



Graduate School of Development Studies

**Isolated Indigenous People and Their Self-Determination:**

**An Analysis of Strategies in the Colombian Amazon**

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# Contents

Acknowledgements	v
List of Acronyms	vi
<i>Abstract</i>	<i>vi</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
Methodology and Limitations	11
Ethics	11
<b>Chapter 1 Isolated tribes</b>	<b>14</b>
How to name the "invisible"?	14
Characteristics of Isolated Groups	14
What happens with contact?	15
Where are they?	16
Protection Strategies	17
International Recognition	18
A tale of Contact, The Nukak.	18
Closing Remarks	19
<b>Chapter 2 History of the Yuri</b>	<b>20</b>
Closing remarks	23
<b>Chapter 3 What is Colombia doing about it? The Park</b>	<b>24</b>
Why the Park?	24
Conservation	25
Culture	25
Sovereignty through Conservation	25
The Park's Zonification	26
Nature/Culture in the Park	27
Problems	28
Opposition to the Park	28
<b>Chapter 4 Threats Faced by Isolated People; the Yuri</b>	<b>29</b>
Threats faced by the Yuri	29
External	30
Development and Illegal-informal	30
Internal Threats	32

Closing Remarks	32
<b>Chapter 5 Imaginaries</b>	<b>34</b>
Typology of Imaginaries	35
Impacts of Imaginaries	38
Affirmative Strategic Use	41
Potential Use	42
Closing remarks	43
<b>Chapter 6 Room for Self-determination?</b>	<b>45</b>
What happens in Colombia?	48
Law	48
Puré Park	50
<b>Chapter 7 Conclusions</b>	<b>51</b>
Case study conclusions: How does the Puré Park grant self-determination?	52
What does all this mean for development?	53
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>55</b>
Appendix A South American Panorama with respect to Isolated Tribes	55
Appendix B In depth History of the Yuri	56
Another Tale of Recent Contact, the Yuri	60
Are the Yuri the only isolated group in Colombia?	61
Appendix C Comparing the Park Proposals, the Constitutive Resolution and the Management Plan	62
<b>References</b>	<b>68</b>

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### ***List of Acronyms***

**FUNAI:** National Foundation for Indigenous Affairs. (Translated from the Portuguese).

**ILO:** International Labour Organization.

**IUCN:** International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

**IWGIA:** International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

**UN:** United Nations.

**UNHCHR:** United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

### **Abstract**

Isolated tribes are groups of “invisible” people who have rejected and fled from the impacts of modernity, development, capitalism and globalization throughout time. Given that contact can lead to the extinction of these tribes, their isolation and our respect for their territories and livelihoods becomes a priority. Furthermore, these people are unknowingly and unwillingly immersed within states systems and constitutions that can grant them a unique meta-right of self-determination i.e. the right to isolation that is not compatible with universal human rights. Self-determination through isolation can be granted through: territorial concessions in the form of protected areas, pertinent institutions and appropriate laws that respect their life choices. Thus, intrinsic to isolated tribes the right to isolation allows for self-determination as non-domination (Young 2007), which opposes arbitrary intervention by any party into their territories. This means that states must live with uncertainty over possible violations of human rights within isolated peoples’ territories, thus yielding a non-presence through design by the state as the best possible strategy. Nevertheless, contextual and mediated perceptions about isolated peoples in larger society and its economic order can greatly affect these processes representing significant threats to the isolated peoples’ survival. For this reason, discourses (imaginaries) that represent isolated peoples as intrinsic subjects of particular rights are compared with discourses (imaginaries) that can lead to contact with larger society. This paper discusses the mentioned above through the case study of Puré National Natural Park, which has chosen a strategy to grant the right to isolation for the Yuri people in the Colombian Amazon.

## Relevance to Development Studies

This paper argues for the importance of local contextual situational solutions for theory and policy. I attempt to show how the particular conditions of isolated indigenous people should be addressed considering local perceptions and realities to a point where the need to introduce and support the novel and particular right to isolation becomes legitimate. It is argued that for the case of isolated tribes an absence of all contact with modernity, including development, is the most favourable strategy. In these cases development should recognize its role in not interfering into isolated peoples' territory and focus on working on the boundaries to control entry from other parties.

### Keywords

Isolated Tribes, "Uncontacted" tribes, Indigenous People, Yuri, Imaginaries, Discourses, Protected Areas, Puré Park, Right to isolation, Self-determination, Amazon, Colombia.

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*"I did not think they would attack, for several obvious reasons... Still, I had also judged the jungle of both banks quite impenetrable – yet eyes were in it, eyes that had seen us. The cries we had heard... Unexpected, wild, and violent as they had been had given me an irresistible impression of sorrow. The glimpse of our steamboat had for some reason filled those savages with unrestrained grief..."*

*What we afterwards alluded as an attack was really an attempt at repulse. The action was very far from being aggressive – it was not even defensive, in the usual sense: it was undertaken under the stress of desperation and in its essence was purely protective."*

*Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness 1899, 61-62*

## Introduction

For most people, “isolated or uncontacted” tribes were the inspiration of bygone adventurers in search of exotic lands, many of whom were fuelled by a desire to “discover” and delight themselves in the fruits of treasures, cities and magic potions. Yet, these people exist in many “remote” tropical forests where they encounter a very different reality, one where unwelcomed contemporary society encroaches upon their territories with foreign disease, forced displacements and violence. Our absence of knowledge about them presents a double dilemma: in some instances our ignorance and their silence can represent their survival; while in others the fact that injustices are unheard leads to impunity and extinction. Despite this situation the idea and myth of untouched virgin paradise dwelling tribes is still present in our globalized collective imaginary through stories, films, advertisements, documentaries and various media expressions.

Following Foucault the paper argues that the outcomes and perceptions of the way we conceive these tribes (imaginaries) have differential and significant impacts on these peoples’ right to isolation and self-determination. A responsible awareness and fomentation of these imaginaries is compatible with novel protection strategies that attempt to respect this right to isolation. These strategies in both theory and practice bring forth a series of unseen conundrums that can prove helpful in expanding human rights debates, which could also be complemented by revising critical theories such as post-development and postcolonial studies in future research.

One of these isolated tribes is the Yuri, who are the only recognized isolated indigenous tribe in Colombia (yet, unrepresented in the Amazonian literature on this subject). Since 2002 the Río Puré National Park is attempting to respect the Yuri’s isolation by prohibiting entry into their territories. A remote Amazonian natural park in a region that has historically been contested by lawlessness, embodied today by the guerrilla and drug warfare, within a state that aligns with centre-right ideologies; but nevertheless which has historically had a large and innovative system of protected areas offer the backdrop for the present analysis.

This paper is not an anthropological analysis of the Yuri; rather it is about the implications of the ways we think about isolated tribes. Nevertheless, I draw from historic, regional and cultural characteristics to illustrate how they can modify our perceptions of isolated tribes.

With this said, the paper sets itself the task to explore what are the underlying reasons that legitimize<sup>1</sup> the creation of a natural park to “protect” isolated tribes? Furthermore, how is self-determination legitimized and granted to these

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<sup>1</sup> “Legitimacy is a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman 1995: 574).



people? And, how effective is the Park in protecting and granting self-determination to these groups?

Given that isolated tribes can offer an ideal scenario for them to be imagined, or idealized in different ways what are the benefits and risks of these imaginaries? In other words, how desirable, useful and conditioning are these imaginaries for granting self-determination and conserving biodiversity and culture?

The answers to these questions argue that “a principle of self-determination for indigenous people can have little meaning unless it accompanies a limitation and ultimately a transformation of the rights and powers of existing nation states” (Young 2007: 53).

Calling for strategies that transform state powers to localized solutions arises from observations by post-development thinkers. For these scholars “it is not the lack of development that caused poverty, inflicted violence, and engaged in the destruction of nature and livelihoods; rather, it is the very process of bringing development that have caused them in the first place” (Rajagopal 2003: 3). The injustices brought by development and progress are the fruit of hegemonic universal development ideologies that labeled the developing world as backward and in need of intervention (Escobar 1995). For the Modernity-Coloniality research program this problem is not new: “development helped a dying colonialism to transform itself into an aggressive - sometimes attractive – instrument able to recapture new ground” (Rahnema 1997a: 384), “the colonialist move” (Mohanty, 1991: 72).

For these thinkers the solution is not about a static entrenchment in the local but lies in redefining new social structures based on equal dialogue between different ideologies and ways of acting: hybridized solutions (Escobar 1995, Canclini 1990), reciprocity, participatory democracy, debating, translation, emancipatory multiculturalism, ecology of knowledges (Santos 2007 & 2009), negotiating (Young 2007), pluri-culturality are but a few of these prescriptions - not exclusive to post-development - for a just society.

I argue that policies that concede self-determination to isolated tribes - even though not considered by post-development writers - follow the spirit of post-development because they grant importance to local struggles that resist the encroachments of modernity through contextual solutions. Nonetheless, in these cases post-development’s prescribed dialogue and participation are impossible to achieve given that any contact with the larger society can have deadly consequences for these tribes.

Thus, it may seem that respecting isolation for these tribes is a strategy that entrenches only in the local. However, I argue that the fact that dialogue is not possible with these tribes does not mean that these policies cannot be open to dialogues that consider local struggles and realities. Therefore, I hold that a respect for isolation like the one that will be presented here is aligned with the idea that “post-development critiques should be seen as starting points from which to examine the transformation of development interventions in local encounters” (Ziai 2007:10).

Then, how does policy consider local struggles and realities without dialoguing with those affected? I hold that Young’s (2007) recipe of not interfering arbitrarily over the other is an important contribution that can be comple-

mented with an empathic understanding of the troubled realities of isolated peoples. In this sense, isolated “peoples resistance to development should be studied in the context of their will to protect their local symbolic sites from destruction” (Rahnema 1997b: 10). I will argue that if we carry out this exercise we can support self-determination as a viable protection mechanism for isolated tribes. Therefore, the paper proposes to hybridize and redefine characteristic packages of development such as human rights<sup>2</sup> and protected areas with unique situational solutions like self-determination through the right to isolation.

The first three chapters of this paper offer the reader contextual information to situate the subject at hand, while the following three chapters discuss the threats faced by the Yuri, the way they are perceived by larger society and the relations to the mechanism of protection.

The first chapter explains the characteristics of isolated tribes while exploring the debates around the academic terminology used to refer to them. Of particular importance to this chapter is the thesis that these peoples actively reject contact because it has detrimental consequences on their culture, livelihoods and survival.

Chapter two offers a historical analysis that supports the idea that the Yuri have historically migrated by fleeing from violent contact and offers a background description of the socioeconomic dynamics of the region. Chapter three describes the characteristics of the Park and offers explanations for its creation arguing that, despite its failings, the Park rightly conceives culture and nature as inseparable for isolated tribes.

The fourth chapter explains how the uneven impacts of development and progress represent differential threats to Yuri. I hope to contribute to this debate by proposing the consideration of commonly overlooked internal threats that can lead to extinction or contact.

The way these threats are mediated by discourses (imaginaries) will be the concern of chapter five. Here I argue that these discourses represent different intended, unintended, beneficial and harmful consequences for the respect to isolation and survival; all this to suggest that a strategic use of information can construct and deconstruct certain imaginaries in order to support policies and behaviour that respect self-determination.

The last chapter argues that if we are to foment imaginaries that support the right to isolation, we must explore how self-determination can be theoretically envisioned and what this means for the relationship between fundamental human rights and the particular rights of isolated peoples. The chapter closes by exploring how self-determination through the right to isolation holds in practice with respect to Colombian law and the Puré Park. The text concludes with an overview of the paper, an analysis of the implications of this case for development and suggests possibilities for further research.

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<sup>2</sup> The marriage of human rights with development has been denounced by Rajagopal (2003) as the “Developmentalization of human rights” (222).

## **Methodology and Limitations**

Secondary documents and interviews are the sources utilized for this research. Among the secondary sources reviewed we find: academic journals, journalistic articles and books, web-pages, colonial travellers' memoirs, newspapers, documentaries, novels, conference reports, Colombian law, national park statutes and reports and NGO reports.

Interviews became a valuable source of information because some of the underlying considerations for the Park in question and lessons learnt from past experiences are yet to be disclosed in writing. Thus, I realized 16 semi-structured interviews with open ended questions during 5 weeks of field-work divided between two Colombian cities: Bogotá and Leticia (capital of the Colombian Amazon). Interviewees were selected through snowball sampling - where one interviewee suggests the next-. During this process I accessed many of the required sources existing in local libraries, hard-drives or in unedited and unpublished formats.

Among the people interviewed were government and park officials, Brazilian park officials, grassroots organisation members, indigenous leaders, filmmakers, conservationists, historians, anthropologists as well as local inhabitants who are better able to incorporate the voices of those "closer" to the Yuri. No interviews were realized in the communities near the proximities of the Park due to their remoteness, concomitant travel time and transportation costs.

An acknowledged bias of this paper is that this is a study of those who wish to protect the Yuri. The main reason for this is that it was a welcomed surprise to find that the majority representatives of civil society and government that have a direct influence over the area are concerned with the Yuri's survival; therefore, I consider it valuable to unite the voices of these actors. It is also important to mention that the case of the Yuri is quite unknown in the rest of the nation, to the point that the Ministry of the Interior in charge of guaranteeing the rights of all citizens is highly uninformed about the existence of isolated tribes. This opens possibilities for future research into the reasons for this negligence.

The actors that can be harmful to the Yuri are more difficult to access in the Colombian context: their position is unpopular with research; they are less represented by formal institutions and reside in remote areas. A few of these actors are the legal and illegal armed forces, missionaries, illegal miners and loggers. In the same way that the voices of those closer to the Yuri were incorporated by listening to those with knowledge of the context, the paper attempts to analyze the positions of potentially "harmful" actors through a revision of secondary texts and interviews with knowledgeable agents that have dealt with or studied them in the past. Primary research of the actors that can lead to contact becomes a perfect complement for future research.

## **Ethics**

I consider that it is ethically undesirable and physically damaging to establish a relation with isolated tribes, thus any research about them falls victim to an old and valid criticism that has been an underlying concern of all those involved in

this paper: If isolated tribes want to remain in hiding, what gives us legitimacy to talk about them? From this question many more follow: Is it legitimate to try to correct past harms without consent? Why are you doing this?

Answers to these questions must build from the fact that the only clear sign we have is that the Yuri do not want contact. It follows that our representations of them should be consequential with what we can interpret from their hiding; namely that we should advocate through a responsible and prudent use of information a respect for their expression to remain disconnected. In other words, if we are to represent and make use of information about the Yuri, it must be in a way that foments their decisions to isolate themselves.

For this reason I believe that a first step to respecting their way of life lies in understanding the conditions that led to isolation and what this means for their livelihoods and survival. If we agreed that primary data is an impossibility in addressing their concerns then we must utilize the tools of *emic* interpretation and research to evaluate their condition and needs (Pike 1954, Headland 1990). In so doing I hope to achieve an epistemological privileged position or standpoint advantage when arguing a case for the Yuri's self-determination. In short, we must rely on the hermeneutic tools of empathy in order to interpret the signs they have left for us.

This takes us to the problem of acting on behalf of what we think "is best for them", which has historically been an alibi for innumerable conscious and unintended injustices. However, we can argue that their absence suggests that efforts to guarantee our absence are their desired outcome. Furthermore, after a historic revision of the detrimental consequences of contact the need to protect isolation becomes fundamental. This implies the need for discourses -like the one I attempt to present here- compatible with the intrinsic right to isolation and self-determination.

Drawing on a Foucauldian epistemological conception, whereby we create power with our knowledge and vice-versa I assume responsibility for the knowledge created by analysing the different discourses (imaginaries) about the Yuri to deconstruct what I perceive as harmful imaginaries and argue for the Yuri's self determination. In so doing, I have felt guilty of what Lohmann (1993) complementing Said calls Green-Orientalism, where cultural constructions are projected on local people to be utilized for Western environmental agendas; "environmentalists are capable of recasting other people's movements and practices to suit their own purposes." Thus, in order to avoid "telling self-serving and one-sided stories about Noble Savages" I attempt to explore the discourses of actors who imagine the Yuri regardless of their position or agendas. I do not attempt to make claims about the Yuri's "true" nature or about what they should or should not do, but rather to find bridges between our Western system of governance and their current lifestyles so that their decisions are respected, including the potential decision to reverse their isolation.

The following quote is a perfect accusation of a way of reading this paper: "traditionalists often view selected Southern peoples as a modernity-free cultural reserve to be fenced off and kept pure for future use" (Lohmann 1993: 204). Its perfect applicability lies in the fact that the Yuri are "fenced off" by a park closed to outsiders. However, if we consider the signs the Yuri have left, such as fleeing at the sight of outsiders, traps set for humans, spears closing

paths, and vandalized boats (Castro 1998: 27-29, 214-225), we can agree that the Park and this research are aligned with the Yuri's decision to control entry into their territory and not exit from it.

This paper subscribes to the notion that "we can learn to seek unity less by attempting to recruit others as subcontractors to build our own utopias, or by trying to find a monolithic "truth of nature" to impose on the world, and more through solidarity with subordinate groups pursuing, on different terrains, purposes that may be related to our own" (Lohmann 1993: 204).

Perhaps this is why, during the interview process, society, including myself, and indigenous people were referred to as "us" in relation to "them" the isolated people, suggesting that the Yuri represent the ultimate other, a common signified. As a result, indigenous and non-indigenous alike are for the first time framed as being in the same boat; of course there is no smooth sailing in any waters. For example, some indigenous leaders are more sceptical of the Park accusing it of Green-Orientalism - acquiring funds in the name of indigenous people. Despite certain discrepancies the underlying trend is a desire by all actors interviewed to respect the Yuri's unique condition of isolation.

