market), I became their guide. The husband said he hadn't actually come here to see the indigenous people and besides which, from what he'd already seen the "indigenous people in Cuenca are more colorful with their red and purple skirts." His wife said she "most definitely" had come here

[18] On this occasion local attempts to commodify a product to appeal to perceived tourist demands clearly backfired.

[19] After the tourist explained the reason he did not wish to buy the poncho he was offered a more 'authentic' handspun woolen poncho. The $800 price tag was deemed too expensive, though, particularly when contrasted with the $20 acrylic poncho he had declined to buy.

to see the indigenous people and had read about them beforehand. They were "more traditional" and "authentic" than those in Cuenca, and she could now see that many more of the younger people wore traditional clothes than in Cuenca, "or even Otavalo." She said this would probably change though as they became more exposed to the outside world and became wealthier. She said, however, it still "shocked" her to see some of them using mobile phones, which speaks to the idea that, "the use of western goods becomes a symbol for cultural corruption and the loss of authentic, distinct, exotic indigenous identity" (Conklin 2010:132).

Here, in common with many of the other tourists visiting Saraguro, the "outside world" is the biggest factor contributing to "change" and isolation the antidote. She also saw poverty as maintaining tradition and economic prosperity as the death knell which would inevitably expose them to the trappings and temptations of modernization. Interestingly she is "shocked"[20] on seeing what she considers a contamination, as such a profound symbol of modernity clashes so starkly with the indigenous attire, confusing and challenging the tourist's definition of tradition and authenticity.

As if by way of using my perceived local knowledge in clarifying confusions and gathering more evidence to determine authenticity, I was asked repeatedly by visiting group tourists if Saraguros generally used mobile phones. I would always answer that everybody I knew had one, explaining rather defensively that this seemingly high ratio was due to the fact that many people simply didn't have the

[20] "Shocked" being the most extreme form of expressing "incongruity" that I encountered.

option of landlines. I was also asked about computers, and I conceded that this was harder to tell, but that the previous family I had stayed with had not owned one, though this current house had more than one laptop, and that if it was any indication my computer had detected Wi-Fi signals in both communities. I also often revealed that many people I knew were also using Facebook. One group said it was "funny"[21] for them, because they'd all believed they wouldn't have internet down in Ecuador but that all their host families in the capital city, Quito, had internet.

It seemed the tourist's markers of modernity and progress reflected their own markers – mobile phones, computers and internet – yet nobody asked whether Saraguros had potable water, a much more pressing local concern. From this I assumed that people simply believed that in the pyramid of modernity, mobiles and internet were at the peak, and by default everything else that came before that was a given or a prerequisite. The tourists' view of progress seems to emulate evolutionary development ideas that there is a linear path to progress and they were assumed to be on the path to becoming us.

Another signifier of authenticity for the tourist is language. Most tourists thought everybody in Saraguro spoke Kichwa "because of the way they dress," and many were surprised when I told them that was not the case. The seemingly traditional manner in which some Saraguros dressed meant they *should* speak Kichwa, and in the hierarchy of signifiers it seems that the tourists believed that clothing would change first.[22] The guides also reflected back that when asked if they

[21] A term repeatedly used by tourists in similar contexts to denote 'incongruity'.
[22] Perhaps in that it can be simply taken off and replaced.

spoke Kichwa, they were embarrassed to concede that they did not, much to the confusion of the tourists, leading them often to give the answer that they spoke "some" or "a little".

When I first saw Yīng brandishing her camera as an appendage to her smile and poise, I instantly surmised from her posturing that she was an experienced photographer. She was a travel writer for a magazine in Hong Kong. Because she was born and raised in Hong Kong, she said she didn't like to stay in cities, and said that she liked coming to these rural places to take pictures. She liked to couch surf whilst traveling, because she believed it put her in touch with the "real culture" of a country.

Like many other visitors to Saraguro, Yīng also ranked destinations according to the traditional/touristy dichotomy: although she had only been in Ecuador for a few days she had already surmised that it was "less traditional than Peru or Bolivia." The main reason she gave for this was that Ecuador didn't have its own currency, the Sucre, anymore ("If I am Ecuadorian I am very ashamed because I have the dollar"). The U.S. dollar, in this instance, was a contamination afflicting an entire nation's authenticity. She felt uneasy when I told her that many indigenous people in Saraguro spoke Spanish – another foreign contamination – as their first language.

> I spent one night with traditional people on Lake Titicaca, but they are touristy now. They learnt Spanish from a volunteer teacher. And now the girls there want to study English, because the tourists are very important [for them]…I think they [Saraguros] should learn Kichwa first and then the Spanish. But if I lived here I would want to learn Spanish, to improve the living standards of my family. Hong Kong

> belonged to the British before '97, now we are part of China. I said to my mother 'why did I learn Cantonese and English but not Mandarin?' – She only taught me those – it is similar to here…maybe in ten years they will want to learn English. If I was born here I would want to learn Spanish and English…Kichwa is just an additional language for them…here you can see internet cafes, it is not totally traditional.

From personal experience Yīng can understand why people would want to learn other languages. Yet she, as a tourist, wants them to remain traditional; from this notion we can again extrapolate that the less traditional people become, the less appealing they will be to those in search of the authentic. Yīng held an almost schizophrenic double-standard when she was deciding what was best for these people. On the one hand as a travel writer/tourist she wanted their culture preserved, as if in a museum. Yet when she attempted to project herself into their situation, she wouldn't want to live like that; she would want to learn Spanish and even English (which would help improve living standards) above the "additional" language of Kichwa. After all, since they have internet cafes now, what are they really preserving? The culture had already been contaminated – their traditionality, or authenticity, breached, the process of assimilation had clearly begun. I asked Yīng what image her magazine would want to see in a story from Saraguro.

> I write an article – for me I don't want any change for the village I want to protect the tradition – but if I lived here I'd want to change…I'm tourist, I don't want change – keep it the same. I like Bolivia because they don't want to change so much…for example the buses don't have toilets and people pee pee everywhere.

Here the traditional is quaint and charming, yet more than that, poverty is romanticized. She admires the Bolivians for not wanting change, for "real Indians

must be pure and poor" (Ramos 2001:14); like the stoical Noble Savage retaining his honor in the face of modernity's temptations. She wants to protect "tradition" for no other reason than for her to look at it, and fleetingly live it. Indigenous culture is something to be consumed. She admits to being a voyeur, a "tourist"; it is her vocation and her passion.

Hartigan (1997) in his article, *Unpopular Culture the Case of 'White Trash'*, notes how Vogue magazine documented a similar nostalgia for the domestically impoverished in late 1980s America:

> While books, magazines, and TV have been wallowing in the lifestyles of the rich, richer, and famous, a counter-trend has evolved - downmarket chic. Part nostalgia, part condescension…now we want to spy on, gape at, fantasize about, and revel in the doings of the downscale and the déclassé. (Jefferson 1988:344-5)

Gottlieb (1982) argues that the tourist is seeking an inversion of their everyday life, and so the working class will seek to experience pampered luxury of "King/Queen for a day" and the elite will search out the lives of the common people to be "peasant for a day." As a tourist, Yīng is able to drop down to view, and fleetingly "live" like these people safe in the knowledge that she can take the next bus, boat, plane out of there, an authentic experience in the bag, photographically logged, with the trinkets and diarrhea to prove it. She admits as much herself; if she lived there she would want change, she would haul herself out of poverty, but she isn't living there and so she gazes voyeuristically at their plight, willing them to remain authentic in their romantic impoverishment. When we change, it's called progress; when they change by attempting to progress it's perceived as them *losing* their culture and themselves (Jolly 1992; Sahlins 1999).

Yet contaminations of modernity ironically also served to validate an authentic experience. After a cleansing ritual the tourists filtered back to the coach, upon arrival one of the tourists joked about the "Pachamama motorbike" that was parked beside it. The motorbike hadn't been commented on half-an-hour earlier *before* the ritual, or arguably even noticed, yet the tourists now seemed to relish its presence. Far from trivializing the experience or de-authenticating it, the motorbike served to validate it. Juxtaposing the ancient incaic ritual they had just attended, it created a dichotomy between ancient and modern, highlighting the time travel the tourist had just experienced.

There are some inherent paradoxes in tourism and the striving for authenticity. The very act of marketing culture for tourism, and (if successful) receiving tourists, begins a process of de-authentication, whereby destinations risk becoming denigrated as touristy in the eyes of the visiting tourist. In MacCannell's mind, the quest itself is doomed to failure because wherever the tourist looks or whatever he touches, he commodifies and irreparably alters the authentic from its original state, like a mythical Medusa or Midas. In entering into the backstage the tourist contaminates by engendering a performance and therefore spoils the authenticity sought, rendering the backstage "profane." This postmodernist approach is critiqued by Bruner because it assumes an authentic culture, and "is as if history begins with tourism, which then pollutes the world" (Bruner 1994:408).

However, if tourists on day-tours can be ferried between traditional villages to visit museums and partake in incaic ceremonies and rituals, through successful staging this illusory constructive authenticity can still be manufactured *and*

experienced. Furthermore, and herein lies another paradox: tourism's own dialectical impact on the commodification of culture can serve to insure that, that which is sold or staged is that which is most likely to be deemed authentic, a kind of placebo authenticity. Yet there is an inherent danger in the striving for authenticity to satisfy the perceived demands of the tourist. That is, in the placing of oneself on a pedestal, the search for inauthenticity in order to authenticate begins in earnest, and if the culture is deemed inauthentic it opens itself up to criticism; that it is fake, illegitimate, corrupted and touristy.

In the following chapter I will highlight the relationship between the depiction of indigenous Saraguro history and culture in locally produced tourist brochures and the locally growing ideology of incanismo, and how material produced for tourist consumption can equally by used by local residents to explain their own culture to themselves (see Salazar 2010). I will explore how these cultural depictions are influenced by parallel recent growth of the local incansimo movement (a veneration for the Inca past and indigenous culture). As we will see, many of the key tenets of incanismo and its main antecedent, indigenismo, do echo the romanticized-essentialized views that visiting tourists have of indigenous peoples more generally. Contemporary devotees of neo-incanism in Saraguro share the same nostalgic yearnings for a nobler past and sense of urgency of cultural loss in a rapidly changing world as the tourist. In attempting to revalorize an Incan past, the neo-incaic movement is beset by some of the same issues of authenticity and legitimacy that they are subjected to by visiting tourists, and in returning to this

past, colonial contaminations and hybridizations must be eradicated in order to (re)construct a nobler purer Incan past, today.

Chapter 4: In search of (our)selves

> Indigenous people are working to regain their relegated cultural practices ....Luis Macas Franscisco… wishes that his indigenous brothers will not forget the ancient customs by which their ancestors lived… returning to these experiences has been complicated because in the historical process *mestizo* society - including religious authorities - have sought to obscure and erase ancestral life processes, which has also contributed to the lack of identity of these *Indigenas*. Work begins to build the foundations of Saraguro culture, returning to their roots to move towards the ancient culture….
> (Mi Tierra, Saraguro. *Customs of a People*, March 2010: No 2: 6)

During the past 10 years the ideology of incanismo has begun to gather pace in Saraguro, chronologically mirroring the foundation of many local NGOs and the development of the community tourism project in 2001. The ideological nucleus of this movement is predominantly located in the three most centrally located communities to the urban center of Saraguro, namely Las Lagunas, Ilincho and Gunudel, which are the most affluent, the communities with a higher percentage of post-secondary educated people and returned foreign emigrants, the most modern housing, and also those with the lowest percentage of Kichwa speakers. Proponents of this movement consider themselves to be more authentically indigenous due to their revival and adoption of Incan custom. In contrast, those outer-lying communities where incanismo has seen little headway are primarily inhabited by poorer Kichwa-speaking agro-pastoralists living in adobe houses – those very same indigenous communities sold to the tourist as the most “traditional”, “authentic” or having the most “intact culture”.

Issues that I will explore in this chapter include: 1. religion and cultural purity; 2. class hierarchies and social hierarchies; 3. cultural performances and creation and maintenance of those hierarchies. I shall begin by briefly exploring the history of indigenismo in Latin America, its glorification of indigenous culture and vilification of all things colonial, and the space it provided for the growth of incanismo, with its specific application of indigenismo to the Incan Empire, particularly in the Incas' historical heartland of Cuzco, Peru. Turning to Saraguro, I will analyze the relationship between the inception of local and international NGO's sponsorship of a community tourism project in 2001, the revalorizing of local indigenous culture, and the paralleled growth of a local ideology of incanismo.

Situated within the literature on neoliberalism and new social movements I will demonstrate how the previous decades have provided the constitutional space and the ideological impetus for separate indigenous identities to emerge from the homogeneity of *mestizaje* and the *Indio/mestizo* dichotomy, and how this political economy has been critical for helping to shape the emergence of cultural forms and ideologies, such as that of Incanismo in Saraguro. I will show how the indigenous movement emerged out of a rejection of ideologies of mestizaje, democracy, neoliberalism, and new social movements, insertion of NGOs and identity politics in context of state restructuring. In the resultant struggle of many Andean social movements, we see a revalorization of indigenous culture, and even identity construction (Roper et al. 2003:11).

