

**“A Little Lizard among Crocodiles”:
Ecotourism and Indigenous Negotiations in the Peruvian Rainforest**

By:

Jessica Herrera

A Thesis submitted to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Anthropology
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Canada

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Abstract

The Peruvian government has used a top-down colonial approach to nature-based conservation. This approach has effectively marginalized Indigenous people located in designated protected areas. For the Matsigenka communities inhabiting Manu National Park, such an approach has created socioeconomic and political problems. Ecotourism is given to them as the only socioeconomic development option for the acquisition of supplementary income to their subsistence lifestyle and for their integration into the global capitalist economy. My research questions include: 1) whether or not marginalized Indigenous groups are given a chance to negotiate their own cultural values, knowledge and practices within the context dominated by global capitalism forces, such as the international tourism industry, and 2) how neo-liberal strategies such as ecotourism, which is sold as an economic panacea for communities in out-of-the-way-places such as the Peruvian rainforest, work in practice.

I draw upon narratives on ecotourism, collected in my five-month fieldwork, as told by the multiple stakeholders of ecotourism. I use these narratives to highlight the complexities, pitfalls and incongruent, hegemonic and predatory nature of ecotourism as it plays out in Manu National Park. Through their Multicommunal Enterprise Matsigenka, these traditionally hunter and gatherer people are courageously and creatively venturing into the ecotourism industry hoping to benefit their communities. However, the “wild” competition in the “green” capitalist market makes this type of venture a great challenge.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

APECO

Asociación Peruana para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (Peruvian NGO)

CEDIA

Centro para el Desarrollo del Indígena Amazónico (Peruvian NGO)

CM

Empresa Multicomunal Matsigenka S.R.L. (Indigenous enterprise)

COHAR-YIMA

Consejo Harakmbut-Yine-Matsigenka (provincial Indigenous organization)

COMARU

Consejo Machiguenga del Río Urubamba (provincial Indigenous organization)

Ecotour-Manu ASSC

Association of Manu Tour Operator Agencies (private tourism sector)

FANPE

Fortalecimiento del Sistema Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas por el Estado (national project funded by the GTZ)

FENAMAD

Federación Nativa del Río Madre de Dios y Afluentes (provincial Indigenous organization)

GTZ

Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit - Cooperación Técnica Alemana (German Technical Cooperation, funding agency)

IANP

Instituto de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (government institution link directly with INRENA)

INRENA

Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales (governmental institution)

NGO

Non-Governmental Organization

PA

Protected Area

PNM

Parque Nacional del Manu (Manu Nacional Park)

MBR

Reserva de Biosfera Manu (Manu Biosphere Reserve)

Chapter 1: Introduction



Figure 1: Travelling into the Peruvian rainforest.

This is a study of how ecotourism is working in the particular context of marginality, nature-based conservation, and expansion of capitalism as a green form. It is based on the experiences of the Matsigenka communities (Tayakome and Yomibato) through their Indigenous lodge enterprise, Matsigenka.¹ The residents of the Native Communities in Manu National Park are the owners of the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsigenka, a community-based ecotourism enterprise that manages the Casa Matsigenka lodge in the Park. This initiative emerged as a way of what was regarded as compensating the Matsigenka people of Manu for the creation of Manu National Park (PNM) in which their homeland was situated. As result of the 1970s politics of nature conservation that

¹ Throughout this thesis I use the word Indigenous with capital letters as a way of showing respect to the Indigenous peoples, because in some contexts this word may have negative connotations.

effectively marginalized rainforest inhabitants, these Indigenous peoples became completely isolated. No basic services were available to them, they no longer had the option of trading, nor did they have any alternative for monetary income.

Before I conducted my fieldwork, I believed that community-based ecotourism that is controlled and managed by Indigenous communities in protected areas may provide them with an ecological and economic strategy for monetary income. Such activity would allow them to diversify their livelihood by adding supplementary income (from the cash economy) to their subsistence lifestyle while also supporting biodiversity conservation. In venturing into the tourism industry, a sector from which the Indigenous residents of protected areas have always been marginalized, they may have new options for income generation. Therefore, ecotourism seemed like an environmentally and institutionally sustainable strategy for both socio-economic development and the nature conservation. However, through my research I found out that ecotourism in practice is complex and not as much a panacea as I initially thought.

In this study I focus on understanding how the Matsigenka people as residents of PNM are negotiating (within their ability and limited power) rights to access resources and their participation in the market-driven economy through their community-based ecotourism enterprise. This negotiation takes place within a context dominated by foreign-owned, international nature-based tourism and nature conservation. My research questions are: 1) whether or not marginalized Indigenous groups are given a chance to negotiate their own cultural values, knowledge and practices, and 2) how neo-liberal strategies such as ecotourism, (which is sold as an economic panacea for communities in out-of-the-way-places such as the rainforest) work in practice. I use a critical anthropological lens about ecotourism as discourse and practice to analyze the context in which ecotourism evolves, and to elicit the diverse ecotourism narratives of the multiple stakeholders of PNM. By doing so, I reflect on the pitfalls of, and the incongruent, hegemonic nature of ecotourism. I have constructed an ethnographic account that portrays the perpetuation of asymmetric power relationships, marginalization, and conflicts between the state, conservation NGOs, private

sector agents and Indigenous peoples in protected areas. The Peruvian nature-based conservation, with its “original sin” of marginalizing forest populations and perpetuation of patronizing relationships; ecotourism, as green capitalism; these are like a continuum of colonialism in the Amazonian forests. I spend much time fleshing out these ideas in the following chapters.

My intention in this thesis is to highlight the complexities of ecotourism as it plays out particularly in PNM, a critical approach that is missing in “participatory” conservation models in Peruvian literature when dealing with ecotourism (for example, Morales 1997; Munn 1985; Salas 1998). I aim to contribute to the scholarship on ecotourism and conservation by addressing this gap.

The asymmetric relationship that exists between Indigenous people and the conservation government personnel in PNM was evident during my first visit to Yomibato, the most remote community in PNM. In 2005, during a Yomibato community meeting, a group of researchers from North America and Germany discussed the barriers that researchers have to deal with to get the Park’s authorization to visit the Indigenous Communities in PNM. In response to this discussion, Glenn Shepard,² an American anthropologist who speaks the Matsigenka language, translated to us what Ismael, an elder and community leader, expressed: “The Park has only existed for 30 years. Before that, researchers used to come here, they would even bring other people with them. The Park’s officials take care of us as if we were animals”.³ Hearing what Ismael said was a striking moment for me. This Matsigenka elder’s narrative illustrates the frustrations of the residents of PNM to the top-down approach that the state has taken towards conservation in this place, their homeland. I explore these issues extensively in Chapter 3 by setting up the context in which the Matsigenka people are immersed. I highlight the historical, political, and economic processes in which Amazonian peoples and land are entangled that

² Glenn Shepard is the real name of this person.

³ El parque solo tiene treinta años de existencia, antes no había problemas para que los investigadores traigan más gente. El parque nos está cuidando como si fuéramos animales.

are deeply rooted in colonization and the expansion of capitalism. Then, I link these colonizing processes to nature-based conservation applied in Manu National Park while explaining its socio-economic implications to the forest inhabitants.

In Chapter 2, I present the literature review and theoretical framework. In Chapter 4, I examine the context of tourism at the national and regional levels, emphasizing the role this industry plays in the Peruvian economy, particularly in the south-eastern region. From there, I describe and analyze different narratives of ecotourism told by the state, private sector, and Indigenous groups in PNM. Through the description of the multiple understandings of ecotourism and how it takes place on the ground in PNM, I highlight several contradictions in the discourse and practice of ecotourism and emphasize the tricky, hegemonic and wild nature of ecotourism as a green form of capitalism.

The main focus of Chapter 5 is the description and analysis of the process of development of the community-based ecotourism lodge Matsiguenka that emerged out of a partnership between two Matsiguenka communities: the Tayakome and the Yomibato. This Indigenous enterprise was implemented through a collaborative agreement between governmental and non-governmental institutions linked to conservation and protected areas management in Peru. This Chapter deals with the conflicts, challenges, struggles, lessons and hopes of the Matsiguenka communities in their effort to “learn to be entrepreneurs” of tourism in a context of “wild capitalism”. The process of negotiation that this initiative triggers is depicted through the description and analysis of the context of wild green capitalism in which the Indigenous enterprise has been evolving and striving to survive.

Finally, this research is one of several case studies being conducted through a coordinated team project of Natural Resources Institute in the University of Manitoba and supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada. The research findings contribute to further refining the theory and practice of collaborative strategies (community-based

conservation) for addressing both biodiversity loss and growing impoverishment, particularly in developing countries around the globe.

1.1. Methodology and Logistics

My research entailed five months of fieldwork in multiple sites in Peru, from November 2004 to April 2005. During this time I visited several sites and conducted a total of sixty semi-structured, open-ended interviews with multiple participants including community leaders, Casa Matsigenka managers, staff and other people linked to the Matsigenka communities in PNM, NGO personnel, regional and national government officials of protected areas, tour agency managers and owners, tour guides, researchers, tourists, and others.⁴ The majority of the people I spoke with were involved either with the Matsigenka enterprise, PNM administration or the ecotourism industry in Madre de Dios Province and particularly in PNM. Eight interviews were with people engaged with the lodge Posada Amazonas,⁵ in Tambopata within Madre de Dios Province. With regards to ethnic/racial diversity, more than half of the people interviewed were *mestizo*;⁶ the other participants were Indigenes from the

⁴ I stayed in the following places: Lima; Cusco; in Madre de Dios province, I was in Manu National Park in which I went to the Core Zone staying in Tayakome, Yomibato and the Tourism Zone visiting the Matsigenka lodge setting. I also spent a few days in Tambopata within the same province staying in the lodge Posada Amazonas.

⁵ With the objective of gaining a clearer perspective on the Matsigenka enterprise through comparison, I visited the Infierno Native Community and its lodge Posada Amazonas, a community-based ecotourism lodge that has developed in partnership with a private ecotourism company. This joint-venture project was a finalist among the projects considered for the 2002 Equator Prize of United Nation Development Program (www.undp.org/equatorinitiative/secondary/equator_prize2002.htm#peru). Besides interviews, I conducted one focus group discussion and participated in tour circuits.

⁶ *Mestizo* is a complex social phenomenon of identity that needs to be understood in sociological terms linked to colonialism (Mariategui 1968). But to put it simply, a mestizo can be defined as someone who has a hybrid of ethnicities, races and culture backgrounds. And, it is a social “status” term that has a class connotation. In Peru, *mestizo* is a socially constructed category that varies throughout regions. Sometimes a mestizo can be a person that has a blend of Quechua

Amazon and white persons from Lima and foreign countries in North America and Europe. The majority of the Indigenous people I spoke with were Matsigenka residents of PNM. With regard to gender, about 70% of these interviewees were male and most of these men had college or university level of education and were white or *mestizo*. Only one Indigenous man had post-secondary education. Almost all the interviews were conducted in Spanish. I translated the quotes used in this thesis into English. The original Spanish quotes are in the Notes. Two interviews were conducted in Matsigenka with the assistance of Glenn Shepard who acted as translator.

Most of the Matsigenka people I interviewed (six men) were male community leaders who were born in the PNM area or moved to the area more than ten years ago; almost all of them were very involved in the establishment of the Matsigenka enterprise. Thus, my data are drawn from these dominant men. Language was a challenge and narrowed down my chances of interacting with a wide range of Matsigenka people, namely women and elders who mostly speak Matsigenka. I am aware that this language barrier hindered my understanding of the array of opinions held within the communities about their enterprise. Another factor that limited my interaction with members of the Matsigenka communities was the short period of time that I spent in the communities. I stayed in PNM for about two months in two visits. My time was distributed between the two communities and the Matsigenka lodge. I struggled with the fact that my stay in the communities was not long enough to develop significant relationships with any of the families of the communities. I was a short-term visitor extracting information to the best of my ability and also one of many researchers present. Therefore, I did not feel comfortable with the idea of interviewing people unless they expressed an interest and willingness in doing so. Those who expressed such interest were more often men than women. In

and Spanish-white background, or a person that has Aymara and white backgrounds, but both have been assimilated to the larger national-society. For instance, a *mestizo* has received some formal education, so he/she is fluent in Spanish. Most Peruvian people, particularly from urban areas, would prefer to identify themselves as *mestizos* rather than as *Indigenes*.

exchange for their participation in my research I brought gifts that were things of value to the participants, and which are usually not very available to them (salt, sugar, axes, machetes, colourful beads, coca leaves, nylon and other tools for agriculture and fishing, clothes).

I conducted two group interviews, one with the staff at the ecotourism lodge, and one with community leaders in Tayakome. We spoke about each group's experience in establishing the enterprise, building their lodge, being staff and the challenges it implies. Two additional focus group discussion (one for each community) were conducted in collaboration with researchers Julia Ohl and Glenn Shepard (Shepard was also translator),⁷ whose research agenda also included work on the Casa Matsigenka. We gathered information on opinions and expectations about their enterprise, the amount of time they were willing to dedicate to the Matsigenka lodge, and the type of training each one would like to acquire to carry out their work in their lodge.

In addition to interviews I also attended community meetings and other social events in the Matsigenka communities and spent long hours (about 50 hours in total) at the headquarters of the Matsigenka enterprise in Cusco. These experiences helped me to gain a sense of the relationship between the community members and the process of decision-making within and outside the communities. I noticed, for instance, that most interaction occurs between the assistant manager in Cusco, Ms. Luna, and the managers at the Casa Matsigenka lodge. They had daily communication through two way radio, the only communication medium in these areas.

I also participated in tour trips in PNM to experience how tourists are guided within that landscape. Being with tourists was a challenging situation for me because it would unsettle my identity as a Peruvian who no longer lives in Peru. When I was with tourists I was often identified as a "tourist", which was always shocking and frustrating to me. I realized that as an outsider there is a fine line between being an anthropologist working in tourism and being a tourist;

⁷ Julia Ohl is the actual name of the person.

what makes us different from tourists is never that clear. My frustration was based on the fact that my intention of “being there” was to inquire into people’s relationships and give voices to multiple narratives. By being mistaken for a tourist rather than a Peruvian researcher, I felt people were less willing to open up and share their narratives.

There was no doubt that the power relationship between researchers and participants created constant tension in my fieldwork. Coming as a student researcher of a Canadian university (linked to United Nations Development Program) created all sorts of reactions. For instance, I found my relationship with Ms. Luna, one of my key informants, tricky. She was the assistant manager of the Matsigenka enterprise and practically the gateway to the Indigenous communities because she was the only person in constant communication with the Matsigenka people in PNM.

Likewise, one of the most challenging aspects of my research was in dealing with the official requirements for researchers to enter PNM. This process illustrates the paradoxical power relationship of doing research in protected areas with “minority groups” in marginalized and patronizing context. That is, my relationship as researcher with INRENA,⁸ particularly in Cusco, was full of frictions. For instance, entry to PNM for the first time to visit the communities is strictly controlled by INRENA headquarters and regional office. This institution, however, authorizes entering PNM through a letter of invitation by the community’s members. But, ironically, due to the isolation of these communities, for a new researcher it is almost impossible to obtain these invitation letters. The only way to communicate with the communities is by radio from Cusco (but even in communicating with them by radio, their invitation could only be oral!) So, after several manoeuvres in which Ms. Luna was of great help, I obtained authorization to enter the Park under the promise that I should return to INRENA in Cusco and Lima to give them those invitation letters from the communities.

⁸*Instituto Nacional de Recursos Naturales* (governmental institution). INRENA’s central office is located in Lima and forms part of the Agriculture Ministry

Also, for my second visit I encountered difficulties. One day before departing to PNM from Lima with other researchers, I was told by one of the researchers that they were suddenly informed by INRENA-Cusco that one of the communities (Yomibato) communicated through the radio that “they do not want more new researchers visiting their communities”. Because of this disturbing news, not understanding the triggering cause, I delayed my trip. I could not find any evidence that this news was “rumours”, or if it was a decision from the communities, the Park, or other outsiders. This incident is evidence of the complex political entanglements in a protected area with “vulnerable minority groups” (see Chapter 3 for details on this concept) whose voices are mostly unheard, if not manipulated. On the other hand, if this news was coming from the communities, it was a form of resistance to exercise their limited power before outsiders.

This tension was also quite present in my attempts to interact with the private tourism people in Cusco. Several of my phone calls and emails to owners of PNM tourism agencies were never returned. More often than not when I was granted an interview, I felt that there was an atmosphere of mistrust in my interaction with the tourism people in Cusco.

I used all the techniques I described above for collecting primary data. The secondary sources I used include reports, evaluation studies prepared by NGO consultants and the government, tourism surveys conducted by other researchers, academic articles, publications, theses, videos, websites and brochures. A key research strategy I used for eliciting information during this fieldwork was a case study approach. The case study method is useful for investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, and it allows for the analysis of a variety of evidence (e.g., documents, interviews, participant-observation) (Yin 1989). The unit of analysis I used was the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsiguenka and its lodge, *Casa Matsiguenka*, located in Manu National Park (PNM), within the Biosphere Reserve Zone, in the Region of Madre de Dios, in south-eastern Peru (see Figure 2).

By using a case study approach I attempted to create and simplify the “boundaries” of my unit of analysis and my sense of “being in the field”. My “field” was not a space, but moments. Every time I was interviewing, regardless of whether my interviewee was my best friend, I imagined I was in the “field”, which sometimes was the rainforest, a completely foreign environment to me. At other times I was conducting my fieldwork in Lima, my own hometown. Yet, this strategy did not dissolve my ambivalent feelings about being in “the field” and my homeland. The colonial conceptualization of “the field” by classic anthropology as a remote foreign place for the anthropologist was problematized and counteracted by my personal positioning of being in “the field” and my homeland at the same time.

1.2. Ethical Considerations

To identify my research participants throughout this thesis I use both real names and pseudonyms. The first time I mention a person I use a footnote to specify when an actual name is used. For all the Matsigenka community participants I am using real names with their oral permission as a way to recognize their experiences and honor their contribution to this research.⁹ I also used real names for the researchers I met in PNM because the information they shared with me was published. For the other participants I used pseudonyms; any association to their real identity is unintentional.

Regarding dissemination of my research, after doing my fieldwork I wrote a technical report (Herrera 2006) for the team at Natural Resources Institute (NRI) that funded my research. I made available a copy of this document to many of the participants and sent hard copies to the Matsigenka enterprise. And, after finishing my thesis project, I will work on elaborating a series of posters in Spanish for the Matsigenka communities and a few Peruvian organizations.

⁹ In my research I obtained oral consent because individuals are not familiar with written informed consent, and some people are not literate. Sometimes it is counterproductive to focus on formal “signing” due to apprehension about political overtones. In my oral consent I asked if I could publish their actual names.

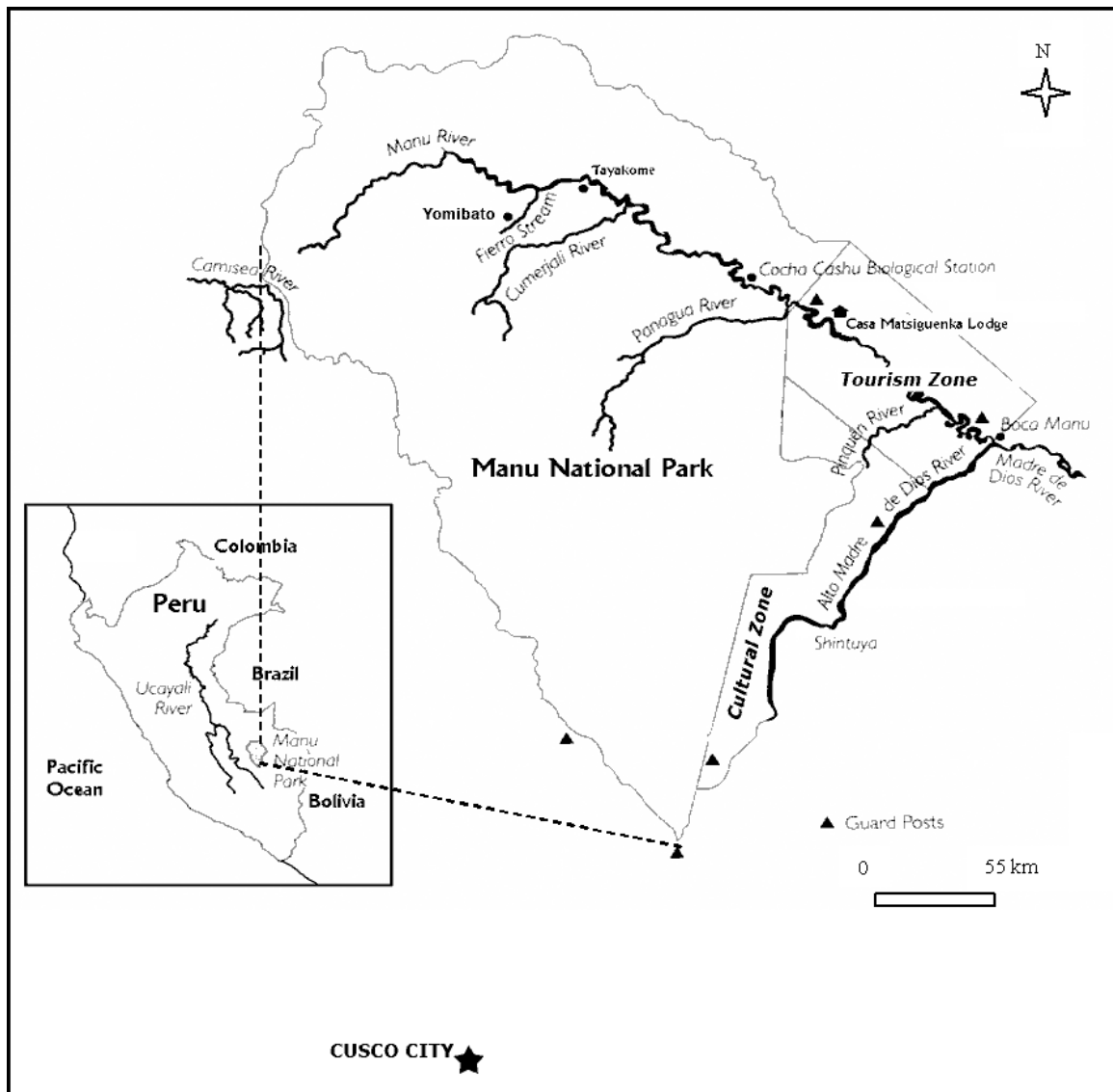


Figure 2: Peru and the study area: Manu National Park, showing the two communities, Tayakome and Yomibato. Casa Matsigenka Lodge is an eight-hour boat trip up-river to the closest community (Tayakome), and at least two days from the more remote community (Yomibato). (Source: Map adapted from Shepard 2002, used with permission, September 2007)

1.3. Analysis and Ethnographic Accounts

Tsing (1993: 13-15) asserts that in order to step forward to a postcolonial anthropology, anthropological writing should be engaged with struggles over power and meaning of those at the “margins” of cultural domination. Colonialism and racism are power relations that construct and bind systems of cultural

difference. In this sense, discussions of the marginal unveil the linked cultural constructions of domination and difference. Marginality as a theoretical approach refuses to distinguish analysis and objects of study as two different classes; "...marginalities created both inside and outside the academy are interconnected. The knowledge of an author, like that of the people about whom he or she writes, is always partial, situated and perspectivistic" (Tsing 1993: 14). Likewise, Gardner (1999: 70) asserts that "...what we learn and what we write is unavoidably subjective, because we are all located in particular political positions..." Thus, my ethnographic account is constrained by my multi-locations, i.e., gender, age, sexuality, class, education, personal experience, ideology, and personality. For instance, the fact that I am a Peruvian middle class woman studying in a Canadian University and funded by the International Development Research Centre determined many aspects of my research, including the writing. In the field, such institutions gave credibility to my research, and the budget made it possible to afford the expensive trips to PNM.¹⁰ On the other hand, my data collection, process of organization and analysis were greatly influenced by the NRI team research agenda.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1992) assert that our efforts must concentrate on considering multiple perspectives and the various contexts in which people live and interact. Despite my intention to bring multiple voices into my ethnography, by conducting interviews with people from various social sectors that inform my research, i.e., people with diverse socioeconomic class, political views and roles, ethnicity and education, I selected the quotes from my own perspective and understanding. That is, ultimately I am the writer who is making sense of the several pieces of stories I was told. In the process of eliciting information, reconstructing and retelling a story, my intention of understanding and portraying the multiple perspectives sometimes got buried by my strong

¹⁰ In my first trip to PNM, I was lent an INRENA boat to go to the Matsiguenka communities, and spent US \$400.00 in fuel alone, because of its inaccessibility there is no public transportation,. Boat-renting and the payment of boat driver and boat driver assistant were donated by INRENA-Cusco.

tendency to advocate for the Indigenous peoples in the PNM. However, I also put in a strong effort to contextualize these ethnographic accounts historically and politically.