I believe the root of my motif for writing this paper and the perceived solidarity mentioned above could be an attempt to clear the accumulated guilt from 500 years of injustices and mistakes. Isolated tribes are the unique groups of people that, through strength and resistance, have shown us that some people choose and are able to live outside debates and defining traits of an increasingly globalized society; they can live without: modernity, capitalism, "progress", development and globalization.

I agree with Santos et al. (2007) in that "there is no global social justice without global cognitive justice" (9). For these authors the plurality of epistemological knowledge in the world is immense but has been subordinated to the dominant source of Western monoculture of knowledge in favour of colonialism and global capitalism. This has given rise to different oppressive structures throughout the world including what Santos et al. refer to as "*epistemicide*" (9). Therefore, this paper argues for a respect for the Yuri's livelihoods as a step towards recognizing the validity of different epistemologies-knowledges and achieving global cognitive justice.

For this reason: protected areas, ethical prudence, awareness of the impacts of discourses, intrinsic rights for isolated peoples and different conceptions of self-determination are some of the tools for achieving global cognitive justice that drive me to hope that this study can shed light on their applicability and prove beneficial to the other 100 to 200 cases of isolated tribes that exist in South America (Brackelaire 2006, 2008, UNHCHR, IWGIA 2007).

# Chapter 1 Isolated tribes

## How to name the “invisible”?

What is commonly known as “uncontacted” tribes are also referred to as: in voluntary isolation, in forced isolation, isolated, nomads, free, lost, brave, fierce, excluded, and occulted. These terms are not exempt of criticisms, as with all categories they carry within them the risk of over-generalization and denial of context. The underlying academic and colloquial trend is to refer to these groups in terms of their situation in relation to “us”, the larger society, rather than their inherent social systems of organization.

In the last 5 years, there has been a slow but steady agreement to accept the term “isolated” (FUNAI 1988, IWGIA 2007, Brackelaire 2006, Singer 2006: 104). The adjectives “voluntary” and “forced” have been stripped from the debate given that in reality these groups face a life choice somewhere between these two conditions. In other words, the threats to their survival have pressed them into the decision of isolation, yet, this decision comes from within the groups. Nevertheless, Rummenhoeller (2007) reminds us that many of them maintain relations with other isolated groups and very sporadically with segments of “contacted” indigenous peoples (60).

Therefore, this paper adopts the following definition:

*“Peoples in isolation are indigenous peoples or subgroups thereof that do not maintain regular contact with the majority population and tend to shun any type of contact with outsiders. Most isolated peoples live in tropical forests and/or in remote, untraveled areas, which in many cases are rich in natural resources. For these peoples, isolation is not a voluntary choice but a survival strategy” (UN, HRC 2009: 5).*

## Characteristics of Isolated Groups

Huertas-Castillo 2002, Survival 2000 amongst others, affirm that these groups are often segments of larger tribes that either departed or were decimated by traumatic experiences throughout their history: diseases, conquistadors, missionaries, slave traders, rubber barons, loggers, miners, poachers are but a few examples.

We must recognize that these groups “were part, in some epoch, of social networks of exchange, in festivities, as well as through conflicts” (Arisi 2010: 44). Considering these groups as absent from any exchange and stuck in an unchanging social structure throughout their existence is contrary to the historic mechanisms present in the creation, growth and downfall of cultures. Therefore, in many instances their current situation “is not in fact their “traditional” way of life: the Awá, for instance, were once agriculturalists, whose adoption of a life of flight was to escape the constant attacks by outsiders” (Survival 2000: 22). The case of the Yuri shows how the numerous con-

tacts with the Spanish and Portuguese in service of their crowns, religion and capital forced an isolation strategy. Therefore, the common idea that isolated peoples have always been and continue to be perfectly uncontacted is ahistorical (Singer 2006, Cipolletti 1991: 99).

Nevertheless, it is evident that they are self-sufficient with the “resources of the forest”, even without having “access to the material objects of Western civilization”<sup>\* 3</sup> (Possuelo 2007: 194). One of the few commonalities of these tribes is that they possess a “sophisticated and detailed knowledge of the natural environment, as they must if they are to survive – often their lands are less appealing, less fertile areas, where settlers are less likely to follow them” (Survival 2000: 22).

Isolated tribes are usually composed of few individuals ranging anywhere from small families to a few hundred individuals. The exact population is a source of debate, given that the estimates are realized without making contact. Based on South American data (Brackelaire 2006, 2008) and on data by the International Alliance for the Protection of Isolated Indigenous Peoples<sup>\*</sup> 2005 it is reasonable to estimate that the number can oscillate between 100 to 200 tribes; the UNHCHR and IWGIA (2007) mention that “their number is estimated in 200 groups representing 10.000 people”<sup>\*</sup>.

Another characteristic of these groups is that due to their semi-nomadic and/or nomadic lifestyles, as well as the natural characteristics of their environments, they require vast amounts of territories for their survival, often unknowingly crossing international boundaries. In South America natural or indigenous reserves that contain within them isolated tribes represent an aggregate area that exceeds 20, 000.000 hectares of forest<sup>4</sup>. This has led to accusations that these small populations have access to too much land (Singer 2006: 104-105). However, these lands are usually: uninhabited, remote, and already protected. It is argued that these lands have not suffered environmental degradation from the existence of these groups throughout the years (UN 2009: 6).

## **What happens with contact?**

It is common to read that these are the most “vulnerable” groups of indigenous people; regarded as at risk of “extinction, ethnocide or genocide” by the ever present reality of contact (IWGIA 2007, Huertas-Castillo 2007, Cabodevilla 2005, UN 2009, Survival 2007). Academia has documented how contact has devastating effects on the physical and cultural survival of these people given that it usually involves cultural shock, the advent of illness, violence, and loss of territory all of which can prove to be fatal (Jost 1981, Arisi 2010, Cabodevilla 2004, 2005, Brackelaire 2006, Survival 2007, 2000, Berraondo 2005, 2007, Politis 2007). The most common realities that these tribes

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<sup>3</sup> Texts followed by this symbol: \* are my translations from Portuguese or Spanish.

<sup>4</sup> Data obtained from analysing Brackelaire 2008, 5-8. This number is an approximation given that it excludes data for Peru. Further research could analyze what parts of the protected areas are inhabited by these groups.

encounter through contact are a harmful change in social relations from direct and structural violence, previously represented by the marriage of slavery and religion and currently expressed by loss of territory and the advent of extractive enterprises.

The major risk associated with contact is the spread of diseases alien to the tribes for which they have no natural immunological defences and little autochthonous knowledge to treat them. Common or preventable diseases like the flu, measles, malaria, tuberculosis, and smallpox amongst others can cause more deaths than in any other setting. FUNAI and Survival International estimate that, upon regular contact with non-indigenous people, isolated populations plummet by 50% mainly due to illness and the effects this causes upon the social dynamics of the groups<sup>5</sup>. The harmful effects of disease on previously isolated populations have been studied in depth by numerous researchers and case studies (see: Lightman 1977, Neel 1977, Kaplan et al. 1980, Franky et al. 2000, English 2005, Cueva Maza 2007, Survival 2007). According to The Peruvian Office of Epidemiology (2003) indigenous populations who have been exposed to exogenous viral diseases require 3 to 5 generations (90-150 years) to stabilize a response to the infectious agents.

Considering the above risks, this paper argues that isolated tribes' desire to avoid contact should be respected. Moreover, cultural longevity, ancestral claims to land, self sufficiency, disregard for a larger social contract (statehood) and sustainability are all factors which cannot be addressed in depth here that also favour a respect for isolation.

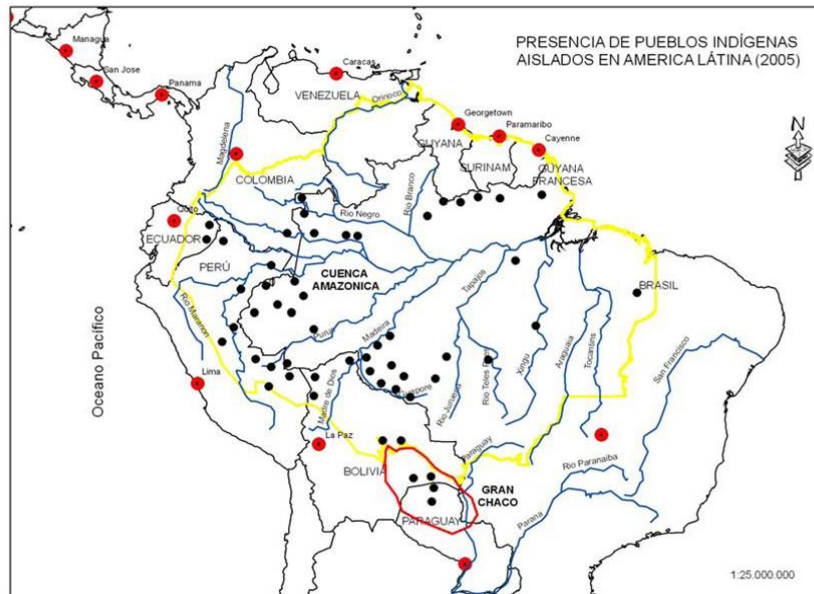
### **Where are they?**

People under these particular conditions can still be found in: Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela (under debate), West Papua and India (Andaman Islands). Seven of these countries are in what is known as the Greater Amazon Basin and the Gran Chaco (Paraguay).

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<sup>5</sup> For example: fear of having children, loss of hunters and gatherers, internal conflict, displacement etc...





This is an approximate and a-temporal idea of the isolated peoples of the region. Source: Brackelaire 2006.

To different degrees South American states have little knowledge about the respective isolated peoples that live within their boundaries and generally lack the willingness to protect them. More pressing is the lack of understanding of the value of these last groups of humans that live outside our constructed reality, and how their survival in many instances falls second to economic interests.

These nations with the exception of Brazil present no legal recognition for their existence as well as weak policies for their protection. Nevertheless, Brazil has influenced slow improvements in some of these countries through laws and protected areas. Yet, in many instances these laws and policies are unclear, unknown and contradictory with other laws or larger governmental initiatives<sup>6</sup>.

## Protection Strategies

Policies that seek the recognition of these people as subjects of universal human rights while recognizing their right to remain isolated are complemented by strategies that attempt to operationalize the policy of no-contact through the delimitation of territories free of intervention.

As the leading example, in Brazil the responsibility for enforcing the legally recognized right to isolation lies with the Ministry of Justice through FUNAI (National Foundation for Indigenous Affairs\*). They “respect the right to remain isolated”\* (Regimento FUNAI: 1993) through “monitoring and policing the external limits of the areas under use by the isolated peoples creating conditions where they can survive”\* (Brackelaire 2006: 4).

<sup>6</sup> For a regional panorama see Appendix A or: IWGIA 2006, Brackelaire 2006; 2008.

One wonders how to gain knowledge and delimit their territories without leading to contact? The answer lies in the methods initiated by FUNAI, now implemented by other institutions which include: track-footprint observations, trail observation, inspection of old camps, hunting sites, crop observations, gathered natural resources such as fruits, observation of traps or signs, satellite images, reconnaissance flights, fluvial expeditions, interviews, secondary revision, myth analysis and testimonies of previously isolated people.

The territories inhabited by these groups experience a widespread lack of institutional presence that increases the threat of harmful contact. For this reason isolated people's protection is heavily reliant on indigenous organizations, activists, NGO's and concerned researchers.

## **International Recognition**

The absence of knowledge on isolated peoples has slowly been reversing since 2005: since then there has been a series of regional and international seminars, conferences, declarations and alliances that have reinforced the importance of recognizing and protecting their survival (IWGIA 2007). The stepping stone for these initiatives is considered by many to be the IUCN's resolution of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and the Conservation of Nature in 2005 where the right to isolation is recognized as compatible with biodiversity conservation.

The most current and important -however not legally binding- outcome of the previous initiatives is the elaboration in 2009 of the United Nation's "Draft guidelines on the Protection of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact of the Amazon Basin and Chaco". These guidelines legally recognize the existence of isolated peoples, the threats they face and establish the need for their protection. They place a particular emphasis on respecting the right to remain isolated and the right to self-determination through the application of territorial rights in order to guarantee the applicability of all other internationally recognized human rights.

In the international sphere I have observed a disjunction between relevant South American and Asian policies, laws, knowledge and attempts at regional strategies. For example, most texts including UN documents, are originally in Spanish or Portuguese and conferences and seminars focus only on South America. This disjunction is perhaps due to logistical inconveniences, lack of donor support and a preconception that there are few lessons to learn from Asia. Due to this divide and time constraints I have decided to focus on South American experience, recognizing this limitation as a criticism. To enrich mutual strategies, further research and efforts must bridge this divide.

## **A tale of Contact, The Nukak.**

(This case will be utilized for comparative purposes throughout the rest of the paper.)

The Nukak is the most widely recognized group to have made recent contact in Colombia. Prior to 1988, the Nukak had established a regular exchange and

relation with a camp of evangelical missionaries from the New Tribes Mission for approximately ten years. By the mid-nineties the Nukak population had plummeted by approximately 50% (Cabrera et al. 1994). According to Cabrera in 2007, the number of displaced Nukaks was estimated at 50% of the remaining population.

Some of the causes that led the Nukak to contact were the displacement by legal and illegal armed forces and the advent of the agrarian frontier that is still reducing their territory. During and after contact some of the catalysts for their deteriorating future include the spread of flu and measles, relocation by the government due to armed conflict, oil explorations, pseudo slave relations with *Colonos*<sup>7</sup> in the coca plantations, fumigations to diminish illicit crops and an adoption of a sedentary lifestyle near *Colono* settlements. Today the Nukak face “the most fragile point of their history, 20 years from their initial contact”<sup>\*</sup> (Politis 2007: 146).

With the above in mind, the reviewed literature as well as my field interviews point towards a number of lessons learnt from the experience of the Nukak that the creation of the Puré Park is attempting to consider with respect to the Yuri:

- The late creation of an indigenous reserve for the Nukak; five years after regular contacts.
- Inability of the state to control colonization.
- Lack of willingness to negotiate amongst the armed groups the respect for the Nukak.
- Government and civil society reaction plans that were culturally and medically inappropriate.
- The forced withdrawal of the missionaries without acknowledging their experience in making contact and the potential role they played in controlling further contact with other groups outside Nukak territory.
- The harmful consequences of a short-sighted over exploitation of the story by the media.

## Closing Remarks

Recent efforts to grant power and autonomy to indigenous people are trying to reconcile new and old prejudices with the idea that indigenous people can and should be the owners of their livelihoods. It is up to contemporary states to recognize isolated peoples’ efforts in conserving their autonomy despite the numerous threats of history and grant them legal and territorial rights so their livelihoods can peacefully rely on themselves. The following chapters will show how the Yuri have reacted to threats throughout their history and how a park attempts to do justice to their isolation.

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<sup>7</sup> Peasant settlers foreign to the local lands. The etymological connection to colonization is evident, however, in this case settlers are Colombian *mestizos* and respond to a post-colonial reality.

## Chapter 2

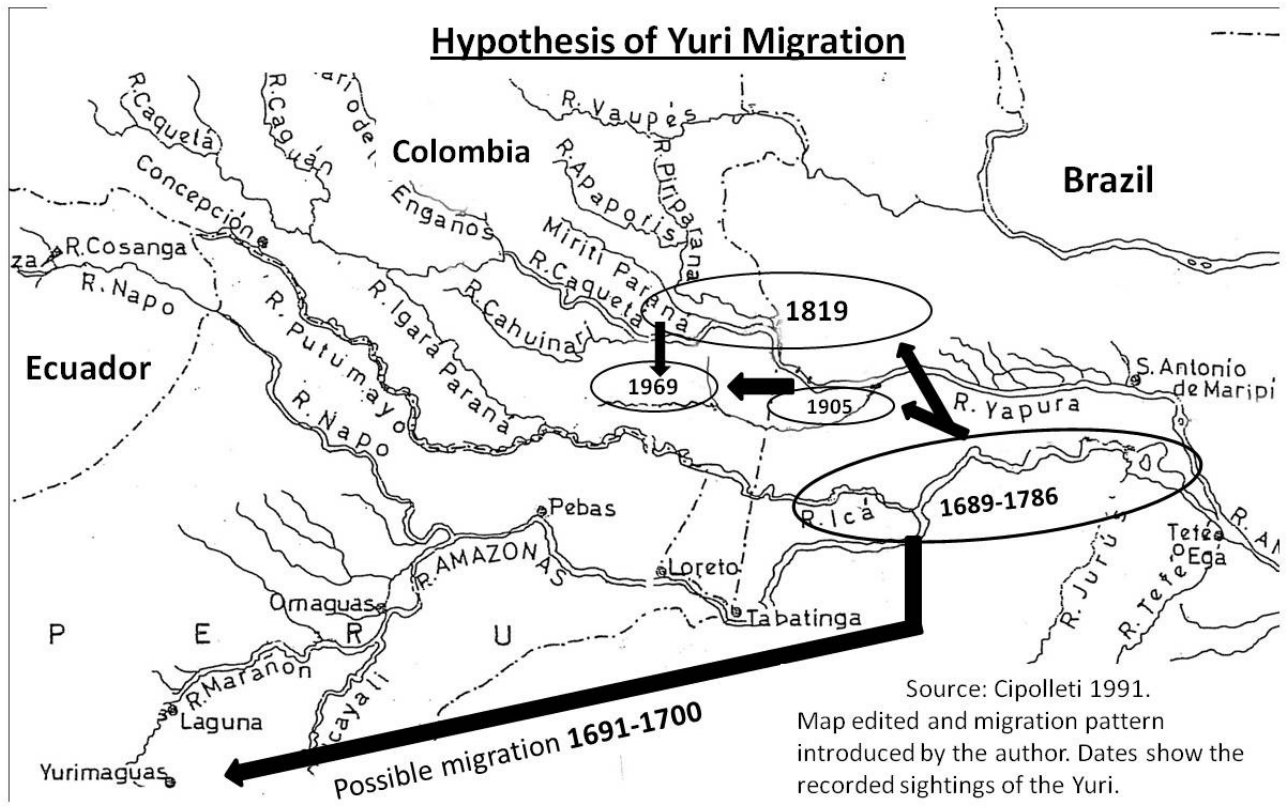
### History of the Yuri

For the Modernity-Coloniality research program associated with the work of Dussel, Quijano, Mignolo, Escobar, Santos, amongst others, modernity is seen as inseparable from coloniality: “the domination of others outside the European core is a necessary dimension of modernity” (Escobar, 2007: 184). For these authors the ideas of progress, modernization, utopias and universal projects cannot be disembedded from the exploitation, violence, slavery, disease, genocide and segregation of coloniality. “The “discovery” of America and the genocide of Indians and African slaves are the very foundations of modernity more so than the French and Industrial Revolutions, they constitute the darker and hidden face of modernity, coloniality” (Mignolo, 2005: 13). This chapter will exemplify how the church, empires and capital assaulted vast unknown territories and peoples. Therefore, isolated tribes like the Yuri can be perceived as evidence of this marriage of modernity and coloniality in the sense that the retreat of these tribes from colonialism is intrinsically also a retreat from modernity.