Local adherents of incanismo seek to revalorize customs they believe connect them to their birthright of a nobler Incan past. In this notion of returning to

themselves we see a convergence with the dreams expressed by some of the tourists visiting Saraguro, themselves searching for a cure for society's ills in a return to an authentic purer past, and with the culturally appropriate development goals of international NGOs who see tourism as a catalyst for cultural revitalization. As indigenous culture is increasingly seen as a resource deemed to possess an untapped source of social capital, I will explore how the theoretical benefits of culturally appropriate development in practice are far from equally beneficial to all, and how indeed the way these ideas are interpreted and utilized locally impacts not only the evolution of the community tourism project, but also contributes to the growth and shaping of a local neo-Incan ideological movement.

I will examine the validation and perpetuation of neo-Incan ideology by local elites to serve their own ends; those with NGO connections and disproportionate rhetorical space, via the production of tourist brochures and the staging of rituals and festivals marketed to tourists, which sees them posit themselves as the inheritors of Incan lineage and consequently the most authentically indigenous. I will then explore a theoretical discussion of race in the Andes, the origins of "Indian", its internalization and the contemporary stigma of "Indianness" in Saraguro and throughout Ecuador. Here, the discussion of modernizing states and the way the racist state may produce a particular kind of subject is important. Ultimately, in adopting incanismo as an ethnic identity we encounter a third way whereby Saraguros can escape the disgrace of Indianness without assimilating to the dishonor of mestizo.

Then I will turn to the contradictions in the imaged idyll of incanismo and the actual lifestyles lived by its main proponents, and how in this pursuit of a purer nobler past, essentialized notions of indigeneity and contaminations of westernization and modernization, held by tourists, converge with incanismo's own ideological aspirations. Here we see contradictions that threaten the neo-Incans' own ideological aspirations and contradictions in the "staging of authenticity" for visiting tourists. Ironically, the rural Saraguros actual lived existence epitomizes many of the traits the neo-Incans aspire to, despite the fact that they are ultimately viewed by the predominantly middle class neo-Incans (in an example of the internalization of hegemonic racist ideology), as ignorant dupes living in the past.

Incanismo, indigenismo, and the construction of a past present future

Indigenismo is the study and general defense, vindication and glorification of indigenous cultures in Latin America. It romanticizes them as living in harmony with nature; sees their political institutions as non-capitalist, egalitarian, compassionate, redistributive and communitarian whilst the Spaniards and other Europeans are considered the bane of the Americas (van den Berghe and Ochoa 2000:10).

The Noble Savage of lore unwittingly had his noble attributes mirror those aspects of contemporary culture that were troubling. Similarly, the history of the Incas has been a site of competitive discourse since their overthrow some 500 years ago, with competing Inca factions from within the conquered empire constructing their own versions of preconquest history in order to establish themselves as elite

lineages to curry position and favour in the newly created Spanish colonial world (Silverman 2002:306).

The intellectual movement of indigenismo argued that contemporary Indians, through contact with Spanish settlers, had moved away from their "authentic" indigenous identities. Planned and implemented by non-Indians, it was believed the Indians needed to re-learn the traditions and values they had lost, and only the intelligentsia was in a position to re-teach them. Rejecting the biological basis of race, it was argued indigenous identity existed in cultural celebrations and tradition, effectively "de-indianizing" indigenous peoples and allowing elite *mestizos* to move into the space and appropriate their cultural identity (Arceneaux and Zhang 2009). Indigenismo generally became Indian policy planned and executed by non-Indians.

In Peru, the space created by the indigenista movement spawned "incanismo", which is the specific application of indigenismo to memory of the Inca Empire (van den Berghe and Ochoa 2000.). As selected attributes came to be shared by an enlightened left in Peru during the 1920s, who saw the Incan state as "a socialist state organized according to the characteristics of a modern state" (Sivirichi 1946:21), just as many of the less noble Incan attributes of forced labour, bloody war, genocide and human sacrifice were ignored (Molinié 2004:237).

"The Andean past is 'as you like it' in accordance with one's chosen theoretical framework and ethnographic lens" (Silverman 2002:307). Incanismo allowed the socialist *mestizo* to identify himself with the Indian defeated by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century (Molinié 2004:238). In Cuzco, Peru, following the

"discovery" of Machu Picchu in 1911, tourism became a marketable commodity, and the same urban elite that spawned the idea of indigenismo, took on the role of custodians of authentic indigenous Incan identity through the staging of folklore to visiting tourists. Even in the present, in Peru, the main proponents of incanismo are Spanish-speaking, urban, *mestizo* intellectuals and professionals, often university-educated in the mainstream of the tradition they vilify. The *mestizo* appropriation of indigenous identity has proved to be extremely lucrative for some with tourist arrivals to Cuzco reaching 638,112 in 2008 (BADATUR 2009) and tourism drawing $2.22 billion in US dollars in 2007, countrywide (MINCETUR 2009).

> Cultural organizations thrived as *mestizo* groups took on a role as caretaker of authentic indigenous identity, typically through the staging of folklore. The culmination of these staging efforts came with the creation of the Festival of the Sun, or *Inti Raymi*, in 1944. (Arceneaux and Zhang 2009:14)

Yet despite these tourist numbers, Arceneaux and Zhang (2009) argue tourism offers few opportunities for indigenous groups in Cusco, with most profits going to middle class merchants and foreign investors. In Saraguro, even though some would argue that it is staged, commercialized and inauthentic, economic proceeds generated by a local adaptation of *Inti Raymi* and the community tourism project more generally, are chiefly finding their way into indigenous hands. However, these indigenous hands are those of a predominantly middle-class, educated Saraguro elite, and despite this being a "community" tourism project, the proceeds are far from being equally distributed, as I will develop below in further analysis of class and social hierarchies within the community tourism project. In the

three communities closest to the urban center of Saraguro (Las Lagunas, Ilincho and Gunudel), people are generally wealthier, live in modern houses, work white jobs and speak Spanish. It is these three communities that are at the center of the neo-Incan revival movement in Saraguro. This demographic shows a striking similarity to that of the white proponents of incanismo in Peru, the major difference being that in Saraguro the neo-Incans are Indians, but it suggests a possible parallel in terms of incanismo being an elite ideology, a theme I will develop below.

The first three months of fieldwork in Saraguro were spent living with a family of Seventh Day Adventists in Ñamarín, a few kilometers from the urban center of Saraguro. For the second half of our stay we lived with a wealthier family in Gunudel, a *Barrio* of Lagunas and virtually a suburb of Saraguro, as well as being one of the communities with a growing interest in neo-Incanism. Both families were involved in the community tourism project. Carlos, family member, eloquent local lawyer and self-professed indigenous neo-Incan, explored the local origins of the neo-Incan movement, believing:

> It is a political thing because before it was forbidden. We are from Incas, and so you have to make some ceremonies. Before it was forbidden in the constitution; from 1990 everything changed because there was a big indigenous movement to be part of Ecuador and then people started to notice them. It was five hundred years of resistance and then 20 years of struggle and in 1998 everything started to change. In the last constitution [2008] they recognized the rights of indigenous people. And now they can see the light because they can do the things legally now that before were illegal.

As Carlos suggests, we can't understand the growth of incanismo outside these broader historical trends and struggles. Saraguro's neo-Inca movement owes a historical debt to the broader indigenous social movement that has swept Ecuador

(and other Andean countries like Bolivia and Colombia) since the 1980s. Ethnic resurgence in Ecuador and Bolivia was the product of centuries of resistance to White-mestizo dominance. Many saw independence as "the last day of despotism and the first day of the same" (Field 1991). Land conflicts led to peasant oriented movements, combined with ethnic based groups, to work together in the common goal of overthrowing the hacienda system.

Indian organization in the 1960s in the highlands of Ecuador, where the bulk of the country's indigenous population is located, gained momentum on the back of the fight for agrarian reform, which allowed localized community associations to grow into regional and provincial ones. The communist-dominated Ecuadorian Federation of Indians (FEI) was the first successful attempt at a national indigenous organization, though its popularity declined after "achieving" its agrarian reform objective in the 1960s. With state formation in Ecuador, liberal elites wanted to break up haciendas and church control and attempt to integrate the Indian. However, this integration failed as such schemes did little to engender popular support, and "indigenousness" was still represented negatively, and ultimately as the Other to white elites (Crain 1996). Racism continued under the state ideologies of mestizaje and the experience of indigenous peoples changed little (Zamosc 1994). The agrarian reform law of 1964 legitimized indigenous demands for land and abolished the *huasipungo,*[23] promising to distribute land to former workers.

[23] In exchange for small subsistent plots of land and a small wage highland peasants (*huasipungueros*) worked hacienda land (*huasipungos*) for three to six days a week.

However this did not occur in the vast majority of cases, frustrating the expectations of indigenous farmers (Field 1991:42). After people were "shoved out" (Zamosc 1994) of the haciendas following agrarian reform in Ecuador, and the 1952 revolution in Bolivia, the state attempted to create peasants out of Indian populations in attempts to forge a national unity (Albo 1987).

As states attempt to integrate structurally diverse groups under one political economy and engage in revolutionary nationalism, they meet resistance and challenges to their sovereign authority to make these decisions (Comaroff 1987; Stutzman 1981; Abercrombie 1991). The mestizo or national identity is the major rival identity to the indigenous or ethnic ascription. Attempts by the Ecuadorian state to integrate people into the capitalist economy, and the promotion of a kind of living that would bring them under the greater control of the state, called for the Indians to abandon their traditional ways of production (even though these relationships of production, at least in the Andean highlands, were largely the products of Spanish colonialism), and become more "rational" through the adoption of market-oriented agricultural production (Weismantel 1989). Stutzman (1981) shows how the cultural project of engendering nationalism and mestizo identification was carried out in Ecuador through its history books which paint a very definite mestizo history wherein the valorous Indian only exists in the past, and the current Indian, and his lifestyle, is seen as a hindrance to modernity and progress. States shape configuration of indigenous groups through interaction – ideologies and politics of exclusion and cultural integration into dominant mestizo culture.

The Ecuadorian state that emerged from a declared aim of assimilating indigenous people, at the end of the 1980s, showed a marked growth in ethnic polarization (Strobole-Gregor 1994:107). Many authors tie this and the subsequent rise of indigenous movements to the neo-liberalism of the 1980s, the rolling back of state services and the rise of participatory democracy, which provided socio-cultural space for civil actors in Ecuador and Bolivia. The exclusion, space and division seen as a result of neo-liberalism gave many groups room for maneuver (Zamosc 1994; Postero 2005; Colleredo-Mansfeld 1999 and Roper et al. 2003); its oftentimes devastating consequences provided the fuel. Decentralization and the subsequent rise of NGOs, particularly international NGOs, brought significant changes to the domestic social movement scheme as they sought out "authentic" "representative people" (read indigenous rather than peasant) leading to an internationalization of indigenous rights. Many regional movements began coalescing around national ones, who themselves coalesced around wider movements such as the anti-quincentenary movement, and indigenous peoples began to force multiculturalism through their own struggles.

Until the mid 1980s many poorer people defined themselves as "working class" or "peasants", yet, "disillusionment with the traditional left led to a search for a new sociocultural identity and ideology" (Strobele-Gregor 1994:112). Ideologies of assimilation, however, had led to a temporary privileging of a working class or peasant identity over ethnic identification. Those educated middle-class denied social ascent due to their ethnicity were particularly "susceptible to, if not the inventors of, the new Indianist discourse" (Strobele-Gregor 1994:112), with many

former peasant leaders becoming the new indigenous leaders. Class-based movements saw the indigenous-based ones as divisive while indigenous movements saw class-based ones as not addressing ethnic discrimination and their modernization goals as at odds with desired local autonomy. Those on the left were calling for an overthrow of the state whereas in more radical indigenous camps people wanted to do away with the state altogether "*No Nos Sirve*" (Hale 1994).

The key event for many indigenous people in Ecuador was 1986, when the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE) joined the Confederation of Peoples of Kichwa Nationality (ECUARUNARI) to form CONAIE (the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) in attempts to merge indigenous peoples into a national pan-indigenous movement. The formation of earlier federations owed much to class-based and religious organizations; CONAIE, however, benefited more from alliances with international NGOs. CONAIE's central demand was to recognize Ecuador as a plurality of nations or cultures, seeing indigenous peoples as entirely different peoples, with citizenship occurring only when they are visible as a distinct entity from non-indigenous peoples within the state. At this time Luis Macas, Saraguro ex-CONAIE president, indigenous activist and former government minister, argues, Indigenous people discovered themselves (Macas, Belote and Belote 2003).

The 1990 *Levantamiento*, or uprising, called by CONAIE was the largest in Ecuador's history and shut down the country for a week (see Zamosc 1994) marking, "the end of years of life on the political periphery for the 40% of Ecuador's 10 million people who are Indians" (Field 1991:39). CONAIE's main demand was for

land to be given back to indigenous communities, though CONAIE's full set of demands also included a cultural rights mandate which called for the financing of bilingual education, indigenous control of archaeological sites and national support for indigenous medicine (Field 1991:40).