Most of my interviews were tape recorded and I spent a great amount of time listening to them over and over to revive feelings and realizations I experienced when they had first taken place. For the organization of my data, I received help transcribing interviews in Spanish, and then used the NVIVO software program to organize these transcriptions into themes and sub-themes. I used a “thematic narratives” approach (see Shawn 1995) for organizing the writing of these accounts. Through all the months of writing and analysing these ethnographic accounts, despite having the transcriptions, I always went back to the tapes. While listening to these stories far away from Peru, I revisited the rainforest land countless times and heard peoples’ voices with different ears and perspectives. Through this retrospective process, I began to weave a story about marginality, conflict, and paradoxes in the Amazon around ecotourism, the Indigenous residents of PNM, and their enterprise Matsiguenka.

1.4. Research Question

My research topic focused on whether or not the Indigenous people in PNM are given a chance to negotiate their cultural values, knowledge and practice through community-based ecotourism within a context dominated by global capitalism forces, such as the international tourism industry. How is this negotiation process unfolding? How are neo-liberal strategies such as ecotourism, which is sold to them as an economic panacea for communities in out-of-the-way places such as the Peruvian rainforest, working in practice? To answer these questions I analyze the experiences of the Matsiguenka people, owners of the Casa Matsiguenka Community-based ecotourism lodge enterprise in PNM, and explore the paradoxical and contested understanding of ecotourism from the perspective of the multiple stakeholders involved in the Manu ecotourism industry.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework



Figure 3: Manu River in Manu National Park.

A literature review and the theoretical framework are woven together within this Chapter. In the first section, I describe anthropological issues relating to tourism, globalization, environmental conservation and Indigenous peoples in current literature. This review sketches out the anthropological lens I use to understand my research with Matsigenka people in the south-eastern Peruvian Amazon.

In the second section I explain the concepts I use in my analysis. My theoretical framework draws upon several authors who are developing interdisciplinary analysis interlinking cultural anthropology of environment and political ecology. I utilize concepts such as colonialism, marginality, hegemony, and agency to guide me in an analysis of ideas embedded in conservation and development projects such as community-based ecotourism. Also, I use the concept of “green capitalism” proposed by Arturo Escobar (1997).

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1 International Tourism, Development and Globalization

In the early 1960s, tourism was introduced as a strategy through which development could be achieved in “Third World” countries.¹¹ In 1963, the United Nations Conference on Tourism and International Travel in Rome proclaimed that tourism brought fundamental contributions to the economic development of Third World countries (Lafant 1995). Subsequently, the development of international tourism has been organized on a global scale by international organizations such as the World Tourism Organization, International Monetary Fund, United Nations, World Bank, and UNESCO, that set the parameters for tourism planning, promotion, identification of tourism products, investment and policies (Britton 1982; Lafant 1995). These efforts were in conjunction with multinational enterprises and metropolitan tourism companies for transportation and amenities. These large companies are capable of organizing, creating, coordinating and marketing all the products of tourism business, and are therefore the key integrative force in international tourism (Britton 1982). Taken together, they constitute a network of agents whose economic power surpass their tourism function and reinforce the centralization of decision-making power (Lafant 1995).

Hence, international tourism plays a critical role in the process of globalization. As MacCleod (1999: 445-446) affirms:

Tourism is the epitome of global flows – the free (or unforced) movement of people around the globe, carriers of cultural capital, users of technological networks, transmitters of cross-cultural ideas; in fact, the tourist personifies globalization and is an appropriate symbol of late twentieth-century consumer culture.

¹¹ The idea of “Third World” countries, as Escobar (1999b) explains, is a complicated notion resulting from “the invention of development” by dominant global forces and elite power.

At the local level, states foster the idea that tourism is the only chance for remote and isolated areas to overcome their backwardness. In response to this global trend, state policies in Third World countries have been created in ways that facilitate investment in the tourist industry. For instance, the Amazon Pact countries (Peru, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Surinam, and Guyana) are strongly committed to developing tourism in the Amazon (Seiler-Baldinger 1988). Hence, through international tourism remote rural places are “rediscovered and thrust” into the path of development, connected to the international market and propelled onto the world stage (Lanfant 1995: 3), which in turn sets up the basis for “modernization”. Put simply, the international tourism phenomenon is part of the process of economic and cultural globalization to the extent that it constitutes a vector of “political and cultural” integration on a world scale while also becoming an essential factor of the new world economic order (Lanfant 1995: 27-30).

Adopting a critical perspective, Lanfant (1995: 23-30) elaborates on a sociological framework for understanding international tourism as a phenomenon that sets in motion the whole society and its institutions, which has effects at the global to local levels and in every sector of human life (i.e., economic, cultural, geographical, ecological and technological).

For my research I define the concept of **international tourism** as a total social phenomenon within society, an “international fact” with implications beyond the movement of people across international frontiers to travel and temporarily stay in a country for leisure.¹² International tourism is a force that operates on a global scale, bridging regions of the world that are normally in significant opposition to each other: post-industrial society and underdeveloped society; modern society and traditional society; urban society and rural society. In this sense, the study of international tourism provides an arena to examine the development of global strategies at the local level as a process in which global

¹² By total social phenomenon, I mean that international tourism has social, political and economic causes and implications at different levels and sectors of societies.

and local forces are part of a **circular process**, instead of unidirectional process –from North to South or center to periphery (Lafant 1995). Having said that, the analysis of tourism in south-eastern Peruvian Amazonian region illustrates this circular process of international tourism from global to local. The ways in which international global forces of tourism define the Peruvian national, regional and local political economy for “development” is manifested through experiences such as the emergence of community-based and more often family-based tourism enterprises in out-of-the-way places such as the Amazonian forest. Further, as it is explained in Chapter 4, tourism activities such as ecotourism, particularly in a context of conservation, are portrayed by governments, NGOs and private sector agents as an economic panacea for “sustainable development” and “integration” of Amazonian residents or “ethnic minorities” into the global economy.

2.1.2 International Tourism and Indigenous People

In anthropology, the study of international tourism in relation to Indigenous groups is often examined in an effort to understand the impact of tourism on the life of the host people, particularly on Indigenous groups and their environment. Two main trends can be distinguished. The first trend emphasizes the destructive and exploitative effects of tourism on various aspects of life, particularly of “cultural minorities” (Britton 1982; Rossel 1988; Seiler-Baldinger 1988) or “marginal cultures” (Tsing 1993).¹³ Researchers in this camp assert that tourism’s impact on these populations is manifested in many ways. For instance, on the one hand, the destruction of their culture, social structure, subsistence economy and environment; on the other hand, tourist businesses create an imagery of “exotic” cultural objects and idealized reality for the tourists, turning

¹³ Rossel (1988: 13) refers to “cultural minorities” as “a working hypothesis concerning the political and cultural positions of some ethnic groups who suffer particular abominable pressure from tourism”. It is a concept that focuses on marginalization of ethnic groups on the political level (subordination to the state power), economic level (excluded from industrial development, e.g., mass tourism) and on the cultural level (exploited by dominant cultures).

ethnic minorities into marketable objects of consumption (Rossel 1988: 11-12). Focusing on the politico-economic dimension of tourism, Michaud (1995) argues that through the promotion of ethnic tourism projects as an economic development strategy for creating a national economy, the state aims to achieve the consolidation of its power. Also, through such projects the state directs cultural changes by controlling the promotional images to the foreign tourists of their national “minorities”, and fosters competition (for money and power), occidental values, and consumerism. In short, state-controlled tourism produces internationalization that provokes cultural disruption and forces Indigenous peoples to become dependent on the cash economy (ibid).

In sum, based on dependency theory, these writers argue that international tourism is a new form of colonization that triggers irreversible traumatic changes to people of the host land. Tourism is conceived of as a *threat* to “cultural minority” groups because it reproduces unequal socio-political and economic relationships.

The second main trend in studying tourism and Indigenous peoples conceives of tourism as an opportunity for marginalized ethnic groups to be reevaluated within a national society and “integrated” in the national economy by developing strategies such as “mixed economies” in which Indigenes combine their domestic production (subsistence economy) with the cash economy, earning income from casual employment in tourism (Ariel de Vidas 1995; Notzke 1999; Stronza 1999).

In studying Indigenous tourism with the Inuvialuit of the Arctic, Notzke (1999: 62) suggests that the introduction of tourism in Aboriginal peoples’ economy is a survival strategy that produces a “dynamic balance” that brings more benefits than negative impacts.¹⁴ Notzke (1999: 73) argues these Arctic Aboriginal people have been successfully mixing formal with informal economic activities by alternating them in seasonal cycles. However, Notzken (1999: 62-

¹⁴ Indigenous tourism refers to the practice of tourism under the control and management of Indigenous groups.

63) admits that despite these people's strong collective political will to protect their domestic production, the cash economy is likely to increase in the northern economy's future. In my opinion, by conceiving the "mixed economy" as a "dynamic balance", Notzke's analysis becomes simplistic. The idea of "balance" hinders the complexity, which include political, economic and cultural changes and frictions that can occur in the process of introducing tourism activities into the Aboriginal people's life.

On the other hand, Ariel de Vidas (1995), who attempts to demonstrate the complexity of the introduction of tourism in Indigenous peoples' lives, asserts that this process creates a "complementary" dynamic of tradition and modernity. She writes, while "... [tourism] allows for externally imposed change, [it] also permits the preservation of internal values, which persist not only in spite of but sometimes also because of the modernization process..." (Ariel de Vidas 1995: 65- 72). In this process Indigenous groups are not monolithic and one-dimensional. Based on case studies of textiles, memory and the souvenir industry in the Andes, Ariel de Vidas (1995) further refines the concept of "ethno-economic niche", referring to the way in which Indigenes are adapting to the imperative of the market by turning into entrepreneurs (e.g., Otavalo in Ecuador, Taquile in Peru, Jalq'a in Bolivia). Ariel asserts that through the successful creation of ethno-economic niche, Indigenous entrepreneurs are also revitalizing and revalorizing their ethnic identity, and in some cases are developing a political consciousness (e.g., the Otavaleños in Ecuador) by controlling the commercialization and design process of their craft in tourism.

In sum, *tourism is like a double-edged sword*. In some cases it contributes to the marginalization of local groups, while in other cases it allows ethnic minority groups that have been excluded from international decision-making to claim and reaffirm their identity (Lafant 1995) in the global economy.

In my study linking tourism and Indigenous peoples, I use a combination of both perspectives to analyze the ways in which the Matsigenka communities in Manu National Park relate to their community-based ecotourism enterprise, the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsigenka, and the regional tourism market. On the

one hand, I conceptualize ecotourism as a phenomenon that is like a “new form of colonialism”(Belsky 2000) by examining the ways in which top-down neo-liberal approaches and meanings of “nature”, “places” and “people” are imposed onto the Indigenous peoples in Manu. On the other hand, through emphasis on the process of negotiations and agency (expressed through the motivations, hopes for the future and aims for self-determination) of the Matsigenka people for venturing into the global economy through tourism, I am depicting the idea of *ecotourism as a double-edged sword*.

2.1.3 Tourism and “Nature” Conservation

With the increasing concern in global politics about environmental degradation, a new alternative model, which includes ecotourism, emerged in the 1980s, aiming to integrate development with biodiversity conservation. This effort was a response from a faction of conservationists and development practitioners to the failures of the conventional top-down models for nature conservation approaches such as “fence and fines”, “fortress conservation”, and purely income-generation incentives.

A number of conservationists and analysts are proposing collaborative approaches to conservation, reformulating their assumptions about Indigenous people as a threat to the environment to potential partners for conservation (in the case of PNM, see for instance (Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohl, and Yu in press). One outcome of this shift in conservation is the community-based conservation (CBC) model that fosters the participation of rural people in such endeavours. That is, the CBC basic premise is that “...local communities participate in resource planning and management and that they gain economically from wildlife utilization...” (Hackel 1999: 726). Giving an economic incentive for conservation to rural people is the neo-liberal approach to conservation that consists of adding economic value to biodiversity as a solution (Brown 2002). From his years of experience working in CBC with African communities, Hackel (1999) affirms that such strategies fail if people’s extremely poor condition of life is not previously addressed.

Within a CBC approach, one of the common economic activities used for its goals, particularly in protected areas, has been community-based ecotourism, which is promoted as a way to produce not only monetary income, but also empowerment and self-determination of local people, ensuring that their values and traditional lifestyles are respected (Campbell 1999; Belsky 1999; Berkes 2004; Langholz 1999). Promoters of community-based ecotourism argue that a locally owned and controlled ecotourism economy will put proceeds directly into local hands, provide incentives for biodiversity conservation, support grassroots organizations, and educate both visitors and residents (see anaicr.org, 2002).

In “Third World” countries, ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors within the tourism industry. Nearly every developing country is promoting a kind of ecotourism (Honey 1999). However, the problem is that the label “ecotourism” has been widely used to describe different experiences and its definition may vary according to the priorities of actors and analysts (Campbell 1999; Chambers 2000; Chambers 2000; Stronza 2001a). That is, there is no precise definition of ecotourism (Honey and Steward 2002). For instance, some tourist companies may focus their definition around the tourist, whereas analysts may focus on guidelines for operators, that is, product-oriented definitions.

From a global environmentalism and tourism perspective, ecotourism has been introduced as a synergetic strategy that embraces both biodiversity conservation and socioeconomic development, especially in rainforest areas (Bookbinder, Dinerstein, Rijal, Cauley, and Rajourias 1998; Koziell 2001; Yu, Hendrickson, and Castillo 1997). For instance, the International Ecotourism Society (UNEP 2001: 5) defines ecotourism as “...responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people”.¹⁵

¹⁵ This organization proposes that implementation and participation in ecotourism should be defined by the following principles for a “standardized” ecotourism: 1) Minimal impact; 2) Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect; 3) Provide positive experiences for both hosts and visitors; 4) Provide direct financial benefits and empowerment to local people; 5) Raise

In analysing the emergence of ecotourism in Belize, Belsky (1999) outlines the assumptions fostering such activity: 1) There are not many alternative sources of income available for “poor” rural people; 2) Ecotourism can complement, rather than replace, traditional economic activities; 3) Ecotourism requires “low levels of investment” while still earning economic benefits; and 4) Non-protection of the environment undermines both tourism and economic development in the local region.

In Peruvian literature on ecotourism, a universal notion of ecotourism is repeated among government official and NGO reports and academic writings. Enthusiasm to foster questionably “sustainable” tourism as “the remedy” for the long standing Peruvian economic crisis was obvious. In a 1998 gathering intended to develop “national strategies” to promote “sustainable ecotourism” in Peru, such activity was defined as a nature-based tourism. With a focus on tourists, Salas (1998), a Peruvian biologist, claims that ecotourism emerged in the 1970’s as an impulse felt by the “industrialized countries’ inhabitants” to travel and adventure to “paradisiacal places” and get away from their “stressful urban life”. This common and uncritical explanation of ecotourism in Peru, however, does not take into account the problematic arising from global environmentalism discourse and the green industry that aggressively sells images of “pristine, paradisiacal nature” to the Western people.¹⁶ With such a simplistic understanding of international tourism and the global market, government officials, conservation NGOs and private sector agents who foster ecotourism argue that Peru has “comparative advantages” by being an “exotic” environmentally diverse tropical country.

In Peru, tourism is the second largest contributor to the Peruvian economy (Chavez 2004). The industry has become involved in national-level conservation planning, and ecotourism is becoming an important strategic tool for

sensitivity to host countries’ political, environmental, and social climate; and 6) Support international human rights and labour agreements.

¹⁶ By “Western” I am referring to the Urban-North American-and European-dominating conceptions of nature, places and Indigenous people in the Amazon.

differentiating and promoting the entire Peruvian tourism industry (Yu et al. 1997). Particularly in the rainforest of Peru, the number of ecotourism lodges is growing tremendously due to the increasing demand for this type of so-called alternative tourism. However, the lack of an organization for certification of ecotourism companies and business owners creates an environment that is both tricky and misleading because a number of “ecotourism” businesses use this label to their advantages. That is, ecotourism is a slogan that attracts tourists who naively believe that by “ecotraveling” they are always supporting a social and environmental cause. But in fact, as I argue throughout this thesis, ecotourism is more often perpetuating exploitation and discrimination rather than contributing to social and environmental justice. Yu et al. (1997: 32-4) studied the three rainforest ecotourism lodges located on the Tambopata River in Madre de Dios, in the south-eastern Amazon of Peru, and concluded that “to make money in Tambopata in the short term individual lodges are not compelled to make conservation a priority”.

Within anthropology, Stronza (2001b; 2002) contributes to the study of tourism by using a political ecology and sustainable development framework. Stronza studies the community-based ecotourism project Posada Amazonas, located in Tambopata, within the Department of Madre de Dios, Peru, the same province where PNM is located. In her ethnographic account, Stronza (2001b:14) argues that through participatory ecotourism, in which communities are the main protagonist, “...ecotourism can be empowering rather than merely lucrative in an economic sense...they are learning rather than merely earning.” Stronza (2001b:3) claims that “...when ecotourism is truly participatory – that is, when local hosts are involved as decision-makers as well as employees – ecotourism can become a transforming experience rather than simply an economic incentive”. That is, the shift in decision-making among stakeholders affects the ways in which people interact and use natural resources. This author affirms that purely economic incentives to conservation are too simplistic.

On the other hand, through her ethnographic accounts in Belize, Belsky (2000; 1999) affirms that community-based ecotourism is potentially counter-

productive because this approach ignores the complex, heterogenic and dynamic socio-political history of “local communities” – a history often filled with exploitation, marginalization, division, and conflict.¹⁷ Further, too often advocates and scholars of community-based natural resources management use terms such as community, territory, resources, management, and other generic terms without regarding the historical and political context (Brosius, Tsing, and Zerner 1998). For instance, the mainstream ecotourism discourse of conservationists and the tourism industry is based on idealized images of “community”, conceiving them as “homogenous groups” who live in “harmony” between themselves within their “pristine ecosystems” (Belsky 1999; Chinchiquiti 2000). In sum, I find that one of the paradoxes of the mainstream discourse on ecotourism and conservation is that it often promotes this practice as a way of replacing part of local people’s subsistence economic activities. Promoters of ecotourism claim that relying more on ecotourism, than on traditional activities, decrease pressure on the forest. However, at the same time, ecotourism manufactures “eden-like” images of Indigenous peoples living in “perfect harmony with nature”, and actually preaches to “respect ‘local’ peoples’ values”.

In my research I analyze the complexities of community-based ecotourism enterprise Matsinguenka as a socioeconomic and political strategy with potential for self-determination and diversification of livelihood. As mentioned above and described in Chapter 5, it is evident that the ecotourism lodge has become a place for negotiation between the Matsinguenka people and other stakeholders linked to Manu National Park, including tourism business people. As the leaders of the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsinguenka put it in their proposal to the United Nation Development Program Equator Initiative Prize (Empresa Multicommunal Matsinguenka 2002):

¹⁷ Lagholz (1999) asserts that ecotourism as a form of provision of alternative income can lead to accelerated destruction of protected areas if there is no adequate planned intervention. For example, in the Ranomafana National Park Project in Madagascar, there is evidence of households using ecotourism project revenues to expand agricultural operations in large scale, increasing the destruction of forests.

After our century history of persecution and oppression, from the rubber harvesting period, our concern as the people who inhabits the shores of Manu River grew with the creation of the Manu National Park in 1973 and with the development of international tourism for which we, the Matsigenka people became only one more attraction of the Peruvian Amazon...we [Tayakome and Yomibato] decided to create our tourism enterprise without including other agencies.

This quote clearly illustrates a level of self-determination of the Matsigenka people. However, throughout my analysis I also pay attention to the hegemonic cycle in which local people are being entangled through their participation in ecotourism. That is, the ways in which these traditionally hunter and gatherer residents of a protected area are being “integrated” to the larger society is defined by dominant forces such as the green market, conservation NGOs and the state. Indigenous peoples not only have to learn to deal with the tourism market to survive in it, but also they are loudly advised to embody and display the “exotic” images constructed in international industry to attract tourists. Behind their motivation for participation in ecotourism is the hope that they, the Indigenous communities, would benefit, which is not always the case.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Nation-State Power, Colonialism and Marginality

The conceptual framework I use emphasizes the long history of colonialism and marginality within a political context of the nation-state. I use the concept of state provided by Tsing (1993: 26) who refers it as “...to those aspects of the governing, administrative, and coercive apparatus that are experienced as external yet hegemonic”. Continuities and disjunctions are part of the nation-state models of governance in Third World countries. As part of these continuities is the fact that these countries simultaneously endorsed both colonial and precolonial models of government (Gledhill 2002; Tsing 1993). Emphasizing the continuities, Gledhill (2002: 71-74) explains that the political and socioeconomic colonization process was heterogeneous in time and space and affected differently all subjects; the colonial state deeply penetrated into certain aspects of

daily life through modern apparatus of surveillance. Colonizers introduced a limited notion of “civil society” that excluded marginalized peoples’ participation in the political system, and created the “colonial citizens” category which was based on racist terms. Also, as Gledhill (ibid: 75) affirms, the formation of nationalism as an “imagined community” (a concept taken from Benedict Anderson 1991) was a product of a process of colonialism led by Western-educated Indigenous bureaucrats that followed administrative organization of colonial states. In short, the nation-state model of post-colonial societies is a continuation of colonial models of socio-political and cultural structures; for instance, “...the culture of nationalism was the most universal legacy of the West to the colonial world...” (Gledhill 2002: 76). As explained in Chapter 3, evidence of such a continuum of the “colonial legacy” (*herencia colonial*) of the Peruvian nation-state is undeniably abundant in the Peruvian context. Jose Carlos Mariategui (1968), a prominent Peruvian scholar, explains in his *Siete Ensayos de la Interpretación de la Realidad Peruana* the deep roots of colonialism in the contemporary Peruvian nation-state socio-political and economic structures.