The history of the Yuri has yet to be written. Nonetheless, historian Roberto Franco -whom I am indebted for his support in uncovering this story- is currently researching this topic in depth. The hypotheses presented in the following summary stem from my historic revision found in Appendix B.

From analysing their history it is evident that since the 1600’s the Yuri have followed the logic of most isolated tribes; they have been fleeing from modernity-driven violence deeper into more inaccessible areas of the forest. From the late 1600’s to the early 1800’s the Yuri were historically fearful of the Portuguese and Spanish slave-traders as well as of other tribes that sustained themselves in isolation by providing captured members of neighbouring tribes to the crowns. This fear was subsequently directed towards the cruel rubber barons in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s who established a widespread debt-bondage slavery system.

My historical analysis proposes the following migratory hypothesis to be confirmed by future research. The Yuri who in 1689 were established between the mouths of the Putumayo-Iça and the Caquetá-Japura rivers with the Amazon River divided in two groups. One group fled to settle upstream the Amazon to establish a town that carries the name Yurimaguas in Peru. The other fraction who is now the isolated tribe in question fled upstream the Putumayo-Iça and the Caquetá-Japura rivers around the 1810’s. They merged with their sister tribe the Passé and possibly others. Subsequently after 1905 they hid deeper upstream the Puré River where they are believed to reside today.



By the mid 1900's Colombia established sovereignty over the region through the authority of the church and armed forces. During the 1940's to 1960's fur and skin fever became the new environmentally devastating economic-enslaving project for the area. In 1968 the stories of untamed "fierce" Yuris led the adventurous fur trader Julian Gil and two indigenous companions to immerse themselves in the forest. They never returned. As a consequence, two military rescue commissions were dispatched and failed in their objectives. They did manage to massacre a Yuri family and take hostage another family of six Yuris. This family was taken to a nearby town and placed under custody of Capuchin monks to "civilize" them. After a few months this project had also failed and the family was returned to their territory.



Yuri man forced to clothe and attend mass during his captivity.  
Source: Berges 1970.

Since the 1960's the region has experienced: white-fever (cocaine), black-fever (oil), brown-fever (timber) and gold-fever (gold). Today, this land finds itself again contested, this time by the legal and illegal armed forces in the service of capital which threaten the future of the Yuri. This presence of armed groups (military, left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries) furthers lawlessness and displacement in the region.

In part, due to the remoteness and difficult terrain of the territory, the Yuri have managed to remain in the sidelines of this conflict. However, based on my interviews and unpublished testimonies compiled by Jimenez (2006), Trompetero and Pinto (2005) the most recent unconfirmed accounts of contact have come from ex-guerrillas who in fleeing the institution stumbled upon the Yuri. Some of these testimonies suggest that the guerrilla has a mandate not to interfere with the Yuri when using Yuri lands to hide from army incursions. Nonetheless, as the Nukak case shows, the guerrilla could reverse this decision in any moment representing a phenomenal threat to the Yuri.

Parallel to these processes the state has fostered "projects of regional integration whose objectives aim to overcome "backwardness" and "underdevelopment", attempting to integrate the indigenous into the regional, "rationally" promoting their social and cultural change"\* (Gomez Lopez 2008: 209). This situation has been shifting in some sectors towards a search for regional and cultural autonomy, self governance by indigenous authorities and conservation through the work of progressive fractions of the government and civil society organizations. This explains the current political-territorial organization of the Colombian Amazon, composed – in order of magnitude - of Productive Forest Reserves, Indigenous Reserves, Natural Parks and townships. As part of these progressive initiatives we find the creation of Puré Park with its policy of no contact.

## Closing remarks

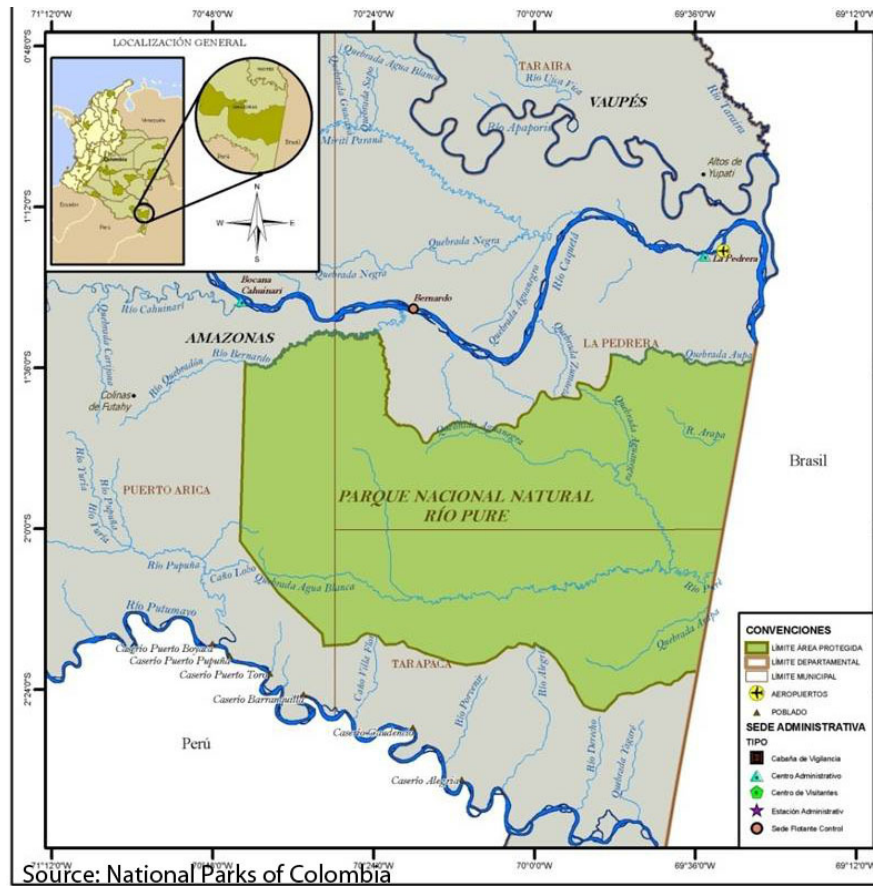
From the conquest until today the lack of permanent presence of any empire or state allowed lawlessness and injustice to flourish in the area. For example: Martius in 1819 mentions how he found himself in "no man's land"\* (Spix, Martius [1819] 1981: 242). And in the 1960's Berges and the media denounced the presence of illegal extraction of fauna and the absence of diligent authorities. In the face of this nonexistence of justice, I argue that fleeing and isolation have proved to be effective resistance strategies.

During my interviews and informal conversations the success of the isolation strategy of the Yuri is usually explained in relation to the difficult access and remoteness of their homeland. However, upon a deeper look at history we can see that from the 1600's until today this land has been the scene of numerous alien actors with the common characteristic of utilizing this territory to satisfy Western ideas of the "right way" to live, embodied through time by: religious, state centred and/or capitalistic ideologies. Thus, remoteness is not enough to contain the motors of globalization, modernity, capital and progress that have left their dirty footprints on the region and its peoples. In fleeing, the Yuri and isolated tribes are agents of their history. If we recognize this reality then we can argue for the establishment, strengthening and support of strategies that protect those who decide to disconnect themselves from a history of slavery and foreign interests.

## Chapter 3

# What is Colombia doing about it? The Park

The Colombian Amazon is ten times the size of the Netherlands (Castro 1998: 55). Out of this area 998.000 hectares compose the Puré Park since 2002, making it the third largest out of the 54 protected areas in the country.



Source: National Parks of Colombia

<http://www.parquesnacionales.gov.co/PNN/portel/libreria/php/decide.php?patron=01.014306>

## Why the Park?

The following paragraphs are drawn from a comparative analysis of interviews with park officials, two different proposals for the creation of the Park (2002), the subsequent Resolution 0764 that legally constitutes it (2002), as well as the legally binding approval of the Management Plan (2007)<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> For an in-depth comparison see table in Appendix C.



## Conservation

The analyzed texts mention the importance of the Park in fomenting a tri-national (Colombia, Brazil, Peru) biological corridor; “constituting a priority area for both conservation and research....it will create a biological corridor fulfilling the complementarities between its different landscapes, fauna and flora”\* (Proposal 1 2002: 15, Proposal 2 2002: 12, Resolution 0764 2002: 3).

Biodiversity became a primary reason for the Park’s creation: a significant rate of endemism, the presence of 10 endangered species, 4 recently discovered plants, signify a great potential for discovery if complete biodiversity inventories take place. In terms of ecosystem services, the Park is important as a water reservoir, water cycle regulator and a carbon sink.

Protected areas in Colombian law also include Indigenous Reserves, “they are complementary to the parks”\* (ex-Park official). However, an important advantage of a park over an Indigenous Reserve is that Colombian law prohibits all sort of subsoil exploration, extraction or mining in the former as opposed to the latter. In this way Puré Park would ideally have legal and practical tools to address mining and hydrocarbon explorations, which are of interest in the area. Moreover, the Park became a better option, because the creation of an Indigenous Reserve requires that a census be conducted, which by law would entail accurate demographic data that would lead to contacting the Yuri.

## Culture

There is a divide between the proposals aiming to establish the Park, Resolution 0764 that constitutes the Park and its Management Plan. The proposals relegate the importance of protecting the Yuri to a few lines at the end of the documents and do not suggest any protective measures; the Park is created due to the “special environmental conditions and ecological relevance of this zone”\* (Proposals 2002: 20).

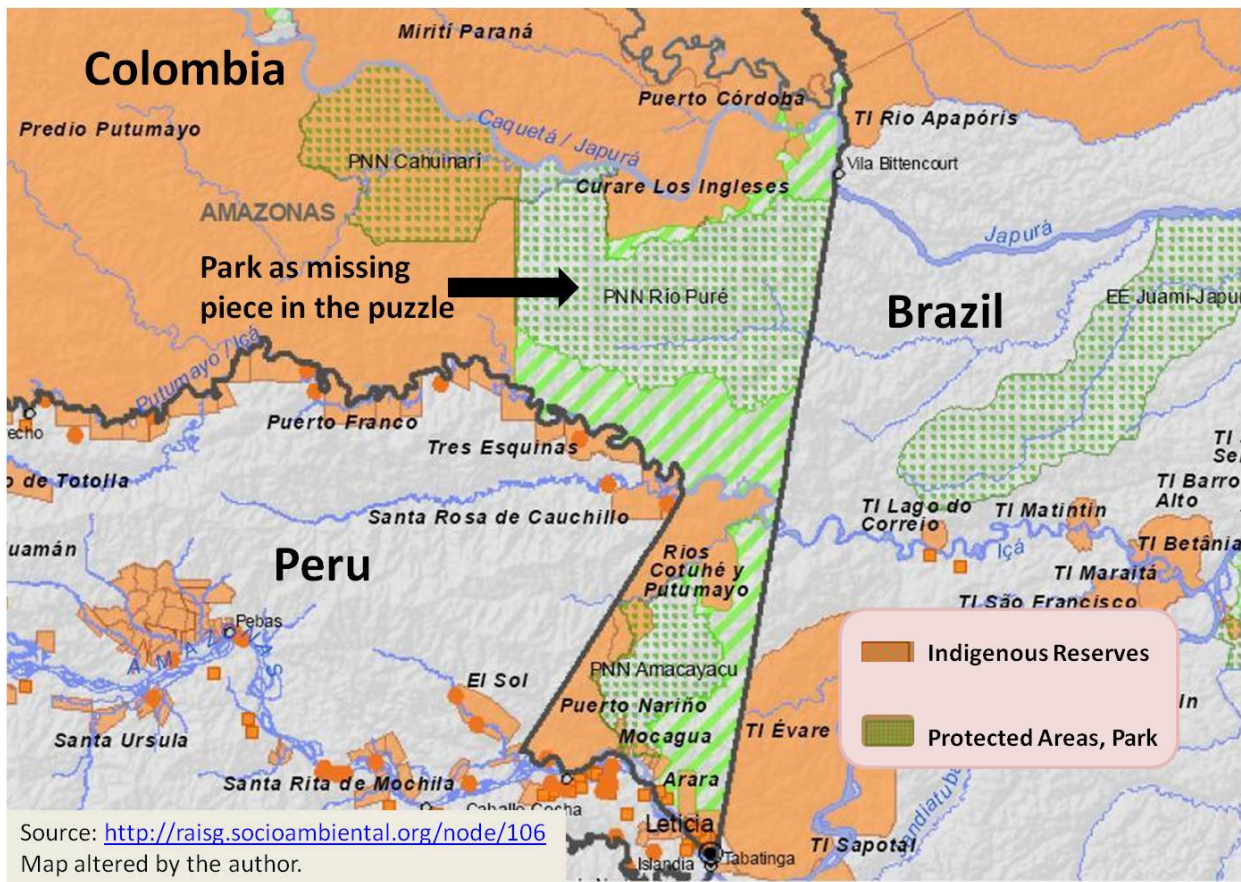
On the other hand, Resolution 0764 and the Park’s Management Plan focus heavily on the need to respect the Yuri’s decision of no contact. In both documents “the need to protect the Yuri’s survival and their decision of no contact with larger society”\* becomes the Park’s first objective. This should be achieved by delimiting a zone for the Yuri free of any activities or interventions. This is to be done by unobtrusively researching the Yuri to better define their territory involving all stakeholders in their protection.

Chapter 5 will show that the reasons for this disjunction that subsequently favours cultural protection corresponds to a strategy for better guaranteeing approval for the Park by the scientific authorities of the country.

## Sovereignty through Conservation

In all documents there is a strong emphasis and belief that institutional presence and the participation with local stake holders will foment sovereignty in this border region. The interviewees mentioned that the Park was a “missing piece in the puzzle” in the sense that there was no legal status or protection for this territory or its people: “The areas around the Park were either legally pro-

tected, belonged to a municipality, an indigenous reserve or had a certain legal status for use by villages; the territory where the Park is today had no protection status"\* (Parks official).



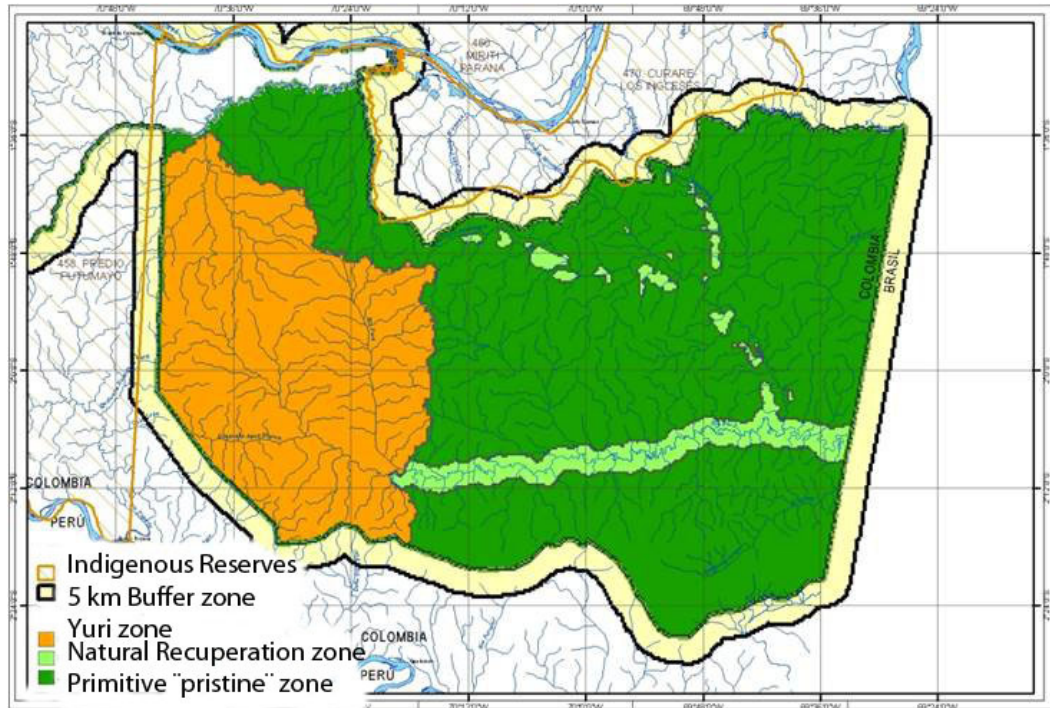
### The Park's objectives are:

- "Protection of the Yuri territory with the aim of guaranteeing their survival and decision of no contact with larger society"\*.
  - "To expand the knowledge on biodiversity, ecosystem services and culture of the area without leading to contact with the Yuri"\*.
  - "To construct with local actors a vision of the management of the Park and its contribution to regional development"\*.
  - "To place the Park as an important ecological area in the national and international sphere"\*.
  - "To strengthen control and surveillance over illegal extractive activities"\*.
  - "To strengthen the team of the Park in the region"\*.
- (Resolution 0764 2002: 5, Resolution 035 2007: 3).