> As a rural protest on a national scale, it had no precedent in the country's history. In most respects, it was a feat of collective creativity, the spontaneous invention of a new form of contention that turned into a blueprint for the string of mobilizations that would follow in the 1990s. (Zamosc 2007:9-10)

The 1998 plurinational proposal that ultimately led to the declaration of Ecuador as pluricultural and multiethnic was also one of CONAIE's (and the party Pachakutic[24] it had launched to take part in elections), main proposals, with the constitution explicitly recognizing existence of indigenous social organization, indigenous jurisdiction over internal community affairs, bilingual education, and rights to own property in common. Then in the midst of a severe economic and political crisis in Ecuador in early 2000, after weeks of demonstrations protesting President Jamil Mahuad's neoliberal policies, particularly the dollarization of the economy, CONAIE indigenous leaders allied with a group of junior military officers in a nonviolent coup that removed the President from power. Ultimately there was little widespread support for military rule in Ecuador and the coup failed to hold onto power. This event marked a watershed for CONAIE, who had now moved away from concentrating on the struggle for rights of indigenous peoples to national

[24] In Kichwa, *pacha* means "time or land," and *kutik* means "return to," thus *pachakutik* translates as cultural change or rebirth.

leadership in the resistance to neo-liberalism (Postero and Zamosc 1994:145). "Indigenous movements had learned how to bring governments down, but it proved more difficult to construct viable and sustainable alternatives" (Becker 2008).

For the Saraguros, having lived through "five hundred years of resistance and then 20 years of struggle," as Carlos noted the belief that survival, and maintenance of cultural vibrancy, serves to embolden. The previous decades have provided the constitutional space and the ideological impetus for separate indigenous identities to articulate their uniqueness as distinct nationalities within the state. It is within this contemporary backdrop - the force created by these indigenous movements, and international nongovernmental organizations and interest in ethno-tourism as a cultural revitalization project - that a local variant of "incanismo" in Saraguro, was spawned.

NGO and tourist aspirations contribute to shaping incanismo in Sararguro

When tourists on organized tours visit the home of Álvaro, one of the main architects behind the development of community tourism in Lagunas, and a leading figure in the local incanismo movement, for traditional food and music, they are led into a large dining hall equipped with a stage. The hall is also used for local gatherings and parties, as it is also the home of a popular local indigenous music group. As one enters the room a plaque facing the entrance entitled "The Saraguros" is visible, displaying "proof" that the Saraguros are descended from the Inca.

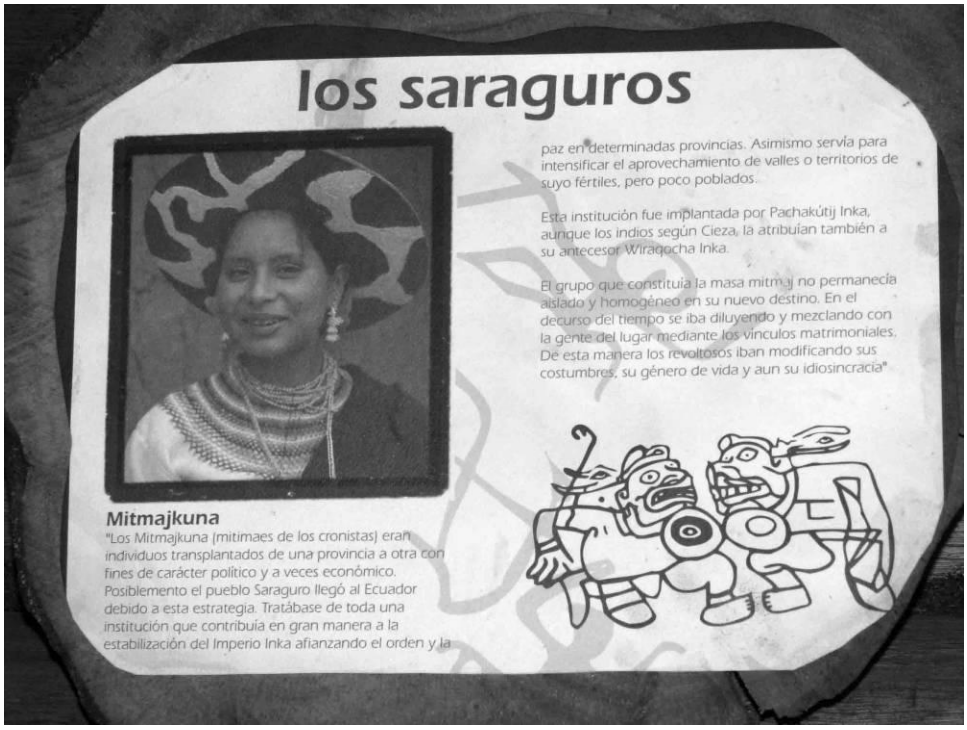

Figure 20. *los Saraguros* plaque (photograph by author).

This is where the dreams of the neo-Incans and the tourists converge; this plaque is prominent for everyone who enters to see, locals and tourists alike, explaining the theory of *mitimaes,*[25] that the Saraguro were more than likely transferred to this region as part of the Incan resettlement strategy, thus authenticating the Saraguros' lineage to Incas. Nearby there was also a fable alluding to present day Roman Catholics as dupes, the sum of which read, "The Spanish came to our land holding the Bible…and when we turned

[25] The Incan political economy used transplanted colonists known as *mitimaes* or *mitmajkuna*, which served a number of economic and strategic purposes; pacification and control; a form of divide and rule resettled rebels and loyal garrisoned peoples among the potentially rebellious in frontiers. Other times colonists were moved to under-populated regions to increase agricultural and economic production (see Ogburn 2001).

around they had our land and we were left holding the Bible." As one scans the room one will see dream catchers,[26] carvings, pictures of Inca warriors battling with conquistadores, paintings and photographs of festivals, newspaper clippings of local traditional music bands and, on the opposite wall to the stage, a large photograph of Machu Picchu, a large depiction of *Inti*, the sun god, with golden rays projecting from his head, and a large picture of *Departmento de Cusco Peru* (see Figure 21. below). The claim of lineage to the Incas, and their spiritual heartland, Cusco - demonstrated in written form through the plaque and in pictorial form through the images and paraphernalia that dot the walls - is apparent to everyone who enters.

Figure 21. Picture of *Departmento de Cusco Peru* (photograph by author).

[26] A seemingly popular local symbol of identification with indigenous cultures – however, many people I questioned were unsure of the dream catchers origin or usage and these were usually bought in at markets in Quito, Otavalo or Peru

By the 1990s many international NGOs began to pursue "culturally appropriate sustainable development," building off the energy of the indigenous social movement itself. The flood of international NGOs to Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s coincided with a worldwide fascination with the indigenous Other (Ramos 1994); eco-politics and international human rights issues; the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of the new world and the resultant anti-quincentenary campaign of 1992; followed by the UN's year of Indigenous Peoples, in 1993. Interest in the indigenous peoples' plight in Latin America and around the world took off, as seen in the idea of the ecologically noble savage documented in Chapter 2, resulting in global icons such as Sting, The Dalai Lama in photographs with Amazonian Indians, and leader of the Kayapo people, Paiakan's, appearance on the cover of Parade magazine over the headline, *A Man Who Would Save The World*. International NGOs and development agencies began to seek out "authentic" "representative" peoples. Ramos (1994) documents construction of the "Hyperreal Indian" in Brazil and the power of Indian authenticity to move national and world opinion, resulting in massive international support for their cultural and environmental plight, viewed, as they are, as protectors of the forest, innocent and stoic in the face of industrialization's greedy claims to their land and existence. Cultural and racial difference turned domestic marginality into international recognition; Brysk argues that the internationalization of Indian rights came about specifically *because* they were weak domestically. In fact the less acculturated the better (Jackson 1991:135).

This international attention and local adoption of the power of the "authentic *indigena*" led to the revalorization of indigenous identities and identity construction (Roper et al. 2003:11). Andolina et al. (2005) see this shift endorsing the construction and projection of localized ethnic identities, and the investment in indigenous cultural assets (as untapped capital stock) to incorporate them into western notions of development; "greater authenticity means greater social capital[27] which means greater development possibilities…" (Andolina et al. 2005:690).

NGOs and states began to see indigenous culture as a resource. The more modern uses of "Indian" and symbols of it for dominant ends include government sponsored displays of native heritage of music, dance, and artisanal products, in which the countryside is displayed in terms of quaint villages of ethnic purity, creating separate bounded entities (Weismantel 2001; Crain 1996). The Indian is

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[27] Social capital does not have an undisputed meaning. Pierre Bourdieu (1986), in *The Forms of Capital,* defines "Social capital" as a resource which is based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support. "Cultural capital" is the forms of knowledge, skills, education, that a person has (or is transmitted from parents), which give them status in society. In this instance, the Saraguro could be perceived to have "untapped capital" due to their potential wealth generating possibilities through contemporary development discourse and tourism as their social and cultural capital is deemed a valuable resource, or asset. In the opinion of Fukuyama (1997), for example "social capital can be defined simply as the existence of a certain set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permit cooperation among them"; a definition which may deem *indigenous community* tourism projects generally to possess untapped capital potential.

still being used for nationalist ends, but "heritage" for the nation is prioritized over land rights for the indigenous whose "heritage" they are "preserving". In research conducted in Tena, Ecuador, Patrick Wilson notes attempts by NGOs in partnership with local state agencies to promote a kind of living that would bring indigenous Quichua under the greater control of the state, by basing them in civilized, orderly living whilst profiting from their cultural potential for ethno- and ecotourism. Wilson describes this as a global process of "trinketization" which sees "'indigenous culture' as reducible to its exchange value in the production and sale of marketable commodities" (Wilson 2008:135).

Further, Andolina et al. (2005), also see a potential problem in these relationships with international NGOs. In using Keck and Sikkink's (1998) "boomerang effect" theory, we see how international help can come boomeranging back infused with foreign concepts and notions of indigeneity which have the potential to empower, but just as easily, constrain and even subvert the power of those deemed most in need. As has been seen, national ideologies, social movements, NGOs and visiting tourists alike can present their own visions of indigeneity based on their own perceptions and goals, which may not only present a different face of indigeneity, but may also affect the way that every day practices are played out by the groups themselves in the face of those external images and expectations.

Lucero (2006) demonstrates that how people are spoken about and viewed internationally ultimately affects who has the right to represent and speak locally. In Saraguro those exhibiting what is deemed to be, or indeed aspire to, those attributes

considered most authentically indigenous, are those most likely to attract international support in developing, sustaining and revalorizing culture when it is itself viewed as a resource.

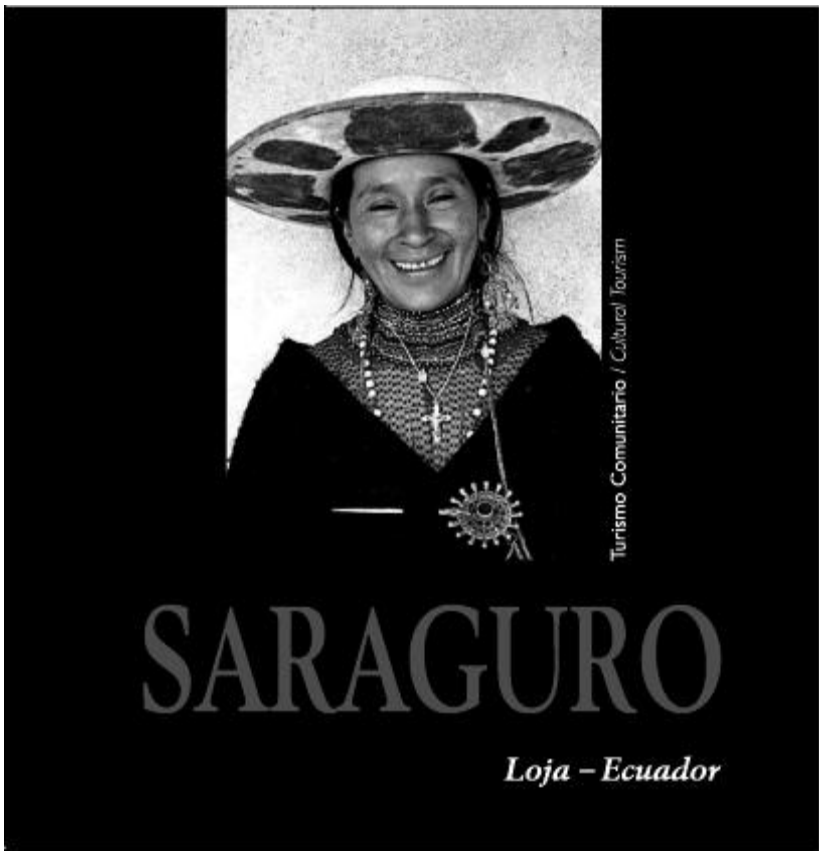

Figure 22. Saraguro, *Cultural Tourism* brochure (*Jatari Fundación,* 2007).