On the other hand, Tsing’s (1993) direct attention to the disjunction (“the gap”) created in the national political discourse and political system between “the government” and “the people”, who “...in official discourse are marginalized as ‘tribal minorities’, outside ‘civilization’, further peripheralized from the projects of governance...” (Tsing 1993: 26). In such a dynamic, “Villages look up to the governing apparatus, which looks down at them...” (Tsing 1993: 25). This “gap” is the “heritage of colonial rule”, in other words, the culture of politics. In my study, rather than understanding the rainforest inhabitants such as the Matsigenka people as “isolated primates” or “archaic survivors”, I put emphasis on framing them as “marginal culture” in relation to the Peruvian “political culture” of the nation-state model. I use Anna Tsing’s concept of “marginal culture” and “marginality”. In her ethnography on the Dayaks, or Meratus people, an ethnic label given to the diverse groups inhabiting the Meratus Mountains in Indonesia, Tsing (2003: 8) refers to the “marginal culture” as “...*displacement* within powerful discourse on civilization and progress...” This author uses the concept

of marginality in ways that are useful for the analysis of the asymmetries of ethnicity and state rule between the Matsigenka people of the rainforest and the Peruvian state. Tsing (ibid: 22) discusses the cultural and political construction of marginality and affirms that marginality needs to be discussed in relation to “particular political cultures”. Through her analysis on disjunctions between the Dayak and the state, this author explores the importance of studying the contradictions of marginality. One of the contradictions she focuses on is the community formation, which as a state project could be fulfilled or frustrated in the local cultural politics. For instance, Tsing (2003: 8) observes that this asymmetric dynamic creates a contradiction: “Rather than integrating these local people into the national politics as citizens, the national political discourse has demarcated them as savages outside its reaches...” i.e., marginals. In such a dynamic, “...village is the site of popular (i.e., nonstate) forms which must forcefully be brought into line with a top-down development policy...” (ibid: 25). By looking at “the politics of the peripheries”, Tsing (ibid: 26) includes the political negotiation of “out-of-the-way” places, i.e., places where it is easy to find instability of state politics and meanings, where authority and national policies are reinterpreted through distance at the margins.

In short, I find Geldhill and Tsing’s analytical approach and concepts of colonialism and marginality useful for understanding both the Peruvian historical context and colonial and patronizing relationship between Indigenous peoples such as the Matsigenka people and nation-state in the Peruvian Amazon.

2.2.2 Hegemony and Agency

Embedded in the analysis of colonialism, and the cultural politics of nation-state and marginality within the anthropology of politics, are the concepts of agency and hegemony. Through studying colonial Africa, Comaroff and Comaroff (2002) affirm that analyzing colonial processes requires one to unveil “...the dialectics of culture and consciousness, of convention and inventions...” This task, these authors’ advice, involves analyzing the “...nature of intentionality, experience and the imagination...” (ibid), in other words, human agency. Human agency is

“...practice invested with subjectivity, meaning and...power...in short, it is motivated...” (Comaroff & Comaroff 2002: 208). As a way to analyze what is underneath such motivations, Comaroff and Comaroff reveal the deep relation between power and culture, ideology and consciousness. These authors explain that culture is empowered by hegemony and ideology, which are two dominant forms of power “entailed in culture”. In explaining the ways in which power and culture are intertwined, Comaroff and Comaroff (ibid) convey the two faces of power. The first is ideology, which is an “*agentive* mode” of power. This refers to the “...human capacity in shaping the actions and perceptions of others...” and to the “...command wielded by human beings in specific historical context...” (Comaroff & Comaroff 2002: 209). The second form of power is hegemony, which is disguised “itself in the form of every day life”. Hegemony, these authors define, “...consists of constructs and conventions that have come to be shared and naturalized throughout a political community... [Ideology is] the expression of a particular social group...” (Comaroff & Comaroff 2002: 211). Hegemony is “mute” and “homogenizes” while ideology “babbles on” and “articulates” (ibid: 211).

Hegemony and agency are two concepts that are implicit in my analysis of the historical, political and socioeconomic context in which the Matsigenka ecotourism enterprise lodge is developing. My critical analytical approach to the ideologies embedded in discourses such as “sustainable development”, “neo-liberal conservation” and “ecotourism” are implicit in my analysis of hegemonic notions, while the concept of agency is used to analyze the negotiation process of the Matsigenka people representing “marginal cultures”. By linking the concepts of “hegemony”, “agency” and “marginal cultures”, I found it possible to articulate the “gaps”, dilemmas, conflicts and contradictions of Indigenous peoples such as the Matsigenka people venturing into the global economy through the ecotourism industry.

2.2.3 Green Capitalism and the Politics of Making Nature

In the study of what Tsing (2001) calls “nature in the making”, there are emerging interdisciplinary efforts joining environmental history, science studies, political ecology and cultural anthropology. From cultural anthropology of the environment and anthropological political ecology arise new analytical tools to study the “constructedness of nature” in “human context” (Escobar 1999). Escobar (ibid: i) suggests “...the meanings of nature...have shifted throughout history according to cultural, socioeconomic, and political factors...so that what we [humans, including life scientists and ecologists] perceive as natural is also cultural and social...”.

Political ecology offers a politically charged vision about environment issues and development theories (e.g., analyses the politics of resource use management such as environmental conservation and creates poststructural critiques to development theory). This discipline shows the centrality of capital and the state in the making of landscape and environments and thus emphasizes the connection between spatial relations and power relations. One of its particular concerns is with the effects of global inequalities on local landscapes and communities (Tsing 2001). Among the new directions in political ecology shared with cultural anthropology is the analytical link between power relations, institutions, and environmental regulations and ecological outcomes. Another trend is the use of a discursive approach to analyse the plurality of perceptions and definitions of environmental and resource problems (Peet and Watts 1996). Framed within cultural anthropology of the environment and political ecology, my study is located in the interface of these two directions. By emphasizing the multiple positioning in relation to “nature”, “places” and “Indigenous peoples” through power relations, my study contributes to the debate on the making of “out-of-the-way-places” such as the rainforest in the Peruvian Amazon. This approach also allows me to shed light on the making of identities such as Amazonian “exotic ethnic minorities” within a globalized context. Through the study of marginality focusing on asymmetric relationships of domination I hope to

contribute to an unveiling of “new” forms of colonialism, and capitalism in its “ecological” phase, in the Amazon of the Twenty first Century.

My intention in developing a critical approach to a neo-liberal approach on nature conservation and ecotourism is to question the commoditization of “nature” and “ethnic minorities”, i.e., Indigenous marginalized peoples. I hope to accomplish this by emphasizing the neglected/unseen or mute processes of such discourses and practices and highlighting the sociocultural and political complexities of class, power, race and ethnicity (Munt 1994). Further, my intention is to reveal how such discursive approaches are placed within hegemonic cycles and meanings of “nature”, “places” and “peoples” through power relationships manifested in the multiple stakeholders’ interests wresting through a “green” facade of capitalism.

The discourses of environmentalism and sustainable development have been dominated by neo-liberal approaches, which focus on how to “diversify” the use of rainforest resources ensuring long term “conservation”. Escobar (1997) argues that the label *green capitalism* (post-modern forms of capital) is a clear expression of this phenomenon, in which capital is entering an “ecological phase”. In short, from this perspective of “making nature”, “nature conservation” has a price, and ecotourism becomes one of the economic panaceas for conserving “untouched nature” or “out-of-the-way-places” (inhabited by “ethnic minorities”) in “Third World” countries.¹⁸

Ecotourism and community-based ecotourism is a double-edged sword. That is, sometimes it has potential for bringing different benefits to an Indigenous community, such as empowerment in decision-making on resource management and supplementary income. However, more often this “green” industry becomes a novel form for exploiting people. Further, this “sustainable” approach for community development and conservation has far more complex and deep implications. By proposing, promoting and implementing such practices on

¹⁸ Escobar (1999a) affirms that the idea of “untouched and independent nature” is giving way to novel perceptions of nature as “artificially produced” such as gene mapping, nanotechnology, etc.

rural/marginalized communities (and sometimes imposing *on* them) neo-liberal conservation, the state and other powerful social groups whose interests are mainly market-driven are replicating unequal power relationships. Such asymmetries are engrained in relations of power, race, gender, and ethnicity between the multiple stakeholders,¹⁹ that is, between the white upper middle-class fraction and the Indigenes. More important, such approaches also reflect the ways in which hegemonic Western values dominate in a capitalist global economy. This hegemonic cycle, in which ecotourism is part, contributes to the *cultural homogenization* of societies over the long term through perpetuating colonialism processes in out-of-the-way-places.

On the other hand, undoubtedly, the lessons learned from the community-based ecotourism experience are of great value as initiatives for grassroots organizations to deal with the capitalism imperatives and the globalization process. However, by promoting market-driven strategies “for conservation” and for rural communities’ “integration” into the global economy and politics, we must ask: Are grassroots organizations given chances to negotiate their own cultural values, knowledge and practices? Is sustainable development and its emphasis on environmental conservation and preservation of biodiversity another form of economic marginalization of Indigenous groups? Is it putting a mask of “exotic cultures” and a price on their “ethnic identity” as the only way to “survive globalization”? In other words, are neo-liberal strategies such as ecotourism an economic panacea for communities in out-of-the-way-places such as the rainforest? These are the questions I aim to respond to in the following chapters through the analysis of ecotourism and community-based ecotourism in Manu National Park, in the Peruvian Amazon.

¹⁹ These stakeholders include the environmental conservation entrepreneurs and *professionals* in tourism and marketing, governmental and NGO personnel, and the Native people who are the subsistence hunters, gardeners, fishermen, but presented in the capitalist context as “the unskilled forced labour”.

Chapter 3: Of Colonial Approaches, “Pristine Nature” and the “Original Sin” of Nature-Based Conservation: The Peruvian State and the Rainforest Indigenous Peoples



Figure 4: Matsigenka people in Manu.

In one of the trips that I made to Manu National Park to visit the communities, I traveled with other researchers. Glenn Shepard, an American anthropologist and ethnobotanist, had two decades of experience working with the Matsigenka people in Manu. Shepard told me some striking stories of things that he had witnessed during those years in Manu. He explained that until the beginning of the 1990s, the Matsigenka people were deeply resentful of the Park’s authorities who had never explained to them the reasoning and meaning for the creation of the park. He recounted a story about how it was that high level authorities from the government, including INRENA, visited the Matsigenka communities for the first time in 1993 — twenty years after the creation of the

park! For the first time they explained to the Matsigenka people why a park was created in Manu, their homeland. Shepard has published his account of this story. The ironic, humorous tone of the following excerpt from his article illustrates the great asymmetries, differences, and frictions that continue to fuel the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Peruvian state:

[A Peruvian bureaucrat] was explaining the concept of threatened and endangered species, noting spider monkeys as an example, and went on to describe how national parks were created to protect such vulnerable species. Elias, one of the best young monkey hunters from the village of Yomybato, was listening attentively, but became perplexed. He raised his hand politely and asked the following question, which I translated from the Matsigenka to Spanish, 'Let me get this straight. An endangered species is one that is almost extinct, right? And the spider monkey is an endangered species, right? Well here in my homeland, I and my father and my father's father, and all of my Matsigenka kinsmen as long as stories have been told since ancient times, have hunted and killed as many spider monkeys as we can every rainy season when monkeys get fat. And there are still lots of spider monkeys. So that means they aren't endangered, right? At least not here. Maybe they're endangered where you live in Lima, but not here. Maybe you should have created the park in Lima rather than here in my homeland'...Later in that evening, our Matsigenka hosts served spider monkey stew to all of the participants of the event. Elias asked the bureaucrat, sipping the stew, 'How does the endangered species taste?!' (Shepard 2002: 101-102)

For more than thirty years, biodiversity conservation has predominantly followed a top-down state-driven approach, employing models such as "for-trees and/or for-monkey conservation". Far from reaching its goal of conserving nature, this model has generated several problems. In the tropical forest of Peru, the conventional top-down conservation approach has created socioeconomic disparity and has perpetuated the long history of political marginalization of forest inhabitants. At a minimum, in several cases such populations have been completely ignored, if not displaced altogether, as consequence of the conventional conservation approach (Chatty and Colchester 2002). The dominant politics of environmental protectionism have not only disempowered Indigenous peoples but they have also failed to recognize their land and governance rights, even though they have inhabited the forest since ancient

times (Gray, Parellana, and Newing 1998). The central cause of failure for such conservation approach is a reliance on a predominantly urban notion of “nature”, which represents “wilderness” as “pristine” environments that need to be protected from human action (Gomez-Poma and Kaus 1992). This urban mindset derives from a North American ideology that assumes the ethnocentric viewpoint that humans pose a threat to “nature” and disregards any other conceptualization of a culture-nature relationship and “vision of cosmovision”. Alcorn (1994) quotes a Solomon Islander’s words that mirrors the personal relationship Indigenous people from the Solomon Islands have with the land they inhabit (or regularly migrate across): “I couldn’t sell my land to you. It would be like cutting off my arm and selling it to you....” The author asserts that

This close personal relationship is difficult for Northerners to understand, since they are accustomed to viewing land and resources as commodities, as well as accustomed to extracting resources from distant areas that do not belong to them.

On the other hand, based on Western thought, some conservationists have romanticized the idea of the “ecological noble savage”. The idea that Indigenous peoples live in what Western conservationists perceive as “harmony” with nature perpetuates the “myth of the noble savage” (Holt 2005). Holt explains that due to the Westernization of Indigenous people they are becoming a threat to “nature” because they have lost their “pristine” and “traditional” ways. Holt observes the resurgence of a “protectionist argument”, advocating for the strict protection of ecological areas and authoritarian enforcement practices in protected areas that interprets conservation as “a state of being” rather than a social and political process (ibid). Holt emphasizes how the West has forgotten about its own learning process of the importance of conservation, a lesson learned from the destruction of its own natural environment. As an example of the “resurgent protectionist argument” Holt (2005) refers to John Terborgh, a conservationist at the Cocha Cashu research station in Manu National Park who believes that local communities cannot be trusted for conservation work, and therefore that Indigenous people should be “voluntarily” removed from the park (Terborgh 1999). Holt criticizes such protectionists for supporting exclusionary practices of

conservation. These conservationists leave little room for other cultures to learn and develop for themselves their own conservation approaches and institutions. Holt (2005) argues for the urgency of working on conservation issues with as many allies as possible; particularly people whose home is the forest.

In Peru, except for some limited initiatives, such as *Communal Reserves* that are the result of Indigenous peoples' strategy for the recognition of their territorial rights (Gray, Parellana, and Newing 1998), environmental conservation approaches have been dominant.²⁰ Communal Reserves are the responsibility of the Indigenous peoples and Communities, but the state retains the "...perpetual rights of control and use" (ibid: 283). Such top-down nature-based conservation has excluded forest inhabitants from participating in management, policy and education for biodiversity conservation (Gomez-Pompa and Kaus 1992).

Despite the studies that show the sophistication of Indigenous people's knowledge and sustainable practices (see Berkes 1999; Gadgil, Berkes, and Folke 1993; Shepard, Yu, Lizarralde, and Italiano 2001; Ohi, Wezel, Shepard, and Yu in press), conservation, particularly in Peru, continues to be practiced predominantly in a top-down fashion. As a result, I want to reflect on the main forces that have shaped the "for-trees and for-monkey" conservation model, and the socio-political and economic implications of such a model on the forest inhabitants. These forces include the historical process of *external colonization* in Peru, which is constantly perpetuating and shaping asymmetric colonial/patronizing socio-cultural relationships between the state and the Amazonian Indigenous peoples and their land. Another force is the *internal colonization* of the Amazon through the expansion of capitalism and, more recently, the globalization processes in which the most important product among Amazonian people is the commoditization of their culture and identity (Santos 1996). These key forces have shaped land rights policy such as the creation of

²⁰ By 2006, in Peru, there are six Communal Reserves: Yanasha (1988), El Sira (2001), Amarakaeri (2002), Ashaninka (2003), Machiguenga (2003), and Purús (2004) (www.inrena.gob.pe-ianp_sistema_sinanpe.htm).

“*Comunidad Nativa*” (Native community or Native reservation) and conservation policies such as the creation of protected areas under the conceptualization of the forest as “pristine nature”. Therefore, embedded in this colonial process of shaping space and access to its resources are the pervasive notions of space, places, and nature that are imposed by a patronizing elite group upon the Indigenous peoples, and that mirror both land rights and environmental protection. Through the description of the case of the Matsigenka Natives Communities and the creation of Manu National Park, I aim to depict the ways in which both external and internal colonization forces have shaped the forest inhabitants and their homeland.

3.1. Colonialism and the issue of territoriality: Amazonian “Comunidades Nativas”?

After spending some time talking with people from and related to the Matsigenka communities during my first visit to Manu National Park (PNM), I became concerned about the legal situation of the inhabitants of the forest and their “adaptation” to the imposed protected area in their homeland. What type of relationship existed between them and the Peruvian state? For instance, one of the situations that mirrored the ambiguity/fragility of the human rights of the Indigenous peoples in PNM was about the discussion whether it is positive or not for the Indigenous people in the remote areas of PNM to have access to television media – these discussions appear to arise without much emphasis on the fact that it is ultimately the isolated Indigenous peoples’ decision. This debate arose when the Dominican priest who had visited these Manu communities for many years donated a TV to one of the Matsigenka communities. The priest revealed to me that, “These people live in isolation. It was a scandal to the anthropologists [researching in PNM] when I brought a TV to this place [PNM].”²¹ We did not discuss the reason for such “scandal” but I presumed that one of the

²¹ ...esto que se estás viendo aquí, el aislamiento, fue un escándalo para los antropólogos [que investigan en PNM] que [yo] traiga la televisión aquí.

main reasons was because the anthropologists were concerned about the negative influence (read: fear of “Westernization”) a TV can have on “isolated” Indigenous people, since they have not had much exposure to the larger society, as I was reminded many times.²² More important, these people were lacking basic services such as primary health care, education, potable water, electricity and other services; hence, should not these basic services be a priority rather than TV?

However, beyond discussing the positive and negative impact of TV on the Matsigenka people, this issue made me ponder whether “we” should decide what things the Indigenous peoples in PNM should or should not be exposed to! As a result of this reflection, I interviewed various people from government officials to NGO personnel about what type of policies have been developed regarding the Indigenous population whose territories have been designated protected areas by the state. My interest was to gather opinions on the relationship between the Peruvian state and Indigenous peoples in the region in order to understand the complex social context in which the Matsigenka communities of Manu are immersed.

3.1.1. Peruvian State: A Colonial State

I began by interviewing Dr. Seri, the chief of the Institute of Protected Areas in Peru (IANP), within INRENA.²³ As a forestry engineer with a doctoral degree in Natural Resources Management, Dr. Seri possessed a large amount of experience working for conservation NGOs. His perspective provided me with a rich historical overview on the issue of Indigenous peoples living in protected

²² I put quotation marks on the word “isolated”, because as I explain in the following section, before the creation of PNM, these Indigenous people were actually not isolated.

²³ The Institute of Protected Areas, *Instituto of Areas Naturales Protegidas* (IANP) is a branch from INRENA that is directly responsible for the management of the protected areas which cover almost 15% of the Peruvian territory. This governmental institution also makes sure that people in and around those territories obey the Law of Protected Areas (*Ley de Areas Naturales Protegidas, Ley N° 26834*) (INRENA 2003).

areas. The engineer observed that in order to understand the Indigenous Peoples' situation we need to consider that, "Peru has been in a colonization process...and there are unresolved issues around that fact that should be taken into consideration to understand our panorama".²⁴

While Peru was colonized five hundred years ago, the legacy of that process remains deeply entangled within the contemporary Peruvian context. Dr. Seri explained that one vivid example of the colonization legacy is the current issue of conflicting notions of territoriality between the Peruvian state and the Indigenous peoples. Through his governmental role as chief of IANP, the engineer experienced the ongoing friction in the state-Indigenous peoples' relationship, particularly in the rainforest. We both agreed that such friction is rooted in the Peruvian state's exclusionary approach to the Indigenous peoples' perceptions and relationships with the land in which they live. For instance, Dr. Seri mentioned that in the rainforest, "The Peruvian policy does not recognize the Indigenous peoples' notion of territory"; in other words, rather than recognizing traditional territories occupied by ethnic-linguistic groups (i.e., the Matsigenka territories, the Ashaninka territories, and others), it only recognizes "communities' land rights". Thus, the state not only disregards the Indigenous peoples' perceptions of land, space and territory, but rather chooses to impose the elite's notion of territory and land rights onto these subordinated/disempowered, but not passive, peoples.

The Indigenous peoples' traditional territorial system in Peru is highly diverse. Such diversity is intertwined with the multiple ecosystems which, simply put, can be divided into three geographical regions: the Coast, the Andean Mountains, and the Amazonian forests. Within the Amazonian region, where my study is located, Indigenous peoples' notions and use of forest land and resources is also heterogeneous; however, there are clear commonalities. The rainforest inhabitants' livelihood is based on subsistence through hunting, fishing,

²⁴ ... el Perú ha sido un país que ha tenido un proceso de colonización... y tenemos temas no resueltos y eso es uno de los elementos del panorama general que hay que tomar en consideración.

gathering and horticulture (Ohl 2005; Puygrenier 2001; Rosengren 1987). They live in low population density in small nucleated groups spread within wide geographical areas (Tresierra 2001).

In the IWGIA compilation of studies in Amazonian Indigenous Territory and the perception of environment, (edited by García and Surrallés 2005),²⁵ one of the concluding ideas shared among the contributors was that:

According to Indigenous perception, the territory is not only an environment for providing the necessary means for survival but rather a space for social relationships with each of the ecosystem's elements. Relationships, networks, channels, paths, etc; the territory is... fabric in the process of constant constitution and reconstitution. A subjective more than objective space, and hence a more lived-in, rather than conceived of territory. (Surrallés and García 2005: 20)

Likewise, during the first Latin American meeting debating the notion of sustainable development, conservation and protected areas among conservation NGOs, environmental and Indigenous peoples' organizations, held in Peru in 1997, a key reflection became clear. That is, through the exchange of views between conservationists and Indigenous peoples, it became obvious to the former that Indigenous peoples have their "own ethical systems" which come from a *holistic* perspective of territory based on cultural and spiritual principles (Gray et al. 1998; see also Berkes 1999; Shepard et al. 2001). The following quote, expressed by the leader of the Indigenous Organization AIDSESEP representing the Indigenous peoples in such gathering,²⁶ is clear evidence of this perspective:

It is clear that through the ages only Amazonian man [sic], with spiritual aid from plants and from nature itself, has been able to interpret the silent language of the Amazon biosphere. Only in this way has he [sic] been able to regulate its use and harvest, thus entering into the cycle of interdependence... (Gray et al. 1998: 283).

In studying the case of the political system of the Matsigenka people whose homeland includes Manu, Rosengren (1987) finds that Amazonian ethnic groups'

²⁵ International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA).