### The Park's Zonification

The Park is closed to most interventions and divided into three areas: a *natural recuperation zone*, which is the area that has suffered environmental impact particularly along the banks of the Puré River due to illegal mining; a *primitive*

zone “that has not been altered or that has suffered minimum human intervention in its natural structures”\*; and a *cultural-historic zone*, where it is “prohibited to carry any scientific, recreational, touristic or any other type of activity in order to avoid any action that could imply contact with the Yuri or affect their territory”\*(Management Plan 2007: 2).



## Nature/Culture in the Park

From analysing the texts and interviews we can identify a conception of parks as the best mechanism for recognizing nature and culture as inseparable for isolated peoples. The Management Plan states that a park is the best mechanism for “biocultural” conservation because it recognizes “a vital area for the Yuri that is inseparable from their identity and existence”\* (Proposal 1, 2002: 29 & Resolution 0764, 2002: 4)

*“We have seen in areas nearby that the more preserved indigenous traditions are, the more the ecosystem is protected; they are inseparable”\* (Park official). “The ecological knowledge that the indigenous people of the neighbouring Cabuinari Park had allowed for the government to grant them management autonomy over their territory”\* (Ex-Minister of Environment).*

Moreover, we must recognize that in these cases culture is fully dependent on nature and not vice-versa. The ecosystem is not dependant on the Yuri’s survival, whereas the Yuri are intrinsically dependent on their environment. For this reason protected areas have become the chosen strategy for the protection of isolated peoples. Nevertheless, in chapter 6 we will see why protected areas are necessary but insufficient to achieve this objective.

## Problems

The Park faces considerable problems in attempting to realize its objectives. These problems are due to the interrelated factors of: inaccessibility, lack of funds, deficient inter-institutional support and a weak knowledge of isolated peoples. This translates to an unclear depiction of the Yuri's territory, weak monitoring capacities, insufficient socialization, lack of institutional presence and an absence of contingency plans (guidelines on how to act in the event of contact).

*“We need a lot of work; we don't have sufficient funds to have permanent presence inside the Park. In operative terms we are weak, for example the south of the Park is unprotected. We have had only 7 expeditions deep into the Park since 2002. We need stronger socialization processes of our objectives in the regional and national level. We need to work closer with other institutions so that they know who we are and implement joint strategies”\* (Park Official).*

## Opposition to the Park

There has been little opposition to the Park, in part because this land has not been contested by legal actors in recent years: “since there are no communities inside the park we are not obliged to do thorough consultations” (Park Official). Nevertheless, some consultations were realized with indigenous people and indigenous political organizations that have historically made cultural and spiritual use of the area. These actors were willing to forego physical use of the Park, agreeing that their desire to isolate should be respected. The absence of inhabitants other than the Yuri has greatly favored the creation of a no entry zone that would have been more problematic under other demographic circumstances.

Opposition mainly comes via the non-consulted *Colonos* of a nearby settlement (La Pedrera) who feel they are “fenced in” between parks, Indigenous Reserves, Productive Protected Reserves and international borders. Park officials sustain that for this reason “the Park's limit is 10.000 hectares away from La Pedrera, leaving its inhabitants with sufficient land for subsistence - much more than the agricultural authorities of the country suggest”\*.

## Chapter 4

### Threats Faced by Isolated People; the Yuri

This chapter provides an analysis of the contemporary Amazon problematic and how uneven impacts of development and progress represent differential threats to isolated peoples and the Yuri.

The Amazon is integrated into the greater globalized political economy through issues like: biodiversity, climate change, culture, agrarian frontier, and resource extraction. All of these processes represent the new “fevers” of “the rest” and consequently bring outcomes both formal and informal in nature. Authors like Stavenhagen (2007), and Berraondo (2005), concur that the principal threats to isolated populations are tied to the dynamics of globalization and expansionary capitalism, because “we always hand over the resources in the name of the lack of resources”\* (Galeano 1971: 224).

Brackelaire (2008) divides the threats to contact in three: development related (gas and oil exploration, dams, roads, agro-forestry etc), illegal-informal<sup>9</sup> (drug dealing, poaching, mining, logging etc) and presence of external agents (missionaries, tour agencies, scientists, adventurers, filmmakers etc.) (14). Huertas-Castillo (2007) depicts three types of cross-sectional vulnerabilities that accompany these threats: immunological (epidemics), demographic (diminished populations, changes in social relations) and reduced territories.

The effects of an increasing formal and informal influence of larger society over the Amazon could eventually lead to a situation of contact for the Yuri. Due to the interrelation between these external and internal conditions, isolation will be harder to sustain in time. In considering these threats, this paper aims to contribute to upholding the Yuri’s/isolated tribes’ decisions for isolation. However, this paper holds that threats to the survival of isolated tribes may be mitigated by applying knowledge of the discourses and dynamics of the possible threats and actors of contact. Once sustained contact takes place, culturally sensitive contingency plans that provide the safest possible conditions of interaction with the larger society become a priority that should be addressed by further research.

#### Threats faced by the Yuri

(Derived from: interviews, Park reports, media and books.)

I utilize Brackelaire’s 2008 threat typology (external, illegal-informal<sup>10</sup>, and development); these threats are often interrelated, hence each category should be understood as having a direct relationship with the others.

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<sup>9</sup> Unpublished.

<sup>10</sup> I added the word informal to amplify the category’s applicability.



## *External*

**Disease:** Of all foreign diseases perhaps malaria represents the most vivid threat because it has been expanding its reaches across the region and villages near the Yuri lands (interviewed Park official). Since its carrier is a mosquito transmission does not require direct contact; any person carrying the virus near the Yuri territory could spread the disease. The failing ability of the Park to monitor and control entrance and the losing battle of sanitation authorities against malaria can prove detrimental in the future.

**Human settlements:** Indigenous people and *Colonos* compose the demography of the region, its two main populations are Tarapacá and La Pedrera with less than 4000 inhabitants each (60% Indigenous and 40% *Colonos*). They present a high rate of floating population, mainly due to extractive booms and military bases, for example, in Tarapacá there are 2500 inhabitants and 2800 soldiers. The risks of contact are related to the army's movements in the area, illegal mining near La Pedrera and logging near Tarapacá. To prevent these actors from leading to contact, the Park invests its efforts in socialization and education campaigns in these settlements.

**Other tribes:** Traditional "enemy" and "friendly" tribes to the Yuri make intermittent and scarce use of the area for subsistence purposes, however they have agreed to avoid the Yuri lands. Nevertheless, due to a lack of monitoring capacity by the Park, surrounding tribes can, if they will, infringe the zone of no contact.

## *Development and Illegal-informal*

**Macro projects:** According to the ex-Minister of Environment there are various subsoil explorations and forestry concessions being considered near the Park. My interviews and analysis suggest that these projects have been prevented in part by the remoteness of the area and the presence of the conflict that turns illegality into an ethno-environmental protective functionality.

**Logging:** Some old logging permits are still valid within the south of the Park. Recent testimonies by environmental authorities mention that these permits are due to expire and have been inactive for some time. The fact that these permits are still valid within the Park's jurisdiction shows the mentioned lack of interinstitutional cooperation.

In the south of the Park, where monitoring capacities are weaker, the principal source of commercial value is illegal cedar extraction. Due to overexploitation cedar is increasingly being found deeper into the forest, closer to Yuri lands. However, local connoisseurs mention that the Yuri territory is cedar-poor and that loggers are scared at the sight of the Yuri's footprints. Nevertheless, it is possible that when loggers stop finding accessible cedars they may start to look in Yuri territory.

**Illegal gold mining (*dragas*):** Among the people that venture closer to the Yuri are the gold searching pontoon platforms that camp for months at a time degrading river banks and leaving mercury deposits in the water. These people usually *Colonos* with their prolonged presence and cash payments "have severe impacts on local traditions and culture"\* (ex-Parks Official). The Park finds it

difficult to control this activity due to the lawlessness that reigns in the region. Thus, the *dragas* informed when operatives are coming to look for them from one nation, consequently hide across the border and vice versa, reiterating the need for multilateral action between Brazil and Colombia.

**Conflict:** Of the three main actors of the Colombian conflict the guerrillas and armed forces play a more prominent role here. They respond to a cat and mouse logic where the guerrillas hide, attempting to protect coca plantations, while the army is in active search for both. “The guerrilla come and go, the effects of the war on drugs cause the coca plantations to spread further, now people diversify coca with other crops”\* (ex-Parks Official).

Given that the guerrillas and army are the only two “authorities” over whom the Park is powerless; they can displace themselves freely within the Park and consequently are the most likely actors of contact. As with any dynamic of militarization, the presence of these forces brings an increasing demand of products and abuses of power which could prove fatal for the Yuri.

A common characteristic of both forces is a reluctance to establish rapport with other institutions. An intermittent relationship with the army has allowed for the Park to advance environmental education programs “to spread awareness of the Yuri with Brazilian and Colombian soldiers who are rotated often and usually have no knowledge of the forest and its people”\*(Parks official). Nevertheless, the Park believes that the army has deployed their elite forces in the Yuri territory: “we didn’t have access to them prior to or after their incursion, we don’t know what happened, if they saw anything or how they behaved”\*. This reluctance to cooperate by the army can also be seen in the fact that they have not authorized reconnaissance flights to search for evidence of the Yuri.

While, as mentioned before, it seems that the guerrilla has a no-contact policy, that could be reverted any time. Ex-guerrilla testimonies mention that out of curiosity some guerrillas explored Yuri trails and left “gifts” in the forest to which the Yuri responded by vandalizing their boats.

**Church and Missionaries:** Development in the region has gone together with religion (Cabrera 2007, Bonilla 1972). The lasting and continuous impacts of religious boarding schools and churches are still visible among some indigenous people that dismiss their traditional beliefs. Highly relevant is the presence of North American missionaries in the Colombian Amazon, denounced by Berges (1970), Castro (1998), Cabrera (2007), Politis (2007). Many of these missionaries have become experts –sometimes by paying with their lives- in contacting many tribes in the Amazon including the Nukak (Politis 2007: 148).

The majority of interviewees dismissed the missionaries as a dying threat. However, due to the growing presence of different types of Protestantism in South America (McGrath 2004); we must not underestimate their influence. For example, the missionary Álvarez (2001) argued that “isolation is due to harmful external conditions, changing these external conditions through a more involved contact with catholic missionaries can reverse this situation”\* (in Rummenhoeller 2007: 63). Furthermore, when considering the already mentioned New Tribes Mission’s power and slogan “planting tribal churches to reach people who have never had a single opportunity to hear the Good News” one understands the importance to protect the Yuri against these incur-

sions. Fortunately the Park's statutes protect the Yuri, at least on paper from any incursion by these actors.

### ***Internal Threats***

I maintain that we must not disregard what is commonly overlooked in the literature, that is, the endogenous factors brought by isolation that can accelerate contact or lead to extinction. We find three categories of this type: endogenous changes in culture, genetic considerations and ex-isolated individuals.

**Endogenous changes in culture** refer to the changes in the social dynamics of the groups due to the conditions faced in isolation, examples include: fewer resources from reduced territories, fear of having children, internal conflict, etc. Interviewed experts mentioned that certain cultural traits can be lost due to low population numbers, such as: fewer talented apprentices for shamanism or hunting, knowledge dying with. Therefore, it is possible that the Yuri have had to adapt and modify certain practices, quite possibly losing some of them. This can explain why recent sightings of the Yuri mention that they no longer tattoo their faces.

**Genetic considerations** refer to the health problems associated with inbreeding in low population numbers. Nevertheless, during my interviews it was repeatedly mentioned that Amazonian tribes respond to these threats by ascribing to very strict reproductive mores, usually in the forms of clans. The interviews and Cabodevilla (2005), Martius (1819), amongst others, mention that it is also common for tribes to swap or steal women and newborns to enrich diversity; in a similar way, in certain tribes births with malformations that would be detrimental to the group's survival are not permitted to live.

The Park has no alternative to address this issue, however, it is curious to note that while one of the Park's reasons for being is to increase genetic diversity for fauna, it is doing the opposite for its human inhabitants. Thus the Park's fauna conservation is achieved through the search for genetic propagation, while its cultural conservation leads to a genetic stagnancy. By prescribing differentiated protection mechanisms for culture the Park is an example against biological fixes for social phenomena.

**Ex isolated** refers to previously isolated members of isolated tribes that have internalized different lifestyles after contact and return to their old territories, attempting to pressure the isolated to come out of their territories. This is a recurrent issue with the isolated tribes of the nearby Brazilian Javari valley. Fortunately, this occurrence is unknown for the Yuri. Nevertheless, there is no clear statute within the Park on how to proceed if such a case occurs, suggesting the importance of instituting such guidelines.

### **Closing Remarks**

The Park seems to have effective legal mechanism to protect the area from outside incursions. However, better advocacy, socialization campaigns, institutional presence and plans for when contact occurs require strengthening for Puré to meet its objectives.



Given that it is an impossibility to explore the self-representations of the Yuri, I argue that we should explore the discourses that the outside actors have of the Yuri as an overarching condition that greatly affects the outcomes of these threats. The following chapter will therefore explore how these diverging yet interrelated discourses had and have lasting impacts on the Yuri's reality.

## Chapter 5

### Imaginarities

As mentioned above, this chapter will explore the different imaginaries we have about isolated people, focussing on how they have historically given rise and continue to connote different intended and unintended consequences for the Yuri's self-determination. The chapter concludes with a depiction of the harmful or beneficial use of these imaginaries. Leaving room for the following chapter to argue that to respect the isolated peoples' rights our use of these imaginaries must be consequential with particular types of self-determination.

First, we must draw on Foucault's interest in uncovering the conditions that lead to the production of certain discourses (imaginaries) rather than others. His main concern is with the reciprocal relationship between power and knowledge: "it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power" (Foucault 1980: 52). The power/knowledge tension determines what will be known in a given society, because the construction of knowledge is reproduced in the myriad of power relations at all levels of society including the stories and perceptions of the other. Therefore, for these perceptions or imaginaries to be considered as "facts" they "must be subjected to a thorough process of ratification by those in positions of authority" (Mills 2003: 72); in this case the actors who construct the collective imaginaries of the Yuri.

Following Foucault I argue that the construction of these truths, which in this paper are called imaginaries, has profound impacts on the identities of the storytellers as well as on the Yuri's reality. Thus the internalization and normalization of these labels, categorizations and discourses are crucial in the formation of the individual because they are "not something the individual invents for himself... rather they are patterns that he finds in his culture which are proposed, suggested and imposed on him by his society and social group"... "they play at once a conditioning and conditioned role" (Foucault 1980: 142, 1991: 11).

Foucault's concern is not to emancipate people from the so called "true" labels that are applied in certain systems of power, but to understand that these labels under any circumstance -emancipatory or oppressive- are social constructs of their time. With this in mind, the aim of the following typology is to expose these imaginaries without making claims regarding their "true" nature. Moreover, through examples I attempt to argue that these imaginaries become forms of "disciplinary power" and tools of power that can affect the Yuri's self-determination; "power relations do indeed serve...because they are capable of being utilized in strategies" (Foucault 1980: 142).

It is widely recognized by the literature that the Amazon and its people have been subjects of these imaginaries and projections throughout time: "conceivably there is no place over which there have been and continue to be constructed the most diverse myths, stories, images and legends: it is a surprising universe of imaginaries that ranges from paradise to hell"\* (Gomez 2008: 207). Furthermore, there is a growing literature on how the bearers of the "ac-

counts of the Amazon that have been handed down over the centuries have actively altered particular written texts and oral histories to fit their own needs and interests” (Slater 2002: 6). Perhaps this is why the image presented to larger society about isolated peoples as tribes in jungle paradise diverges from their current conditions. Today they are threatened by the “dark side” of progress where suffering persists from experiences of contact: polluting enterprises, displacement, disease, massacres etc...

The impacts of Western, scientific, “civilized” imaginaries of the Amazon on local realities have been widely addressed by the literature (Slater 2002, Lutz 1993, Collins 1993, Latour 1999, Lohmann 1993). By also considering the effects of the imaginaries of the inhabitants of the Amazon about other “invisible” Amazonians I hope to contribute to another facet of a deconstructing project that in my opinion has not received enough attention in the literature.

## **Typology of Imaginaries**

Isolated tribes are especially vulnerable to framing and imaginaries because the only way they can contest, resist or deconstruct them is through our interpretations of their absence and traps. Therefore, isolated tribes become the ultimate other, in the sense that they can be otherized by all actors; they are the subaltern within the subaltern.

The categories (imaginaries) in the tables respond to the logic that certain actors (signifiers) endow the Yuri (signified) with certain characteristics through time that bring about a series of consequences that could lead to or legitimize contact, hence disrupting their livelihoods and decision to isolate. We must note that more than one of these imaginaries can work in conjunction or disjunction in a social sphere at a given time; there is a fluid interlacing among them, hence they should be considered as Weberian ideal types.

These imaginaries have been drawn out from analyzing the field interviews, media outlets, novels and common opinions. The exercise is non-exhaustive and recognizes the need for further research to revise or expand the typology.