SARAGURO, *Cultural Tourism* brochure, is a veritable 46 page Manifesto of Indigenous Saraguro culture, which goes into far more detail than the other locally produced travel brochures.[28] This and most other tourist brochures are produced

[28] The brochure was published in December 2007, "In an effort to the promote of cultural and natural wealth of Saraguro and its people" (Jatari Fundación 2008) the realization of this promotional material was the product of a collaboration between two NGOs: the Spanish NGO, ACSUD-Las Segovia, which works closely with Ecuadorian residents in the community of Valencia, Spain, "Inti Nan," and the locally run, Jatari Foundation. This is part of a larger ongoing project, which goes by the acronym WIPALA (in reference to the 'rainbow flag', representing

by the same people advocating the new incaic movement in Saraguro; a small number of NGO professionals who have secured backing from overseas nongovernmental organizations, who themselves see tourism as a catalyst for cultural revitalization. For local proponents of incanismo, proof of their noble Incan lineage is the cornerstone of their ideology. Many of the historical and cultural portrayals presented in these tourist brochures are also the ones deemed most worthy of revalorization by the local incanismo agenda.

Although not for sale, this brochure seems more like a souvenir or a coffee table book. The stated aim of this "Catalogue or Guide" was so that people could know the "reality" of Saraguro culture, "we want Saraguro to be known and recognized worldwide" (Jatari.org). In the community tourism homes this brochure served as a quasi manual, with its Spanish/Kichwa Vocabulary guide at the back and "General Norms for Tourist Experiences," and in-depth Saraguro ethnic, cultural, historical and political manifesto, for both host family and tourist guest, with sections entitled Cult to Land [*sic*], Respect for Natural Environment, and Andean Cosmovision.

This *Cultural Tourism* brochure also provides a discursive space, utilized as a means to market the ideological message of incanismo to a local audience. Its very selective emphasis on Incan heritage and colonial exploitation to represent

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the indigenous peoples of the central Andes, and as a symbol of Inca heritage). For the production of this brochure, Jatari was able to obtain funding from Solidaridad International (who were instrumental in providing the funding to instigate the community Tourism project), Paradores turisticos de Espana and Generalitata valenciana y Bancaja.

Saraguro “indigenous culture” in tourist brochures – in the form of widely distributed mini-manifestos of incanismo - has a significant local bearing. Local residents use these brochures not only to describe their own culture to visiting tourists, but also to (re)learn and explain their own culture to themselves.

Figure 23. Local postcard depicting Saraguro in incaic costume.

In objectifying their culture through the gaze of the tourist it has been deemed by mediators that these representations of their culture are the most worthy to be presented to the tourist. That is, it is the *indigenous* Saraguro culture – as opposed to that of the culture of the Spanish or *mestizos* – and furthermore, those elements of their culture that have been maintained and are traceable back to an Incan heritage – those elements of their culture that are not contaminated by the Spanish. The tourist brochures are selling the idea that the current Saraguro *indigenas*, are the *living embodiment* of the Inca both genetically and culturally.

Figure 24. Tourist attending Incaic ritual. (*Jatari Fundación,* 2007).

The family in Ñamarín sees the catalyst and subsequent growth of the incanismo movement originating in the gathering of information by various locals[29] to promote and support the development of the community tourism project, which posits an Incan cultural lineage in tourist marketing and stages revalorized incaic rituals and festivals for visiting tourists. The information collected and knowledge gained to support the community tourism project was then disseminated through the families and extended family networks, individuals of whom now form the core of the incaic revival movement in Lagunas, Ilincho and Gunudel.

The culturally appropriate development goals of international NGOs created the catalyst for the incanismo movement in Saraguro, to revitalize Saraguro culture through their financial backing and logistical support for the local community tourism project. A contingent of middle-class university-educated indigenous

[29] Two of whom they specifically name (one of whom worked for FEPTCE helping organize and develop community tourism programmes throughout Ecuador).

Saraguros working within the local NGOs charged with the administration of the community tourism project, closest to the sources of finance, influence and rhetorical power, have taken it upon themselves to revalorize a *neo-Incan* slant on Saraguro culture. In objectifying their culture through the tourist gaze, laden as it is with contemporary global notions of indigeneity, and attempting to commodify it and ultimately authenticate it to satisfy and perform to these desires, the neo-Incan movement has been shaped and has continued to grow with tourism as its audience and dialectical sounding board.

Incanismo as combating a contaminated colonial past

> The various struggles that took place throughout Ecuador's history during its colonial and republican periods were answers to what I would call the *postponement* of our peoples. (Macas 2001:xiii)

Macas's notion of *postponement* is interesting because a *postponement* is to delay until a future time; therefore, to commence with who they are or were would be to return to a point 500 years ago to replay or revive their culture. This would effectively mean discarding or cleansing themselves of the previous 500 years during which they had been in some kind of cultural purgatory at the hands of the Spanish. At a presentation given to visiting tourists, a local anthropologist stated:

> A people without a historical conscience can't have a political conscience. A people confused about their history won't be able to know their past, their present or future. Only those men and women who take it upon themselves to know their own identity will return to be able to be themselves. (Saraguro, 07/19/2010)

In this section I will demonstrate how incanismo combats and ultimately allows an escape from Indianness without losing indigenous identity, as it is believed those enlightened with knowledge of their Incan heritage can gain fortitude in dismissing the stigmatism of Indian and supplanting it with the nobility of Inca. In returning to a nobler past in the (re)adoption of incaic rituals and *Raymi* festivals, neo-Incans seek to free themselves of colonial contaminations to their religion, language, culture, and custom – elements that serve to authenticate and strengthen their ethnic identity both to themselves and visiting tourists.

Linda Belote, during her time in Saraguro, noted a transculturation or "changing identity" experience when she rode a bus and "one of the greater bigots in Saraguro" sat next to an indigenous man who "had been white for only two years." When the "bigot" recognized that he actually knew the other man after a short conversation he asked quite respectfully, "How long have you been white?" (Belote 1978:201). This example highlights the fluidity of race in Ecuador and South America more generally; classification of whiteness does not primarily come from racial attributes but is rather a social category whereby what one wears, one's job title and wealth have a lot more bearing on how one is considered racially than simply the color of one's skin.

This story provides an excellent example of "racial passing," whereby an individual moves from one place on the racial hierarchy to another, generally "upwards" from Indian to Mestizo (van den Berghe and Primov 1977), which can involve the cutting of one's hair or change in the way one dresses, and may even involve the person consciously disassociating themselves from friends and even

family who may mark the individual as lower and thus compromise their passing (Harris 1964). For example, an individual from Ñamarín, who had cut his hair and now considered himself mestizo, oftentimes would make disparaging and racist remarks about Indians when around "fellow" mestizos, even though he, ironically, still lived with his mother in an indigenous community and derived his income in helping her make indigenous handicrafts.

The origins of race, Weismantel and Eisenman (1998) argue, can be found in history rather than genetics. Earlier Spanish colonial constructions of difference were not "racialized" although by the 18th and into the 19th centuries, concepts of race took firmer hold. However, instead of exploring a history of the concept of race, I will examine how race functions in the recent history of the Andes, and provide a brief theoretical discussion of the way the concept of race emerges at the intersection of a symbolic and political economy approach to understanding difference.

Those sharing a "distinct culture" usually as a result of a common ancestry or contemporary historical forces are generally considered to be an ethnic group. This group can grow though, to be more encompassing or exclusive relative to external forces and political mobilizations (Vincent 1974; Cohen 1978), with many overlapping labels making for multiple identities (Barth 1969). Cultural differences, or ethnicities, visible to any observer can be considered to be the "bedrock upon which the superstructure of racism is erected" (Weismantel and Eisenman 1998:122); the accumulation of these ethnic differences and class-based stratifications give rise to "race."

Everyday practice and experience produce common memories and tie people to ethnic identity (Bentley 1987; Bourque 1997; de la Cadena 1995), most noticeably in clothing styles, religion, customs and language. The formation of we/they distinctions in everyday activities takes place in rituals, processions, residential dispersion, symbols and consumption (Belote and Belote 1984; Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999), creating "a series of nesting dichotomizations of inclusiveness and exclusiveness" (Cohen 1978:387).

In the Andes race is fundamentally problematized by the Indians' inability - or stubborn resistance – "to become white - or white enough" (Weismantel and Eisenman 1998:123). Kearney (1996) shows how capitalism, in creating divisions along class-based lines, served to preserve the identity of "Indians" because they were generally forced to the fringes of society and thus wouldn't assimilate or disappear. Despite the buffer of mestizaje, the class-system reproduces ethnic identity from generation to generation, with part of the problem being that stereotypes of Indians as filthy, lazy, irrational, and backward persist (Stark 1981).

Historically Indians have been a social class (located at the bottom of society) both jurally and culturally in the colonial context. Ecuadorian writer Neptali Zuniga fated the Indian for his farming ways: "The Indian is the son of agriculture and agriculture is the mother of race" (Zuniga 1940:189). The Indians "biological development," he believed, was adversely affected by his external environment, its disorder and un-cleanliness (Weismantel 1989:190). Weismantel and Eisenman argue that "most educated Andeans" would these days find this notion derisory, yet "the underlying anxiety about the contaminated and contaminating body remains"

(Weismantel and Eisenman, 1998:131). Colloredo-Mansfeld talks of repulsive "smelly bodies" and indigenous hands which see a white shop keeper "recoil" from a customer. Orlove (1998) talks of feet, lack of shoes, and "mud between the toes," as symbolic of indianness; "hands and feet [which] render the abstract concept of economic class, concrete and unmistakable" (Weismantel and Eisenman 2005:134).

In the Andes, clothing, language, food, bodies, and an individual's location and occupation are important racial markers. For example, de La Cadena (2005) notes those working in towns and cities seen to be employed in white work. Since women have been relegated to the land as rural producers in the semi-proletarian household, they, in effect, become "more Indian" in the eyes of those men working in towns and cities who have adopted and internalized the dominant racial discourse. Yet people who are considered white in their indigenous communities may be considered Indian when traveling to or working in the city (Weismantel 1989).

The stigma attached to Indianness has worked its way into the Indian self-consciousness, leading to a colonized Indian self. Previous government propaganda built on dualism and polarization of the racist discourse, and this racism has been deeply internalized among the indigenous people, such that the "truth" of these assumptions is rarely challenged. For example, Weismantel notes the admiration of whiteness and racism as a tool of ideological and hegemonic domination in the word for phenotypic whiteness *suca* which refers to beauty, and its opposite *runa,* meaning "us people" or ugly. This is also inherent in the identification with indigenous practice as "the past" and white as "the future".

Even rich native entrepreneurs and professionals find little unqualified acceptance. Appearing Indian can lead indigenous Saraguros to be treated differently to white mestizos, particularly, Carlos explains, when they travel to places outside the confines of Saraguro:

> You go to Loja as an indigenous person, to a public institution, and for them to treat you well, it would be a miracle, IT-WOULD-BE-A-MIRACLE! …they paint their nails, they make you wait. In the end they ask you what you want - with attitude! – And then tell you to come back next week! For the youth, it is disparaging so they go with long pants, with his boots and everything. And they are not discriminated against.

The desire to want to change identity, Carlos believes, is a result of treatment at the hands of whites/*mestizos* in the wider society, which has a definite bearing on how indigenous Saraguros, particularly the youth, choose to dress when they travel, or live, outside Saraguro:

> We as indigenous people are a little alienated; because we think we are not accepted in a lot of places. Because of the way we look, that people will reject us and call us names…. Talk with a young person, of 16/17 years who has gone to the city to study and doesn't wear the short pants and ask him why he doesn't wear the short pants. It is because he feels he will be judged, they'll say 'you are stupid, not in style' and when you are young and you don't have a well formed idea of where you are from, of your roots, you are weak. And so when one is young and weak you put on long pants and a black T-shirt and you don't identify yourself as indigenous. I too passed that phase [when a student in Quito].

Here we see even temporary attempts at transculturation as a negative; Carlos believes that the lack of an informed idea of where one is from and who one *really* is, historically, will leave indigenous Saraguros "weak" to outside pressures.

Pride in oneself solely as an indigenous Saraguro, an *Indio*, won't engender the type of pride needed to give enough strength to identify as indigenous in public.

Indio is a racial ascription whereas *indigena* is ethnic. Colloredo-Mansfeld, during time spent in Otavalo (northern Ecuador), noted, "Where the word *indio* connotes a crude way of life, poverty, and irrationality, *indigena* signals the historic legitimacy of a culture and people" (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999:193). The neo-Incans do not wish to become *mestizo* or white, but at the same time they do not wish to remain *Indio*. In Saraguro, and Ecuador more generally, Indian is commonly understood as a derogatory term, whereas Inca[30] is understood as a positive one.

On one occasion, when a director of a local NGO was asked about the llamas on the woolen sweater she was wearing, which are not common in Ecuador, she said she had bought it from the Peruvians who come through Saraguro every March selling their wares. She said, "It is the only times one can buy things that mark you as indigenous, as Kichwa," suggesting current traditional Saraguro dress isn't a sufficient marker for those wishing to express Kichwa indigenousness,[31]and that the association with a proto-national (Incan) Kichwa identity emboldens and is preferable.

Transculturation is seen by whites as a tacit acknowledgement of superiority of blanco culture and allows greater degree of informal social control over that

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[30] In Kichwa, Inca translates literally 'lord, royal person'.