²⁶ Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Amazon (AIDSESEP).

identification and boundaries were not rigid or explicit among this Indigenous group and its neighbours. Further, Rosengren (ibid) affirms that the widespread settlement among the Matsigenka people reflects how well they have adapted to the ecological conditions and resource availability within the rainforest. More important, the author affirms that:

The Matsigenka have no notion of territoriality, that is, ideas of a particular group having exclusive “rights” of access and control over a certain area of land... [L]and is conceived of as an inexhaustible resource which is available to everyone (Rosengren 1997: 72).

And, when no labour has been invested in the “virgin forest” land, it belongs to none; therefore, it is available to everyone. Rosengren’s emphasis on Matsigenka people’s differentiation of land from swidden (agricultural land where labour was invested) helps to understand their land and land tenure notions. Land is the place that belongs to all persons (*kipatsi* in Matsigenka language), while swidden (*tsamarintsi*) is a “domesticated resource “that belongs to the household whose members have invested their labour there. Rosengren concludes (ibid) that the Matsigenka people have the notion of “farm tenure” but not “land tenure”. They conceive that a Matsigenka person has the right to farm or work on a swidden without necessarily claiming this parcel of land as exclusively his/her own.

Not only are the state’s notions of territory and land rights imposed on these peoples, but so too is the concept of community. The following section is a detailed description of the ways the state uses the legal system to impose a certain notion of “community” to integrate the Amazonian people into the national politico-administrative system.

3.1.2. The Rainforest and the Capitalist Expansion: Internal Colonization

The introduction of the concept of “community” in the rainforest was a result of the encroachment on Indigenous territories by capitalist agents throughout the twentieth century (Rosengren 1987). This capitalist expansion was a process enhanced by the *internal colonization* process of the rainforest or “*la Nueva*

Conquista de la Selva” (García 1994; Santos 1996). In Peru, this colonization process was intensely promoted by the twice-elected President of the Peruvian Republic, Belaunde Terry (1964-1968 and 1980-1985). Belaunde was convinced that opening the rainforest to colonization was the only way that urban and Andean regions would overcome their acute socioeconomic problems (Rosengren 1987). The rainforest was gradually integrated into the national economy through a directed process of internal colonization that consisted of the following activities: opening up roads to the Amazon, expanding the agricultural frontiers, facilitating the incursion of gold, lumber and oil companies, and encouraging internal migration (Garcia 1994; Rosengren 1987).

The political colonization of the rainforest was done predominantly through the building of roads to facilitate access while creating incentives that promoted internal migration from people of the Andean highlands to the rainforest. For instance, in the Manu Province, within Madre de Dios Region, particularly during the 1940s, as the need for labour force for building roads, for logging enterprises, *haciendas* plantations, and mining industries increased, waves of Andean *campesinos* (Indigenous farmers) migrated to the region (Llosa and Nieto 2003). Along with them, from other rural areas and/or cities, came *mestizos* in search of land and job opportunities. Because these immigrants were the main protagonists of the colonizing process into the Amazonian forest, they were called *colonos*, implying that they occupied “uninhabited” land (ibid). Through a “Western” notion, the Amazon was perceived as “wilderness” space, that is, an “uninhabited,” “pure” nature, a colonial way of seeing and using space (Cooke 2004). The “Amazon colonization” process and the emergence of *Colonos* in the social structure mirrors the ways in which notions of “nature”, “wilderness” and its forms of “management” by the Peruvian state are bound up with dominating colonial/patronizing perceptions of space, places, resources and peoples.

Thus, among the various disastrous consequences of the colonization process of the Peruvian Amazon was the putative invasion of Indigenous territories by *colonos*. Further, *colonos* became a significant population that formed the villages in areas such as Manu, and the majority of these people

acquired land facilitated by the state (Llosa and Nieto 2003, the author's translation). *Colonos* embodied the internal colonization process in the Amazonian region; therefore, under the rainforest inhabitants' eyes, they are often identified as the "invaders" of their homeland. For example, Juan, a Matsigenka man from Urubamba region shared with me that he migrated to PNM because in Urubamba the land was invaded by *colonos*, something that under his eyes could not happen in PNM.²⁷

As the encroachment of the land by outsiders took place, the state began organizing the rainforest space through a legal regulatory process of land ownership. Rosengren (1987) explains that two laws of Native Communities (*Comunidades Nativas*) were created for the rainforest region during the 1970s –in 1974 the Native Communities Law (*D.L. 20 653*)²⁸ and in 1978 the Native Communities Law (*D.L. 22 175*).²⁹ Put differently, through these laws the concept of Native Community (*Comunidad Nativa*) was introduced for the first time into the rainforest to legally recognize land rights for Indigenous peoples and others. Prior to these regulations, Indigenous peoples from the Amazonian region literally did not exist for the state; indeed, they had no rights. Mr. Armadillo, the director of the Indigenous rights NGO CEDIA, who participated in the process of land titling through establishing *Comunidades Nativas* throughout the Peruvian Rainforest, spoke of the messy process of land titling when he explained that before 1974 rainforest Natives (*Nativos*) did not have rights under the Peruvian laws:

The only news we had about the Indigenous population in the rainforest was about their bellicosity and resistance to the Amazonian colonization process...[The Natives] were constantly attacking the Army soldiers who were building the road for penetrating the jungle...they were saying that the '*colonos*' were

²⁷ Juan is the real name of this person.

²⁸ *Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Promoción Agropecuaria de las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva.*

²⁹ *Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Desarrollo Agrario de las regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva.*

invading their territories but in fact, the “Native” (*Nativo*) did not legally exist at all!³⁰

Furthermore, as I discovered when I spoke with the IANP chief and the CEDIA’s director (Dr. Seri and Mr. Armadillo), the Amazon *Comunidad Nativa* was an invented concept. *Comunidad Nativa* was arbitrarily imposed onto the Amazon Indigenous peoples by policy makers from far away Lima, without an inkling of the Amazon inhabitants’ existence. Unaware of the fact that Andean and Amazonian Indigenous peoples’ societies were substantially different, the state replicated the Andean model of community and mechanically and legalistically transferred it onto the Amazonian societies. The notion of “community” was a foreign concept for the Amazonian inhabitants, imposed on them as the only legal form of access and control of land. The recognition of land rights came only after a *Comunidad Nativa* was legally recognized by the state, which was a legal process that the “community” rather than the state had to put forward.

It appears that the state’s imposition of the notion of community on the indigenous groups was a result of the lack of knowledge that existed about the Amazonian peoples. Until the 1970s, most anthropological studies in Peru were about the Andean peoples; indeed, the government assumed that the Amazonian peoples’ land use was equal to the Andes. Thus, as a consequence of ignoring the Amazonian social organization and use of the land and ecosystems, the Law of Native Communities led to a process of irreversible transformation, provoking severe disruptions in the Amazonian peoples’ livelihoods. For instance, most of the Amazonian peoples were semi-nomadic and used extensive land regions for subsistence. The establishment of *Comunidades Nativas* led to the creation of community borders that were drastically narrower than what forest inhabitants

³⁰ estaban dando noticia respecto de su belicosidad por un lado, su resistencia por otro lado, al proceso de colonización que en esa década se estaba dando en la amazonía...Entonces las únicas noticias que se conocían de las poblaciones Indígenas es que eran belicosos, paraban atacando a los ejércitos que construían las carreteras de penetración hacia la selva, que estaban peleando y reclamando con los colonos, porque se decía que estos colonos estaban invadiendo sus tierras, cuando en la ley el Nativo no existía para nada.

were accustomed to. Hence, this restriction caused huge subsistence problems for the forest inhabitants, not only fragmenting their space and limiting their mobilization, but also disrupting ancient interethnic trading relationships.

Moreover, through the implementation of school communities and primary health care services, the state, along with the missionaries' support, promoted the emergence of new settlements. The Christian missionaries, whose main purpose was to evangelize the "Natives", infiltrated the Amazonian forests, setting up basic health and education services in select areas. By facilitating basic health and education services not supplied by the state, the missionaries encouraged Amazonian Indigenous families and clans to move nearby. In this way, the missionaries fostered the establishment of new settlement centers called *Centros Poblados* (village centers).

However, settling in these fixed areas usually meant that the Indigenous families and clans became sedentary, maintaining their hunting and fishing and agricultural practices around the new settlements' areas. As a result, the rise of local population density often caused severe depletion of resources, and contact with outsiders engendered devastating epidemics among the forest people (Johnson 2003).

In addition to the *Ley de Comunidades Nativas*, two laws (that contradicted the former) were approved between 1975 and 1979. The first law was the Wild Forest and Fauna Law, *Ley Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre* (D.L. 22147,) that mandates that all forests in Peru are state property, hence denying any specific rights to the rainforest *Comunidades Nativas*. The second law, a modification of the *Ley de Comunidades Nativas* (D.L. 22175), mandates that the *Comunidades Nativas* can only have land title upon agricultural land areas and not on forests. Indeed, these laws, as Mr. Armadillo expressed, were "a slap on the face of the Amazonian people"; the state ignored the fact that forest inhabitants based their livelihood on the use of the forest *holistically* rather than as a primarily agricultural system, which was the Andean economic model. The Amazonian inhabitants' economic imperative is based on hunting, fishing, gathering as well as agriculture.

In sum, the friction on both territoriality and Indigenous land rights as a result of the creation of *Comunidades Nativas* reflects the colonial relationship between the Peruvian state and the Indigenous peoples. As Surrallés and García (2005) state, the legal recognition of Indigenous land has occurred within legal frameworks based on spatial concepts that are often at odds with the concepts of people's process of ethnic space "constructions". The colonial approach embedded in the national legal system put barriers in place to alternative relationship models between people and their environment. This colonial approach of domination and exclusion has also been replicated in the Peruvian biodiversity conservation process particularly during the 1970s, by creating protected areas that disregard the contemporary socioeconomic needs of the Indigenous peoples. As Dr. Seri (2005), the chief of Protected Areas, eloquently expressed:

There is an ongoing issue of intercultural relationships between the modern state and the traditional peoples ...and there is no clear bridge...I feel that there is a huge gap...if the state does not lay out that bridge, this is a situation of exclusion...³¹

3.2. "Pristine Nature"? The Case of Manu National Park: A Deep Contradiction

As a result of the expansion of capitalism through the incursion of logging companies and fur traders from the 1940s to 1970s, Manu's resources were intensely exploited (Llosa and Nieto 2003). Shepard et al. (in press) talk about Celestino Malinowski, a taxidermist and naturalist of Polish background who explored Madre de Dios extensively. Shepard et al. explain how, as a result of the intense and arbitrary logging and hunting within Manu, Malinowski had warned the Peruvian authorities about the alarming situation in Manu (Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohl, and Yu in press). Due in part to Celestino's influence, by

³¹ Hay un tema de relaciones interculturales del Estado moderno con los pueblos tradicionales que no está resuelto. ... y no se ha tendido un puente digamos suficientemente claro ... Yo siento que ahí hay un vacío grande. ... si el estado no tiende ese puente digamos es una situación de exclusión ...

the 1960's environmentalists assessed the “urgent” need of protecting Manu (Gray et. al. 1998; Llosa and Nieto 2003). Accordingly, in 1968 Manu was declared a Reserved Zone and in 1973 Manu National Park was created (Shepard et al. in press).

Located in south-eastern Peru, between Cusco and Madre de Dios region, Manu National Park became one of the first national parks in this country. The Park's area is the Western fringe of the rainforest basin, which is the “world's biodiversity epicenter” (Terborgh 1999), meaning that is considered one of the most biologically diverse ecosystem in the globe. The Park covers 1,533 million hectares of land (it is approximately the size of Belize) and is the core zone of the Manu Biosphere Reserve (MBR), one of the largest protected areas of tropical rainforest in the world (Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohl, and Yu in press). The Manu Reserve has other two zones: the Tourism Zone (formerly the Manu Reserve Zone) and the Cultural Zone, which is the buffer area (see Figure 2).

Due to a pervasiveness of colonial Western notions of “nature” as “pristine”, the formation of Manu National Park was premised on the *deep contradiction* of needing to be an “untouchable” forest, when in fact, it is home to various Indigenous populations (Shepard and Izquierdo 2003; Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohl, and Yu in press). The largest group among the Indigenous inhabitants of Manu is the Matsigenka people (Matsigenkas means “the people”) who belong to the Arawak ethno-linguistic group. The Matsigenka people, among other ethnic groups – which include the Yora (Nahua), Mascho and Mashco-Piro, Piro – are semi-nomadic and have been inhabiting and moving through the Manu and Madre de Dios watersheds since before 200 BC (Huertas and Garcia 2003).

3.2.1. Matsigenka “Communities” in Manu

According to Shepard and Izquierdo (2003), the Matsigenka population consist of approximately twelve thousand people who dwell largely in the Urubamba, Upper Madre de Dios, Manu River basins in south-eastern Peru. Within PNM's core protected area there are two Matsigenka communities: the

Tayakome and Yomibato settlements with a combined population of approximately 420 (census 2005 by Ohi et al. in press).

The Matsigenka schoolteacher of Tayakome (Mauro) – a Matsigenka from the Urubamba area who in 1981 was hired by missionaries and brought to Tayakome – told me that prior to the creation of the park, the Matsigenka people moved freely and their homes were widely spread around the Madre de Dios watershed.³² The Matsigenka people's pattern had been to live in small, scattered, hidden and very autonomous settlements centered on the household and residence group with a strong inclination to matrilineal residence (Izquierdo and Shepard 2003).³³

Through ethnographic research, Johnson (2003) – one of the most respected anthropologists studying with the Matsigenka people in Peru – shows that the Matsigenka people constitute a *family level society* that has "... little economic incentive to form large groups, certainly not the village-sized settlements missionaries, the government, and development agencies are promoting..." (2003: 85). A schoolteacher of a Matsigenka community from the Urubamba region complained that "They [the Matsigenka people] can't handle community" (Johnson 2003:141). Johnson's research affirms that the Matsigenka people's pattern has been to avoid violence, fleeing to marginal forest areas for protection; as a result, they have occupied refuge zones such as Manu. Johnson (2003) asserts that the Matsigenka settlement pattern was reinforced by the slaving raids period that, as in other forest communities, the Matsigenka people were subject to during and after the rubber boom of the late nineteenth century. Therefore, for generations many of the Matsigenka families remained in isolation for fear of disease (measles, influenza, and other epidemics) that devastated the Matsigenka people in the 1950s and 1960s due to contact with Peruvians and Euro-Americans (also see Shepard 2003).

³² Mauro is the real name of the Matsigenka schoolteacher of Tayakome.

³³ Other alternative names are Machiguenga, Matsigenka, Matsigenka, Kogapakori, Kugapakori, Anti (Izquierdo and Shepard 2003; Johnson 2003; Rosengren 1987)

Alternatively, some members of this Indigenous group have maintained sporadic contact with the *Virakocha* (Euro-Americans), which means the “civilized people or whites”, “lord” or “ruler”, under the expectation of obtaining commercial goods, such as axes, knives and some clothes (Shepard 1998).³⁴ In the early 1960s, this interaction became permanent for some of the Matsigenka people with the arrival of the Protestant missionaries who settled an area known as Tayakome, with the express purpose of converting the Indigenous people.

The missionaries played a paramount role in the formation of Tayakome and Yomibato settlements, which in 1988 became the only two recognized Native Communities within PNM. The right to land tenure of these communities, however, is ambiguous due to the contradictory laws governing land title in parks. Table 1 highlights the contradiction between the 1978 law versus the 1990 law. In Chinchiquiti (2000), he asserts that Tayakome was created by the concerted effort of the Protestant missionaries and the *curacas* (power brokers). *Curacas* were brokers whose authority originated from the missionaries (Rosenberg 1987). They were the link between the Matsigenka families and the missionaries. A *Curaca*, as Shepard (1998) explains, is a dominating figure that rules populations to his own advantage. The *curaca*'s socioeconomic power derives from his ability to mediate between the Indigenous population and the economic or political relationships with Western world agents, and from his knowledge of the Matsigenka and the official languages (ibid).

In Manu, missionaries and powerful *curacas* convinced many of the Matsigenka families, who were spread around the Manu area, to migrate to Tayakome settlement. More specifically, Vitaliano convinced Matsigenka families to move to Tayakome by promising them access to goods such as iron tools, primary health care, and education (Chinchiquiti 2000). All these goods

³⁴ Johnson (2003) explains that *Viracocha* comes from the Quechua term *Wira Kocha*, an Inka creator god. In Matsigenka mythology *Virakochas* are demons whose larger group live under the earth. According to Matsigenka cosmology the *Inkakuna* spirits were excavating in search for gold. One day, while they were working, many *Virakochas*' heads came out and the *Inkakuna* spirits could not stop them. The *Viracochas* who are on earth are not demons but are evil.

and services were supplied by the missionaries whose main purpose was to Christianize and civilize the “savages” (Llosa and Nieto 2003, my translation). Many families came from Yomibato, an area where the Matsigenka people have been living for a long time. During the 1960s, some families from Yomibato came to Tayakome to run away from Yaminahuas’ attacks. Indeed, ethnic attacks from groups such as the Yaminahuas, Kogapakoris and Amahuacas, were also a factor for the congregation of Matsigenka families at the Tayakome settlement.

The missionaries not only built a school and provided educational and medical services, but they also created a fur trading economy that supplied the Matsigenka people with commercial goods and introduced them to guns for hunting (Shepard 2002; Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohl, and Yu in press).

More importantly, the missionaries created a fur trading economy to finance their own living in Manu. The Matsigenka people brought them fur animals of alligator, otters, boas and others, to exchange for Western goods and guns. Mauro, the Tayakome’s schoolteacher, told me that in the 1960’s, “with the help of Matsigenka people, the missionaries built a private airport. This airport facilitated the commercialization between the missionaries and the “*gringos*’ [foreigners] who came to buy animal skins”.³⁵

Years later this fur trading economy was abruptly disrupted by the establishment of Manu National Park. The change from an intense desire for capitalist expansion to the “urgent” wish to “conserve” the “pristine” space of Manu illustrates the ways in which colonial views and interest in a place shift over time.

³⁵ In this context, the term “*gringos*” refers to the foreigners who arrive to Peru predominantly from North America or Europe.

Table 1: Peruvian Laws Pertaining to the Status of Indigenous People in Parks (Source: Shepard et al. in press: 15-16, used with permission, September 2007).

Year	Law name	Law number	Summary and relevance to Native populations
1974	Ley de Comunidades Nativas	Decreto Legislativo N° 20653	Law of Native Communities: establishes basis for legal land title for Indigenous communities throughout Peruvian Amazon.
1975	Ley Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre	Decreto Legislativo N° 21147	Forestry and Wildlife Law: general policy for conservation and protected areas; Native inhabitants of protected areas are not mentioned.
1978	Ley de Comunidades Nativas y de Desarrollo Agrario en las Regiones de Selva y Ceja de Selva	Decreto Legislativo N° 22175	Revised Law of Native Communities: caveats and restrictions to the 1974 legislation; notably, legal land title in parks is not allowed, though Native communities can remain in parks if they do not interfere with conservation objectives.
1990	Código del Medio Ambiente y los Recursos Naturales	Decreto Legislativo N° 613	Code for the Environment and Natural Resources: Native communities <i>can</i> receive legal land title in parks, as long as they do not interfere with the conservation objectives (in contradiction to above).
1994	International Labor Organization Convention 169 on Indigenous Peoples	Ratified as R.L. 26253	ILO Convention 169: Requires participation by Indigenous peoples in administration, use, and protection of natural resources; forced resettlement of Native people is illegal.
1997	Ley de Áreas Naturales Protegidas (ANP)	Ley N° 26834	Law of Natural Protected Areas: "special use" zones permitted in national parks where inhabitants who pre-date the park can practice land use; but legal land title <i>not</i> permitted.
1999	Estrategia Nacional para las ANP – Plan Director (INRENA 1999)	Decreto Supremo N° 010-99-AG	Strategy for the implementation of the 1997 Protected Areas Law (above)
2001	Reglamento de la Ley de ANP	Decreto Supremo N° 038-2001-AG	Implementation of the 1997 Protected Areas Law (above)

3.2.2. The “Original Sin” of Protected Areas

Since the creation of Manu National Park, the Indigenous peoples inhabiting the area have lived under tremendous restrictions enforced by often abusive local authorities. A significant number of Matsigenka families have responded by a massive exodus from the park. In the words of Mr. Armadillo, CEDIA’s director: “In those times [1970s] the ecologists were more royalist than a king!”³⁶ In other words, they established a very rigid environmentalist conservation policy that completely disregarded the forest inhabitants. This “for-trees” environmentalist approach to conservation, i.e., one that does not account for the social and economic aspects of conservation, I refer to as the “the original sin of protected areas”. Dr. Seri, the chief of ANP in Peru, to whom I refer earlier, used this metaphor in one interview to refer to the lack of compensation for the restrictions placed on the Indigenous people’s livelihood when creating a protected area.³⁷ Indeed, the Matsigenka people living within PNM were abruptly prohibited from using guns and from commercializing any resources from the forest and remained in almost complete isolation. Through the formation of the Park they were effectively forced to live only on traditional subsistence activities, which included hunting with bows and arrows, fishing, and small scale agriculture (*la chacra*). During the first years of the park’s creation, the park guards (*Parqueteros*) used an extremely repressive approach as they arbitrarily interpreted and enforced rules that frequently violated the Matsigenka people’s human rights (Shepard et al. in press). For instance, the Matsigenka people were suddenly prohibited from bringing iron tools, guns and other goods into the park, and their movement in and out of the park’s new borders were regulated. In

³⁶ los ecologistas de entonces eran más Paspistas que el Papa!

³⁷ From my understanding, the “original sin” metaphor used by Dr. Seri means that the gap/exclusion of a social component (peoples) of the conventional “for-trees” conservation approach is a “sin.” Beyond the fact that Christianity has highly influenced the Peruvians, language expressions and belief, there is not any relationship between Christianity and the context of conservation on the use of the “original sin” metaphor.

words of Mr. Peluso (2005), a Peruvian conservationist who worked with the Matsigenka people and heard their complaints,

There wasn't any consultation with the people living in Manu, they just put a park. Their guns, even their axes were taken away...the elders speak of having been abused. They put a control booth [in Tayakome settlement]...Since then, the Matsigenka people have lived without wanting to do conservation because conservation is associated with *División General de Áreas Forestales de Flora y Fauna and INRENA* and they have a vertical relationship, they do not work with them [the Indigenous people], even today there is no consultation...If a woman or girl is escaping from her abusive husband, the park guards capture her and bring her back to the house.³⁸

The rules about the rights and duties of Indigenous Peoples in PNM, particularly upon the establishment of the Park, were not clear, hence, abuses of these people by the local authorities (park guards) have been uncomfortably numerous. Soon after the establishment of the park, the missionaries were evicted and half of Matsigenka families from Tayakome left with them. The eviction of the missionaries, as a result of the establishment of the park, created a vacuum in basic services for the Matsigenka people who remained in Tayakome (Shepard 2002; Shepard and Izquierdo 2003). For more than twenty years, the Park's officials did not implement any medical or educational basic services for the residents of PNM. The policy of the Park's officials was "to keep the Indigenous population away from Western culture with the purpose of preserving the 'noble savage'", under the pre-conceived notion that they were all "uncontacted people" who "joyfully live in complete harmony with Nature" (Chinchiquiti 2000: 25-26, my

³⁸ No se hace una consulta a la gente que vive dentro del Manu, se pone un parque nacional encima. Se les quita las armas, se les quitan las hachas incluso, los Matsigenkas viejos cuentan esto, que se les quitó y se les abusó, en otras palabras, se puso el puesto de vigilancia [en Tayakome]...Entonces, desde entonces los Matsigenkas crecen o viven sin tener ganas de hacer conservación, porque la conservación va relacionada con la División General de Áreas Forestales de Flora y Fauna e INRENA o sea que eran verticales, no se trabajaba con ellos, a ellos no se les consultaba, a ellos hasta el día de hoy...Si una niña, o una mujer escapando de su esposo que es abusivo que es Matsigenka también, los guarda parques la capturan y la regresan a su lugar.

translation). Additionally, as Chinchiquiti (ibid) states, the Matsigenka people within the PNM have been excluded from any conservation-educational program. Even more interesting is the existence of divergent opinions among the Matsigenka people about the creation of PNM. Some accept the idea of having the park while others oppose it. Mauro (2005), for instance, agrees with the Park idea but has some reservations:

The park situation needs to improve with calm and education. The world is changeable and one needs to change with it. We are like plants that if cut nothing is left, for that reason we keep what we love...Progress is not destruction of our forest. Everything is going to grow. We have to keep what is useful to us.³⁹

Those who oppose the park feel that the park has not generated any direct benefits for them (Chinchiquiti 2000). They feel that they have received precarious educational services and they can not interact freely with people out of PNM. In fact, until late 1990s, most Matsigenka did not have citizenship status because of the isolation consequence of being ignored and forgotten by the state. In general, the Matsigenka people have constantly complained that the park neglects their needs. These complaints generally have been ignored by park officials. Indigenous organizations have described such a model of conservation as “*conservacionismo de museo*” or “cultural conservatism” (Rummenhoeller and Helberg 1992; Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohl, and Yu in press), which ignores forest inhabitants’ rights, and their agency for self-governance and self-development. Further, primary health care had not been provided consistently until the 1990s, and the Matsigenka people have had to rely on sporadic donations by outsiders (researchers, some NGOs and park officials) as their main source of consumer goods.