**Negative Views of the Yuri**

<b>Imaginary of the Yuri (signified)</b>	<b>Characteristics/Discourses</b>	<b>Actor (Signifier)</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Risk of Contact</b>	<b>Prevalence</b>
Fierce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Cannibals”, “big footed”, “giants”, “aggressive”, “magical”, “leave traps”, “vengeful”, “savages”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most Indigenous groups of the region, loggers, miners, Sensationalist journalists.</li> <li>• Example: El Tiempo Newspaper 1969</li> </ul>	1500 to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Creates a protection barrier that favours isolation.</b></li> <li>• Has led to fear driven violence upon contact.</li> </ul>	Low	Prevalent
Sinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Souls in need of redemption”. “They need to hear the word of god”.</li> <li>• Requires them to be “civilized”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Missionaries.</li> <li>• Some indigenous people that have fully internalized Western culture, ex indigenous people who grew up in boarding schools.</li> <li>• Examples: Capuchin monks in La Pedrera 1970’s.</li> <li>• New Tribes Mission</li> </ul>	1500 to Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of Indigenous Culture</li> </ul>	Very High	Decreasing in the region. Yet prevalent in other areas of the Amazon.
Underdeveloped/ Uncivilized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “In need of progress and Western culture”.</li> <li>• “They should be “discovered””.</li> <li>• “Because they are not a consumer society then people assume that they are poor”* (Park Official)</li> <li>• “Why should they live like animals and so far if they can move closer to civilization?”</li> <li>• Applies to all indigenous cultures.</li> <li>• Orientalist view (Said): “How the West sees the rest”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government officials, ruling classes, development planners, ethnocentric journalists. Colonialists and <i>Colonos</i>, tourists, soldiers, etc.</li> <li>• Indigenous people that have internalized Western culture, some indigenous people who grew up in boarding schools.</li> </ul>	1500 to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of indigenous culture and livelihoods.</li> <li>• Negative impacts “dark side” of development (post development critiques)</li> <li>• Displacement of isolated tribes towards more accessible localities.</li> </ul>	High	Increasing
Easily Exploitable or easily indebted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent strong, knowledgeable cheap labour.</li> <li>• They are a good opportunity for profit seeking enterprises.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extractive entrepreneurs: miners, loggers, fur and skin traders, rubber barons, trinket traders etc...</li> <li>• Recently embodied by irresponsible tour companies and filmmakers.</li> <li>• Example: Arana Rubber House 1900’s. Lost fur trader Julian Gil 1969.</li> </ul>	1500 to present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slavery, exploitation, unequal access and ownership of resources.</li> <li>• Loss of culture.</li> </ul>	Very High	Decreasing

**Positive Views of the Yuri**

<b>Imaginary of the Yuri (signified)</b>	<b>Characteristics/Discourses</b>	<b>Actor (Signifier)</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Risk of Contact</b>	<b>Prevalence</b>
Green/Noble Savage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In harmony with the ecosystem.</li> <li>• “Ecological Noble Savage”. (Redford 1991)</li> <li>• “They are happily living in paradise”.</li> <li>• Self sufficient, survivors. Knowledgeable of their ecosystem.</li> <li>• Green Orientalism (Lohmann 1993)</li> <li>• Culture inseparable from nature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some: anthropologists, conservationists, Donors, NGOs, “Progressive” journalists.</li> <li>• Example: Survival International</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recently in the region.</li> <li>• Further research required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential increase in institutional support, funds etc.</li> <li>• <b>Increases legitimacy for the right to isolation, self- determination and protected territories.</b></li> <li>• Potential beneficial and harmful increase in literature and media representations of them.</li> <li>• Legitimizes protected areas as ideal for protecting culture-nature nexus.</li> </ul>	Medium	Increasing internationally. Decreasing nationally.
Last Master	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last guardians of ancient or lost knowledge.</li> <li>• Self sufficient.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous individuals concerned with culture loss.</li> <li>• Some “voyeuristic” anthropologists, filmmakers, tour-guides etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent.</li> <li>• Further research required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential desire to contact and learn from them.</li> </ul>	High	Increasing
Hiding in thought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous leaders through local shamans attempted to spiritually contact the Yuri (a sort of telepathy). The shamans mention that they can “see” the Yuri but that the Yuri shamans have stronger defences and avoid dialogue, isolating themselves even through thoughts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous shamans and their believers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further research required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Respect for their decision to isolate</b></li> </ul>	Low	Further Research required
Authentic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “real” indigenous people vs. the “other” indigenous people.</li> <li>• “They are not like the rest of indigenous people who are lazy, drunk, land hungry, living of the state, etc.”</li> <li>• “The only true indigenous people left in the country.”</li> <li>• Self sufficient.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibly a common perception in the rest of Colombia.</li> <li>• Uninformed people.</li> <li>• Further research required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1990’s to present.</li> <li>• Born from the national awareness of the Nukak’s situation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increases legitimacy for the right to isolation, self- determination and protected territories.</b></li> </ul>	Low	Further research required
Myth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They do not exist.</li> <li>• “It is just another story of the jungle”.</li> <li>• “They disappeared a long time ago”.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly <i>Colonos</i>, sceptics etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1900 to Present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces desire to find them, could increase extractive incursions in the area.</li> <li>• Does not consider protection strategies as legitimate.</li> </ul>	Contact would occur unintentionally.	Not prevalent.

## Impacts of Imaginaries

Laws and Rein (2003) remind us that “stories wed fact and value into beliefs about how to act” (174); in the tables above we see how different actors have the potential to construct different stories which mould a spectrum of imaginaries that ranges from beneficial to harmful actions. For instance, we see how some beliefs can yield support for rights and strategies that grant the Yuri protection while others dismiss them as fiction. The following examples attempt to argue that these discourses or imaginaries become tools of power/knowledge for diverging purposes –intended and unintended- by otherizing those who have no voice apart from our stories about them. The paper also recognizes that some more powerful actors (media, government, NGO’s, academics) have more efficient tools and legitimacy to construct and deconstruct these imaginaries, placing on them a higher ethical responsibility with respect to the use of information.

Some uses of these imaginaries can serve purposes that have **indirect effects** on isolated tribes. For example, Politis (2007) argues that imaginaries of the recently contacted tribe the Nukak have made themselves part of the Colombian pop-culture. I believe this is rooted in a very popular documentary showing their nomad lifestyle that was repeatedly aired on television when the majority of the country had access to only three channels. Today, the “*green-noble savage*” imaginary with its characteristic self sufficient paradise dweller has been co-opted by entrepreneurs giving the name Nukak to a local brand of camping gear, suggesting that you too can survive in the “wild”. Similarly, there is a fashion model that claims to have Nukak ancestors and “reflects the imaginaries of the pristine jungle and its peoples in her photo shoots”\*(153). For another Colombian example where the imaginary of the isolated as waiting to be discovered is utilized together with heteronormative values that display men as explorers who conquer women that love cars see the image below.

This is an advertisement in a magazine "for men" where the imaginary of the isolated as waiting to be discovered is utilized together with heteronormative values for entrepreneurial purposes. "Erentukua makes all the Yanhua men sigh for her, until today the Yanhua were unknown. Like the Yahua there are many places and people that don't know you. Discover them with the new completely renovated Ford Ecosport...When asked about the ecosport Erentukua said "I love it!"".

Erentukua pone a suspirar a todos los hombres Yanhua, una tribu hasta hoy desconocida. Así como los Yanhua, existen muchas personas y lugares que todavía no te conocen. Descúbrelos en la NUEVA Ford Ecosport completamente renovada y mucho más equipada.

El nuevo Ecosport Yazeshno no hubiera sido posible sin la nueva Ecosport que tiene el equipaje perfecto para recorrer los lugares más difíciles que te puedas imaginar. Para comenzar cuenta con un motor 2.0L. Durante que produce 138 caballos de potencia y transmisión mecánica de 5 velocidades con sistema de tracción automática en los cuatro ruedas.

Para no sólo tener potencia. La nueva Ecosport tiene un nuevo centro de mensajes en el panel de instrumentos que te avisa cuando necesitas frenar y para cuántos kilómetros te avisa, entre muchas otras funciones. También tiene un nuevo control de radio en la columna de dirección para manejarlo lo mejor posible.

Para finalizar, te preguntamos a Erentukua que opinaba de la carretera y esto fue lo que dijo: "La carretera más bonita que he visto en mi vida".

Para finalizar, te preguntamos a Erentukua que opinaba de la carretera y esto fue lo que dijo: "La carretera más bonita que he visto en mi vida".

Hay lugares que no te conocen

Ford

Source: SOHO Magazine, Edition 95, 2008

**Other uses of imaginaries have a direct negative effect** on the reality of these tribes. For example, Papua Adventures is an ethno-tourism company where various imaginaries - "green", "authentic" and "exploitable" - come together to sell the exotic other in an ultimate adventure experience; first contact for cash.

*"For anyone interested in seeing a tribe that hasn't been spoiled by modernization; join us", "When civilization is encroaching upon them, they move deeper into the forest. The Tause that we are going to visit are one of these groups that still has pretty much resisted outside influence.", "With the success of finding new tribes by opening up new areas in Papua", "We will finish our trek in one of the last spots where tribes without contact still exist."*<sup>11</sup>.

Without any serious concern for respecting their desire to isolation, health, safety, territorial and social wellbeing these tours continue to take place. Therefore, the need for protected areas like Puré Park that can respond to these profit-driven encroachments of irresponsibility becomes a priority.

Previously it was noted that faith based fundamentalism represents a threat to contact. In these cases the imaginary of the "sinner" in need of contact is utilized through statements like: "missionaries must learn their language and understand their culture in order to clearly present the Gospel and effectively

<sup>11</sup> [www.papua-adventures.com/](http://www.papua-adventures.com/)

plant a church” (New tribes Mission)<sup>12</sup>. It is evident that this world view is incompatible with the right to isolation and forbidden in the Puré Park.

Another common consequence is the **unintended harmful impacts** of imaginaries upon the isolated. For example in 1969 the press followed closely the last recorded contact with the Yuri; at the time the center-right *El Tiempo* and the center-left *El Espectador* newspapers were the biggest in Colombia.

*El Tiempo* published 19 articles in 1969 regarding these events drawing heavily from the local imaginary of the Yuri as “fierce” through the use of words like: “savages”, “man eaters”, “anthropophagus”, and “giants”\*. It is arguable that the *El Tiempo*’s irresponsible use of imaginaries and sensationalism could have raised curiosity and fear amongst the public. This media attention could have pressured and/or legitimized the two military “rescue” operations that took place resulting in a massacre as well as an abduction of a Yuri family. In contrast, the *El Espectador* published 10 non-sensational articles with headlines that refer to the Yuri as an “Unknown Tribe”\*. Moreover, their last article reads “Anthropologists Protest for Abuses towards the Indigenous People”\* where it states that the most renowned Colombian representatives of this profession “object to the adjectives used by EL Tiempo to refer to these tribes”\*.

I believe that the *El Tiempo*’s sensationalism echoed and reproduced the already existing local imaginary of the Yuri as “fierce”. As mentioned in the table, this fear can support isolation by keeping outsiders at bay; however, upon contact fear can easily turn to violence, bringing detrimental consequences like the mentioned massacre. Perhaps the beneficial facet that can be fomented from this imaginary is to attempt to convert this fear into a respect for the Yuri and their decisions.



<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ntm.org/>



With this said, we must recall the words of an interviewee with regards to the use of information: “all of us have a responsibility to be conscious of its power, consequences and perhaps learn to be silent in some topics”\*. After analyzing the Park’s mandates we can say that Puré does not explicitly address the harms and benefits of the use of information. However, its functionaries are well aware of this threat and act accordingly when representing the Park and Yuri through different outlets.

## Affirmative Strategic Use

This leads us to note that the use or non-use of imaginaries can also become a tool to legitimize perceptions, actions and/or laws that protect isolated tribes. This affirmative strategic use can include non-use of information as an approach to support self-determination. “Discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power, it reinforces it, it also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes possible to thwart it”. (Foucault 1979:100-1 in Howarth 2000:78)

Among those that deliberately make use of the “*green-noble savage*” imaginary for advocacy we can cite the NGO Survival International that works “for tribal peoples’ rights” and campaigns for the protection of isolated peoples; “focusing on tribal peoples who have the most to lose, usually those most recently in contact with the outside world”<sup>13</sup>. Survival International utilizes the stories, testimonies and visual records of these tribes in a virtual interactive and attractive manner to educate and pressure the public and decision makers to grant isolated tribes their rights.

Another Colombian example of the strategic use of imaginaries is the previously mentioned difference between proposals for the creation of the Park and its constitutive Resolution and Management Plans<sup>14</sup>. The proposals focus much less on the Yuri because the “National Academy of Exact Science approves the creation of parks in Colombia and they have historically not placed much interest in cultural aspect of the territory...because the Yuri are so intangible it would have been harder to argue in positivistic terms”\* (Proposal designer). I maintain that the imaginary of the “*green*” sustainable forest dweller was addressed in passing by the proposals in order to allow the development of environmental protection mechanisms. The approval became the priority and soon after the Yuri as “*green*” became increasingly relevant to officials due to the peculiar protection they require.

Similarly, the “*last master*” and “*green*” imaginaries come together in an affirmative strategic manner in a board game that the Park is developing for local children where the player that wins is the person that does not contact the Yuri. The game’s objective is to get to know the natural, spiritual and human rules and rights of the forest where the most important canon is to respect the isola-

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.survivalinternational.org/>

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix C for a detailed comparison.

tion of this tribe. Whether the game fulfills its educational purpose or awakens a local contact-driven curiosity remains to be seen.

Finally, there are instances where **non-use** of information or silences becomes a tool to strengthen self-determination. For example FUNAI in Brazil does not disclose certain iconic photographs, maps of trails, GPS coordinates, and maps of resources in the area, all to avoid raising unwanted interests in the isolateds' territories.

The following anecdote serves as another example of the non-use of imaginaries that is aware of the unintended consequences of mass media representations. I was told that a famous Colombian filmmaker was embarking on a documentary about the Yuri. I found myself facing the door to his apartment ready to confront him with the argument that a documentary would open potential dangers like attracting unwanted actors into their territory. The door opened, he said: "I don't know what you want, but after a year of thinking, I've decided that a film about these people could be the worst thing for them"\*.

Through these examples we can see how imaginaries and the use of information become a tool of power for diverging purposes including their protection. After interviewing the stakeholders who in some way are involved in the protection of the Yuri it was a welcomed surprise to find that an implicit pact of prudence has come about. I mean that there is an awareness of the power of representations and no desire to exploit the Yuri story beyond what could be necessary for avoiding contact. It is implicit because nowhere in the documents reviewed was there such a thing as a: "secrecy, confidentiality and discretionary code of conduct" where the release and use of information is subject to regulations. Furthermore, actions like: Park officials and researcher's reluctance to cooperate with filmmakers and sensationalist media, disinclination during the interviews and reviewed texts toward making unfounded claims about the Yuri, and a clear understanding of the effects of contact are some of these prudent strategies encountered during my fieldwork. The following quotes echo the prominent agreement with prudence:

*"It is dangerous to use imaginaries if people are not aware of their power and potential role in leading to contact. We [NGO's and Parks] haven't really made big use of these imaginaries because if we give them too much visibility with our current inability to monitor their territory and without an effective socialization process we would be exposing them to contact."\** (Executive director of an Indigenous rights NGO who has worked very closely with the National Parks).

*"As an institution this info has a lot of potential; we must be prudent and strategists because we can't also receive funds if we don't have the adequate capacity to implement protection plans."* (Parks official).

## Potential Use

Most interviewees agreed that information and imaginaries can be heightened, romanticized and used if the Yuri were severely threatened like the isolated

tribes of Ecuador or Paraguay. Imaginaries of the Yuri and their ecosystem can be utilized for these purposes through audiovisuals, webpages, merchandising etc... Echoing Brockington (2009), in our contemporary world this virtualization of nature is increasingly being utilized and explains the success of many conservation brands, organizations, because in a way these depictions of the wild create our only urban experience with protected "wild" culture/nature. "Yet, good will and wisdom are crucial if this option is taken"\* (Ex-Minister of Environment).

For example, the use of imaginaries for protection can bring into play the imaginary of the isolated tribes as "*authentic*", which grants increasing legitimacy to the protected status of their territory and to the particular rights they require. In this case legitimacy is strengthened because the legacy of the stories of isolated tribes in the social imaginary of Colombia is different from the stereotype projected on the average indigenous person i.e. lazy, not "really" indigenous, living of the state, uncultured, constantly protesting, etc... (Berges 1970: 3). Politis (2007) has observed this phenomenon with respect to the recently contacted Nukak which can be transposed to the Yuri: "The Nukak have also become part of the Colombian imaginary and are seen as the true representatives of the "indians of the jungle" in opposition to "other indians". For the average urban Colombian, they are the only true indigenous people left in the country; therefore, they must be protected" (53).

However, we must be wary of preaching and acting in ways that do not coincide. Within the protection institutions there have been accusations of voyeurism and media irresponsibility. "Isolated Indians have long attracted considerable curiosity on the part of the media, eager to peek at the last pockets of "non-civilisation" (Singer 2006: 106) -presenting conflicts within protection entities. For example, sectors of FUNAI invited journalists to take part in an expedition to contact the Korubo in 1996. Media coverage was not welcomed by many at FUNAI who deemed it a lack of respect for the tribes who voluntarily isolated themselves. Furthermore, Singer also mentions that representatives of the inhabitants of some regions where isolated peoples live claim "that FUNAI employees still display curiosity vis-à-vis the remaining isolated Indians"(107). For this reason some indigenous leaders agreed to stop collaborating with FUNAI. These accusations of an inherent voyeurism of people who claim to protect and respect the isolated status of these tribes is not unique to FUNAI; during my interviews this was a common concern for Colombian organizations when including different parties in their work.

## **Closing remarks**

We have seen how: usage, including strategic use or non-use, of imaginaries has differentiated intended and unintended consequences for contact and survival. Given that "discourses are primary instrumental devices that can foster common perceptions and understandings for specific purposes" (Snow, Benford 1988: 31) we can argue that calling upon imaginaries is potentially beneficial to mobilize support for protection strategies within society, government and international green circles. Therefore, imaginaries become a pragmatic tool to represent isolated peoples' territories as biocultural (biodiversity + cultural diversity) hot-spots so that particular rights to isolation

and self autonomy are conceded. In other words, enough mythification to legitimize the creation of pertinent laws and protected territories but not so much to allow for them to be objects of desire for tourism, documentaries, development industry, missionaries, etc. Thus, a moderate use of the Yuri story becomes useful in supporting alternatives to development that embed self-determination, rights and biodiversity in an indivisible goal.