[31] Carlos also related how he felt certain local and national indigenous political figures wore certain clothing (sometimes insincerely) in order to perform indignity, in order to garner more legitimacy and authenticity.

person (Belote and Belote 1984). Within the indigenous community, transculturates are seen unfavorably as those who are betraying their people. In Saraguro, incanismo is a particular expression or performance of identity which allows (predominantly middle-class *indígenas*) an exclusive ethnic membership, casting off the stigma of Indianness without the dishonor of ceding to mestizo. Although "Incan dress," as such, doesn't independently exist – except at neo-Incan festivals or rituals – by inculcating Saraguro with Incan, Saraguro dress then becomes Incan dress. Imbruing the Saraguro indigenous identity with Inca instills it with a sense of dignity and pride, elevating their vision of themselves and eliciting respect from others in the hierarchy and rank of different kinds of Indians.

However, even then, Carlos the lawyer argues, race still trumps. For example, his boss is a *mestiza*, in fact, "*real* white," he says:

> She doesn't have a doctorate just a bachelor's degree, but what is the result? We go to a press conference and how do they treat her? They say, "How you are doctor?". And with me, "How are you señor?" It's a reversal of titles; she by virtue of her whiteness is a doctor, but me on the other hand because I am indigenous, obviously I cannot be a doctor. And that is right here in Saraguro – imagine Loja, worse! Cuenca even worse! Quito even worse!

In this example Carlos is frustrated that even though he has reached a certain level of educational achievement and socioeconomic class, because of the way he continues to dress, he is still racially inscribed with the prejudices of Indian by white/mestizos, demonstrating the fact that racial passing is never fully complete (see Weismantel 1989).

Race and class dynamics parallel one another in Ecuador; race is reflected in class, and class reinforces race (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999; Weismantel 1989). Wealth whitens (but only to a point, as seen above), and poverty indianizes. In the past, occupational mobility generally resulted in loss of indigenous identity, yet in the 1970s and 1980s (Belote and Belote 1984) saw it as leading to re-adoption, and that Saraguro, in this sense, was an exception to the rule. In the example of incanismo it could be argued this is still true. In the case of Saraguros who aspire to incanismo, they would argue their shift is a gaining or reclamation of indigenous identity, and that class mobility does not require the shedding of *indigena*.

John Ogbu (1990), in his study of minority education in the United States, contrasted immigrants, who move to a country voluntarily, with what he called "involuntary immigrants"; that is, those incorporated into the dominant society through slavery, conquest or colonization, against their will. For involuntary immigrants, he argues, the adoption of customs of the dominant society would challenge cultural identity; it would be seen as losing identity, whereas for immigrants this would not. Involuntary immigrants create boundary-making mechanisms in opposition to the dominant society, which symbolize cultural identity and importantly, preserve a sense of worth.

The neo-Incans of Saraguro wish to be able to shed the racialized prejudiced image of "Indian". Ethnogenesis allows the selection of changing symbolic behavioral and material features of their own choosing which will reinforce their identity and enable them as indigenous people to adapt to and compete in the

modern world as neo-Incans, their historic legacy and legitimacy to a nobler past crystallized.

Neo-Incans are attempting to regain and (re)develop their cultural vibrancy and resist cultural homogenization by defining and reinventing what it means to be Saraguro. A new indigenous Saraguro can rise only if it looks back to ancient history and reawakens the glories of a noble Incan past. Central to this movement is the development of a linkage between the Saraguros past and present, and key to this are the reenactments by a limited number of Saraguros of "Incan" inspired cultural celebrations in the form of shamanic rituals and festivals. The most important of these is the Festival of the Sun, or *Inti Raymi*, theatrically recreated in Cusco, Peru in 1944, from chronicles of a religious ceremony of the Inca Empire which took part annually on the winter solstice in honor of the sun god *Inti*. *Inti Raymi* has been celebrated in Saraguro since the mid 1990s and is still very much in its developmental stage, both for those performing and the steadily growing local attendees.

I once asked Carlos and his wife Ana why they believed incanismo had become recently popular in Lagunas, Ilincho and Gunudel - as manifest in their celebration of *Inti Raymi*, the Incan Festival of the Sun, which has been celebrated in Las Lagunas - and not in many of the other indigenous Saraguro communities.

> Ana: These three communities were the first to recover these festivities because before we didn't celebrate them… Lagunas was the oldest community and the first to do it, and Gunudel and Ilincho were a part of Lagunas. The rest were far from here and they didn't take it up. Lagunas took the initiative to recover these festivities.

> Carlos: It could also be that before in the Tawantinsuyu[32] there were big agglomerations called *marka kunas*. And in these big communities they were rotating parties between the communities. In the Tawantinsuyu there were always four important points; hana and Uri, both divided into two parts. Because of that we have four parties in the year. The leaders of Gunudel, Lagunas, and Ilincho said our ancestors used to do this so we should do the same…. We rotate between them….

There is an unquestioned belief that these festivals occurred historically in these communities. Lagunas[33] is understood here as the oldest and furthermore the historical epicenter of such festivals and contemporarily the first community to have taken the initiative to recover this cultural birthright, as an historical cultural order ordained in the past, recovered and restored in the present[34].

This being true, there simply isn't space on the calendar for the other communities to participate, if they so wished, unless of course they wanted to instigate their own *Raymis*. Yet the truth is there aren't yet many people in those outlying communities really interested in hosting such festivals, or the incanismo movement more generally. Carlos sees this as a matter of belief about origin:

> It is quite important the contribution of anthropologists and the investigation they have made from where we came from. If we think we are from the Tawantinsuyu we have to celebrate this type of thing as well because it is the type of religion the Incas had. And this is the point to understand; that Ñamarín and Oñakapak don't do it, because

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[32] The Inca referred to their empire as *Tawantinsuyu*; a Kichwa word which can be translated as *The Four Lands Together*.

[33] Ironically, Las Lagunas (formerly known as Chukidel) was the first indigenous community to adopt a Spanish name.

[34] A sign at the entrance to Las Lagunas on the Pan-American Highway states it as the home of the Inti Raymi festival.

> maybe in Oñakapak they don't agree that we came from the Tawantinsuyu, I think they think they came from another origin.

According to Carlos the investigations that were made by anthropologists, and the subsequent knowledge acquired from them, prove that they, the Saraguros, are from the Tawantinsuyu, the Incan Empire, which means they "have to celebrate this type of religion" because it is what the Incas did. It is their birthright, as if religion and culture are somehow genetic or preordained. Despite changes that have occurred in the preceding 500 years, neo-Incans are now discovering what was taken from them, how things were in the past, and are now reclaiming and reintroducing it. Those who don't wish to follow this neo-Incan religion are turning away for no other reason than they must think they came from another origin, for to possess this historical knowledge and to wish to reclaim it, now that it is possible, is seen as a self-evident. The idea that others may accept an Incan ancestry yet choose a different religion is a possibility he doesn't seem to consider.

Although *Inti Raymi* is marketed to tourists in brochures and on the internet, it would be difficult to argue that it is an event of "staged authenticity" (MacCannell 1973) solely for the consumption of tourists simply because, of the hundred or so people who attend, only a handful are tourists. One could argue, however, that it does serve as staged authenticity of incanismo for a *local* market, and many Saraguros believe just that. When I asked Jose, an ex-founding member of the

community tourism project in Ñamarín,[35] what he felt about the growth of incanismo and the *Raymi* festivals, he said:

> It could be interesting for the tourists but there is something to analyze; what Ilincho and Lagunas are doing is folklorizing the culture, it is not an authentic representation, so people that don't know this could take away a distorted message, and think that this is the life of people in Saraguro – that is a problem. They are distorting the real Saraguro culture.

This seemed to be an important point for Jose, the real culture was being usurped or corrupted; what the people were doing in Ilincho and Lagunas was just folklore. Even though he knew of the growth of the movement and the adherents' claims of Incan lineage to support their movement, he still saw it as a distortion. When I asked him if he felt tourism increased the show, and whether he believed those involved in the festivals' production were doing it for themselves and the local community, or more for the visiting tourists, he said:

> I can see both, but according to me, they are more on the side of using the *Raymis* for economic benefit. That is what I have realized… if they are going to do the things they are doing, for me it is just folklore.

So for Jose, the current *Raymis* are simply staged authenticity for economic benefit, a commodification of the culture, the subtext being that visiting tourists must enjoy these types of folkloric misrepresentations. Similarly, the family in Ñamarín viewed the *Raymi* festivals and the incaic traditions surrounding them as being utilized specifically for making money from tourists:

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[35] Jose still runs his own guesthouse, but left the project because he believed it was controlled by a cliquey network of families in Lagunas and Ilincho and wasn't actually communal at all.

> People have been worshipping the earth and the sun for over 4000 years, but the [*Inti Raymi*] ceremony itself [in Saraguro] is real recent. People have gotten into it since they started putting these things on for tourists and more people got involved in it, studied it more etc.... And some people went out and studied this Andean cosmovision somewhere else, and they went to University and came back with these ideas and started pushing them on the people and saw the value in them as tourism dollars.

Adherents of incanismo are attempting to present themselves as part of an unbroken cultural continuity with the Incan past. From their viewpoint the culture in which they currently find themselves living is in large part due to a disenfranchisement from their original culture. They wish to disentangle themselves from this foreign, Spanish colonial influence, and to do this they wish to go back to a point 500 years in the past for a roadmap to deduce purity; what is originally theirs, and what was taken from them. Emboldened by the belief that they are descended from the Incan Empire, many believe they "have to celebrate this type of religion," because it is their birthright.

It is this Spanish past that the neo-Incans wish to move beyond, yet ironically, by reclaiming a past in which the Saraguros believe they were in control of their own cultural destinies, (re)becoming Incan would mean living in, or returning to, an even more distant past. Incanismo ultimately allows for an escape from Indianness without losing indigenous identity – a third way, as it secures a link with an uncontaminated, pre-Columbian past, one that, according to tourist, and even popular white-mestizo beliefs, was noble.

Everything must be revived to be able to return to, reclaim, and revalorize the Incan past. A central tenet of incanismo is the construction of a past present future, a sentiment strongly emphasized by Carlos:

> This is the central point; we are trying to rescue everything that we can, but it is a bit complicated. This isn't a one day battle; it is a project for years, centuries. To *really* be able to recover, and that is tough.

It is this same notion of purity that is driving tourism based on the idea of an authentic indigenousness, and at the core of the indigenismo ideology of the early 20th century.

Contradictions between the neo-Incan imaged idyll and life in Saraguro

Ronald Cohen, in his 1978 article, *Ethnicity: Problem and Focus in Anthropology*, describes how the pejorative colonial concept of "tribe" (from the latin *tribus*, meaning barbarians at the border of empire) was rejected and has been phased out by anthropologists in favor of the term ethnic. The tribe was epistemologically seen as an isolated, primitive, non-western, bounded entity; ethnic as contemporary, non-isolated, universally applicable and an entity only in relation to others (Cohen 1978:384). Yet importantly, for visiting tourists the contemporary definition of "indigenous peoples" is still more often than not based on less nuanced earlier classifications and understandings of features defining tribes – and indeed, the neo-Incans themselves are similarly seeking such essentialized atavistic aspirations. To be authentic is to be epistemologically tribal.

The benchmark by which Saraguro neo-Incans judge their own authenticity, and the authenticity of rural Saraguros, demonstrates considerable overlap with

contemporary global notions of indigeneity and links back to the issue of authenticity in the eyes of visiting tourists. Those Noble Savage notions visited in Chapter 2, of indigenous peoples as ecologically noble, anti-capitalist, community-bound and ultimately engaged in authentic lives are the types of cultural attributes tourists expect to encounter when visiting Saraguro. In Chapter 3, I demonstrated how the tourist seeking authenticity considers any Western contaminations of indigenous culture as a bastardized hybridization which ultimately inauthenticates. Western religion, language and clothing which isn't deemed homegrown is considered contaminating. Superficially generic trappings of modernity like internet and mobile phones lead to incongruities which clash with the tourists' notions of indigenous people's lives, leading to confusion and doubt in the gauging of Saraguro authenticity.

By claiming for themselves an authentic, intact culture and a direct lineage to a purer nobler past, neo-Incans risk placing themselves, and indigenous Saraguro culture more generally, on a pedestal to be judged by outsiders' essentialized notions of indigeneity and authenticity. This situation ultimately threatens the dichotomous perception of Saraguros as authentic or fake in the eyes of the visiting tourist, and thus jeopardizes the very success of the community tourism project itself if the Saraguro ultimately come up faux. This situation is seemingly always present in the minds of those Saraguros in the process of objectifying and revalorizing their culture under the tourist gaze.