³⁹ En relación al parque, las cosas hay que mejorarlas con calma, con educación. El mundo es cambiante y se tiene que ir cambiando con él. Nosotros somos como plantas que si la cortan se queda sin nada, por eso nosotros mantenemos lo que queremos. La superación no es destrucción de nuestros bosques. Con el tiempo todo va ha crecer. Nosotros tenemos que mantener lo que nos sirve.

For the Matsigenka families who left with the missionaries, life was not much better. As Mauro shared with me, soon after the formation of the Park, there was an exodus of Matsigenka families from Tayakome who were all convinced by the missionaries and the schoolteacher Martin that they were going to “The land where they will see God and they will have a better life and freedom”.⁴⁰ Such exodus was also a reaction fueled by the highly abusive park guards (*Parqueteros*) who, during the 1970s, installed a control station in Tayakome settlement. Mauro explained that these families, and in some cases children, moved to the Camisea river and formed the Segakiato community. Such families had been under immense pressure because of the ongoing scarcity and land struggles. With great frustration the Tayakome schoolteacher (2005) expressed that:

These people were lied to by ‘evils’. Over there [Camisea], there are all kinds of pressure and one has to work for money to survive, while here [in PNM] one works for love of the land. Here there is abundant land, one can work and live in calm.⁴¹

The above quote makes evident that the establishment of the park has played a double role in the Matsigenka peoples’ life. On the one hand, by forcing them into nearly complete isolation, the park’s creation has greatly decelerated the Matsigenka families’ integration into the national economy (Shepard, personal communication, February 2005). Yet, on the other hand, the park has also diminished the competition for resources, as there are fewer encroachments by outsiders for Manu land and its resources (such as woodcutters, gold seekers and mining). However, as described in the following chapters, since the 1980s the emergence of new forms of capitalist forces, such as green-capitalism

⁴⁰ Cuando se creo el parque un grupo de familias se fueron con los de Instituto Linguisitco de Verano, junto con el profesor Martin se fueron a Segakiato. Martin les dijo que tendrían mejor vida , mas libertad "van a ver a Dios".

⁴¹ En realidad fueron engañados por Satanás. Halla existe mas presión de todo tipo. Haya se tiene que trabajar por dinero para vivir. Acá se puede trabajar por amor a la tierra. Aquí existe mucha tierra y se puede trabajar y vivir tranquilo.

embodied by the “ecotourism” agencies, other forms of political and economic encroachment, and asymmetric relationships, have been emerging in PNM.

One of the most striking findings was that there is no formalized anthropological policy or plan in Manu National Park (Rummenholler, personal communication, April 2006). In 2005, the anthropological policies of the Park for its residents were still under revision. Thus, there was no legal political plan being applied to work with the Indigenous peoples residents of PNM. In fact, multiple interviewees repeated that “The park authorities don’t know what to do with the Indigenous peoples in the Manu Park!” Furthermore, based on “protectionist arguments” fostered by scientists, such as Terborgh,⁴² whose view holds significant power and influence on PNM’s officials, continuing rumours about resettlement of Matsigenka people out of the park represent an ongoing hidden agenda among government officials.

However, since 1997 government officials and NGOs have attempted to overcome the “original sin” of protected areas (PA). There are experiences such as the *Communal Reserves (Reservas Comunes)* that, through participatory conservation policy, aims to harmonize the objectives of cultural development of Indigenous people with the conservation of PA (Ohl 2005; Shepard et al. in press). Some of the recommendations of the 1997 Park’s anthropological policies plan proposal, which emphasizes the need for improved health and education access for the Indigenous population as well as their participation in the national park management, have been adopted. Although limited, ambiguous and incipient, the PNM management hopes to compensate the Matsigenka residents of PNM, and the creation of a Matsigenka-owned ecotourism lodge enterprise is concrete evidence of this. The lessons, challenges, fragilities and contradictions arising from the process of development and negotiations of the Indigenous community-based ecotourism enterprise in PNM are described and analyzed in Chapter 5.

⁴² As explained earlier in this Chapter, John Terborgh asserts that the increasing Westernization of Indigenous people living in Manu represents a threat to forest conservation and their relocation is imminent (Holt 2005; Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohl, and Yu in press).

In sum, the consequences of the Peruvian historical process of colonization and capitalism expansion are ongoing issues in the recreation of asymmetric relationships between state and Indigenous peoples and their land. Based on such colonial/patronizing state approach, the politics of land management and biodiversity conservation have prevailed by excluding Indigenous peoples. By imposing foreign concepts of land tenure and the “Native Community” in the Amazon, the state has created socioeconomic and political disruption. While in the conservation strategy predominates an “for-trees and for-monkey” environmental protectionism, the Indigenous inhabitants of the concerned areas have been dismissed, causing negative implications for their wellbeing. The case of Manu National Park (PNM), where an imposed protected area (PA) ignores the forest inhabitants’ rights, clearly illustrates the negative consequences of nature-based conservation.

Despite the positive outcomes of Indigenous peoples’ struggle for the recognition of their land rights in Peru (e.g., Communal Reserves), the processes of negotiation among state, Indigenous organizations and international agencies/agreements requires long-term institutional commitment. Meanwhile, this negotiation process is entangled in tensions and frictions among the multiple stakeholders involved in green forms of capitalism expansion such as ecotourism.

In the following Chapter I describe ecotourism from the perspective of multiple actors involved in Manu tourism industry. Their narratives mirror the contradictory nature of ecotourism. The Amazon is “re-discovered” through a green form of capitalism, and despite its discourse of benefiting the “local people”, in reality such contradictory practices perpetuate exclusion and exploitation of the Indigenous peoples.

Chapter 4: Green Capitalism and the Two “Ecos”: The Politics and Entangled Nature of “Ecotourism” and the “Economy” in the Southern Peruvian Rainforest⁴³



Figure 5: A private tourist lodge.



Figure 6: A Casa Matsigenka lodge building.

Peru’s cultural and geographic richness has been turned into one of the main resources strategically used by national government officials to foster tourism activities with the promise of achieving modernity (Salas and Chavez 2000; Stronza 2002). Peru is a culturally diverse country that includes

⁴³ I am using quotation marks with ecotourism to imply that this is a tricky concept tied to multiple meanings, politics and conflicts.

approximately ninety-six different ethnic groups (Herrera 1989) and a total population of 27.2 million (INEI 2005). This Andean country is also ecologically diverse, cited as the third most “mega diverse” country in the world (Ohl 2005). Peruvian territory consists of one of the most plentiful and heterogeneous ecosystems in the world. Its landscape consists of the tropical Andes, one of the most threatened environmental hot spots on this planet, in addition to one of the most unique wildlife tropical zones, and one of the largest rainforests on Earth (700,000 km²) (Herrera 1989). The combination of Peru’s ancient history and abundant flora and fauna has been successfully promoted to attract the international tourism industry in South America. According to Chavez (2004), an expert on ecotourism, Peru’s tourism industry has become the second-largest contributor of foreign currency after mining. Chavez (2004) states that tourism represents an influx of one million tourists per year; generates approximately US \$1.2 million in profit annually, and sustains 500,000 jobs (directly and indirectly).

As an important aspect of my research centered on tourism in Manu National Park (PNM), I based part of my fieldwork in Cusco, where all tour agencies selling packages are located. Cusco is the epicentre of the Peruvian tourism industry. Known to the Incas as the “navel of the world” and the “dwelling place of the gods”, and the capital of the Incan Empire, Cusco also boasts several other signifiers. Cusco retains the official title of the “archaeological capital of America”, and has been nominated as a “Cultural World Heritage Site” by UNESCO (1983). Most important, while Cusco is a national treasure on its own, its value is greatly enhanced as a gateway to Machu Picchu – the Mecca of Peruvian tourism. As the most revered and coveted tourism destination in Peru, the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu is the pride of the “local” people (*cusqueños*).

Further, as a Natural World Heritage Site (UNESCO 1983), approximately 70% of the total tourists who visit Peru visit Cusco-Machu Picchu (Vásquez and Injoque 2003), making this Incan Empire city one of South America’s most popular tourism destinations (Jenkins 2003). According to

studies conducted by PromPeru in 2000,⁴⁴ 81% of international tour operators associated Peru with cultural and historical tourism, and name Machu Picchu as the most important attraction in Peru (INRENA 2003).

Walking through the narrow stone roads of downtown Cusco and the Machu Picchu ruins, I felt as if I was transported hundreds of years back in time. What suddenly brings one back into the twenty-first century, though, is the Western tourists. In downtown Cusco and particularly in the Incan Ruins during the height of the tourism season (the dry season from May to October); it can be challenging to find a “local” (*Cusqueño*) on the streets. These places are almost permanently inundated by waves of tourists from around the globe, “*gringos*”, as the “locals” (*Cusqueños*) call them.

4.1. “Discover the Peruvian Amazon”: From the Incan Trails to the “Amazonian Paradise”

As I explained earlier, the Manu Biosphere Reserve (MBR) located in Madre de Dios Region is one of the world’s largest protected areas of rainforests, the core zone of which is Manu National Park. This protected area is accessible from Cusco. As some persuasive brochures assure, MBR is “...simply the best wildlife destination in the Amazon”. To quote a carefully worded tourist pamphlet, it takes “...just forty-five minutes by plane...” to get to Manu from Cusco city, or, in other words, a quick trip to “paradise” in less than one hour. In some flyers an adventurous taste of “nature” is offered, i.e., “nature” equals adventure and Manu equals an “...Amazonian paradise...with spectacular fauna and flora...” (Expediciones Vilca’s brochure). However, as a tour guide book warns, flying rather than taking the bus dramatically increases expenses (charter flight cost: US \$300-\$400) (see Jenkins 2003). Thus, only fairly wealthy tourists could charter a plane directly to and from the Manu Biosphere (Groom, Podolsky, and Munn 1991).

⁴⁴ Comisión de Promoción del Perú (PromPeru) is a branch of the Ministry of International Commerce and Tourism in Peru (MINCETUR) directly in charge of promoting, strengthening and marketing the Peruvian tourism industry.

Within the Peruvian tourism industry of the 1980s, nature tourism, adventure tourism, ecotourism, and other forms of nature-based tourism emerged and co-existed almost interchangeably. During the 1980s, ecotourism appeared on the market as an alternative approach to tourism that commoditized and marketed Peruvian Amazon as pristine nature. Literature on sustainable tourism in Peru states that ecotourism is gaining importance within the Peruvian tourism industry; however, some studies are more optimistic than others about the growth of ecotourism. According to (Vásquez and Injoque 2003), despite Peru's great natural attractions, when compared to one of the most popular ecotourism destinations such as Costa Rica, Peru still lacks the required infrastructure to fully provide ecotourism services. These Peruvian authors state that the ecotourism sector composes a minuscule portion of the tourism industry in South America; by 2002, only 1% of the American ecotourism market visited Peru (Vásquez and Injoque 2003). Also, the ecotourism industry is very small within the Peruvian tourism industry. PromPeru estimates that only 3% of international tourists visiting Peru practice nature tourism, and, on a large scale, none of the Amazonian forests are ranked at the top of the list of most visited sites by international tourists (INRENA 2003).

On the contrary, the studies of Chavez (2005) and Stronza (2001b; 2002) present a more optimistic outlook of ecotourism in Peru. For instance, Chavez (2005) estimates that 47% of the tourists visiting Peru do ecotourism activities. Stronza states that, due to the fact that ecotourism is the fastest growing sector within the global tourism market, Peru is becoming a global leader among ecotourism destinations, competing with consolidated international ecotourists' favourite sites such as Belize and Costa Rica.

Stronza (2002) explains that in the 1990's there was an "ecotourism boom" in Madre de Dios province, located in the southern part of the Peruvian rainforest. My findings suggest that, due to the over growing mass tourism industry in Cusco, new agencies started to expand the market by offering tour packages to the "Paradisiacal Amazon". The *Cusqueño*-based tourism market was first established by offering adventure tourism packages to Manu National

Park (PNM). During the mid-1980s in Madre de Dios, there was a growth in nature-based tourism/ecotourism to rainforest protected areas. Since then, the amount of “ecotourism”/“nature-based” infrastructure, such as lodges and camp sites in and surrounding areas the Manu Biosphere Reserve, has multiplied tremendously due to increasing demand by foreign tourists.

However, as evidenced from my interviews with multiple stakeholders of PNM tourism market, ecotourism has become a commodified label that is arbitrarily used by tour agencies. Put simply, ecotourism is a buzzword that attracts international tourists who may assume that tour agencies using the “ecotourism” label practice the principles of ecotourism designated by the International Ecotourism Society (see Chapter 1 for descriptions of these principles) or other such organizations.

4.2 “Ecotourism”: Panacea for Development and Conservation?

But, what is ecotourism? As stated in the literature review section of this research, there are various understandings and ways of practicing ecotourism. Beyond anything, ecotourism is a set of social relations and there is no “globally standardized” set of practices of “real ecotourism” (Frohlick, personal communication, February, 2007). Within environmental anthropology, ecotourism is seen as a “*Special* kind of market integration...” for rural communities, because “...It makes commodities of culture and nature....Tourism involves the sale of one’s identity, one’s culture, one’s home, one’s environment...for outside consumption and enjoyment...” (Stronza 2001b: 3-5). When it is community-based, ecotourism brings the market to the communities, allowing its members to participate in various ways without necessarily disrupting their livelihood and social relations (ibid). However, in aiming to understand ecotourism in the PNM context, I find ecotourism a tricky concept to flesh out because of its multiple meanings enmeshed in politics and highly conflictive contexts.

In a later section I draw upon interviewees’ narratives to describe numerous perceptions of ecotourism held by tourism industry actors in Manu National Park (PNM). I am using narratives as a descriptive and fragmented set

of ideas that my interviewees reflected on during our encounters. Despite the varying standpoints of each stakeholder who shared her/his narratives with me, an underlying assumption was unanimous – ecotourism was regarded as the cornerstone for conservation and sustainable development. Regardless of their differing social, economic, or political positions, ecotourism was regarded to be a beneficial practice for all parties but most specifically for the host communities, in this case the Indigenous peoples as residents of PNM. Ironically, the Matsigenka Indigenous leaders living within PNM did not consider the symbolic meanings of ecotourism. For them “ecotourism” was simply a label used by the private tour operators working in the Park. It was not evident to the Matsigenka people I interviewed that ecotourism is potentially concerned with “local” people’s needs, the conservation of their land, and the equitable sharing of benefit among stakeholders in tourism industry. Furthermore, it was clear during my fieldwork that the regional practices of ecotourism were typically at odds with the principles of equity and sustainability, even though these ideals were routinely promoted as foundational at the local/communal, regional, national and international institutional levels by government and non-government organizations. For instance, such an ideology of “sustainable” ecotourism for conservation was repeated to me in Cusco during my interviews with the owners and operators of Manu tourism agencies, as they offered assurances that “local” people were gainfully employed in the Manu region.

In practice, however, few “local” people (rainforest Indigenous) are hired, because the majority of jobs are reserved for *colonos*, who form the predominant group inhabiting this area. Maldonado’s study (2004) estimates that *colonos* represent 68% of the Manu Biosphere Reserve’s Buffer Zone population. In contrast, the rainforest inhabitants of that area represent only 32%. As I explained in the previous Chapter, *colonos* are immigrants from other regions of the country, mostly Quechuas from the highland mountains who are culturally and linguistically closer to the regional dominating social class, which included the tourism elite (owners/operators) of Cusco. While the *colonos* appeared to benefit from such an arrangement, the few jobs available to the men and even

fewer to women in the Manu tourism industry were overwhelmingly casual, low paying, unstable, seasonal, and labour intensive. This has created a racialized class system whereby people living in the villages surrounding the Park are prevented from significantly benefiting from the Manu tourism industry, and from participating in it.

In Chapter 3, I described the creation of the Manu National Park (in 1973) and its historical socioeconomic impact on the local rainforest inhabitants. In 1977, PNM was elevated to the status of a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO, broadening its territory from 1 692 137, 26 to 1 881 200 hectares. As the largest and oldest biosphere in Peru, in 1987 it was declared a Natural World Heritage Site by UNESCO (INRENA and PRO-MANU 2002). The goals of a Biosphere Reserve are conservation, sustainable use, biodiversity, and socioeconomic development of the local population (Kirkby 2004). Consequently, villages within the MBR are bound to follow these conservation and sustainable development goals. While this long-term endeavour must contend with the socioeconomic conditions of extreme poverty among the population within the Manu Reserve, projects such as Pro-Manu are funded by international agencies. This type of project has contributed positively towards conservation goals, yet has yielded insufficient socioeconomic benefits for local peoples (for more details see (Maldonado and Alvarez 2004).

Meanwhile, particularly since the mid-1980s, such environmental protection ideologies and conservation policies have encouraged “sustainable” tourism as a viable economic activity in the Manu region. In the midst of a huge economic crisis, such as high unemployment, environmental degradation, forced sedentarization of rainforest peoples, and overcrowding from internal migration, local peoples in the Manu Reserve are receptive to tourism as one of the most viable alternative strategies for sustainable development (see Pacheco 1997). Hence, ecotourism as a form of “sustainable” tourism has become a *panacea* which government officials, business leaders, conservationists, and “local” people have rallied behind in search of a “sustainable” development that “protects Amazonian nature” and aims to overcome “backwardness”.

However, I found that it was not the local inhabitants of Manu Reserve who were benefiting from the tourism market in Manu. Rather, the Manu tourism market was dominated by foreign/non-local businessmen/businesswomen owners and operators located in the Cusco region. The economic and political power of the non-local (foreigner and *Cusqueño*) tourism business elite was clearly evident. I witnessed national and regional protected area (PA) chiefs being pressured and sued by the elite business people (see last section of this Chapter for more details).

On the other hand, ecotourists who are in search of the “ultimate jungle experience,” are oblivious to their role in perpetuating socioeconomic inequalities at the multiple levels (from local to national). As outsiders, most ecotourists, who come from Europe and North America, are unfamiliar with internal conflicts. Thus, they are commonly unaware of the socio-political dynamics of domination and exploitation in the tourism industry. Ecotourists participate in an ecotourism market that is sold to them under the guise of offering them the opportunity to experience and support the protection of “untouchable nature” and wilderness. Meanwhile, by believing that in choosing to ecotravel they are enacting “...socially and environmentally...” sound tourism, such tourists partake of “...a deceptive cycle that traps both local people and tourists in a discursive [and systemic] cycle of hegemony...” (Cooke, personal communication, April, 2007).

4.3 The Green-market’s Diversity: Narratives of “Ecotourism”

Mr. Palmito (2005), a Peruvian conservation biologist who is also involved in the management of ecotourism businesses in the southern rainforest of Peru, convincingly stated that,

Most people are doing ecotourism to line their own pockets, not for the Indigenous peoples or for the forests, only for their own pockets...this is the reality. So, every time they talk of ecotourism, they are saying that there are two ‘ecotourisms’: eco from economy

and tourism, and eco from ecology and tourism. And most are doing the former.⁴⁵

I present here a series of ecotourism narratives conveyed by the multiple actors who played and continue to play a key role in the PNM ecotourism market. The way I am using the narratives are as fragmented rather than cohesive/logical discourses of ecotourism. The narratives I present draw not only on the stakeholders' ideas and ideals of ecotourism but also on their experiences of and lessons doing ecotourism. For the most part, such narratives produce a highly contradictory concept of ecotourism. For instance, I found that ecotourism is sometimes narrated as a dangerously broad concept that easily fits the discourse and interests of the dominant economic elite groups of the tourism market in the southern region of Peru. Put differently, rather than supporting the "host" communities, the Manu rainforest peoples' interests and livelihood, ecotourism structurally privileges non-local entrepreneurs who are often allied with wealthy and or well-connected foreign business partners.

For practical reasons, I divide these narratives into five key social groups: 1) environmental conservation researchers, 2) tourism business persons (including Indigenous entrepreneurs), 3) Manu tour guides, 4) ecotourists, and 5) government personnel in PA. While these categories are arbitrarily designed to clarify my argument, they are based on the actors' participation in the tourism industry. These divisions, therefore, are not rigid, but are instead often interwoven. For instance, as the narratives show, there are cases of conservationist researchers who are also involved in the ecotourism business, which exemplifies the "entanglement" of the ecos (ecotourism and economies).

⁴⁵ la mayor parte de la gente está entrando a hacer ecoturismo para generar para su bolsillo, ni para los indígenas ni para los bosques, sino es para el bolsillo... Esa es la realidad. Y por eso cada vez que hablaban de eco turismo, decían, o sea, hay dos ecoturismo, eco de economía y turismo, y el otro de ecología y turismo. Y la mayoría está haciendo la primera.

4.3.1. Narratives from a Conservation Researcher

After a few weeks in Cusco and interviewing various people involved in the Manu tourism market, many discussions centered on the crucial involvement of one individual American researcher. This central figure, however, produced controversial opinions among the numerous actors/sectors involved in tourism activities in PNM. His neo-liberal approach to conservation that involves combining scientific research with tourism business was not appreciated by everyone. Criticism of his conservation approach ranged from the mildest complaint of being greedy and manipulative to the harshest criticism that his strategy put profit over people. For these reasons, I decided to briefly explore this neo-liberal conservationist's perspective.