If imaginaries are relegated to a practical tool for achieving self-determination in these parks it is because the intrinsic rights of nature and culture hold a relevant place in theory and practice. We could argue that these rights become the reason behind these policies over the profit driven agenda of conservation. The analysis of imaginaries presented here hopes to reiterate the importance of contextualizing the threats and uses of imaginaries for the remaining 100 to 200 isolated tribes to better protect their livelihoods through laws, policies and discourse.

## Chapter 6

### Room for Self-determination?

The previous debate leads us to explore the theoretical and practical implications of discourses that respect isolation, human rights and self-determination. In other words, what does this self-determination that is legitimized through imaginaries like the “*green-noble savage*” or “*authentic*” indigenous forest dweller look like?

We argued that imaginaries play an important role in conceiving the need to protect isolated tribes and lay the groundwork for certain rights and laws to be considered, applied and followed. Drawing on Foucault (1980) once this groundwork is in place in the collective imaginary, these internalized discourses play a “conditioning and conditioned role” allowing for rules and perceptions to be freely pursued by individuals as well as reinforced by institutions (142). Therefore, laws of protection are not sufficient unless accompanied by internalized discourse.

Given that laws do not address how to accomplish what is expressed by them, imaginaries can play a role in not only supporting the law but also legitimizing and operationalizing its respective objectives including enforcement mechanisms, such as monitoring the Park’s borders. Deconstruction and construction through a strategic use of information that portrays the Yuri as subjects of special rights would support self-determination and a respect for isolation. Thus, this chapter offers a theoretical discussion on how we can conceive the protection mechanisms of: self-determination and the right to isolation, what they mean in practice with respect to the Park and what they possibly mean for larger human rights debates. A definition of self-determination is thus pending.

This paper offers a different perspective from the classic international relations definition of self-determination, which is broadly understood as the struggle for non-interfering independent states. Self-determination for isolated peoples does not align with this classic definition because as Diaz (1997) rightly observes very few indigenous claims to self-determination –including isolated peoples- seek the formation of an independent state. Young (2007) argues that self-determination is achievable within states and in particular in reference to peoples, “sovereign independence is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition of self-determination” (52). An example of this can be seen in table 2 when we observe that the Yuri are considered by some as “*authentic*” indigenous people, “the only true indigenous people left in the country” and hence accorded special cultural and territorial rights (Politis 2007: 53).

Furthermore, Young argues that the classic principle of self-determination as non-interference between polities is blind to the fact that the interdependence and relations between societies are constitutive of themselves; “self-determination is not a right for peoples to determine their status without consideration of the rights of other peoples with whom they are connected” (Scott 1996: 819).

Therefore, she proposes to understand self-determination as non-domination, which is an abolishment of the possibility to interfere over the other arbitrarily. Self-determination is about regulating and negotiating relationships amongst people so that all interests and desires are taken into consideration. It implies that peoples “dwell together within political institutions which minimize domination” (Young 2007: 51).

Given that the Yuri are self sufficient within their habitat and in that sense independent, we can argue that the relationships amongst societies that Young defines as constitutive of groups and identities is minimized. Nevertheless, the Yuri continue to be dependent and affected by larger society in one respect, namely the fact that their survival is at risk if contact is not avoided. Traditional self-determination understood as non-interference, which in practice translates into a withdrawal of the state, would be blind to this fact and would increase threats of contact.

With this said, I argue that Young’s self-determination as non-domination is more applicable to isolated groups. Self-determination as non-domination for the particular case of isolated tribes would mean that the state should guarantee an absence of arbitrary action by any party -including the state- within isolateds’ territories. This is not the same as a state withdrawal (non-interference) that would leave an open door for other potential harmful actors to exercise their influence in the area.

Huertas-Castillo (2007) distinguishes two components of self-determination for isolated peoples: cultural and political. The former refers to the free practice of customs and use of territories, while the latter refers to whether isolated people can exercise autonomy through the ability to decide over their present and future (49). Thus, I hold that Huertas-Castillo’s definition of self-determination as “the right to decide the lifestyle they desire and the degree of interrelation that they wish to establish with the larger society”<sup>\*</sup> (49) is compatible with Young’s self-determination as non-domination.

This brings us to consider a specific condition of isolated peoples’: the right to isolation (Berraondo 2007). Similar to Huertas-Castillo, I believe that in practice the right to isolation translates into giving isolated peoples the ability to decide for themselves, when and under what conditions contact takes place -if at all- by protecting their territories from all incursions from outsiders through effective laws and policies. The self-determination as non-domination and the right to isolation that we present here have to be understood as meta-rights that prime over other rights. This conception of isolation as overriding all other rights is functional because, as demonstrated contact can lead to the violation of the right to life, amongst others.

This means that in the particular case of isolated peoples the intrinsic right to isolation is synonymous with self-determination. The legitimacy of these initiatives can be better elucidated if we conceive self-determination through isolation as recognizing cultural difference in its absolute form. In this sense, these concepts and policies are aligned with Santos' et al. (2007) recognition of the overriding principles of equality and recognition of cultural difference: “to defend equality when difference generates inferiority and to defend difference whenever a call for equality implies a threat or a loss of identity.” (47).

The ideas presented here are echoed by the non-legally binding “Draft guidelines on the Protection of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact of the Amazon Basin and El Chaco” Prepared by the UNHCHR (2009):

*“The right to self-determination means that their decision to remain isolated must be respected. This decision can be understood as the highest expression of the exercise of the right to self-determination, since it guarantees respect for other human rights. Respecting their right to remain in isolation and safeguarding this right through public policies and laws aimed at achieving this end are ways of protecting these peoples from any contact and, therefore, from possible violations of their human rights” (8).*

The statement above echoes the literature reviewed in that these protection strategies attempt to safeguard isolated tribes from human rights violations from exogenous actors; however they do not address the possible instances of human rights violations from within the tribes. Given that there is a practical inability to verify these possible violations from within due to the consequences of contact, self-determination for these tribes implies a legitimate conundrum of uncertainty over possible human rights violations. This coexistence with uncertainty is unique to isolated tribes, because in theory all other instances of human rights violations should be investigated and addressed. “It’s curious because as Parks we are bound by the national constitution. In this case we don’t know what is going on and we have decided not to intervene. Operationally we are giving them the benefit of the doubt.”\* (Parks Official)

Returning to Young, she is explicit about the claim that if people have a right to self government this could allow for oppressive practices within the group to go unchallenged. However, she states that self-determination as “relational autonomy to prevent domination” can challenge these injustices because “interference is not arbitrary if its purpose is to minimize domination and if it takes interests and voices of affected parties into account” (Young 2007: 48). Nonetheless, in the case of isolated tribes we must live with the uncertainty of potential injustices and not intervene because it is impossible to take the voices of the Yuri into account and arbitrary interference would imply further violations of fundamental rights. Thus, ultimately, the privileged right to isolation must coexist with an uncertainty that places collective rights to culture and survival over individual rights.

Therefore, protected areas like the Puré Park are unconsciously operationalizing this conundrum by creating a no access zone that “permits” possible violations of human rights from within. As examples, we can consider sensational yet potentially real examples like infanticide and anthropophagi. It is not my intention to assess the ethical validity of these practices, I would simply like to denote that all the documents reviewed, including UN and regional guidelines, do not mention the possible incompatibility of some universal rights with self-determination for isolated tribes.

To sum up, the dilemma stems from the fact that through isolation many human rights are guaranteed: “we conceive the Park as assuring certain universal rights: the right to life, to a healthy environment, to culture, to territory,

food sovereignty etc.”\*(Park Official). While through isolation other rights remain unknown. Nevertheless, through a verification commission fundamental rights would be violated. Of course in other parts of the country rights are violated and the state does not intervene, the difference lies in that this decision of no interference is a unique objective of an exceptional governmental institution -Puré Park. For this reason I consider the situation of isolated peoples as a conundrum where it is impossible to guarantee all fundamental rights without infringing on them.

This conundrum is unique to isolated groups and not applicable to those that attempt to live outside the law because the ontological understanding of the social contract we live by is unknown to isolated peoples. Other groups like religious cults, communes or anarchists are not given this benefit of doubt because there is dialogue between the parties or at least an acknowledgement that both are authorities regardless if they are considered legitimate or illegitimate by each other.

Thus, respected isolation allows for the development of self governance and autarky only within the isolateds’ social and territorial boundaries. However, the case does not cease to be problematic because the right to self-determination granted by the government is still imposed from above and without dialogue (no participation) and could be removed if desired. For this reason I argue that we must construct imaginaries that respect the right to isolation so that this right can easily find itself protected against political wishes through discourses and immovable laws.

If immovable laws are in place, the ideal of self governance will still be achieved without the prescribed participation and dialogue with these communities, thus contradicting part of Young’s recipe of self determination as non-domination as well as current development and post-development thinking. However, one must consider that the “appropriateness” of this non-participatory imposition from above is a situational characteristic for isolated peoples. Puré must be seen as an exception to a rule that reminds us of the need for situational approaches in local contexts; it should not be understood as a case that defies participation but one that exemplifies the importance of circumstance.

## **What happens in Colombia?**

### ***Law***

Colombia has ratified the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and has acknowledged particular rights to indigenous people under its 1991 Constitution through articles 7, 8 and 63, which protect ethnic, cultural and natural diversity and define indigenous reserves and parks as “inalienable, imprescriptible and unseizable”\*. Nonetheless, the right to isolation is not explicitly recognized under national law, while Puré Park attempts to fill this legal gap by prohibiting entry into Yuri territory. Nevertheless, the statues of the Park are easier modified in the absence of national legal recognition. If we consider the potential existence of other isolated groups outside the Park, or the migratory



past of the Yuri, their right to isolation would be unprotected by the Park or law.

A proposed reform on the law of previous consultation currently under consideration would ratify the existing requirement that any party considering the creation of a project must consult all local ethnic stakeholders. Article 51 of this reform mentions that if a project is to take place in an area with isolated peoples; the consultation process of the project cannot be carried out. However, the writing style of article 51 is ambiguous and grammatically erroneous. It points towards the respect for the "principle of no contact" and the impossibility to carry out any previous consultation, thus, one would assume that it would consequently nullify the project in question. Yet, it does not explicitly mention the illegality or impossibility of going ahead with the project, leaving an open door for diverging interpretations.

A 2009 document realized by legal representatives of civil society organizations including indigenous organizations, concerning the reform on the Law of Previous Consultation mentions that - no matter the case - consultation should always precede the implementation of a project. Furthermore, it mentions that if an agreement is impossible to achieve, the project must be sensitive to respecting the "cultural and socio-economic rights of the community"\*. As we have seen, consultation is impossible with the Yuri and the contact that would come about through the implementation of a project represents a violation of the isolated people's right to life and culture. This should therefore nullify the consultation and implementation of the project.

Despite its ambiguity we can say that the Law of Previous Consultation could help protect isolated peoples "principle of no contact" with respect to projects, however, article 51 does not protect against legal, illegal and informal actors who are not implementing projects in the isolated's territories. Such actors include armed groups, other indigenous groups, explorers etc. Once again, the need for an explicit, unambiguous law guaranteeing respect of the right to isolation is a priority.

The proposed law must protect isolated people against all actors – formal, informal - and not only against projects. It should offer protection to the isolated people and not only their current territories because as we have seen isolated groups have changed territories through time. Furthermore, this law should embrace groups of whose existence we have no confirmation given that in the region evidence suggest the presence of unconfirmed isolated groups (Franco 2009). Since many isolated groups live near international borders it is a possibility that they will move into different nations, thus requiring the right to isolation to be regionally recognized for any isolated tribe within national territory regardless of its "national origin".

It is interesting to note that there is a legal possibility to grant self governance to the Yuri in the event of contact. This possibility arises from a law that establishes the compatibility of having co-managed indigenous reserves with natural parks. Interviewees mentioned that it was explicit in the Park's statutes that if the Yuri were ever vocal about this possibility the Park would coexist with a newly created indigenous reserve. However, upon examining the documents such a clause is not written. Nevertheless, the legal possibility exists, various indigenous communities in a neighbouring Parks have made use of it

and civil society actors are well aware that this is a beneficial option for the future. This suggests that the absence of such a clause in the resolution will not lead to a denial of the Yuri's right to an indigenous reserve. However, this issue does not cease to be problematic because "in Colombia there are many claims by indigenous peoples that when their reserves coexist with a park the authority remains with the park and the agreements of co-management are not fulfilled"\* (Ex-Minister of Environment). The future characteristics of this reserve and the fulfilment of its co-management require further debate.

### ***Puré Park***

By prohibiting entry to Yuri lands the Park protects those inside from third party entries but does not control exit. However, as we have seen, these documents cannot protect the Yuri if they migrate past the boundaries established by the Park or if another isolated tribe from Brazil migrates into the Park. Furthermore, the boundaries of the Yuri zone were demarcated through a consultation with local informants, however, Park officials are well aware that more constant and in depth studies are necessary to better define this territory since it is possible that the Yuri make use of lands outside their "no contact" zone or even the Park's limits.

If the Yuri remain within the territory that has been declared free of/from outsiders, the Park has clear and adequate mechanisms in its mandates to guarantee the right to isolation. However, we have already discussed how the Park's acknowledgement of its practical failings in guaranteeing this isolation.

Amongst these failings we find that the Park is conscious of its inability to monitor and police against incursions into Yuri land. Furthermore, there are weak socialization and education campaigns to inform the public about the Park's jurisdiction, role, importance and conservation objectives in the localities, region and country at large. Moreover, the Park has no explicitly clear strategy, plan or policy to support imaginaries that are compatible with isolation or to deconstruct stereotypes and imaginaries that are harmful to the Yuri's survival. Nevertheless, opportunely, there is the implicit pact of prudence discussed in chapter 5 whereby park officials, NGO personnel, indigenous leaders and researchers that have worked and/or continue to work in favour of the Yuri's rights tacitly concur that the misuse of information can be detrimental to the Yuri and further that there is considerable potential for the story of the Yuri to yield support for their self-determination.

However, given the weak presence of the Park it is arguable that the Yuri's self-determination today depends more on a remote geography and lack of larger interests in the area than on the purposive non-intervention by the state. Nonetheless, strong mechanisms for non-intervention and regional, national and international imaginaries that respect isolation must be well in place before larger interests in the area make remoteness a secondary variable.

## Chapter 7

### Conclusions

The paper departs from the premise that isolation is legitimized by the deadly potential of contact. I argue that an imposition of the larger values of our society upon people who actively reject contact would be repeating the epistemic injustice of the colonial powers on local populations, in short, neo-colonialism. Accordingly, our analysis of the Yuri's history has found to be compatible with theories of isolated peoples as well as the modernity-coloniality project; in the sense that the Yuri present a 400 year historic diaspora against contact with modernity and are extremely vulnerable due to the troubled conditions of isolation.

We have also seen that this is not the only way to conceive (imagine) the existence of these groups. Given that they are in many cases "invisible", it is possible to otherize them in different ways, making them the ultimate subaltern. Therefore, this case study presented a typology of imaginaries (discourses) of the Yuri in a spectrum ranging from those having beneficial to harmful intended and unintended consequences for their isolation.

Through examples we explored how the use, non-use or strategic use of these imaginaries becomes a tool for diverging purposes like entrepreneurship or protection. The paper delved deeper into imaginaries that argue for the Yuri's protection. In this way, it argues that imaginaries that conceive the Yuri as "*authentic*" or "*green noble-savages*" are compatible with supporting, applying and enforcing strategies that respect the right to isolation and self-determination. I hope to underlie the importance of studying imaginaries situationally, particularly for other isolated tribes, given that some imaginaries are generalizable to all isolated peoples while other like the "*last master*" could respond to local logics.

If we agree that isolated people have an intrinsic right to isolation and that our perceptions about them greatly affect their ability to exercise this right, then our ethical responsibility is that the use of information must correspond with this and not represent the Yuri as "*uncivilized-underdeveloped*" "*sinners*" that require intervention. Thus, imaginaries should be used, not-used or strategically used in order to guarantee the endurance of self-determination.

It is precisely this discretion that has been found amongst the stake holders who have an interest in respecting the Yuri's livelihoods. I refer to this as an implicit pact of prudence. The unwritten nature of this "pact" is manifested through the lack of representation or cautious representations of the Yuri as "*green-noble*" forest dwellers in different outlets. Nevertheless, I argued in favour of the explicit formality of this prudence in the manner of a "secrecy, confidentiality and discretionary code of conduct" where the release and use of information is subject to regulations.

An example of this implicit prudence through a strategic use of information became evident when exploring our case study. In order to gain the legitimacy necessary to constitute the Park we observed how the relevant actors strategically and pragmatically used information in two moments. Initially, the

biological discourse was utilized by the proposals for creation of the Park to emphasize the environmental qualities and benefits of the area to the country's scientific authorities. Posterior to this, once the park was created, the need to respect isolation and self-determination took a more prominent role in the Park's Resolution and Management Plans.

The paper argues that if certain beneficial imaginaries support isolation, then an explanation of the way this self-determination operates in theory and practice is necessary. Drawing from Young (2007), I argued that self-determination as non-domination is applicable to isolated groups. For isolated tribes this would mean that the state should guarantee an absence of arbitrary action by any party -including the state- within isolated's territories, implying that the right to isolation becomes the vehicle for self-determination. This is not the same as a complete state withdrawal that would open the possibility for other potential harmful actors to exercise their influence in the area. In short, the state should interfere on the boundary but not inside it.