In this final section I will explore how the neo-Incan idyll squares against the practiced realities of the predominantly middle-class neo-Incans who believe they

have lost, and are in the process of losing, many of the very customs and practices they wish to maintain and revalorize. The educational level they have achieved they believe has equipped them with the knowledge to desire and reclaim a nobler purer past, despite the contradiction of them living in and adopting many of the practices of the society they vilify. Notwithstanding the paradox that the Saraguros that perhaps have the strongest claim to these authentically indigenous traits - chief among these being a rural agropastoralist lifestyle and ethic, manifest primarily in the notion of community and the practice of *mingas,* or communal work parties, and the continued use of the Kichwa language - are first denigrated by the neo-Incans as uneducated and colonized; and second, seemingly generally uninterested in the neo-Incan movement, and that the representation of Saraguro indigenous culture as a unified entity sharing an intact incaic culture in much of the tourism literature is a fallacy.

> The majority of native Saraguros speak Quechua, yet due to Spanish western education, and cultural globalization part of the identity of the town is being affected because few children and young people nowadays practice this language, although bilingual education is seeing people take it up again. (*Saraguro, Cultural Tourism* 2007)

As we see alluded to in this excerpt from the Saraguro Cultural Tourism brochure, fewer people nowadays speak Kichwa, particularly younger people in the wealthier communities closest to the urban center of Saraguro. In the 1960s indigenous people from communities nearest town began attending school, where the sole language of instruction was Spanish, which saw the gradual decline of Kichwa usage. Writing in the 1980s Belote notes:

> The shift to Spanish has gone so far that among some of the indigenous families of Lagunas…some young adults, who are without question indigenas, and who identify themselves as such, cannot speak Quichua. (Belote 1984:62)

Traditionally whites worked in town and *indigenas* worked the land. Yet many in those most affluent communities close to the urban center of Saraguro now work as town whites. Since the early 1970s due to land pressures coupled with greater openness for indigenous peoples in Ecuadorian society, Saraguros increasingly pursue life courses other than traditional agro-pastoralism. Many are now dentists, doctors, lawyers, mechanics, nurses, politicians, schoolteachers or veterinarians, many with postsecondary educations (Macas, Belote and Belote 2003:217). This openness, particularly in formal and university education, has brought greater economic prosperity, and access to the type of ideas the neo-Incans claim are necessary for the knowledge and reclamation of their past. Yet paradoxically these changes concurrently are deemed to make it more difficult to maintain and reclaim elements of the past considered worthy, particularly for those in the neo-Incan movement.

With fewer and fewer indigenous Saraguros knowing or using the Kichwa language due to generations of stigmatization at the hands of whites, particularly in those communities nearest the urban center of Saraguro, those having lost a primary marker of their indigenous authenticity become preoccupied with the importance of re-learning it as an emblem of non-mestizaje, and as a symbol of Incan identity.

Those who speak Kichwa proficiently in the communities closest to the urban center of Saraguro are predominantly middle-aged and older. Kendall King's 2001 ethnography of language revitalization in Lagunas and Tambopamba argues this is not the result of assimilation into white society, but the result of a changing system of incentives and opportunities as well as exposure to harassment; moreover through segregation and discrimination of indigenous populations language emerges as a social classifier of people and which further precludes inter-group activity and social mobility (King 2001:71-72). Speaking Kichwa became disadvantageous and many indigenous Saraguros stopped using the language when journeying to town to avoid harassment and mistreatment at the hands of white/*mestizos*. This became internalized, King notes, as people were ridiculed for speaking Kichwa in their own communities by indigenous friends and family. "The oppressed language becomes, in turn, oppressive" (Albo 1979:313). Parents began using solely Spanish with their children, which they believed would help them avoid discrimination and contribute to their future success in the Spanish language-based state education system.

This was a story told repeatedly amongst the children of this generation, now in their 20s and 30s, who, not knowing Kichwa themselves, were unable to subsequently pass it onto their children, a situation many now lament.

> The generation who do not transmit an ethnic language are usually actively in search of a social betterment that they believe they can only achieve by abandoning, among other identifying behaviors, a stigmatizing language. The first generation secure as to social position is often also the first generation to yearn after the lost language, which by their time is no longer regarded as particularly stigmatizing. Some of these descendants see an ethnolinguistic heritage which eluded

> them and react to their loss, sadly or even resentfully. (Dorian 1993:567)

Language continues to be seen as an emblem of identity long after it ceases to be used (Fishman 1985; King 2001). Smolicz sees language "as the main defence against assimilation… a symbol of ethnic identity... which acts as a prerequisite for 'authentic' group membership" (Somlicz 1992:280). As one of the legacies left to them by their ancestors, it is believed that relearning or rescuing Kichwa will authenticate their cultural roots. In Saraguro, the three communities closest to the urban center, Ilincho, Gunudel and Lagunas, are those with the lowest percentage of Kichwa speakers and, as has been seen, are currently those most actively involved in the neo-Incan movement. Yet the Kichwa language is seen by many in the neo-Incan movement as one of the most important aspects of indigenous life. It is difficult to claim an authentic indigenous identity without knowledge of Kichwa, harder more so to claim direct lineage to a purer nobler Incan past when one only speaks the language of the colonizer. It is language that those in Lagunas most envy and respect about the "backward people" in the rural communities, and as has been seen in the previous chapter, it is also a marker by which visiting tourists gauge authenticity. Tourists, who acknowledge the learning of Western languages leads to social betterment, also see it as a contamination of indigenous people's simple noble lifestyles, which they have come to Saraguro to see.

Laura Graham, (2002) in her article "How Should an Indian Speak?" demonstrates how Amazonian Indians are attempting to learn the more authentic native languages of their neighbors in an attempt to garnish international support,

and ultimately power. Others have cottoned on to the trend in international support by inserting phrases such as "environment" into their speeches, because, "they [international NGOs and media organizations] like it when you say that" (Graham 2002). One could argue that in Saraguro, the recent trend in (re)learning Kichwa is also partially driven by external expectations of, "how an *Incan* should speak," particularly in the eyes of visiting tourists, when gazing upon those attempting to lay claim to an authentic and intact Incan heritage.

A recent trend has witnessed adult adherents of incanismo enrolling in weekly evening Kichwa classes, which were inaugurated in the autumn of 2010. In Saraguro, Kichwa is now coming full circle; it is now no longer stigmatized. For those predominantly middle-class Saraguros afforded the opportunity of learning Kichwa, it is fashionable – a sign of progress, privilege and learning – even if learning a language to maintain a sense of ethnic identity is merely a symbolic gesture, as increasingly, Kichwa is used as a language of instruction in many communities rather than a language for communicative purposes.

Ana, who herself was enrolled in an evening Kichwa class, would bathe her one-year old son on occasion outside in the courtyard, weather permitting, and during the bathing would use her own basic mastery of Kichwa to teach her son parts of the body and colors. Yet outside this marked context, the language of communication for the entire family, and community more generally, was Spanish.

In a talk given by a local anthropologist to visiting tourists, evidence of linguistic toponomy was used to highlight the Saraguros' linkage to Incan heritage. Saraguro, it was argued, is the only region in Ecuador where people speak *Inka shimi*

(Inca language). The Kichwa spoken in Saraguro today, for example, is *closer* to the Kichwa spoken in Cusco than is the Kichwa spoken in Otavalo (in northern Ecuador)**.** When a tourist asked if this is something that differentiates the Saraguros from other people, the anthropologist answered in the affirmative, saying this makes them "higher" than other indigenous groups because it shows they came from the Incans. So in this instance, their languages ties to Incas can see the Saraguros rise up the hierarchy of indigenous groups. For even though, for example, the Cañaris in the north speak Kichwa much more prevalently than the Saraguros, the Saraguros' Kichwa is purer or more authentic. Further, Van den Berghe and Flores Ochoa (2000) document in the manifestations of *incanismo* in Cuzco a desire to speak "pure" Quechua, free of Hispanic borrowings, a concern locally articulated by Carlos:

> Have you seen around here brochures in Kichwa for Jehovah's Witnesses? It is like an insult to Kichwa because they mix Spanish and Kichwa in the brochure. And people are going to denounce that because it is terrible to mix the two languages.

Although in this instance the mixture of Spanish and Kichwa sees Spanish as the contamination leading to insult, unlike Catholicism, nobody is advocating the discarding of this particular colonial corruption. For most neo-Incans Spanish is the mother tongue in their daily lives, knowledge of which is arguably the foundation for their very success in the society they vilify.

Although loss and (re)learning of Kichwa can be seen as catalyst and path toward embracing tenets of incanismo, the desire isn't necessarily always directly

tied to interest in *incanismo*. Many people said they would *like* to learn it simply to avoid embarrassment at not knowing it when in the presence of others speaking it, in particular the Cañaris, to the north. The head of a local NGO said she was embarrassed when she would go to places like Oñakapak and small children would try to talk to her in Kichwa, and she would have no idea what they were talking about. Irma, a local guide, said she was often embarrassed when tourists asked her if she could speak Kichwa, and would like to learn it simply to avoid awkwardness in her interactions with them. There also seemed to be certain nostalgia attached to Kichwa, with one lady telling, for example, how she once went to Oñakapak and overheard some children down by the river speaking Kichwa. This left her wistful she couldn't speak it, and yet her own children, currently learning it at school, were embarrassed to use it themselves. Her 18-year-old daughter also recounted a time when she and some friends from Saraguro visited Ingapirca and met some Cañaris who were shocked and confused as to why those from Saraguro couldn't speak Kichwa, asking, "But you are indigenous right?"

What could be translated as an effort to tie, and therein authenticate, indigenous Saraguro with the Kichwa language and the Inca theme is heavily represented in the names given to community tourism homes (even though the occupants themselves more often than do not speak it): *Kaspi Wasi, Inka Wasi, Pukara Wasi, Tambu Wasi*, *Kamayu Wasi* and local hostels, *Inti Samana Wasi, Achik Wasi*, and Restaurant *Baños Del Inka*. In the community tourism homes and hostels themselves there seems to be a fairly uniform theme of writing the words for

bedroom, bathroom, kitchen etc., in Kichwa, above the entrance to those respective rooms, carved on rustic wooden signs.

The *ayllu llakta*, meaning community in Kichwa, combines the terms for the extended kin group (*ayllu*) with the concept of land (*llakta*), forming the most basic nucleus of indigenous society after that of family (Macas 2001:xiv). While most indigenous Saraguros do live in governmentally defined *comunas*, political and social units overseen by locally elected cabildo councils accountable through regular assemblies where people voice their concerns and vote on matters that affect the community as a whole, such political functional aspects of the community are not what is evoked by the idea of the ayllu llakta. Instead, this concept evokes the more intangible sentiments associated with the community as a unified body of closely related, largely homogenous and mutually concerned individuals and families. As witnessed in chapter two, the notion of indigenous peoples living in "communities" is a common held view globally, an oft times romanticized concept commonly attributed to indigenous peoples by visiting tourists, which many Saraguros consider central to their indigenous identity and from which the tourism project ultimately derives its symbolic raison d'être. It is thus particularly important in the cultural performance of incanismo and its claims to a purer nobler past. At the same time it poses a major contradiction in the actual lived realities of the predominantly urban middle-class proponents of the neo-Incan ideology who live "modern," "urban," white lifestyles, particularly since many visiting tourists, as has been seen, would judge these actual lifestyles as "contaminated", as markers of globalization and modernity, and therefore see them as corrupted and inauthentic. For the

proponents of this movement, though, the ayllullacta stands as both a marker of a lost past rooted in a more communal tradition, and as a goal to work towards, a reality still in the making. In this sense the ayllullacta, as community, fulfills Gerald Creed's criticism of the romanticized notion of community more generally in that it is more aspirational than real. Those who sacralize the term strive for what the term stands for (mutual aid, homogeneity, cooperation, a foil to the antisocial city) rather than promote what it may be in actuality (a political unit conferring certain rights and responsibilities on its indigenous members [Creed 2006]).