Dr. Aguila had been a researcher in Manu who implemented ecotourism business initiatives as a sustainable economic alternative to support conservation and research in PNM. After almost a year of attempts to interview him, I finally met with Dr. Aguila in his hometown in New York State (USA). During our interview, he elaborated on his experiences of conservation and ecotourism in PNM, Peru. Dr. Aguila explained that, under his influence, in 1984, the Manu Park master plan incorporated "scientific tourism of nature" (*turismo científico de naturaleza*) as a viable economic alternative for income-generation for the Park's system administration. With the purpose of supporting scientific research and biological conservation, he identified his role in the integration of "scientific tourism of nature" in PNM. Dr. Aguila explained that until the middle of the 1990s, by camping on Manu River beaches and establishing the Cocha Cashu Biological Station as the ultimate destination, a blend of scientific, adventure and nature tourism was practiced and promoted in the Tourism Zone (formerly the Reserve Zone of PNM) (see also INRENA 2003).

The narrative of the American researcher about his involvement in the emergence of the Manu tourism market reflects the long-standing exclusionary gap that existed between "ecotourism" enterprises/initiatives and the Manu Indigenous peoples until the 1990s. Dr. Aguila revealed that, because of the assumptions fostered in his research training environment (Cocha Cashu

Biological Station located in PNM), this researcher, like his colleagues, avoided *meeting* Indigenous inhabitants of the area. Because of their questionable assumption that “forest inhabitants destroy Nature’s balance”,⁴⁶ Cosha Cashu biology researchers believe that forest inhabitants are *dangerous* to nature conservation. The training superiors encouraged researchers to avoid meeting with or trading with the Indigenous people in the Park. This situation prevented Dr. Aguila from interacting with the Indigenous people inhabiting PNM during the first decade working in Cocha Cashu. But this changed when Dr. Aguila began a research project located at a biological station deep in the rainforest and a one hour boat trip away from the Cocha Cashu Station. Under these circumstances, the American researcher and his colleagues established a relationship with some Matsigenka families through trading goods for fresh food. Subsequently, in Dr. Aguila’s own words (2006): “...[I] discovered that the Matsigenka people were kind people...and that they were not many...” (for more details on the outcome of this encounter towards community-based ecotourism see Chapter 5).

Dr. Aguila explained that his fondness for scientific tourism of nature in PNM became stronger in early 1980s, after his “tour” throughout the lakes within the PNM. He saw them as great tourism potential. Together with well-known nature travel tour agencies such as Victor Mauro and Ventbird, Dr. Aguila fostered nature tourism and brought groups of tourists, the majority of whom were wealthy foreigners, highly concerned about nature tourism and “nature” conservation in general. Because of Dr. Aguila’s significant involvement in the implementation of tourism activities that went beyond the PNM, this American became a business frontiersman in the MBR. He told me that the entire project hinged on the need to convince wealthy “ecotourists” to visit Manu National Park. For example, Dr. Aguila would guarantee tourists the following: “You will see

⁴⁶ In Chapter 3 I refer to John Terborgh, who has a leading role in the Cocha Cashu biology station and a strong influence in PNM. Terborgh is a conservation biologist who strongly believes that Indigenous peoples’ presence in Parks is a threat to tropical conservation; he states that they should be relocated out of conservation areas (Holt 2005; Shepard et al. in press).

many monkeys for each dollar you paid to visit Manu”. Funding for scientific research was consolidated in the Manu region as a result of such visits.

By facilitating funding, the “know how”, and global networks in nature-based tourism, Dr. Aguila’s initiative was central to the making and growth of Manu tourism. This American businessman and researcher facilitated the establishment of numerous “ecotourism” businesses that later became prevalent in the Manu tourism industry. Dr. Aguila facilitated the implementation of the first lodge in PNM, the Manu Lodge, in 1987. The government institution in charge of Manu during that time (*La Dirección General Forestal y de Fauna*) gave ten hectares of land as a concession to a Cusqueño tourism businessman to build Manu Lodge.⁴⁷

Further, the Cocha Cashu Biological Station’s scientific research dissemination centering on the Manu’s mega biodiversity and “untouchable nature” were instrumental in facilitating the “paradise-like” images of Manu Park within both the international scientific community and tourism industry. Thus, Dr. Aguila contributed to commoditizing Manu as a “Living-Eden” in the international tourism industry.

During our interviews, Dr. Aguila shared his political concern about the Park’s approach to the Indigenous peoples and the politics of tourism. He stated (2006):

There is no right to say to the Matsigenka people that they can only live from subsistence...and be forced to isolate themselves in the Park... when in fact they already had made contacts... they are seen and treated as monkeys by the mostly racist Park authorities...plus it is unfair that the only benefactors of tourism were *Cusqueños* and *Limeños* [people from the Peruvian capital, Lima].⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Previous to INRENA’s creation (between 1994 to 1996), *La Dirección General Forestal y de Fauna* was in charge of the protected areas in Peru.

⁴⁸ No hay derecho de decirle a los Matsigenkas que solo pueden vivir de la subsistencia. Ellos ya tenían contacto...y se han visto obligados a reducir su vida al nivel de subsistencia...[quote continuos in English].

Dr. Aguila was convinced that it was the Indigenous peoples such as the Matsigenka people who hold the key to Manu's future. Maintaining positive relations with them was paramount, he voiced. This scientist believes that the small Matsigenka population in the Park presents not a "danger" but "the solution" for the Park's conservation. Indeed, in 1992, he set in motion an ecotourism venture project with the Matsigenka people in Manu National Park that was subsequently curtailed by the Park's authorities (see Chapter 5 for details).

In sum, through the narrative of the conservation researcher described above, ecotourism refers to a "sustainable" for-profit strategy that, by commoditizing nature, serves as the economic engine behind biodiversity conservation and scientific research. Within this neo-liberal approach to nature and its conservation, the access to social and economic capital is the gateway to participation in this "sustainable" tourism industry (i.e., ecotourism is centered on networking and wealthy "ecotourists"). The concern is centered on scientific research, and the incorporation of Indigenous peoples as benefactors from this "sustainable" industry is proposed much later.

4.3.2 Narratives from Entrepreneurs/business People

While it is not my purpose to describe the array of tourism agencies and their practices in the PNM,⁴⁹ it is important to recognize that not all "ecotourism" agencies are equal. In my research I decided to maintain the anonymity of these tourist agencies (except for the Casa Matsigenka, an Indigenous-owned ecotourism enterprise) because I do not wish to give them publicity considering that my position/stance is primarily to support community-owned/controlled ecotourism.

Upon my arrival in Cusco in 2004, only eight touring agencies bore the status of "official" tour operators for the Tourism zone of PNM. Such status was

⁴⁹ To find descriptions of Manu tourism agencies, lodges and camp sites, tourism attractions and others in PNM see Enriquez and Morante (2004); to find out about the early tourism operators see Groom, Podolsky, and Munn (1991), and Munn (1985).

given through state designation by INRENA's regulatory standards of tourism activities in PA.⁵⁰ In 2000, eight agencies became "official" by signing a three-year agreement with INRENA conceding them the exclusive rights to operate in PNM. Being an official operator was highly advantageous to agencies as it provided a number of privileges. For example, operators are licensed to sell tourism packages directly to tourists, are allotted space to build campsites, and are designated as authorized operators to bring tourists to the Tourism Zone of PNM (formerly the Reserve Zone). Most of these official Manu tour operators were the oldest operating in PNM and had campsites in PNM since mid-1990s; one of them had a campsite and a lodge, the first one built in the Park with the American researcher mentioned above. The eight official Manu tour operators congregated under the auspices of Ecotour Manu Association, an organization integral to dealing with the Park's authorities (INRENA 2003). Each tour agency, nevertheless, had its own history, practices, and experiences of "ecotourism". Each business emphasized a specialization in particular tour packages (such as bird-watching, particular activities of adventure tourism, and others) and targets particular tour clients (backpackers, adventurous tourists, birdwatchers and/or others). Each business has a unique positioning and relationship with the other actors/stakeholders that include international tour agencies, Ecotour Manu ASSC, Park authorities, conservation NGOs, the Casa Matsigenka enterprise, and the local inhabitants of the Manu Biosphere Reserve (rainforest inhabitants and *colonos*).⁵¹ I found that the ways in which several of the Manu agencies became official appeared to have gone beyond formal paper work. That is,

⁵⁰ I found that INRENA's regulation of tourism activities in PNM became stronger/notorious in the mid-1990s with the designation of campsites within PNM. These sites were allocated to experienced tour operators in an attempt to have "less impact on the environment". Previously, these tour operators would bring tourists to the Park, camping wherever they desired, often on the shores of Manu River.

⁵¹ The Casa Matsigenka lodge was the only Indigenous-owned ecotourism enterprise within PNM and was not associated with Ecotour Manu ASSC, as it was controlled by the Matsigenka communities within PNM.

several times I found myself in conversation with individual participants of the Manu tourism market who believed that the oldest agencies reached successful agreements with INRENA to have exclusive rights to operate in PNM because the owners of these agencies had amicable bonds with government officials. Such opinions, of course, may just be rumours; nevertheless, they mirror the high level of friction and mistrust among actors within the Manu ecotourism industry.

My main research purpose was to learn about the Matsigenka ecotourism lodge enterprise (see Chapter 5 for a detailed description and analysis). I was expecting to find that these Indigenous entrepreneurs had a clear idea of the notion of ecotourism because they were protagonists of a community-based ecotourism project. My findings revealed something far more interesting and complex.

When I asked Rafael,⁵² one of the main leaders and five-year manager of this community-based ecotourism enterprise project, if he had ever heard of the word “ecotourism”, he instantly responded (2005): “Of course! Ecotourism is the association of tourists, is a society of ecotourists” and then looking to the ceiling he repeated to himself, “Eco! Eco!”⁵³ It was almost as though he was trying to evoke something. “Right now there are eight groups of tourists- ecotourism”. I asked: “Ah! Ecotour Manu ASSC?” Rafael replied, “Of course! It’s the same thing; they even have their own camping sites [here in Manu Park]. I’m telling you...this is tourism...this is our country!”⁵⁴ Later I asked the same question to Romulo, the President of Tayakome who was one of the Community owners of

⁵² Rafael is the real name of this Matsigenka man.

⁵³ Through this quote is evident that Rafael makes no clear distinction between “tourists” and “agencies” neither between “association” and “society”. I attribute such overlap of words to the fact that his Spanish vocabulary as a Matsigenka speaker is limited.

⁵⁴ [JH] Alguna vez has escuchado el nombre ecoturismo?

[Rafael] Claro!, ecoturismo, es una asociación de turistas de una sociedad de eco turistas, claro, eco, eco, como ahorita lo que hay 8 grupos de turistas de ecoturismo.

[JH] Ah! Ecotour Manu?

[Rafael] Claro es igual, como ellos, inclusive ellos hacen su propio campamento. Pero como te digo, viendo todo eso, es así el turismo...en el país en que estamos!

the Matsigenka enterprise.⁵⁵ Romulo used to be part of the uncontacted Matsigenka groups in the Park and was, by marrying a woman from Tayakome, able to join her settlement and later become president of Tayakome. His answer about “ecotourism” echoed Rafael’s.

Ecotourism and Ecotur Manu ASSC meant the same to both former Casa Matsigenka’s managers. Rafael’s emphasis on the fact that Ecotur Manu ASSC’s members (all from Cusco) operated their private businesses in the Park, the Matsigenka forest, had a strong political connotation. His exclamation underlined the strong power of this “society of ecotourism” in Manu region and he was almost hopelessly affirming that it was against the political and economic asymmetric conditions that the Indigenous enterprise was competing. Or, put simply, it was “A little lizard among the crocodiles,” the metaphor I use to reflect on the dramatic inequality between Matsigenka enterprise and their competitors, the private tour sector.⁵⁶ I found such tremendous disparity when comparing the human resources available in the Indigenous enterprise and in the private tour agencies. While the private tour agencies often had the advantage of skilled and experienced people to manage and operate a tour business and services, the Matsigenka enterprise had only one professionally trained staffperson, the assistant manager. The other staff members in the Indigenous enterprise were the Matsigenka people who are subsistence hunters and gardeners and had at best a few years of elementary education and no experience managing a business.

⁵⁵ Romulo is the real name of this person.

⁵⁶ I want to acknowledge my father for his contribution to my research. During my fieldwork in Peru, he came to the Casa Matsigenka office and lodge as my research assistant and witnessed meetings and conversations about the Matsigenka’s enterprise problems. In our discussions about Casa Matsigenka, he eloquently came out with the metaphor: “*Una lagartijita entre cocodrilos*” (“a little lizard among crocodiles”) referring to the Indigenous enterprise Casa Matsigenka versus the private tour agencies in PNM. I decided to use this metaphor which I explain in more detail in Chapter 5.

During my fieldwork in Cusco, I searched for the business people involved with the PNM tourism industry. Within the first month I learned that there were only a few tour agencies that sold package tours to the PNM. In one interview, a *Cusqueño* business person openly pointed out that, “We all know each other, this is a small circle”. Yet, talking about ecotourism with the official Manu tour agencies in Cusco was quite a different experience. Those interviews revolved around discussions of “caring and teaching about nature”, “not leaving garbage within the Park”, “respecting the local culture” and other environmental/eco-moralist themes. A common expression among the Cusco business persons, however, was that ecotourism was an overly-used term.

Among the few official Manu tour operators managers/owners who agreed to be interviewed (four out of eight) was Mr. Otter, one of the Peruvian business frontiersman of the tourism industry in PNM. Mr. Otter told me that the Manu tourism market began by promoting adventure tourism in the early 1980s. This business person described his first chance to guide a group of American tourists into Manu Park, which occurred upon his return to Peru after living abroad for fourteen years.⁵⁷ Mr. Otter (2005) shared with me that:

We did adventure tourism. Indeed, it was a whole adventure, the transportation used [renting little boats from local people], camping [on beaches at sunset], there wasn't the structure that now exists. Today, going to Manu is not an adventure anymore. Everything is planned and logistically very safe, everything is very well structured...in the middle of the 1980s people started to talk about ecology and ecotourism ... later these were over-used words and everything became eco...now the tourism packages of our operators to Manu are focused on nature.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Mr. Otter explained that when he was younger and participated in adventurous expeditions in the Manu region searching for Paititi – a Machupicchu-like fort that was legendary for holding Inka golden treasures–, he became “attached” and familiarized with the Manu “spectacular nature”.

⁵⁸ lo que hacíamos era turismo de aventura, y efectivamente era una aventura, por los medios de transporte que había que usar, los campamentos, no había la estructura que ahora hay. Entonces ahora ir al Manu, ya no es una aventura. Hoy en día está todo muy planificado, una logística muy segura, existe infraestructura. .. a mediados de los 80 se comenzó a hablar de ecología, ecoturismo... que después obviamente se ha abusado y ahora a todo le dicen eco...

Interestingly, when I asked Mr. Otter about his understanding of ecotourism his answer was that, “Ecotourism is everything. Everything should be ecotourism...there is an ecological way to visit a place.”⁵⁹ He continued by asserting that by doing adventure tourism in the 1980’s, before “ecotourism became a fashion”, he was completely unaware that he was already doing ecotourism.

Within the entrepreneurial sector, there are various notions of ecotourism. In this section, I have briefly described two of the most contrasting, i.e., the Indigenous managers vs. the professional tourism business people. To the Indigenous managers, ecotourism is a label linked to the outsiders’ private tourism sector (the *Cusqueños*) that has been encroaching on their territories. In contrast, for the private tourism sector, ecotourism is “an exciting product to market” (McLaren 2003). For the private business people, ecotourism is primarily a highly attractive/fashionable discourse for doing business by bringing wealthy foreigners “to discover untouchable nature” with the intention of not destroying it.

4.3.3. Narratives from the “Manu Nature Guides”

The idea that the role of tour guides is key in the tourism service was brought up several times in my conversations with people from the private sector. For this reason I decided to interview tour guides working in PNM. During my stay in Cusco city I interviewed six of approximately fifty tour guides working either as freelance or permanent guides for an official Manu tour operator. It was significant to me that several of them emphatically identified themselves as Manu Nature Guides (*guia/conductor naturalista de Manu*), a label which distinguished them from conventional tour guides. One of these men explained to me that the demand on a Manu nature guide is to “...know nature, to know flora and fauna,

Ahora los programas que todos hacemos en realidad al Manu, todos los operadores, están más guiados a lo que es naturaleza.

⁵⁹ ecoturismo es todo. Ecoturismo debería ser todo....Entonces eso por un lado. Entonces como te digo, si bien en esa época no existían los términos pero si ya hacíamos ecoturismo, pero luego a los pocos años, empezó esta moda de la ecología.

and to have a scientific understanding...” of the rainforest ecosystems. This young Cusqueño explained that “A *conductor naturalista* is different from a conventional tour guide”. The latter is the “official tour guide” who has tourism training, while a *conductor naturalista* is an “empirical guide” hired by tour agencies because he/she has scientific knowledge of nature and Manu Park, but lacks training in tourism services.

The majority of the guides working in PNM were empirical guides (*guías empíricos*), according to the ones I interviewed. Such guides frequently had a science background as current students and/or possessed a bachelor’s degree in biology, and were fluent in English. All the guides I met were mostly young Cusqueño men, with the exception of one who was a foreigner. A problem mentioned by one of these *Cusqueños* was the marginalization of local guides by the tour groups organized by international tour companies. The tour guide dynamic amongst tour guides engaged in tourism in Manu suggests that as the market expands, it demands a particular skilled labour force; in the Manu case, tour guides’ distinctions and divisions reflect the diversification and structural asymmetries of work within the green market.

A couple of the tour guides I interviewed shared their concern about the poor work conditions that many of the official Manu tour agencies offer to their staff. From these guides’ perspective, such business practices are at odds with their ideals of an ecotourism agency. For instance, one guide (2005) revealed to me his personal experience with a particular official Manu tour agency:

My modus operandi doesn’t agree with many things...for example, the way they treat their employees ...it’s terrible and often inhumane, there is abuse, they don’t pay on time to the cooks who sometimes are waiting for one or two months to get their payments.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ mi modus operandi no estoy de acuerdo con muchas cosas...Por ejemplo la manera como trata a sus empleados...es un trato terrible y muchas veces es inhumano, hay abuso, no se les paga a tiempo a los cocineros, estan dando vueltas y vueltas a veces un mes, dos meses.

I found that, unfortunately, this seemed to be a common occurrence among tourism workers. Further, the majority of tourist agencies' staff are "paid under the table", which means they cannot access employment insurance.

While I stayed at Casa Matsigenka lodge within PNM, I joined an "adventure tour expedition" to explore "untouched and unexplored areas in Manu" on my way out of PNM on route to Cusco city. Ikaro was our *conductor naturalista*. While taking part in the "adventure tour", among trail walks, camping and long boat trips, Ikaro shared with me his experience in the Manu tourism eco-field. When he started this job fifteen years ago, "...there were not many rules about how to do tourism in PNM ...[so] it was possible to be a guide and operator...". Ikaro revealed to me that through all the years he has been involved in tourism in Manu, he has also tried to become a tour entrepreneur without much success. With great frustration this young *Cusqueño* conveyed that the process of creation of the tourism market in PNM was limited to an exclusive minority of entrepreneurs with strong economic and social capital. Ikaro felt that only elite businessmen were able to successfully lobby the Park's officials to establish their tour agencies within the PNM. Ikaro (2005) stated that:

The ecotourism entrepreneurs of Manu do not have anything of ecotourism. They live out of a black market where employees are not working under a contract. Most of the enterprises survive by being funded by foreign capital.⁶¹

This Manu tourism guide asserted that while he worked for all the official Manu tour operators, only one of them had business practices that he felt were acceptable, i.e., that they treated their employees well. It was also his feeling that this agency was the only one putting any real effort into supporting one community within MBR to develop a community-based ecotourism initiative.

Nearly all tour guides shared their concern about the Indigenous peoples within PNM, expressing that ecotourism should be about sharing benefits with the local host community. Ikaro, for instance, expressed his desire for the Manu

⁶¹ ...Los empresarios de ecoturismo aquí en Manu no tienen nada de ecoturismo. Viven de un mercado negro donde los empleados no están en planillas. La gran mayoría de empresas se mantienen con regalías de fuera.

Indigenous peoples to become integrated into the larger society in a fair way by being the protagonists and beneficiaries of the Manu tourism industry. Also, more than half of the guides I interviewed conveyed that the private tour operators for PNM labeled themselves “ecotourism” agencies because it was and is profitable; hence, “it is just a slogan”. These young *Cusqueños* asserted that genuine ecotourism that conserves nature and equitably shares profits does not exist among the official private Manu tour operators. The guides who avoided making any compromising revelations about their employers’ work ethics and practices in ecotourism during our interviews preferred to share their impressions and experiences about their clients (the tourists).

To summarize, by stating that the ecotourism agencies operating in PNM use ecotourism as an attractive slogan I found that the tour guides had a critical perspective of the ecotourism practiced in the Manu region. From their point of view, the idea of ecotourism encompasses work ethics and business practices within the enterprise and equal rights to the local communities linked to MBR to participate in and get benefits from the tourism industry. Also, in the view of these guides, these features do not exist among the tour agencies working in PNM; on the contrary, these agencies abuse and exploit people. Thus a tension exists between the discourse of ecotourism and the lived practices on the ground in PNM.

4.3.4 The Ecotourists in PNM and the “Ultimate Jungle Experience”



Figure 7: Tourists in the rainforest.

The Manu Park officials estimate that 60% of the tourists visiting MBR enter PNM (INRENA and PRO-MANU 2002). According to Morales (1997), since the 1980s, the number of tourists visiting PNM has significantly increased from fifteen to one hundred every year. With the Manu Lodge construction in 1987, the number of visitors increased to almost 500 per year, which was the maximum number of visitors allowed by PNM policy (Groom, Podolsky, and Munn 1991). Since the 1990s, the number of tourists has jumped by more than 300%. In 1990, a total of 811 tourists visited the Park. This number jumped to 3,622 tourists in 2003. The annual average since 2000 is 3,000 tourists (INRENA & Pro-Manu 2002; PNM chief, personal communication, March, 2005).

According to studies on tourism in Manu National Park (INRENA 2003; Empresa Multicomunal Matsigenka and FANPE-INRENA-GTZ 2002; Pacheco 1997), the tourists who come to this protected area (PA) share the following features: a) More than 95% are foreigners of which approximately 62% are Europeans and 30% North Americans; b) Approximately 80% of the ecotourists are professional, frequently in a science-related field; c) These tourists have a high social and economic status, which is determined by being able to afford the high price of tour packages, particularly to the Tourism Zone (former Reserved

Zone) of PNM.⁶² Also, all the tour guides assured me that the tourists who visit PNM are people who frequently visit protected areas and tropical forests worldwide.

The tourists are not a homogenous group. During the 1980s, according to Ikaro, the people traveling to Manu were “explorers, nature lovers and researchers”. During my fieldwork, the Manu tour guides identified mainly three types of tourists: 1) birdwatchers (*pajarólogos*); 2) tourists who are interested in watching butterflies, *mariposólogos*; and, 3) tourists who are interested in the rainforest ecosystem and in experiencing the jungle’s nature *generalistas*. Also, given that the majority of tourists are predominantly interested in the flora and fauna, interest on the cultural aspect of PNM is sporadic. However, recently the guides have noticed an increasing interest in the Amazonian peoples and cultures. A couple of guides emphasized that, while most of the tourists are searching for a nature-based educational experience, some tourists sought “the ultimate jungle experience”. One young *cusqueño* female Manu tour guide described, with an irritated tone, this ultimate experience in these terms: “Some of the tourists look for contact with the Natives but with an attitude that is like *Almagro* or *Cristobal Colon*! They have the dream of discovering the Native...the savage man within the jungle!”⁶³ This comment clearly portrays the way in which tourism is embedded in a new form of colonialism.