However, I argue that these purposive non-intervention strategies in theory and practice bring forth a series of unseen conundrums for human rights debates. In subscribing to the impossibility of intervention within the Yuri's territory the state admits the uncertainty of possible violations of other rights by recognizing the right to isolation as primordial. Therefore, self-determination through the right to isolation becomes a meta-right that overrides other rights implying a hierarchy of rights that places collective rights of culture and survival over individual rights.

I believe that the need for this meta-right is clear under conditions of isolation. Yet, what happens to self-determination and conflicting human rights in times of contact? Cultural negotiations would have to take place considering the peculiar conditions of people in initial contact; self-determination in the form presented here will probably cease to exist. Similarly, how will self-determination be granted to indigenous groups that decide to isolate themselves today? The Ticuna population of Pupuña presents such a case where they restrict entry to outsiders. Debates around these issues beg for further research to prevent infringements over these people's rights.

### **Case study conclusions: How does the Puré Park grant self-determination?**

In first instance it must be able to guarantee an absence of arbitrary action by any party. Its remoteness and inaccessibility, together with a lack of larger interests in the area, play in its favour. However, after a historic and local revision we can see that these barriers are not enough to prevent contact.

For this reason the Park is presented as having threefold benefits for the isolated's protection over other legal figures; Colombian parks are perennial, they are the only figures that protect the subsoil from extraction, and they can coexist with indigenous reserves. In order to control access from any party and responds to the threats faced by the Yuri the Park has established a no trespassing zone where entry is forbidden. Through evaluating this case study I argue that these well intentioned policies face difficult obstacle in their practice. The Park is failing to control entry given the presence of illegal mining, log-

ging, armed groups and adventurers. The reasons for these failings can be summed down to the interrelated factors of: lack of funds, deficient inter-institutional and international support and a weak knowledge of isolated peoples.

In the national sphere the right to self-determination through isolation is nonexistent. The Puré Park is attempting to fill this legal gap for the Yuri's protections through its Resolution and Management Plan. However, not being a national law, the statutes of the park are easier modified than if the right to isolation held a national legal status. Furthermore, this absence of a law recognizing the right to isolation does not protect other possible isolated groups or the potential Yuri migrations outside the Park's boundaries. Thus, protected areas are necessary but insufficient without legal recognition of the rights of isolated peoples. We can conclude that self-determination as non-domination and the right to isolation are theoretically, yet, insufficiently granted only within the zone reserved for the Yuri in the Puré Park, while in practice the Park is failing to guarantee these rights.

### **What does all this mean for development?**

Our increasing knowledge of isolated peoples existence and the recent interest in their protection has caused state action to affect these populations and territories in a novel way, mainly by expressing statehood through a lack of intervention and working predominantly outside these territories and populations for their benefit.

Therefore, I argue that self-determination through the right to isolation offers an opportunity to do things differently after 500 years of injustices and mistakes. If we follow this line of argument we fall on the problem of "*doing what's right*". Many injustices in the world have been committed on people because the powerful decide what is "appropriate" for them. The current recipe against this proposed by Santos (2007) and most development and post-development discourses is an open democratic, constructive (dialectical) dialogue (translation) between different knowledges in order to build a more just society. I have argued how this dialogue with isolated tribes is objectionable under the conditions of isolation but possible between policies. This leaves room for an educated empathic interpretation of their actions (isolation) that is aware of these tribes' problems and struggles to maintain their livelihoods. Thus, non-interference non-dominant self-determination through the right of isolation becomes the most viable option because it poses a new peculiar sequence or hierarchy of rights where ultimately the right to isolation is a right to life as they know it. Thus, the right to isolation is true to the principle of recognition of difference that advises "to defend difference whenever a call for equality implies a threat or a loss of identity" (Santos et al. 2007: 47).

The case shows that old ways are being revised by development agencies like: states, parks and human rights to implement novel tools that align with the post-development spirit -willingly changing the way of doing development. These strategies focus on intrinsic characteristics of a localized context where the right to isolation becomes legitimate. In these cases human rights are not imposed from above into a territory but inferred from the specific conditions and desires of these tribes to argue for contextual approaches to communal

rights. The right to self-determination is equated with the right to isolation, which translates to an absence of the hegemonic forms of development.

Therefore, in these particular cases, a recognized yet regulated purposive non intervention or non-presence through design of state and societal actors is the only desirable strategy for the implementation and respect for human rights. In other words, we can see that in a time when the world is struggling for access to development and states are attempting to be present in all their territories, a planned and controlled absence of development guarantees rights and survival. Is this a path towards the right to autonomous development?

# Appendices

## Appendix A

### South American Panorama with respect to Isolated Tribes

Second to Brazil **Peru** has slowly -not without grave criticisms and contradictions- moved forward in protecting their estimated 20 isolated tribes through the creation of “Territorial Reserves”<sup>\*</sup> and respecting their existence in Natural Parks (Huertas-Castillo 2007: 49). As of 2006 with the law #28.736 a legal definition has been established that recognizes their existence in isolation.

According to Cabodevilla 2005 in **Ecuador** the isolated peoples lack legal recognition and are only protected by a weak Presidential Decree<sup>\*</sup> - that can easily be revoked - which grants these groups exclusive access to a territory under the figure of “Intangible Zone”<sup>\*</sup> in the famous Yasuni Natural Park. This zone and its inhabitants are in constant physical and legal threat due to the oil operations in the region and the potential outcomes of the international debate on the Yasuni IIT initiative by the Ecuadorian government which seeks to stop drilling on the condition of international payment<sup>15</sup>.

**Bolivia** has five regions with an unknown number of isolated tribes. For Brackelaire 2008 the country has experienced significant improvements during the government of current president Evo Morales with its new indigenous orientated Constitution. The country held the Regional Seminary of Santacruz in 2006 where the Bolivian government submitted the foundations for a future policy of protection for isolated peoples. The creation and implementation of these policies is yet to be seen (13-17). Bolivia recently created an “Intangible Zone” in the north for their protection (Berraondo 2007: 21).

In **Paraguay** Glauser 2007 mentions the existence of isolated peoples in five regions of the country –mainly in the Gran Chaco- representing an estimate of 50 to 100 individuals. Since 1993 the country has been slowly recognizing these people’s rights and territories, however, conflict with agricultural and cattle expansion is a threat that has not been smoothly resolved. The country has yet to legally and publically fully incorporate the right to isolation (223-229).

Since 2002 the **Brazilian** FUNAI’s guiding principles were strengthened and revised into 8 points: “

1. To guarantee isolated peoples the full exercise of their liberty and of their tradition.
2. The assurance of existence of isolated peoples does not determine the necessity to contact them.
3. To promote systematic field activities destined to geographically localize and obtain information about isolated people.

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<sup>15</sup> For more information see Vogel 2009, Acosta & Martinez 2010, Cabodevilla 2008, Martinez Allier 2010.

4. The lands inhabited by isolated peoples will be guaranteed and protected considering their limits, natural richness, fauna, flora and watersheds.
5. The health of isolated peoples is considered a priority, will be subject of special attention.
6. The culture of these people in its diverse forms and manifestations will be preserved and protected.
7. Any commercial or economic activity is forbidden within the areas inhabited by isolated peoples.
8. To determine that the formulation of specific policies regarding isolated peoples and its execution, independent of its financial source will be developed and regulated by the FUNAI"\* (PORTARIA N° 281/PRES, de 20 de abril de 2000)\*.

Recent data show that Brazil has information on about 70 cases of these tribes and through their work has been able to confirm without making contact 38 cases, it is currently accompanying 6 groups in different stages of initial. (FUNAI 2008: 5)

Despite these efforts, Singer 2006 mentions that representatives of the inhabitants of some regions were isolated peoples live claim "that FUNAI employees still display curiosity vis-à-vis the territory's remaining isolated Indians". For this reason some indigenous leaders in this region have agreed to stop collaborating with FUNAI. For Singer "in this case as in others (*e.g.*, in the Rio Biá II), it is not FUNAI employees but other Indians who "protect" the world's last isolated populations from Western society" (106). The accusation of an inherent voyeurism of researchers and people who claim to protect and respect the isolated status of these tribes is not unique to FUNAI, this debate is explored in chapter 5 Imaginaries.

Nevertheless, Brackelaire 2008 points out that Brazil remains to be the only country of the region that presents a functioning policy and law on isolated affairs, thus becoming a reference point for neighbouring nations (5).

## **Appendix B**

### **In depth History of the Yuri**

The oldest account of the Yuri that I could find through a historic revision of travellers journals and ancient maps is the journal of father Samuel Fritz, a missionary under Spanish commission. In 1689 he made contact and established a church with a tribe called the Yurimaguas in between the mouths of the Putumayo-Iça river and the Caquetá-Japura river with the Amazon river. By this time the Yurimaguas were already fearful of the Portuguese slave traders and soldiers. He visited this settlement numerous times to find it abandoned and burned to the ground in 1691. Between 1698 and 1700 Fritz received visits by Yurimagua leaders concerning the need to establish a mission higher upstream in order to be safe from the constant attacks of the Portuguese. As a consequence some Yurimaguas went further upstream the Amazon and settled in the town that carries the same name today in Peru, while it is my hypothesis that others who are now the isolated tribe in question fled upstream the Putu-



mayo-Iça and the Caquetá-Japura rivers. This is the birth of the Yuri's upstream diaspora, losing the suffix *maguas* throughout the distance and years<sup>16</sup>.

From 1779-1791, the Spanish Governor of the region, Francisco Requena was sent to establish the borders between the Portuguese and Spanish vice-kingdoms in a region where there was a significantly stronger Portuguese presence (Cipolletti 1991). In 1783 Requena encounters the Yuri nearby where Fritz initially did: "in between the Putumayo-Iça river and the Caquetá-Japura river around the river Puríos" (in Cipolletti 1991: 92). Requena mentions that they moved west of this place in order to create an alliance of protection -that never proved fruitful- with the Spanish to avoid the Portuguese slave-traders and their allied enemy tribes. For this reason in 1786 Requena with the help of the Yuris established another mission near the mouth of the river Putumayo-Iça with the Amazon River. This town suffered an attack by the Portuguese and their allies who took many Yuris prisoners and causing the "inhabitants to flee and hide in the forest"\* (Cipolletti 1991: 94).

Forty years later the German expeditionaries under Portuguese mandate Karl F. P. von Martius and Johann B. Spix in 1817-1820 encountered the Yuri who were still victims of the slave expeditions of the Portuguese and other tribes like the Mirañas (this enemy tribe will play a role in the most recent instance of contact). During this time some tribes like the Coretus and Miraña fractions sustained themselves in isolation by providing captured members of other tribes to the slave-traders.

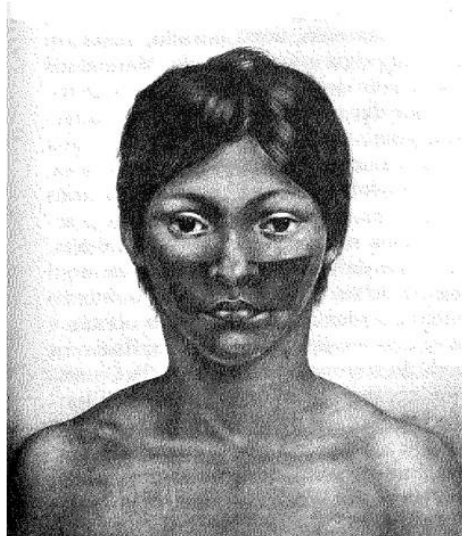
Martius (1819) described the Yuri culture, witnessed and stayed in some of their settlements upstream the Caquetá-Japura and the *Puré* rivers. He often found them living in union with the Passés tribe and it was common to see them hide at the sight of explorers. These sister tribes were sought out by slave traders and Colonos for their "docile, frank, peaceful and diligent"\* nature (Spix, Martius 1981: 209)<sup>17</sup>. Other brief reports of the existence of Yuri settlements during the XIX century include: Camacho 1850, Monterio 1862, and Cuervo 1894 (Jimenez 2006).

"This is the sad prerogative of the noblest tribes of Brazil; that the faster they settle and adapt with civilized peoples, the faster they will go extinct!"\* (Spix, Martius 1981: 211). Ironically Spix and Martius played a role in the reproduction of this prediction when they "rescued" the son of the Yuri leader from the Miraña tribe and took him to be exhibited in Germany, only for him to die a few days after arriving.

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<sup>16</sup> Another theory is that when Fritz encountered the Yurimaguas they were already a merged tribe composed of Yuris and Omaguas. Further research would imply comparing the lost culture and language of the Peruvian town Yurimaguas with records of the Yuri culture.

<sup>17</sup> All quotes from Spix & Martius refer to volume 3 of their travels.



Son of Yuri leader taken to Germany by explorers .  
Source: Spix & Martius ([1820] 1981: 280)

During the late 1800's and early 1900's the world's fever for quinine<sup>18</sup> and rubber had a severe impact in the dynamics of slavery in the region. World "progress" and the massive arms race in Europe and North America boosted the demand for: efficient medicines, bicycles and automobiles tires, communication cables, zeppelins etc... This was the time when the feared and cruel Peruvian rubber enterprise "Casa de Arana" was the authority in a region which was under dispute between Colombia and Peru 1900-1932 (Pineda 2003). The *endeude* (debt-bondage) system of slavery was the ingrained mode of production; where commodities were given to individuals to pay for with their labour, yet the work was always insufficient to pay for the commodity. In short, this place was the "devils paradise" (Hardenburg 1907 in The London Newspaper the Truth in Pineda 2003)<sup>19</sup>.

As a consequence of this as well as increasing disease propagation in 1905 Koch Grünberg finds numerous abandoned villages in the river banks of the area in question, including Miraña settlements, and recorded instances of indigenous uprisings. Franco et al. 2009 remind us that isolation in these lands has historically worked in conjunction with violent resistance and the use of shamanism (4)<sup>20</sup>. The atrocities that Koch Grünberg 1905 witnessed from the Colombian, Peruvian and Portuguese rubber barons led him to conclude: *"The plague of a pseudocivilization falls over the dark men lacking of rights. Dehumanizing bands of rubber barons advance more every day...terrible acts of violence and death are at the days*

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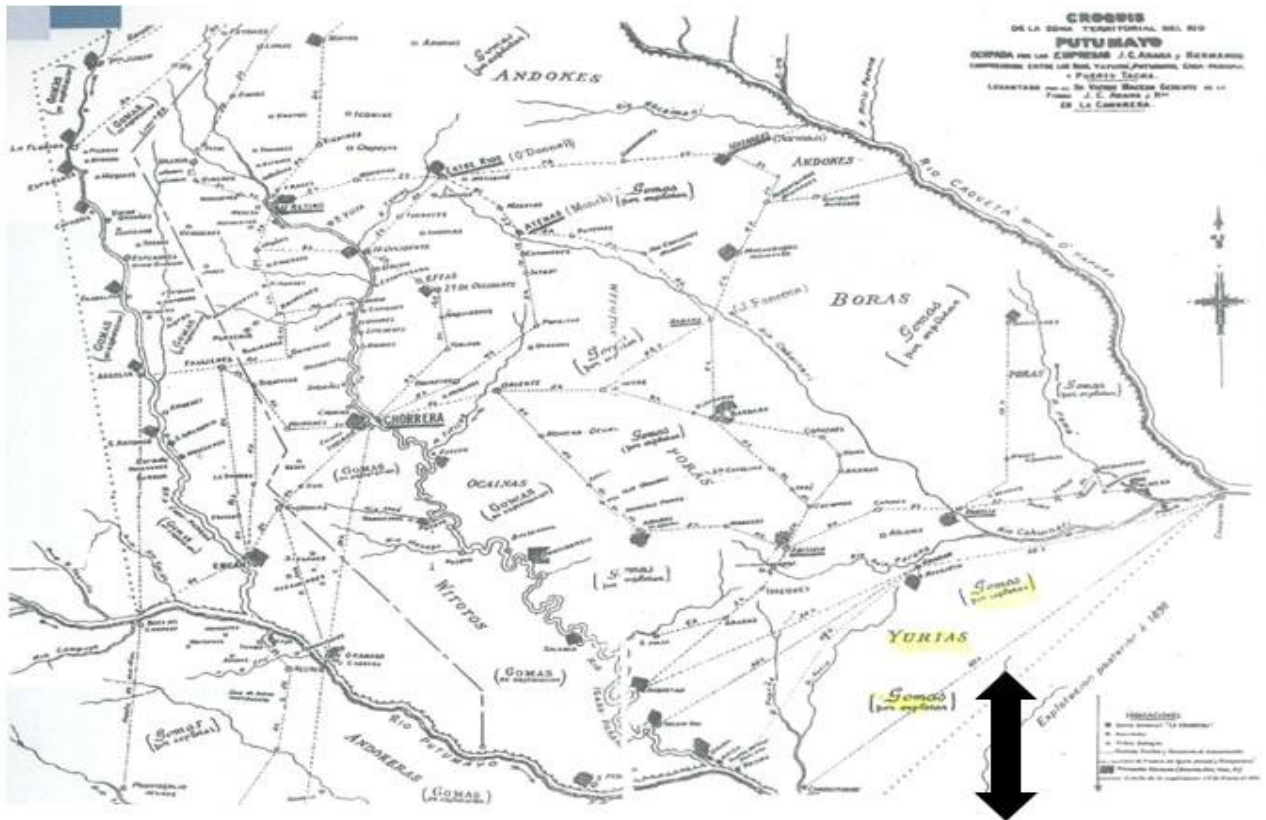
<sup>18</sup> Extract of the cinchona tree used for medicinal purposes particularly in malaria treatments up until the 1940's.

<sup>19</sup> For more information on the atrocities of the rubber houses in the region see: Rivera 1924, Casement 1912.

<sup>20</sup> For further history on the resistance of the tribes of the region from 1700 to present see to Franco 2009: 1-40.

order...this is how a race full of strength is destroyed...in the abyss caused by the brutality of these modern barbarians"\* (Koch Grünberg 1995:299).