> Carlos: Ten years ago we lived more like a community; when you were planting the fields various community members would get together with their plows… for example in this field here you would have five plows and in half an hour it would be done. Then we would all go to another house and do theirs, and another. That was nice, that was community. But now you have to pay… .For example, before when you were building a house, everyone came, lots of people, and now you have to pay. And even sometimes for the money they don't want to come. Nowadays people don't even want to work for money! People now think they work more 'intellectually', so that they don't have to work in agriculture, it is complicated…
>
> Ana: Eventually we are going to lose every aspect of community and communal work. And the people who work in community tourism – the tourists will realize we just call it community tourism but it is not really communal.[36]

Carlos laments he has seen profound changes to community within his lifetime, and interestingly we see in Ana's anxiety not just the lamenting of the erosion of community, but the insecurity that the community tourism project itself

[36] Indeed during my time in Saraguro I was aware of two families who left the project because they resented having to give a percentage of their profits (10%) to the community, since the community hadn't invested any of its own money. Another family didn't give any money to the community as they were the only family in their community involved and in effect there was no community tourism in that community.

will be considered faux in the eyes of the tourist. Ana is objectifying the idea of community by viewing through the gaze of the tourist. What is deemed salvageable for themselves also becomes salvageable for the benefit of tourism. The concept of community in the community tourism mantra is both vital to the very idea, as the very bedrock of the concept, and important in authenticating the tourists' view of those indigenous people who partake in such projects. Anthropologist Mary Weismantel dismisses the language of community and ayllu as "impotent fantasy":

> The forces of late capitalism in the Andes have surely finished what conquest, colonialism, and the depredations of the nineteenth century republics began, fracturing and devouring what little remained of traditional cultures and social formations which today exist only as ghost memories. (Weismantel 2006:80)

Yet it is these very ghost memories that the neo-Incans and tourists alike still envision, chase and glimpse. The locals wish to resurrect for themselves the ghost of a purer nobler past and this is a spirit the tourist believes in himself. For as has been seen in this paper, the objective authenticity of traditional cultures alluded to in the above quote never has existed, and so chasing it will always be akin to chasing ghosts, or Strauss's "vestiges of a vanished reality." This is an opinion Weismantel herself seems to share, for she continues:

> …the preconquest Andes was a place of enormous cultural diversity and political turmoil, in which social and political formations were constantly undergoing rapid and often forcible alteration; there was no singular, stable, shared social form in the first place for postconquest native peoples to inherit from their ancestors. (Weismantel 2006:81)

Yet, as with the tourists, who seek an objective authenticity based on global notions of indigeneity, so local indigenous Saraguros can also seek, simultaneously

grappling with questions surrounding their own identity. In a changing political climate where indigenous people are afforded greater opportunity within the Ecuadorian state, their culture and language are less stigmatized. By some, they are even lauded as the living embodiment of nobility, leading many to now ponder: How many adaptive changes or contaminations are allowed before one ceases to be considered indigenous by tourists or one's peers? Those who no longer exhibit the traditional markers of indigenous ethnic identity which define themselves as authentic – Christians who participate in "white work", speak Spanish rather than Kichwa, live in large modern houses, drive SUV's, and pay others to toil their land – suffer the greatest identity crisis. For a growing contingent incanismo is a path to reclaiming some of that authenticity in defining who they are as indigenous Saraguros in the twenty-first century.

> During the time of the Spanish conquistadores, we had to hide these types of rituals. They came with the Catholic religion and they didn´t want us to practice this. And now we want to demonstrate what we have and revive this type of thing (*tourist guide Raul explaining to a group of tourists at an Incaic cleansing ritual*).

In this example, Raul claims the Saraguros wish to revive incaic rituals in place of the religion they were forced to adopt by the colonizers. Yet in reality, in the vast majority of cases of people living in Saraguro, rural Indian, and urban mestizo or otherwise, most are "still" practicing the Catholic religion, as Carlos explains:

> In those communities they are behind us, because they are really Catholic. The moment they are living now, we lived it here, before. But we changed because of emigration and studies; we changed our mentality and outlook. But it doesn't mean that just because we don't speak Kichwa we are less traditional than them. And it doesn't mean they are not traditional, they speak Kichwa but there are many people who don't study and they don't

> understand because they don't know any different. And because of that they follow the Catholic religion. And these two things go together – a lack of education and the Catholic religion.

Catholicism is viewed by the neo-Incans as one of the most persistent markers of colonialism, a contamination that needs to be weeded-out. Those who do not embrace incanismo are considered to be dupes living in ignorance, in a past not of their making, a past usurped. Furthermore, for Carlos, reclaiming a nobler Incan past is not as easy as simply revalorizing religion or ritual. One of the main burdens and obstacles resulting from years of colonial contamination, he believes, has become internalized, still permeating the Saraguro mindset, particularly that of the uneducated rural Indian, who knows no better.

> Carlos: Many people have a mentality that is quite closed because of the imposition they've had to accept. Europeans came with different thinking and everyone absorbed it very deeply and believed in it. Even us, we have that kind of thinking that if you are a *mestizo* or white you are a genius. It´s like you know more than me just because you are white, you are scientific and better than me, this thinking permeated our society…But things are changing and the new generations are more educated, we travel, we study…. Because of that Ñamarín and Oñakapak are different from us… it´s like we are a bit ahead of them and they are a bit behind us. Many people from here have studied in the US, Spain, Quito and Peru so they start to think in a different way.
> Ana: Spanish people came and took advantage of the humble and committed people. The conquistadores forced this religion and language on us and until now we have kept these beliefs….
> And people didn't study so they accepted what they were told….

The way for the neo-Incans to inoculate themselves against, and shed themselves of these occidental historical traits is through study and knowledge. Education allows people to learn about their true, uncontaminated history, to think in a different way, to (re)learn Kichwa, and move toward a new indigenous religion.

Here the neo-Incans are attacking colonial present with the past; ultimately bound by colonial terms of living, they are seeking and gaining support from the "ex" colonial power to distance themselves from the embedded colonial power within (Silverblatt 2004).

Colloredo-Mansfeld, in his research in Otavalo in northern Ecuador, argues that indigenous people make sense of class differences by utilizing the dominant logic of race, which has become internalized. In Saraguro the neo-Incans are articulating the idea of the contaminated Catholic and ignorant uneducated rural Indians in the same way many white-*mestizos* historically have. This, for example, was also manifest in the indigenista ideologies of earlier parts of the 20th century, where it was argued that only pure indigenas were truly worthy, as compared to those who had been degraded by colonization. The neo-Incans wish to transgress, with their hegemonic aspirations to a higher education, to shed themselves of the contamination of a colonial past. Neo-Incans have come to see the rural Indians as the colonials saw them. They are trying to peel away from this representation of Indian themselves; to de-indianize without transculturating. The rural Catholic Indians are them in the past, them as the white-man's Indian. The neo-Incans are adopting the Other's Other as their own internal demon (Abercrombie 1991).

The major contradiction in the community tourism project basing much of its performances on an incaic cultural legacy is that the overwhelming majority of indigenous Saraguros do not pertain to the neo-Incan religion, and not everyone in Saraguro is in accord that their past begins with the Incas. Furthermore, the incaic portrayal of Saraguro history and culture is beginning to be contested locally. When

I spoke to a leading proponent of the neo-Incan movement in Lagunas about the content of the community tourism website he said that it had now become a political issue as to what goes on the website, as many people are beginning to complain about certain incaic representations of indigenous Saraguro culture when it is portrayed as a unified entity to the wider world. Writing about rituals and *Raymis* in direct relation to Saraguro culture was now a bone of contention. If rituals, *Raymis*, and Saraguros' incaic lineage are now to be illustrated on the website or in tourist brochures, for example, their description would have to be limited to their contextual relationship with specific tours or events, rather than something indigenous Saraguros more generally participated in or ascribed to.

Leading from this, one must question whether those indigenous Saraguros "omitted" from these tourist brochure representations are allowing themselves to be (un)represented like this because it is perceived this depiction will attract more tourists, as it squares with the tourists' preconceived ideas and dreams of what indigenous people represent more generally. Many locals see these *Raymis* and rituals as just folklore staged to make money from tourists, which leads one to question whether the majority of non-believers are tolerating such distorted representations of indigenous Saraguro culture because they are deemed good for tourism, from which many now profit economically, as it is widely understood that an association with "Inca" can only be good for tourism.

For those outside of the ideological aspects of neo-incanism, the incaic portrayals of Saraguro culture are fine as folkloric performances when they are symbiotically and symbolically attached to tourism, as many would agree these

depictions directly appeal to the desires of visiting tourists. However, when it begins to grow out from this relationship, developing a life of its own, and is used to represent indigenous Saraguros more generally, concerns and contestations are raised, which threatens contradictions in the image of Saraguros increasingly being portrayed to the wider world.

By reclaiming and revalorizing the past the neo-Incans are attempting to reinvent tradition based on their own contemporary interpretations of Incan cultural history, abetted by the aspirations of tourists and international NGOs. One can denote from locally produced tourism brochures and conversations with self-proclaimed neo-Incans that there is an idyll that is striven for. The adoption of a religion which revalorizes various incaic rituals and festivals, and combats a colonial past by eradicating its contaminations, most notably that of Catholicism, which has been demonstrated, is believed to be practiced mainly by backward uneducated rural Indians who continue to duped by the creed of the colonizer. In Saraguro the rural-Catholic-Indian is suffering the same racialized stigmas directed at Indians by white-mestizos, yet now also at the hands of the neo-Incas. Yet ironically, by nature of their very "isolation" from the enlightened ideas and modern lifestyles of the middle-class neo-Incans, many of these backward rural Indians exhibit traits of the imaged idyll the neo-Incans yearn; their Kichwa language, community-oriented peasant lifestyles and pastoral ethic are considered more noble and pure. These are many of the same notions driving both indigenous tourism and the indigenismo of the early 20th century. The same traditional markers of Indianness that are ultimately what the world expects indigenous people to be like and therefore poses

certain contradictions for the neo-Incans and the lifestyles they currently live and the lifestyle they strive for.

On the surface it would seem that this is the point where local culture and tourist's dreams converge. From the NGOs' perspective as well, a culture is in the process of being revalorized. However, the indigenous people of Saraguro are being presented as one unified cultural entity, as separate from Spanish mestizos. Not all indigenous Saraguros believe they are descended from the Incas, and furthermore the vast majority of indigenous Saraguros are Christian, predominantly Catholic, with a growing minority of Protestant sects. It is true that many Saraguros these days are both neo-Incans and loosely Catholic, and also that many Catholics concurrently believe in an Andean cosmovision, yet these contaminated trends aren't accounted for in this Incanist presentation of Saraguro culture to visiting tourists. This raises the question whether these omissions are due to a fear that tourists will see the Saraguro as inauthentic if they are perceived to be straddling ancient and Western religions, or whether this omission serves a more local ideological agenda, with the tourist brochure as a place where tourist dream and local neo-Incan dreams converge.

For many Saraguros outside the movement, incanismo demonstrates at best an example of folklore or staged authenticity to make money from visiting tourists. As has been seen, tourist motivations certainly factor into many of the incaic-inspired cultural performances. However, many recent developments and future aspirations suggest a more stringent and permanent set of revalorizations, with incanismo seen by many as a way of escaping the stigma of Indianness and

supplanting it with a purer nobler Incan past. By taking on a life of its own, independent of tourist, NGO, indigenista, or other forces, incanismo has been "indigenized."

Chapter 5: Conclusion

> The currently dominant tourism discourses draw upon and extend mythologized (colonial) visions of Otherness from popular culture, (travel) literature and academic writings in disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology and history. (Salazar 2010:43-44)

Cultural differences that had previously served to legitimize exclusion are being championed as an emancipatory development of world historical significance (Turner 2003). In Latin America, indigenous actors have accepted the popular definition of the term indigenous in an attempt "to further their cause for ethnic recognition and self-determination" (see Ramos 1998:6-7). In the economy of tourism, the term has obtained additional value and significance. Imagined as egalitarian, ecologically savvy, anti-capitalist and community-bound, discourses of indigeneity come to contain all that Western society is thought to have lost. Indigenous peoples themselves have drawn on this idea in order to present themselves in favourable terms to (often first world) groups in order to gain economic and political leverage (Ramos 1998).

> The image of Indian as Other was read differently by Latin American policymakers and international publics. To their compatriots, Indians' appearance made them threatening, subhuman, or simply invisible; to North Americans and Europeans, it marked them as fascinating, exotic and romantic. (Brysk 1996:46)

Ethno-development theory has recast modernization theory by discarding the idea that these traditional cultures are impediments to progress; Indigenous ''ancestral and traditional knowledge,'' their ties to the earth, and communal practices are now viewed as important sources of social capital (Andolina et al. 2005:689). It is the Saraguros' cultural capital in their perceived isolation and

authenticity that international NGOs have attempted to tap into, and the fascination held for the indigenous Other in the eyes of visiting tourists that continues to drive the community tourism project.

Historical notions of Noble savagery have been contemporarily translated and massified in popular culture so that traits that "Indigenous People" are believed to possess or more significantly maintain are conflated with those of the Noble Savage of lore and taken for granted as truth. In this sense *The Noble Savage* is the embodiment of the tourists' notion of the authentic; the more traits Indigenous people are assumed to share with the western notion of the Noble Savage the more authentic they are deemed, and the more attractive they are to the visiting tourist.

For MacCannell, the tourists' quest is a failed quest as the authenticity they seek contaminates, alters and ultimately destroys the authentic. This theory presumes an uncontaminated authentic culture; an idea which reflects the motivations of tourists who also mostly assume an original, pure, authentic culture lays out there, to be discovered and experienced. Edward Bruner adopts a more constructivist stance in seeing that "it is a matter of power, of who has the right to authenticate" (1994:408). Within Saraguro itself, an elite band of neo-Incans with privileged access to rhetorical space via the production of tourist marketing literature and staging of local *Raymis* and rituals, are deciding that which is authentic and to be considered and represented as *real* Indigenous culture. Yet even though the neo-Incans and tourists are each determining authenticity, they do not necessarily agree completely about its performance. We see in Saraguro the tourists deciding what is authentic and not, based on their own criteria, oftentimes setting

standards over and above those which are considered authentic locally. For example, when a guide dons what he considers traditional Saraguro garb by wearing a black hat and short pants in anticipation of visiting tourists, and decides to spruce it up with a smart white Lacoste™ shirt, he is unaware that the inch-long crocodile contamination ultimately de-authenticates him – and possibly the entire experience – in the eyes of visiting tourists.