I spent very little time with tourists who visited PNM. Being in Casa Matsigenka lodge and taking part in the “adventure tour” expedition with Ikaro was my best chance to interact with tourists. I had casual conversations with three tourists while traveling in the “unexplored areas” of Manu Park. When I asked about their impression of being in Casa Matsigenka lodge (an

⁶² An average price from Cusco city to PNM (Reserved Zone) for a six-day/five-night tour is US \$1,000 for one person. Tour packages’ prices range from US \$650.00 (traveling by bus) to beyond US \$1,500 for one person (traveling by charter plane).

⁶³ Algunos de los turistas buscan tener contactos con los nativos, pero ¡con una actitud parecida a la de Almagro o Cristóbal Colon! tienen el sueño de descubrir al nativo, ¡al hombre salvaje dentro de la selva!

Indigenous-owned enterprise), they were happy with the idea of supporting an Indigenous peoples' project while they were enjoying their holidays. In a survey conducted by the Casa Matsigenka staff, I found that tourists' comments highlighted the "simplicity and authenticity" in the rustic style of the Casa Matsigenka's architecture. In both the survey and my conversations, I found that the tourists expressed interest in knowing more about the Amazonian Indigenous peoples. Some of the tourists suggested that the Indigenous lodge should have panels of information about the culture and traditions of Indigenous peoples in PNM. An important question they directed to me regarded how much of what they paid to the tour agency was going to the Indigenous-owned lodge; such information was impossible for them to acquire themselves. Later in my research on the Casa Matsigenka, I learnt that this Indigenous-owned lodge was not making any profits. While the official tour agencies charge an average of US \$1,000 for a five-night package, they pay only US \$35.00 for a night's accommodation to the Indigenous operators, a cost that covers only operating expenses.

Mr. Palmito, a Peruvian conservation biologist and ecotourism businessman, told me that the tourists are interested in supporting local people through tourism. However, from his experience in the business, tourists buy the cheapest tour packages that guarantee good services. Meanwhile, through my research, I found that almost all of the official tour agencies for PNM promoted their company bearing the ecotourism label as ecologically and socially friendly.

In sum, I found that through the tourist narratives the contradictions within ecotourism (as discourse and practice) became evident. First, it is clear that being an ecotourist in PNM implies that one has to be wealthy and educated, which is an elitist and privileged position. Despite such wealth, the tourists are not disposed to pay more, despite their expressed desire to support the "local people." Second, the central interest for the majority of the tourists in PNM is in the ideas of "wilderness" (as opposed to the Indigenous people) and in having the ultimate jungle experience. Such little regard for the forest human residents is based on stereotypes of the Indigenous peoples as "the savages of the jungle,"

making the Indigenes attractive objects for tourists' adventures as an extension of the "wilderness" that they have come to experience. Thus, rather than to help, the ecotourists' tendency is to unthinkingly hinder the welfare of the Indigenous people in the forests.

4.3.5 Narratives from the Regional Government Personnel in PNM

The Peruvian state's policy fosters sustainable tourism, i.e., tourism that is framed to be socially, ecologically and economically grounded, particularly in forests and protected areas (Chavez 2005; Salas and Chavez 2000). Such state-owned land is under INRENA's management whereby the *Intendencia Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre* is in charge of the forest, and the *Intendencia de Areas Naturales Protegidas* (ANP) is in charge of protected areas (ibid). According to the law 27308 (article N°3.34), *Ley Forestal y de Fauna Silvestre*, enacted by INRENA and the Ministry of Agriculture (2003), the definition of ecotourism is as follows:

Tourism activity that is ecologically responsible in regions where it is possible to offer and enjoy nature with values related to the place, contributing to conservation, generating minimum environmental impact, and fostering an active socioeconomic participation benefiting local peoples (INRENA, FFS 2003: 26, my translation).

Since the middle of the 1990's, in PNM tourism activities have been increasingly regulated, with an emphasized effort to promote ecotourism. That means that the focus of the Parks' authorities has shifted to more educational and fewer adventurous tourism activities. For instance, in 1995, camping on beaches in the Park became prohibited, whereas the government conceded concessions of land to private tour operators for setting their camping sites. Also, except for visitors, such as researchers and film-makers, entrance to the Park has been restricted to the Tourism Zone of the Park and visiting is only possible through touring with a licensed tour operator (INRENA 2003). In interviews with a couple of the regional Park officials who have been involved in tourism regulation in PNM, I found out that the Park's tourism regulation process was developed in very close

coordination with the licensed tour operators represented by Ecotour Manu ASSC. One of the Park authorities (2004) explained:

We worked so closely with them [the official tour operators] and we said to them: “Do you know, Mrs. Operators [that] if we evaluate the situation... we are doing the work for your own benefit; you are not helping the Park, you are paying the maintenance and repairing the infrastructure that you are using for yourselves”. So, there are no benefits remaining for the Park from their activities...We recognize the work of these businessmen on marketing and publicizing Manu...but it’s unacceptable that this place, which is a national and world patrimony, is benefiting only a very few people...Thus, it is true that the tourism they [the operators] practice does not benefit the people.⁶⁴

Further, as evidence of the hypocrisy of many of the ecotourism tour agencies, this official narrated the case of an official Manu tour agency that is always producing statistics of its apparently “great ecotourism work”. This approach gives an impression of professionalism. However, this same agency has been sued by its own employees. In fact, the Park office received several letters from the tour agencies’ employees complaining of not having been paid. This Park official stated that the Park’s authorities could not act upon these unfair practices, and their only approach was to tell the tour agencies that such mistreatment of employees would be taken into account on future Parks’ evaluations to tour agencies. However, the Park official complained that the tour agencies ignored the Park’s opinion(!). This revealed that the control of touring agencies operating

⁶⁴ Porque nosotros trabajábamos tan estrechamente con ellos [los operadores oficiales] y les dijimos: “¿saben qué señores operadores? nosotros estamos haciendo el trabajo para ustedes,...si evaluamos realmente la situación, Uds. no están cooperando con el parque, porque ustedes están pagando el mantenimiento y la reparación de la infraestructura que ustedes están usando. Entonces, en realidad beneficios al parque no le quedan de la actividad que ustedes están haciendo...se le reconoce a los empresarios el trabajo que han hecho de dar a conocer el producto de marketearlo, de publicitarlo... Pero lo que no se pude aceptarse es que este sitio, que es patrimonio de la nación, patrimonio mundial, solamente beneficie a unos cuantos. Porque... es cierto que ese turismo que ellos han manejado no ha beneficiado a la población... la población en general, ya como ente organizado como poblado, no están viendo los resultados, ningún beneficio.

in PA by tourism regulatory institutions is, at the least, insufficient, if not totally absent.⁶⁵ INRENA's power to control ecotourism agencies' exploitative practices is thus deficient. The words of the Park authority (narrated above) highlight the exploitative practices of the licensed ecotourism agencies. He emphatically concluded that:

They [the licensed tour operators] speak lots that: "yes, we sell ecotourism, we benefit the people, this is the way it should be" ...nevertheless, when it is time for compromising or to provide benefits, they are not consistent...So what benefits are we talking about!? Instead, they are exploiting people for their own benefit! They are not acting according to the principles they preach.⁶⁶

Further, with great frustration, four of my interviewees (government officials and tour guides) shared with me that some villages surrounding MBR (Pilcopata, Paucartambo and Salvación) have been protesting *en masse* because they have not been receiving any benefits from the main economic activities in PNM, that is, tourism. These villages located in the Cultural Zone of the Manu Biosphere Reserve have organized road blockades to stop the private tour operators' activities, and have said that their villages lacked significant benefits from tourism activities. Village residents complained that the tour operators do not buy anything from their villages, but bring everything from other places (mostly Cusco) for tourist consumption. The marginalization of these communities is evident in an evaluation study conducted by Pacheco (1997) with the support of Pro Naturaleza (Peruvian conservation NGO) and the leaders of Shipetiari

⁶⁵ This point was highlighted further in my interview with an government official from the institution in charge of regulating tourism activities in Cusco (the *Dirección Regional de Comercio Exterior y Turismo del Gobierno Regional del Cusco*); she pointed out to me that only INRENA is in charge of regulating tourism activities in protected areas.

⁶⁶ ...Ellos hablan mucho de que "si, que vendamos ecoturismo, que beneficiemos a las poblaciones, que esto debe ser así"... , sin embargo al rato de cumplir compromisos o de dar beneficios no es tan notorio su forma de trabajo...Entonces ¿de qué beneficio a la gente estamos hablando!? ¡No más bien lo que ellos están haciendo es explotar a la gente para beneficio propio! Y no están cumpliendo con sus propios principios o con lo que ellos dicen que son sus principios de trabajo...

community; they proposed a grassroots initiative for one of the villages (Shipetiari) located in the Buffer Zone of MBR, next to PNM. Their grievances were as follows:

The majority of the groups visiting the Reserved Zone [of PNM] pass in front of Shipetiari Indigenous Community and only in exceptional occasion do they visit it. The cause [of this exclusion] is the little interest that tour agencies have in including this community for a tour visit or buying handicrafts; or simply there is total ignorance of the community's tourism potential, attractions and services they could offer (Pacheco 1997: 17)

These government personnel narratives capture several inconsistencies about the ecotourism agencies' practices in contrast to the state's notion of ecotourism. For instance, regional government officials encountered that the private agencies' interest centers on profit rather than cooperating for conservation and/or sharing benefit with the "local people" from the host communities. That is, rather than fostering local people's participation in the ecotourism market in ways that benefit their socioeconomic conditions (a key principle in the state and international organizations' notion of ecotourism), the tour operators constantly exploit or exclude them. Further, it is evident from above that the regional government officials' power to control and regulate ecotourism agencies' practices is very limited. Thus, state institutions face great challenges to comply with the tourism plan and policy on ecotourism in PNM. I found the regulatory role of state institutions on tourism activities in PNM to be ambiguous; for instance, it was not clear which institutions should control the ecotourism agencies' business practices to avoid exploitation. Thus, ecotourism praxis by the private sector in PNM is at odds with notions of ecotourism described in regional government officials' narratives.

4.4. Among “Crocodiles” in the Ecotourism Industry: “It is Not Love of Nature but of the Green-money”⁶⁷

In the above section about the entrepreneurs’ narratives I suggested the image of “a little lizard among the crocodiles” as a way to describe the extreme disparity of green market competition (and its predatory nature!) between the Indigenous ecotourism lodge enterprise and the private ecotourism agencies in PNM. Such an unbalanced relationship of friction also exists between the private agencies, portrayed as the powerful “crocodiles”, and the state with its weak political structure. The following story makes more evident the Ecotour Manu ASSC’s great power and illustrates how its interest is ultimately in profit and that its concern for conserving nature vanishes when its capitalist interests are jeopardized.

During the middle of my fieldwork for this thesis (early 2005), a national scandal unfolded. I learnt that INRENA authorities at the national and regional levels were undergoing several court trials with the Ecotour Manu ASSC and its members, the official Manu tour operators. This conflict, according to several government officials whom I interviewed, was caused by the resistance of the “official” tour agencies to comply with the new regulations, i.e., the Law of Protected Areas (*Ley de Areas Protegidas*) enacted in 2001. This *Ley de Areas Protegidas* did not recognize previous agreements between INRENA regional and head office and the private tourism sectors. As a result, in the case of Ecotour Manu ASSC, this new PA law meant that its previous agreement with INRENA-Cusco ended, and was not renewed despite Ecotour Manu ASSC’s expectation that it would be.⁶⁸ Rather than following the process to adapt to the

⁶⁷ “It is not love of nature but of the green-money” is an adaptation I am using from a Spanish popular saying, “*No es amor al chancho sino a los chicharrones*” (it is not love of the pig but of the pork) and I am applying it to the ecotourism context.

⁶⁸ In 2000 this private consortium successfully reached an exclusive 3-year agreement with INRENA’s regional branch office in Cusco to have campsite concessions and allow only the eight members of the Ecotour-Manu ASSC to operate in PNM in exchange for regular revenues to INRENA. Such an agreement led to a monopoly that, whether it was intentional or not, directly

new PA policy or to participate in the contest for camping concessions open to the public, several members of Ecotourism Manu ASSC decided to fight against INRENA by suing the state. The official tour agencies that decided not to comply with the requirements to adapt to the new PA law became unlicensed. In spite of this, they continued operating in PNM, challenging INRENA's authority.⁶⁹ The INRENA vs. Ecotour Manu ASSC conflict mirrors, on the one hand, the fragility and ambiguity of the government institutions in adhering to its tourism policy in PNM, and, on the other hand, the dominant power of the private tourism sector over the other stakeholders of PNM, including the state.

In sum, the multiple narratives and experiences of ecotourism presented in this Chapter reflect the intensity of the conflictive political dynamics in which the Manu tourism industry is embedded at the local, regional, national and international levels. These narratives mirror the complex and highly asymmetrical socioeconomic positioning among the stakeholders involved in the PNM ecotourism reality.

The community-based ecotourism Stronza (2001b; 2002) advocates as a “*Special* kind of market integration” for rural communities in the Amazon — because it brings the market to the community and its members can participate without them having to change or disrupt their livelihood and/or social relations — is a relative concept and a *double-edged sword*. Underneath the label of ecotourism, even when community-based —ultimately through the commoditization of images and meanings of “culture” and “nature,” their homeland— there is clear evidence of exploitation and marginalization of peoples

affected the only community-based ecotourism enterprise within the PNM (see Chapter 5 for more details).

⁶⁹ When I left my fieldwork (April 2005), the outcome of this conflict was still uncertain. But, surprisingly, in the midst of this conflict, during my fieldwork, the national chief of ANP (Dr. Seri) was stripped of his position. Dr. Seri, according to a number of Peruvian academics, was one of the most professional officials that ANP-INRENA had in that position. Such an incident made me question if there was any relation between the changes of ANP's chief and Ecotour Manu ASSC, and about the level of power that some of the member of Ecotour Manu ASSC contain within the Peruvian political system.

(forest Indigenous people, *colonos* and economically poor class *Cusqueños*). In addition, in the particular case of the Casa Matsigenka enterprise as community-based, the very concept of “community” (as explained in Chapter 3) is a notion with which the Matsigenka people continue to grapple. Further, when looking beyond the micro-reality of the community-based enterprise, such a process of integration of “isolated” forest people becomes complex. The huge disparity and the multiple stakeholders’ interests in competition with each other create a context I refer to as “wild green capitalism”. In the PNM context, except for the Indigenous enterprise, all the ecotourism agencies were private businesses, marginalizing “local”/host communities surrounding the Park, and wildly competing against the community-based enterprise that did exist (discussed in Chapter 5). Thus, power relationships of economic class, politics and dominant cultural notions are factors that shape what ecotourism can do for the Indigenous peoples of PA.

As a green form of capitalism that imposes culturally constructed notions and values of “nature,” places and peoples, it is clear that “ecotourism” represents a form of “new colonialism” (Belsky 2000) wherein regional, national and international elites encroach upon the rainforest inhabitants’ territories. Because ecotourism in PNM is a *green industry* dominated by the elite class — in a region where there has been a long and ongoing history of exploitation and marginalization of the Indigenous peoples by the *viracochas*, “the civilized people or whites” (see Chapter 1 for details) — I find ecotourism problematic. In practice, under the disguise of “ecotourism,” exploitation and exclusion of Indigenous peoples’ cultures, places, perceptions, and “ways of living” continues.

In the following Chapter I describe parts of the “other side” of this *double-edge sword*: The “community-based” ecotourism enterprise, Casa Matsigenka, experience, challenges and limitations, but also hope and aspirations for the future. As the Indigenous enterprise within PNM emerged, a process of negotiations has slowly taken place among the multiple stakeholders of the tourism industry. However, significant progress in such a process of negotiation requires developing a long-term institutional commitment—particularly from state

institutions. Such a commitment needs to be centered on fostering collaborative intercultural management approaches and policy that accounts for the Indigenous inhabitants in PNM. Also, rather than leaving community-based enterprises to deal with “wild green capitalism”, state commitment should ensure a fair market in which these initiatives can participate on equal footing.

Chapter 5: “A Little Lizard among the Crocodiles”: The Multicommunal Ecotourism Lodge Enterprise Matsigenka in Manu National Park



Figure 8: Matsigenka Family Compound (or "Household").



Figure 9: A Casa Matsigenka lodge building.

The following account is reflective piece that demonstrate the intersubjective way knowledge is acquired in fieldwork. This story is composed of episodes of my fieldwork that epitomized my understanding of the nuances of the local political

context in which my research participants are embedded, as “Indigenous entrepreneurs” on ecotourism. After this piece, I reflect upon these episodes.

I was very excited when I learned that my second visit to the Casa Matsiguenka lodge would be with people who had been working in the Peruvian rainforest for many years. While some of these people were figures with great reputations in working in the profitable ecotourism business in Peru, I did not realize how much was at stake in this visit until my conversation with Ms. Luna, the assistant manager of Matsiguenka lodge enterprise. She told me that this group of visitors wanted to see what possibilities existed for developing a business alliance with the Matsiguenka communities’ owners of Casa Matsiguenka. The assistant manager was worried that if Casa Matsiguenka allied with other competitive ecotourism companies of other regions, the Ecotour Manu ASSC would take it as an attack. So, we planned the trip very quietly without revealing either the identity or the intentions of our trip companions.

Once in the lodge, the ecotourism capitalists expressed their amazement at finding such “neat and unique lodge architecture”, and they expressed — during a collective meeting in the Matsiguenka lodge with the Matsiguenka community presidents, staff, managers and assistant manager, PNM’s chief and a few researchers, including me — that “what they saw was in total contrast to the rumours we had heard for years from other tour agencies about the Casa Matsiguenka being ugly and untidy!” One of these capitalists who worked with the Tayakome community years ago said that “the sensation I got when entering the lodge was that of entering a Matsiguenka family house; that shouldn’t be lost!”⁷⁰ As a result, he advised not do any major changes to the Matsiguenka lodge’s architecture.

What really caught my attention was the preconceived image of the Matsiguenka lodge that these prestigious ecotourism elites had about the Casa Matsiguenka. I talked about it with Ms. Luna who responded in a bitter tone:

⁷⁰ La sensación al entrar al albergue es como entrar a la casa de una familia, que no se pierda eso.

The Ecotour Manu people are the only ones who have been allowed [by the Park's authorities] to come to Casa Matsiguenka, and the only thing they have done is discredit Casa Matsiguenka... they say that Casa Matsiguenka shouldn't exist, why? Because they know it is a "little golden mine," otherwise... they wouldn't discredit it. You discredit something when you fear it.⁷¹

This story illustrates the conflicting environment the Matsiguenka enterprise has to grapple with to keep participating in the ecotourism market. Despite the extreme unequal conditions under which the Matsiguenka enterprise was scrambling to survive, surviving these wild tour competitions (i.e., "wild green capitalism") for the Matsiguenka leaders is not only a matter of making money. Through their enterprise, the Matsiguenka people are also eliciting a political message of capacity development and act upon their right to "adventure" in the market, envisioning their children's future in their own land, i.e., self-determination.

In this Chapter, I present narratives about the origin and development of the Casa Matsiguenka lodge in PNM. More specifically, I recount the ways in which the Matsiguenka families have participated and experienced their Indigenous ecotourism lodge enterprise, as well as some of the main outcomes and implications of this enterprise in their livelihood. I finish by analyzing the challenges and frictions that the Indigenous Communities confront in attempting to put forward their community-based ecotourism enterprise. This Indigenous enterprise must compete within a context of "wild green capitalism".

In the mid-1990s ecotourism businesses were flourishing in PNM. Because these businesses were owned mostly by regional elite people from Cusco and foreigners, they were not providing benefits for the Indigenous populations. In response to the restrictions placed on them by the Park's rulers – under the influences of both CEDIA Peruvian Indigenous rights NGO and Dr.

⁷¹ Ellos toda la vida, los de Ecotour que eran los únicos que entraban a la casa Machiguenka, lo único que han hecho es desprestigiar a la casa Machiguenka... Ecotour Manu siempre dijo que la Casa Matsiguenka no debería existir. ¿Por qué? Porque saben que es una minita de oro. Ecotour Manu sabe que es una minita de oro, porque o si no, no le haría nada, no la desprestigiaría como lo hace. Tú desprestigias a alguien cuando tienes miedo de algo.

Aguila,⁷² an American neo-liberal conservationist – the Matsigenka communities in PNM began putting pressure on Park officials to allow for the development of an ecotourism lodge as a way to gain compensation for losing land and resources due to the Park’s creation. The Matsigenka leaders shared with me that their main interest had been to steer some economic benefits from tourism towards their communities to improve their quality of life. Established in 1997, the Matsigenka-owned lodge enterprise started as a *pilot project* and became an important space for negotiation between the state institutions, the two PNM Matsigenka Communities, conservation NGOs and the private sector.

5.1. Casa Matsigenka Lodge Enterprise

I was preparing my thesis research proposal on community-based ecotourism when I read the Casa Matsigenka proposal presented to the 2002 Equator Prize of the UNDP (United Nation Development Program).⁷³ This proposal depicted the Casa Matsigenka project as a community-based initiative in which the “communities” were striving to own and control the enterprise. Allegedly, the communities were the decision-makers and outside organizations were facilitators of the design, planning and implementation of the ecotourism lodge. Hence, I started my research on this Indigenous ecotourism lodge, impressed by the level of the community’s initiative. My approach was to gather information from the different social groups that had participated in the project (NGOs, government personnel and Indigenous enterprise members).

5.1.1. A Complicated Origin of the “Little Lizard”, Casa Matsigenka

An important aim of my research was to understand the context and history in which the Matsigenka-owned lodge project originated. I started by interviewing Eng Cedro, a forestry engineer and former chief of Natural Protected Areas Institute (IANP). In 1996, soon after he became IANP chief, Eng Cedro visited

⁷² *Centro Para el Desarrollo del Indígena Amazonico* (CEDIA) is a Peruvian NGO that works for recognition of land title and other Indigenous rights of Amazonian Indigenous groups in Peru.

⁷³ See: www.undp.org/equatorinitiative/secondary/equator_prize2002.htm#peru

the Matsigenka communities in PNM to confirm that the Matsigenka communities wanted a lodge, and to initiate the project. This engineer believed that the lodge idea emerged from the Matsigenka people.

Only after interviewing Mr. Rios,⁷⁴ Mr. Armadillo (CEDIA's director) and the Matsigenka leaders (who all gave me different versions of the Matsigenka project's origin and process of development), I realized that this story was mired in mistrust and frictions. Mr. Rios told me that he developed training workshops for the Matsigenka communities to strengthen the Matsigenka communities' cultural identity and transfer knowledge to enable the Matsigenka people to manage their tourism enterprise. His narration of the Matsigenka project origin was different from Eng Cedro's version. In Mr. Rios (2004) own words:

Then, it is interesting how this project began...it was born in the late 1980s. I was a schoolteacher in Manu for a Yine community. So we were the distinguished local people... During discussion at the PNM Operational Plan meetings the issue of alternatives for the Indigenous Communities in PNM came up...the issue was that these communities became isolated and restricted by the laws of protectionism in the Park... During that time there was a man who used to sell tourism to PNM in the same way that illusions are sold...⁷⁵

According to Mr. Rios, soon after, the PNM Operational Plan committee visited Tayakome and explained to the Matsigenka leaders their need to steer some benefits from tourism to their communities. Later, Mr. Armadillo, an

⁷⁴ This person who works for The Peruvian Association for the Conservation of Nature (APECO) NGO. APECO was in charge of managing the budget for the construction of the *Casa Matsigenka* lodge, and supported the project from 1998 to 2002.