Koch Grünberg is told that the Yuri and Passé have moved to the lands where they are believed to exist today, furthermore he is the last western scholar in 1905 to see evidence of these tribes in the river Caquetá-Japura: "there was a house of the Yuri and not far from there one of the Passé, unfortunately both of them were abandoned"\* (Koch Grünberg 1995: 296).



Operations of the Arana Rubber house in 1907. The map shows the trails, tribes and rubber camps . Notice on the Yuri territory there are no camps, it reads: "Rubber to be exploited" suggesting the isolated condition of the Yuri.

Source: Franco et al. 2009.

Franco et al. (2009) mention that in 1928 a census was realized for the area where it was mentioned that a group of 240 indigenous people of the Andoque, Bora and Muinane tribes were hiding in isolation in the area, furthermore, between 1936 and 1937 the Capuchin friar Bartolomé de la Igualdad encountered isolated tribes in the region and convinced them to reallocate themselves in the hope of religious conversion (23-26). This data strengthens the possibility that the Yuri could have joined or merged with some of these tribes.

### *Another Tale of Recent Contact, the Yuri*

By the mid XX century Colombia had established sovereignty over the region, nevertheless, there was an extremely weak government presence. This was a time when authority was still in the hands of the church and the armed forces, for example, the law recognized the Capuchin monks as being the legitimate “protectors of the Indians” and granting them monopoly over the education of the indigenous people through boarding schools. Berges 1970 and Castro also denounce an increasing presence of North American evangelical missionaries in the region. According to Berges 1970 one of the few positive outcomes of these missionaries is that they seized the wars between enemy tribes.

During the 1940’s to 1960’s the fur and skin fever was the new environmentally devastating economic-slave project for the region; “all the whites end up buying and selling furs and skins, the only ones that don’t benefit from the business are the indigenous people”\* (Berges 1970: chapter 8).

The following events are based on two journalistic books: “Lost in the Amazon”\*, 1998 by Germán Castro Caycedo in Spanish and “The moon is in the Amazon”\* 1970, by Yves Guy Berges in French. The events occurred in 1969 when the world’s interest laid on the astronauts on the moon.

The stories of untamed “Indians” in the area led the adventurer Julian Gil and two indigenous companions to immerse themselves in the forest, the excuse for the need of a trail for the fur trade was the perfect motive for his enterprise; “his obsessive dream was to become their owner and boss” (Castro 1998: 22). Gil and his companion Alberto Miraña never returned.

After an initial rescue expedition that failed, a second attempt followed with a commission of 40 armed men between civilians and soldiers. This expedition found an abandoned *maloka* (25 meter long – a typical indigenous communal home) where Gil and Alberto were last seen; they also found crossed spears closing the trails and traps for humans (Castro 1998: 27-29, 214). Judging from the trails and different signs in the *maloka* the committee believed that this area had been inhabited anywhere from 50 to 100 years (Castro 1998: 225). This is roughly the same amount of time that the Yuri had disappeared from the main rivers of the region and records.

While in the *maloka* some curious members of the Yuri made contact with the mission. During explorations around the *maloka* some indigenous members of the expedition opened fire massacring 5 Yuris including women and children (Berges 1970: chp 5 & Castro 1998: 231).

An observation that has not been made explicit the writings of this story is that the perpetrators were members of the Miraña tribe; who as we have seen are the historic enemies of the Yuri. This mistake by the rescue expedition ratifies the need for research and strategies that are in conjunction with local realities; any consultation or socialization about the protected status of the Yuri with the Mirañas must be aware of this reality.

During the night and in reaction to the massacre the remaining Yuri surrounded the *maloka* intimidating the commission with sounds and twitches. The commission responded with warning shots and decided to return in the morning taking with them as hostages a family of six Yuris.

The press justified the hostage situation because the rescue commission was ambushed by “cannibals in the Amazon” (Berges 1970: cap 5, 21). Upon the arrival of the family in the nearest town of La Pedrera in the Brazilian border the Capuchin monks were given custody of the family with the intention to civilize and evangelize them above all costs. The family was soon baptized as the Caraballo family for the resemblance of the father to the Colombian boxer of the time Bernardo Caraballo; this name has now become common when referring to the Yuri.

During this time the missionaries unsuccessfully tried to “civilize” the Caraballo family, only causing disease and discomfort between them. The ongoing silence, attempts of suicide and refusal to eat and interact of the “Caraballo” family and the Yuris further retreat into the forest can be seen as a “peoples resistance to development [that] should be studied in the context of their will to protect their local symbolic sites from destruction” (Rahnema 1997: 10).

Yves Guy Berges a French Journalist of the France Soir appeared in the Pedrera accusing the ill treatment of the Yuri family and the insensitive ethnocentric sensationalist press articles written by Germán Castro Caycedo who is now a renowned author (Berges 1970: chapter 6 pg 23). Being the only one who was able to earn the Caraballo’s trust and claiming the violation of the right to freedom, the French journalist managed to get permission to return the family to their territory after months of captivity. Nonetheless, his underlying intention was to make peaceful contact with the tribe (Berges 1970, Chapter 6 & Castro 1998: 281). The return expedition left without solving the mystery of the linguistic origin of the Yuri given that none of the 18 different languages spoken in the region resembled their own (Castro 1998: 279) (Berges 1970: chap 10); forty years later the mystery is being solved by Echeverri and Franco<sup>21</sup>.

The return expedition arrived at the now fully abandoned *Maloka*. Caraballo and his family did not allow Berges and his men to go any further in the attempt to contact the rest of the tribe. The Yuri-Caraballo’s happily disappeared into the forest.

### ***Are the Yuri the only isolated group in Colombia?***

Given their history of intermittent contact and the diversity of actors (signifiers) the Yuri have been referred to under different names: Yurimaguas, Juris, Passés, Yuripixunas, “Boca Pretas”, Arojes (by the Mirañas), Caraballos, “Patones” (big feet), “Bravos” (fierce) and Maceteros. Yuripixunas or “Boca Pretas” translates to black-mouths due to the tattoos exhibited around their mouth, face and/or neck; however, there were a few other tribes with this tradition which further complicates their ethnic identification.

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<sup>21</sup> In 1969 the Capuchin friars managed to write down a few words and published them in a disappeared journal, the only remaining copies reside in their libraries. The reluctance of the churches to grant access to these files has greatly delayed this research.

Testimonies, stories and hypothesis based on historical and anthropological analysis are pointing towards the possibility of the existence of other tribes in isolation. Recent unpublished research by historian Roberto Franco is putting into question the notion that the Yuri today are one homogenous group. As we have seen travellers journals from the XVI to XVII century -amongst other sources- can lead to believe that the Yuri are divided by clans and possibly isolated with their sister tribe the Passés which numbered 1500 free individuals in 1819 (Spix & Martius 1981:209). I believe that due to the constricting social dynamics of isolation it is possible that these sister tribes could have merged and live in constant cultural restructuration today. Other tribes of the many that have disappeared from record and could be isolated or diffused with the Yuri in this area are the Uainumás or Jumanas that according to Spix & Martius numbered 600 individuals in 1819, on the other hand, according to Koch Grünberg 1905 they were enemy tribes. Moreover, it is believed that where the Mirití river is born lives the isolated Urumis"\* (Berges 1970), (Franco et al. 2009: 3). Given that the existence of these tribes is unconfirmed, we can see why the need for further research and stronger tools to protect isolated cultures that could be living outside the Puré Park becomes a priority.

## Appendix C

### Comparing the Park Proposals, the Constitutive Resolution and the Management Plan

There are two versions of the proposal for the Park's creation. One that is accessible at the parks libraries which is shorter and was the one submitted to the Colombian Academy of Pure Sciences for approval. This proposal only mentions the Yuri in two lines on the last page were it states that a park is the best mechanism for biocultural conservation in the sense that it recognizes "a vital area for the Yuri people that is inseparable from their identity and existence"\* (Proposal 1, 2002: 29). The second longer proposal exists in the library of the NGO that helped design it, just as the previous proposal it only briefly discusses the need to protect the Yuri.

#### Comparing: Proposal 1, Proposal 2, Constitutive Resolution 0764, and Plan of Action

Theme	Short Proposal 2002	Long Proposal 2002	Resolution 0764 2002 (Legally binding)	Plan of Action 2005 ratified in 2007.
<b>The Yuri</b>	Not mentioned in the contents table of indigenous people or Yuri  Absence of mention except for four lines at the end. Pg29.	Not mentioned in the contents table of indigenous people or Yuri.	Opening lines about the need and obligation of the government to protect multiculturalism. Pg 1.  Heavily relying on need to protect the Yuri "who possibly	Opening lines about protection of the Yuri. Pg 1  Heavily relying on need to protect the Yuri, to respect their decision of no contact pg 1.

Theme	Short Proposal 2002	Long Proposal 2002	Resolution 0764 2002 (Legally binding)	Plan of Action 2005 ratified in 2007.
<b>The Yuri</b>	<p>A park as the best mechanism to protect the Yuri. Pg 29.</p> <p>Mentions the need to protect Yuri's territory inalienable to their identity but there is no mention of the borders of this zone or a policy of no intervention. Pg 29.</p> <p>The Yuri not mentioned in the Parks Objectives.</p> <p>No clear mention of Yuri territory.</p>	<p>A park as the best mechanism to protect the Yuri. Pg 2.</p> <p>The constitution and ministry of environment recognize the need to protect indigenous culture. Pg 9.</p> <p>The Yuri not mentioned in the Parks Objectives.</p> <p>When addressing the parts that will compose the park, they mention: Two Productive-protected areas near indigenous and non indigenous settlements. And the rest would be strictly park. There is no mention of a special zone for the Yuri. Pg, 22.</p>	<p>exist", to respect their decision of no contact, and to protect their self determination<sup>22</sup>, pg 4.</p> <p>A park as the best mechanism to protect the "biocultural" characteristics of the park and the Yuri. Pg 4.</p> <p>Protection of the Yuri is the first objective of the park, pg 5.</p> <p>Delimits a zone for the Yuri free of any activities or interventions unless welcomed by them. Pg 6.</p> <p>Need to research in order to better define the territory of the Yuri. Pg 6.</p> <p>To involve all stake holders to protect the Yuri. Pg 7.</p>	<p>A park as the best mechanism to protect the "biocultural" characteristics of the park and the Yuri. Pg 4.</p> <p>They are sustainable forest dwellers. Pg 9.</p> <p>Protection of the Yuri is the first objective of the park, pg 5.</p> <p>Mentions the need to create a zone of no intervention. Pg 14.¿?</p> <p>Need to unobtrusively research the Yuri. Pg 16.</p> <p>Need for contingency plan in case of potential contact. Pg16.</p>

<sup>22</sup> In Spanish the term used is: *libredeterminación* literally free-determination.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Short Proposal 2002</b>	<b>Long Proposal 2002</b>	<b>Resolution 0764 2002 (Legally binding)</b>	<b>Plan of Action 2005 ratified in 2007.</b>
<b>Sovereignty</b>	Indigenous reserves and parks increase sovereignty. Pg 27.	Strong emphasis of the park in fomenting sovereignty. Pg 2,6,8, 16, 17.	Institutional presence and participation increases sovereignty. Pg, 3.	Institutional presence increase sovereignty and avoids illegal mining by Brazilians. Pg 4
<b>International conservation cooperation.</b>	Emphasis on need to create and strengthen existing international protected areas. Pg 14.	Stronger emphasis on need to create and strengthen existing international protected areas. Pg 6,7,9,10,11.	Puré grants continuity to existing treaties on international conservation. Pg 3.	Puré grants continuity to existing treaties on international conservation. Pg 3.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	To close a gap in the international biodiverse genetic corridor. (Col, Ven, Bra). Pg 13, 27. Principle of Complementarity pg 15.  1583 different plant species and 4 new plant species for science. Pg,10.	To close a gap in the international biodiverse genetic corridor. (Col, Ven, Bra). Pg 9,10. Principle of Complementarity pg 12.  1583 different plant species and 4 new plant species for science. Pg, 30, 31.	To close a gap in the international biodiverse genetic corridor. (Col, Ven, Bra). Principle of Complementarity pg 2,3.	To close a gap in the international biodiverse genetic corridor. (Col, Ven, Bra). Pg 1, 4.  1583 different plant species and 4 new plant species for science. Pg 7.
<b>Climate Change</b>	Species suffer from climate change. Increased protected areas, increases interhabitat continuity and resilience of species. Pg 13.	Species suffer from climate change. Increased protected areas, increases interhabitat continuity and resilience of species. Pg 11.	No mention of climate change or mitigation.	No mention of climate change or mitigation.
<b>Water...</b>	Sweet water reservoir and Ecosystem services of water pg 16. To fulfill agenda 21, pg27.	Sweet water reservoir and Ecosystem services of water, pg 13. To fulfill agenda 21, pg 14.	Objective 4 of the park is to protect sweet water reservoir and ecosystem services of water, pg 6.	Objective 4 of the park is to protect sweet water reservoir and ecosystem services of water, pg 6.
<b>New Species-Endangered</b>	During a preliminary visit of	During a preliminary visit 10	To protect 10 animal endangered	10 animal endangered species



Theme	Short Proposal 2002	Long Proposal 2002	Resolution 0764 2002 (Legally binding)	Plan of Action 2005 ratified in 2007.
<b>Species.</b>	20 days 10 animal endangered species and 4 new plant species for science were observed. If complete biodiversity inventories take place these numbers are likely to rise. Pg 10, 12,17.	animal endangered species were observed. If complete biodiversity inventories take place this number is likely to rise. Pg 15, 32. 4 new plant species for science. Pg31.	species. Pg3.	were observed. If complete biodiversity inventories take place this number is likely to rise. Pg 4, 8.
<b>Satellite Studies that suggested potential protected areas</b>	Puré was the only area in 2002 not protected from the areas suggested by the studies. Pg 15.	Puré was the only area in 2002 not protected from the areas suggested by the studies. Pg 12.	Puré was the only area in 2002 not protected from the areas suggested by the studies. Pg 3.	No Mention anymore, no need.
<b>Multistakeholder Participation.</b>	Co-management, need to involve all parties: indigenous people, colonos, institutions etc. 12.	Co-management, need to involve all parties: indigenous people, colonos, institutions etc. 2,5,7,8,9, 18.	Co-management, need to involve all parties: indigenous people, colonos, institutions etc pg, 2.  Places a stronger emphasis in respecting local and traditional forms of management. Pg, 4.  To involve all stake holders to protect the Yuri. Pg 7.	Co-management <b>process started:</b> need to involve all parties: indigenous people, colonos, institutions etc pg, 1, 10, 13,16.  Places a stronger emphasis in respecting local and traditional forms of management. Pg, 4, 12.
<b>World Ecosystem Services</b>	Crucial in world water cycles. Carbon Sink Biodiversity, pg 17, 18.	Crucial in world water cycles. Carbon Sink Biodiversity, pg 15.	No mention	No mention
<b>Human Settlements near the Park</b>	They are introduced under the heading “Main threats faced by the conservation objectives” pg 20.	Under the heading “socio economic considerations” pg 33.	No Mention	Because different ethnicities, non indigenous population and different

Theme	Short Proposal 2002	Long Proposal 2002	Resolution 0764 2002 (Legally binding)	Plan of Action 2005 ratified in 2007.
<b>Human Settlements near the Park</b>	<p>Main threats: mining and forest exploitation. Pg 20.</p> <p>For the most part people live of the land for subsistence, however there is unsustainable small scale logging and decreasingly mining. Pg 21, 24, 25.</p> <p>The “endeude” system (pseudo slavery) prevails ruled by white patrons in fishing and logging 21, 24.</p> <p>Unstable migration and unsustainable forest use from extractive bonanzas like: rubber, turtles, furs, gold etc. pg 23.</p> <p>Most extraction occurs outside the parks borders. Pg 26.</p> <p>Need for co-management. Pg 26.</p> <p>Fishing and logging represent 92% of family income. Pg 22.</p> <p>Roughly 60% indigenous and 40% colonos, pg 21, 23.</p>	<p>Severe sanitary deficiencies, insufficient secondary education coverage, deficient energy services, no water treatment, sewage coverage is very low, low level hospital, deficient waste disposal. In short, low indicators of development.</p> <p>Fishing and logging represent 92% of family income. Pg 34.</p> <p>The “endeude” system (pseudo slavery) prevails ruled by white patrons in fishing and logging. Pg 34, 37.</p> <p>For the most part people live of the land for subsistence, however there is unsustainable small scale logging and decreasingly mining. Pg 35, 38.</p> <p>Unstable migration and unsustainable forest use from extractive bonanzas</p>		<p>nationalities interact in these places there are: reconstruction of identities, integration, adaptation as well as frictions that require special attention for management. Pg 1.</p> <p>Mentions different indigenous collectives other than settlements, their Indigenous Political Associations and Political Associations of Colonos.</p> <p>Emphasizes the difficulties faced, advances and need of implementing co-management.</p>

Theme	Short Proposal 2002	Long Proposal 2002	Resolution 0764 2002 (Legally binding)	Plan of Action 2005 ratified in 2007.
Human Settlements near the Park		<p>like: rubber, turtles, furs, gold etc. pg 36.</p> <p>Most extraction occurs outside the parks borders. Pg 39.</p> <p>Roughly 60% indigenous and 40% colonos, pg 33, 36.</p> <p>Stronger need for co-management. Pg 40.</p>		

As mentioned in the research paper there is a disjunction in the sense that the proposals grant very little importance to the Yuri while focusing on the environmental qualities of the Park. On the other hand, the Resolution 0764 and Action Plan heavily rely on the need to establish mechanism to respect the Yuri's isolation. Nevertheless, what is common to the proposals, resolution and plan of action is that they understand the indigenous territory, identity and biodiversity conservation as indivisible, intrinsic and vital for the survival of the Yuri. Following on this the Resolution 0764 delimits a zone for the Yuri and suggests further studies, yet the Plan of Action suggests the need for more research to establish these limits (14).

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