One of the goals sought in the implementation of the community tourism project was cultural revitalization, yet in this thesis I argue that this revitalization has been hijacked by a local elite in positions of power to take advantage of international interest in their plight and use it to further their own agenda locally and within the larger society in which they are embedded. An Indigenous elite who are inverting culturally appropriate development to developmentally appropriate culture (Andolina et al. 2005), by shaping and staging their culture to suit the gaze of visiting tourists. In the same vein, locals outside the neo-Incan movement are similarly allowing what they see as the staging and folklorizing of their culture because it fits with their perceptions of tourist motivations, and is thus deemed good for business. These preliminary conclusions posit further questions and topics of research which require further examination, as the community tourism project itself and the local ideology of incanismo respectively, are dynamic processes barely a decade into their paralleled existence.

> No longer is authenticity a property inherent in an object, forever fixed in time; it is seen as a struggle, a social process, in which competing interests argue for their own interpretation of history.

> Culture is seen as contested, emergent, and constructed, and agency and desire become part of the discourse. (Bruner 1994:408)

It is now widely accepted that any given culture is never essentially authentic (Bruner 1994; Cohen 1989; Daniel 1996; Millinger 1994; Silver 1993) yet at the same time many of the events laid on, or performed, for visiting tourists to Saraguro are unquestionably staged and in the world of objective authenticity, inauthentic. Yet rather than arguing that the staging alters the nature of an already established ritual, from an objectively authentic perspective, one could argue that it has been literally invented and continues to evolve, under the tourist gaze. This staging involves the objectifying of one's own culture on the part of those involved in the community tourism project in Saraguro, to enable them to commodify, and indeed concoct, aspects of their culture deemed appealing to perceived tourist desires and motivations, thus shaping the final product. At the same time the hosts are also staging the rituals for themselves and using the tourists' presence as a dialectic sounding board; audience participation shapes the performance, their financial contributions allow for the purchase of props and time to be able to enact, reenact, revalorize, invent and evolve a practice that has the potential to be incorporated into their culture, becoming an invented tradition and an emergent authenticity. Local culture *is* being staged and altered for the tourist, blurring what is original and what is invented, but far from this commodification leading to a loss of culture, in many ways, it catalyzes change leading to cultural appropriation as new traits are invented, evolve and (re)discovered.

Trilling's (1972) contends that the issue of authenticity merges to consciousness when there is a question of doubt. Yet in the same vein an evaluation, or doubt, of perceived authenticity is more likely to commence if there is first a *claim* to an authentic or intact culture. By claiming for -or selling- themselves as authentic the Saraguro place themselves on pedestal and risk becoming beholden to the tourists' essentialized notions of indigenous authenticity. MacCannell suggests that when people begin to see themselves as an ethnic attraction, they then begin to view themselves as representatives of an ethnic way of life and that, the ''group is frozen in an image of itself or museumized'' (1984:388). Similarly, Butcher (2001) argues, cultural tourism threatens to create a straitjacket for communities. Although it cannot be denied that ideas travel, this suggests passivity in the face of external expectations thrust upon the Saraguro by visiting tourists; if taken within the context of a tourist visit and the ensuing cultural performance, one could argue there are instances of museumization, yet these are impermanent and staged. If anything, any museumizing or straitjacketing that occurs outside these performances isn't intended for the tourist gaze, and has the potential to develop into a more embedded social project for the benefit of those who can take it up as means of transmuting these changes into cultural, economic and political gain. By taking on a life of its own independent of other forces incanismo is being indigenized.

For example, upon asking Ana if they had baptized their year-old son, she said that no, they still weren't decided if they were doing to give him a "native baptism" or a Catholic one; "They just started giving baptisms in *our religion* this

year [2010],” she said, “they are very nice, but of course it depends on what one believes.” Álvaro, one of the main local architects of incanismo who works with Fundación Jatari as tourism director, owns a restaurant and hostel catering to tourists, and leads a local folkloric music band, lost his eldest son last year in a tragic motorcycle accident. The family chose to bury him in an Andean inspired ceremony in Lagunas where he now rests in a gazebo-type structure, inside of which is a Chakana, or Inca Cross, decorated with flowers. This is the first occurrence of such a burial, though other people said they were thinking of doing it in the future, perhaps on their own land.

This isn’t cultural commodification performed for tourists. There is no “tourist gaze” (Urry 1990). Here we see an example of “reconstructing ethnicity” (MacCannell 1984) that isn’t “staged authenticity” (MacCannell 1976); “invented tradition” (Hobsbwan 1983) laying down roots as a social project separate from tourism. Neo-Incans are (re)appropriating elements from constructivist interpretations of a usurped nobler past, and in so doing negotiating the space between invented and authentic, a dialectic leading to the invention of cultural practices that can become embedded as authentic traditions themselves. This leads to a whole array of future research topics which centre on the development of incanismo in Saraguro, as a social project and its affects beyond the tourist gaze, and its potential disciplinary nature both for those inside and outside the movement.

Ironically, in the context of Saraguro the biggest potential for straitjacketing is coming from tourists who do not necessarily seek an authentic essentialized

indigenousness. The project's major economic contribution is seen when Spanish solidarity tourists arrive in July and August every year. These solidarity tourists have different sets of motivations for visiting Saraguro as set out in the scope of this thesis; primarily an interest in volunteering at local schools and to help "the kids." Indeed many solidarity tourists choose Saraguro based on this element alone; the idea of living authentically amongst indigenous people in many cases isn't a factor at all. This creates confusion in that the families involved in the community tourism project are of the impression the tourists' primary motivation is to experience how they *really* live. Indeed, when independent tourists stay with families they are the most likely to want to experience this type of authentic living, and are more likely to accept differences in food and living conditions, seeing them as part of the experience itself. However these infrequent, itinerant tourists use the accommodation service so infrequently, it is currently insufficient to economically sustain the community tourism project by itself.

Frictions with hosts generally manifest when Spanish solidarity tourists – who stay with the families for extended periods of time which intensifies any problems - refuse to eat the strange, inferior food, and complain of cleanliness, tardiness and cold water etc; it is in the resultant complaints and demands that one witnesses the greatest documented friction in the project. These tourists contribute the most money, the organizations they belong to return annually, and have in many cases helped in the foundation and development of the community tourism project. Changes to the project are made on the back of the complaints and recommendations made by these valuable and powerful groups of tourists. Thus the

project is being pulled in a direction to suit these demands. This creates obvious tensions for the families who are pressured to make changes. Yet at the same time if they were to overhaul their homes to resemble two-star guesthouses (despite the costs involved), they risk alienating the motivations of independent visitors. This raises further research questions of how the project will grow in future, as evidence suggests that it will be the wealthier middle-class (neo-Incans) who are able to afford to make such changes. Indeed, will the neo-Incans begin to attract the bulk of tourists as their culture is deemed more authentic, and will the project ultimately evolve so that the authenticity sought by the tourist comes packaged in the form incaic rituals and *Raymis* and other folkloric performances, rather than the original concept of living in the authentic back regions of rural indigenous community homes from whence the ethos of the project attains its raison d'être?

Common with much research on ethno-tourism marketing, Adams (1984) claims that in creating marketable stereotypes of the Toraja of Sulawesi, in Indonesia, ''by manipulating origin myths, travel brochures create a false picture of Toraja people as archaic and unchanging'' (1984:474). In the majority of cases worldwide, such marketing is made by third party moderators, private companies or even state run initiatives. Yet in Saraguro, local indigenous elite are attempting to push this myth of the unchanged selves onto tourists.

"Touristic culture," Michel Picard argues, has become internalized by the Balinese, contributing to that which they themselves consider to be authentically Balinese and becoming "an integral part of a process of cultural invention" (Picard 1996:199). The issue of an essentialized indigenous authenticity, circulating in

global master narratives on indigeneity, is not solely an idea carried by tourists to Saraguro, locally performed by guides and moderators to ensure that hermeneutic circle is reaffirmed and re-exported with the departing tourist. The master narrative circulates much more broadly and perpetuates locally in the ideas of state policies, international NGO initiatives and continent wide ideologies like indigenismo. These ideas imbricate with Saraguro perceptions of their own cultural life ways, and as has been seen, can be utilized locally not only for their perceived appeal to the visiting tourist's expectations, but as a foil for local political gain.

The changing political landscape over the last few decades has allowed indigenous people much greater space and opportunity. Yet these opportunities have exacerbated the class system within Saraguro indigenous communities, with those situated closest the centre of Saraguro's urban centre the most apt to be able to exploit these new opportunities; and in the growth of the ideology of incanismo we may be seeing a stratum of rich *indigenas* attempting to institutionalize itself (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999). In (re)adopting a nobler past, a past usurped, the neo-Incans are (re)claiming their birthright, carving out a new identity for themselves; transculturating the stigma of Indian without the betrayal of becoming mestizo.

> Modern life unleashes several interrelated conditions: an increasingly individualized sense of self, alienation from one's inherited cultural forms, a new temporal sense of living in the present, and the secularization or disenchantment of the world. (Colloredo-Mansfeld 1999:27-28)

As the 20th century drew to a close, Belote and Belote noted, "Some Saraguros have entered the post-modern world in which consciousness of the fuzzy,

changing boundaries of ethnic identity has become a preoccupation" (Belote and Belote 1997:4) Similarly, Kendall King, in 2001, notes, "For many Saraguros exactly *what* this identity consists of and how it is marked is no longer obvious" (King 2001:98). This crisis is founded on the fear of becoming mestizo, of losing their culture, cultural capitulation, of disappearing as an entity in themselves. If the Saraguro don't do something to shore up their identity, will they be overlooked, ignored, and after 500 years of resistance, assimilated by the dominant culture? This anxiety is still evidenced a decade on, held mostly by those middle-class *indigenas* who feel they have strayed furthest from their indigenous cultural identity. Yet since the implementation of the community tourism project, the paralleled rise of incanismo has given this crisis of ethnic identity a focal point, on which many can pin their past and future to.

Those in rural communities not directly within the tourist gaze don't objectify their lifestyles to the same degree and nobody questions there indigenousness, until now; ironically they are now being evaluated by the growing contingent of neo-Incans who admire many aspects of the rural idyll in which they live but at the same time are attempting to cast them with the brush of ignorant contamination. Internalizing many of the same racist notions of modernity and progress used by white-*mestizos* to historically describe Indianness, some of the neo-Incas see the rural Indian as hopelessly tradition bound and locked in a contaminated peasant mentality. As either unwilling or unable aspirants of this nobler purer past, the inhabitants of these traditional communities are ultimately stigmatized and excluded because they fall short on one major issue: they are

catholic and therefore living in the impure past. Here we see the creation of hierarchies within indigenous people based on cultural performativity and education that break down along class lines, and comparisons with elite, white indigenismos of the early-to-mid 20th century who shared these same paternalisms in believing only they, the enlightened, were in a position to re-teach the Indians the noble traditions they have lost.

For neo-Incans going back is a way of moving past their colonial past - the five-hundred year *postponement* they suffered at the hands of colonization - by shaking off the shackles and looking to the future. The neo-Incans wish to revalorize that which was lost and eradicate colonial contaminations. They wish to regain the perception of control of their own destinies; they don't own their present, and cannot control their future, *if* it is contaminated by the past. After the slate is clean, cleansed and pure, they can move ahead having righted themselves of past wrongs having reclaimed their true cultural identity.

In a sense these elite indigenous Saraguros are "tourists within their own culture" (Esman 1984:465), their ancient traditions as exotic to them as outsiders. Their own golden age past has the same nostalgic appeal to them, when held up against contemporary customary life ways, as it does to the visiting tourist. The same circulating master narrative abets host and guest onwards and backwards to the same utopian cures for their own societies' ills.

Comaroff and Comaroff (2009), MacCannell (1989) and Said (1978) ponder whether those who commodify their identity in this fashion are dupes, simply beholden to the trends of market. As has been demonstrated, the whims of the

market are doubtless instrumental in defining what cultural attributes are currently trending, yet the latest iteration of the concept of the Noble Savage, now personified in Incan form, is hardly a trend; instead, it is traceable back to Gilgamesh, ancient Greece, and the Garden of Eden. If the desires of a people do converge with those of visiting tourists and contemporary master narratives to aid in the enrichment of their local existence, when do the local proponents of incanismo cease being dupes and begin becoming agents of their own cultural destinies?

> The producers of culture are also its consumers, seeing and sensing and listening to themselves enact their identity – and, in the process, objectifying their own subjectivity, thus to (re)cognize its existence, to grasp it, to domesticate it, to act on and with it. (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009:26)

In short, tourism and incanismo mutually validate and reinforce each other. In the production of tourist brochures the neo-Incans are objectifying and consuming their *own* dreams though the gaze of the tourist. Incanismo, as a tourist commodity, finds an enthusiastic audience for its brochures in the tourists, who valorize their own preconceived notions of indigenous culture. In the process, the tourist validates incanismo through visits and interactions with local guides and families, and reinforces it through involvement in incaic festivals and rituals. Yet the inevitable cultural commodification doesn't necessarily lead to cultural loss; re-production and (re)appropriation of the past, as has been seen, can lead to cultural rebirth and cultural evolution, and in Saraguro, incanismo, as a social project, for better or worse, has taken on a life of its own.

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