⁷⁵ Entonces es interesante cómo nace el proyecto... fue a fines de los ochenta...yo trabajaba como profesor de escuela inicialmente... con una comunidad Yine, más a la boca del Río Manu. Y entonces éramos las personas notables locales...Y entonces en el Plan Operativo del Parque nacional del Manu, ya se empezó a plantear esta problemática, de qué, cuál es la alternativa para las comunidades nativas dentro del Río Manu,... estas comunidades han quedado aisladas y están totalmente dentro de la dinámica que impone este Parque Nacional para proteger, es solamente protección [de naturaleza]... y en aquella época algo se habló de que la alternativa sería turismo. En ese tiempo había un señor que vendía la idea de turismo a todo el Parque Nacional del Manu, así como quien vende ilusiones...

anthropologist who had been working on Indigenous land titling since the 1970s, shared with me another version of the Matsigenka project origin. He said:

In 1989, we proposed to the Park's officials that these communities are willing to give up the idea of having land titling under the condition of being compensated with a land concession...to do ecotourism, that is the origin of the story...Our objective was to show that these people [the Matsigenkas] need to develop an economic activity to resolve problems that the state neglects...so they had to have their own income source to afford their own expenses.⁷⁶

CEDIA's proposal was not taken further because apparently PNM officials did not believe that these Indigenous people were capable of managing a business (Rummenhoeller 2000). At that time in Peru, Rummenhoeller (ibid) observes, no Amazonian Indigenous Communities owned and/or managing their own lodges. The dominant colonial perspective of PNM officials about the Indigenous people in the Park as "savages" is evident in the following quote that Mr. Armadillo revealed to me. In a tone that is almost mocking, he told me that in an informal conversation with a former PNM chief in which he was insisting on the importance of the Matsigenka lodge proposal, her reaction was, "When are you going to understand that these feathered *indios* can't be managers!"⁷⁷ This quote, even if it is rumour, suggests that racism was a factor hindering the origin and development of the Indigenous lodge project. The racist officials' conception about the Indigenous people from PNM conceived them as "disarticulated" (or "isolated") *indios* who were incapable of carrying out such challenge. Ironically, as I explain in Chapter 3, it was as a result of the creation of the PNM under the

⁷⁶ Nuestro objetivo era que queríamos demostrar que esta gente necesita desarrollar una actividad económica para resolver sus asuntos que el estado no resuelve. ... entonces ellos tenían que tener una fuente de ingresos para poder solventar sus propios gastos...Es ahí donde nosotros planteamos, desde el año 89, al parque nacional del Manu que estas comunidades están dispuestas a desistir de su insistencia de tener título de propiedad, pero con la condición de que sean compensada su propiedad por una concesión de territorio... para dedicarla ...al ecoturismo, de ahí sale la historia de esto.

⁷⁷ La jefa del parque nacional del Manu me dijo, " hasta cuándo vas a entender que estos indios están con plumas, no pueden ser gerentes".

Western notion of “pristine nature” that the Matsigenka people (who have had interaction with the market system) became isolated. Given such colonizing attitudes of the state, exclusion and discrimination against the Matsigenka communities in PNM to participate in the Manu tourism market persisted for many years.

Moreover, additional evidence of this discriminatory and colonial approach by the state toward the Amazonian people in PNM was the fact that the first concession of land within the Park was already given in 1987 to a Cusco-based private tourism agency. This *Cusqueño* agency built the first PNM lodge on a ten-hectare site within the Tourism Zone of PNM (formerly the Manu Reserve Zone) (Rummenhoeller 2000).

In my conversations with the Matsigenka leaders of the two communities in the Park (Tayakome and Yomibato), the story I collected was yet another, different version. These leaders narrated that in the 1980s some Matsigenka families from Tayakome began trading fresh products (fish and fruits), and sometimes labour, in exchange for Western goods with the scientists from the Cocha Cashu Biological Station who were conducting research there. Dr. Aguila, who directed the research, told me in his own words that after some years of trading and working for the biologists’ project, he realized that “the Matsigenka are kind people”. Subsequently this American researcher proposed to the Tayakome community to form a joint-venture and build a Matsigenka lodge for tourists. In 1992, under the incentive of Dr. Aguila, some Matsigenkas who already had been working for him started to build a few huts by the *Cocha Salvador*, the largest lake in the PNM area, and where today the actual *Casa Matsigenka* lodge is located. (Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohi, and Yu in press) describe that in the early 1990s, due to the Park officials’ negligence of to the Indigenous peoples’ needs, there was such a huge discontent among the Matsigenka population that when INRENA mandated to stop the construction of the huts, “some Matsigenka threatened to open cattle pastures along the Manu river if the lodge project were not approved”.

Mr. Palmito, a Peruvian biologist who took part in scientific research in PNM, was also directly involved in initiating the idea of the Matsigenka lodge project. He (2005) narrates:

The problems emerged when we proposed to do tourism with the Matsigenka...The Park's official didn't like ... the Indigenous peoples to work in tourism. Maybe such an opinion is linked with INRENA's idea that the Indigenous Peoples should leave Manu Park, this idea was in the first Park Use Plan ...Also who was opposed [to our initiative] was John Terborg who is a scientist from Cosha Cashu that in many occasions has said publicly that "the Matsigenkas should be taken out [of the Park]". Other scientists [also from Cosha Cashu]...said to me "You have to think that if you improve the Matsigenka health and nutrition, their population will increase and that will affect conservation". People weren't interested in the Matsigenkas having a sustainable option for improving their life.⁷⁸

As this quote reflects, the Matsigenka lodge idea not only created much controversy but also speaks to the pitfalls of the top-down "for-trees and for-monkey" conservation model.

Yet, in 1994-1995 more land was conceded by INRENA in favour of *Cusqueños* private tour agencies and they were also given permission to build their own temporary campsites. In reaction to these concessions, in 1994 CEDIA's director persisted on presenting again the ecotourism lodge proposal to INRENA, affirming that it was a written request expressed by the Matsigenka communities. But there was no official response. In a 2004 INRENA report, I

⁷⁸ El problema surge cuando planteamos hacer un proyecto turístico con los Matsigenkas. Al parque no le gustó esta iniciativa.... INRENA no quería permitir que los Indígenas manejen turismo...Quizás esta idea esta relacionada con la opinión de INRENA de que los Nativos debían salir del Parque Manu, estaba en los primeros planes de uso del Parque...También quien estuvo opuesto fue John Terborgh, que es un científico de Cocha Cashu Biological Station y que públicamente ha dicho "hay que sacar a los Matsigenkas" en más de una oportunidad. Otro investigador [de Cocha Cashu] que han vivido con Matsigenkas... así me dijo: "... tienes que pensar que si mejoras la salud y alimentación de los Matsigenkas, va a crecer la población de Matsigenkas y va a afectar la conservación". Entonces había mucha controversia sobre esto, la gente no tenía interés en que los Matsigenkas tuvieran una manera de uso sustentable que les mejore la calidad de vida. No querían, definitivamente no querían.

found that the second CEDIA proposal was not approved, apparently due to “a lack of technical and economic support” (INRENA and Sociedad Zoológica de Frankfort-Coppin & Asociados 2004; Rummenhoeller 2000). Discussions about the CEDIA-Matsigenka joint venture lodge were tainted with mistrust. As it was an American biologist sponsoring the project, there was the perception among INRENA officials that the venture would be controlled by an “outsider” in the image of “outside” interests. With a patronizing approach towards the Indigenous people, INRENA officials feared that as a result of Matsigenka communities’ “naiveté”, such a dynamic would present a high risk of exploitation for the Indigenous groups. Therefore, in 1996, instead of approving CEDIA’s proposal IANP-INRENA took control of the Matsigenka lodge project by incorporating it in the FANPE project budget.⁷⁹ As Shepard et al. (in press) eloquently express, this was INRENA’s “maneuver” to closely control and monitor the development of the Matsigenka project. The project was established through an agreement between INRENA and GTZ (a German government’s aid agency that funded the FANPE project). The purpose of FANPE’s project was to support consolidating and strengthening the National System of Protected Areas and Buffers Zones in Peru (SINANPE), while enhancing civil society’s participation (FANPE’s secretary, personal communication, August 2006). In addition, FANPE wanted to conserve ecosystems through traditional livelihood protection and self-determined development of ethnic minority groups living in protected areas (Ohl 2005). Thus, the Casa Matsigenka was planned and implemented with FANPE’s support.

These statements from CEDIA and INRENA are evidence of tension and conflict over issues of the Matsigenka project control at a level that was far beyond the multiple institutions’ expectations. As a reaction of INRENA’s stratagem, in 1998, CEDIA lodged a formal complaint to the ombudsman’s agency in Peru (*Defensoría del Pueblo*) against INRENA, appealing the formal rejection of the Matsigenka lodge project and accusing INRENA of intellectual

⁷⁹ *Fortalecimiento del Sistema Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas por el Estado (FANPE)*

property theft (*Defensoría del Pueblo, Resolución Defensorial #055.98/DP.005.98/DP [1998]*) (Defensoria del Pueblo 1998; Shepard, Rummenhoeller, Ohi, and Yu in press). This adversarial process had a very negative effect on the Matsigenka communities as they felt discouraged in their effort to develop their own enterprise and felt particularly offended by CEDIA's allegation of ownership of the Casa Matsigenka project. The Matsigenka communities already felt that the project belonged to them (FANPE-INRENA-GTZ 2000; Rummenhoeller 2000; Shepard 1998). As a result, Tayakome broke links with CEDIA.⁸⁰

5.2. Participation and Leadership in the Casa Matsigenka Lodge Enterprise

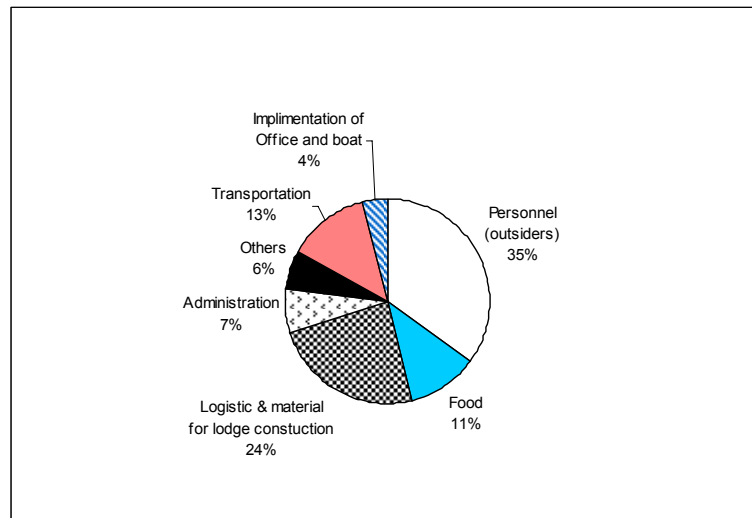
Despite the many “stones in the way” mentioned above, the Matsigenka lodge project became a reality with the inauguration of the Casa Matsigenka in 1999. To establish the Matsigenka lodge project, GTZ and INRENA suggested that the two Matsigenka communities of Tayakome and Yomibato form the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsigenka to manage the Casa Matsigenka lodge. Equal profit-sharing and decision-making was established between the two communities. Once the Indigenous joint venture *Empresa Multicomunal Matsigenka S.R.L.* (the Matsigenka Multi-community Enterprise) was consolidated in 1997, INRENA and the EMM signed a twenty-year renewable agreement in which a six-hectare land concession was granted to the communities' enterprise for tourism purposes. In exchange, the Indigenous enterprise made a commitment to give five percent of their monthly profits to the PNM office. The land concession in which Casa Matsigenka lodge was built is located next to *Cocha Salvador*, within the Tourism Zone of the MNP, close to the private agencies' campsites (see Figure 2 in Chapter 1).

The multiple institutions directly involved in the implementation of the

⁸⁰ Yomibato still maintains a strong relationship with CEDIA because there are kinship ties between this NGO and one of the Yomibato schoolteachers (Rummenholler 2000; Shepard et al. in press).

Casa Matsiguenka lodge were GTZ, FANPE project, APECO and the INRENA regional office in Cusco. Through the FANPE project, GTZ provided funding and assistance for the implementation and development of the Matsiguenka lodge enterprise project from 1997 to 2003. When I visited the Matsiguenka communities in PNM, I met Julia Ohi, a German biologist who studied the Matsiguenka enterprise project since 1999, centering her research on the social and economic aspects of this Indigenous initiative. Ohi evaluated that GTZ investment was a total of US \$110,000.00, which was distributed as shown in Figure 10. More than 50% of the total budget was used in payment to outside personnel (facilitators, consultants, project manager and others) and for construction material for the Casa Matsiguenka lodge (Ohi, personal communication, March 2005). However, none of the institutions that implemented this Indigenous project were still involved. Some of their personnel who supported the project shared with me their fears that Casa Matsiguenka will not survive on its own in the furiously competitive ecotourism market.

Figure 10: Percentage distribution of funding donated by GTZ to the Casa Matsiguenka lodge project (1997-2003). Source: Herrera 2006: 42



My first interaction with the Matsiguenka enterprise was through Ms. Luna, who lives and works in Cusco and is a *Cusqueño* tourism professional. She was hired by GTZ in 2000 to work in the Cusco enterprise's office and is the only non-

Matsiguenka employee. Since the supporting institutions abandoned the ecotourism enterprise project in 2003, because the GTZ founding agency terminated the budget, Ms. Luna became a key player in the Indigenous enterprise.

Numerous interviewees such as Mr. Rios and Eng Cedro who participated in the implementation of the Matsiguenka enterprise recognized that, despite the help the communities received from the funding and supporting institutions, none of them invested as much energy, time and enthusiasm into the project as the two Indigenous Communities themselves. As Shepard conveyed, the lodge enterprise acted as a stimulus for the Matsiguenka people in PNM to strengthen their recently created community organization (personal communication, February, 2005). The strength of this community organization has been highly instrumental in the multicomunal enterprise's ability to navigate and survive the aforementioned crises and road blocks that plagued the project from the beginning.

One illustration of how Tayakome and Yomibato responded to the project was in providing the primary labour force for building the lodge. The communities organized *faenas*, a type of community-volunteer-based organization system.⁸¹ In the Casa Matsiguenka case, as the Matsiguenka leaders explained, groups of families (men, women and children) traveled from their communities to the lodge site and worked voluntarily without pay for the most part; taking turns with other Matsiguenka families every two weeks. The *faena* system was used first to prepare the forest land for the lodge and second to build the lodge infrastructure.

According to Eng Cedro, the former IANP chief, the self-esteem in Matsiguenka identity greatly increased as a result of owning and building the lodge, and the Matsiguenka people have become increasingly respected by the

⁸¹ The Faena community labour organization comes from the Andean societies and was introduced to the Amazonian Indigenous groups with the introduction of communities (*Comunidades Nativas*) during the 1970s. The main purpose of *faenas* is to organize the community members for community work such as cleaning roads and irrigation channels, fixing the community school. The *faena* is organized as a rotating system.

other ethnic groups in the rainforest, who usually underestimate them. As Eng. Cedro (2004) puts it:

When they [the Matsigenka communities] finished building the lodge, people from Boca Manu [the closest village to PNM borders] were astonished at Matsigenkas' accomplishment. I think that a main achievement in 1998 was the pride of the Matsigenka communities. It was with such enthusiasm which we worked ...in Peru when working with Natives (*Nativos*), the general opinion is that "to work with Natives is a waste of time; their habit is to hunt, fish and drink manioc beer (*masato*) and go hunting only whenever they are hungry", and this is the myth. But these Matsigenkas used to tell us: "the material ran out. Why are we getting behind!?" They took turns between Tayakome and Yomibato...and the work [of building the lodge] was the result of their own effort.⁸²

Even though the participation of families from Tayakome and Yomibato was intense during the construction of the lodge, through several interviewees I learned that during the next stages of the enterprise the participation from both communities was less consistent. The Matsigenka people have strategically incorporated the ecotourism lodge's activities into their livelihood. However, working in the ecotourism enterprise has not been an option unanimously accepted by all Matsigenka families' members. Some families, particularly from the most remote community (Yomibato), have shown little interest in integrating ecotourism activities into their living. Rather, their participation in the Indigenous lodge enterprise is sporadic and under constant negotiation among the households' members.

⁸² ... cuando ellos han hecho el albergue y lo han terminado, la gente de Boca Manu, los que supuestamente son muy capaces, se quedaron muy asombrados de lo que habían logrado los otros y yo creo que uno de los logros del 1998 fue el orgullo de la gente (los Matsigenkas) de lo que habían conseguido. Era tal el entusiasmo con que trabajábamos que mas bien la presión era de ellos ...Normalmente lo que te dicen aquí en Perú cuando vas a trabajar con Nativos dicen... [y] este es un poco el mito: "trabajar con Nativos es perder el tiempo. Ellos están acostumbrados a cazar, pescar, a tomar mazato y cuando están con hambre se levantan y van a cazar". Pero estos Matsigenkas decían: "se han acabado los materiales, porque estamos atrasándonos". Entonces iban en turnos tanto de Tayakome como Yomibato ... y fue un trabajo realmente resultado de ellos.

Further, Ms. Luna estimates that scarcely 20% of Matsiguenkas people go to work at the lodge. In contrast to those comments, however, are Ohl's statistics (2005), which show that participation from the communities is about 80% of the Tayakome households and 62% of the Yomibato households. Most participants are young males who have some knowledge of Spanish and their ages range from twenty to thirty years (Ohl 2005). One explanation for the different perceptions of the community participation may be that Ms. Luna is assessing only men's participation since the lodge's operation. Ohl's study may be assessing participation since the very beginning of the project and including women's activities for the lodge, such as construction and craft production, as well as men's. However, the assistant manager's comment may also be a sign that only a small group of Matsiguenka people are consistently interested in directly working at the lodge setting because working in the lodge involves great sacrifices, as I will explain.

Most Matsiguenka women from the communities do not work as Indigenous lodge staff. During the planning process of the lodge, the community leaders, along with the supporting institutions, decided not to involve women as employees in the enterprise. My impression is that this decision was based on the fact that most women speak limited or no Spanish and are not used to interacting with outsiders. Also, the Matsiguenka traditional division of labour is gender-specific, and women's major responsibility is for household tasks and taking care of children (Johnson 2003). Women, however, participate in the lodge indirectly through craft production. Ohl's (2005) study demonstrates that women received 40% of the total income from the sale of handicrafts, and elders (people older than fifty years) receive 8%. More important, Ohl's study shows that the profit generated by craft production has been steady and has become a main source of income for women and elders, who otherwise did not have options to earn monetary income without disturbing their traditional livelihoods. Because the production and selling of craft did not require leaving their homes, women and elders could incorporate such flexible activities within their traditional activities (such as gardening, hunting, and fishing) at their convenience. In short, craft

production as a lodge activity that only requires indirect participation was one of the most successful aspects of the Matsigenka ecotourism enterprise.



Figure 11: Matsigenka woman making cotton thread. This picture was taken by me with their permission.



Figure 12: Matsigenka man displaying beaded necklaces that are made and sold at the Casa Matsigenka. This picture was taken by me with his permission.

In sum, despite broad participation at the beginning and construction phases of the lodge project, once up and running, changes in work conditions narrowed direct engagement in employment at the lodge to the male youth of the communities. I now explain some of the main factors of these dynamics.

5.2.1. The Casa Matsiguenka's Managers and Staff

Through interviews with the lodge staff, I found that, for the majority, monetary income is the central incentive for Matsiguenka people to work at their lodge. Working at the lodge, however, has not only economic but both social and political implications. Thus, the Matsiguenka families are constantly negotiating their labour force.

The Casa Matsiguenka's operations require a manager (one person per community who takes turn) and four lodge-staff (two persons per community). One surprising finding from an opinion poll conducted by Shepard and Ohl, about what job training Matsiguenka people wanted to increase and improve their participation in the Casa Matsiguenka, was that almost none of the Matsiguenka people in either community were interested in taking on the role of lodge manager (*gerente*). I believe that a key factor for the lack of interest is that a manager in Casa Matsiguenka earns only 30% more than other staff (except for the assistant manager whose salary is the highest) but takes on a huge number of responsibilities. When a manager is elected, always by community consensus, he has to move to the lodge for long periods (one to two years away from the community). Thus, temporarily, the Matsiguenka man has to give up his traditional livelihood in order to perform his job in the lodge, i.e., he cannot continue with gardening or hunting.

The personal experience of Rafael from Tayakome illustrates the sacrifices involved in being a manager at Casa Matsiguenka lodge. This young man is an Urubamba-born Matsiguenka who in 1992 moved to Tayakome looking for a Matsiguenka wife and who later became a leader in Tayakome through the lodge project. Rafael was elected manager for almost five consecutive years. He shared with me that he was about to become a "*gringo* without gardens" because wild animals destroyed his abandoned gardens while he and his family were at the lodge. As a result, Rafael decided to take a break from the lodge job.

The role of manager represented a hierarchical position to which Matsiguenka people have shown signs of resistance and mistrust. According to

the literature about Matsigenka, beyond asymmetrical relations based on age and sex differences, these people have not had hierarchy, thus, a strong feature in the socio-political organization among the Matsigenka people has been egalitarianism (Johnson 2003; Rosengren 1987). There has been resistance against the emergence of powerful groups and individuals with some exceptions, such as shamans (*seripigari*) and, fairly recently, schoolteachers. For instance, any president of Matsigenka communities faces the challenge of lacking authority among the Matsigenka people (Johnson 2003; Rosengren 1987; Shepard, personal communication, February 2005). Moreover, there is a fear among the *gerentes* of being identified as *curaca*, which is a negative figure for the Matsigenka people (Shepard 1998). *Curacas* are associated with despotism (see Chapter 3 for details). For instance, in Yomibato many people were discouraged from participating in the project because there were rumours within and outside of the communities about the misuse of money and power. Shepard (ibid) advises that to avoid the emergence of “*curacas* of tourism” the Matsigenka people’s skills need to be strengthened through training. Likewise, Rafael (2005) recommends:

It is important that the youth get training because they are the ones who should continue the work in the Casa Matsigenka ...It is good to work in the lodge, but during that time peccaries eat my manioc and spoil my gardens and my house gets ruined. For these reasons, this project is best for the youth. I have children who now are going to school and I should take care of them.⁸³

The Casa Matsigenka staff’s working conditions are another factor that directly affects the Matsigenka people’s participation in the lodge which, along with moving out of their communities, includes a drastic change of diet. Becoming a lodge staff member is a voluntary decision approved through community meetings and involves moving to the lodge for six months. If a staff member’s

⁸³ Es muy importante que los mas jóvenes vayan a las capacitaciones pues ellos serían los que tienen que continuar el trabajo en Casa Matsigenka...Esta bien trabajar en albergue, pero durante ese tiempo los sajinos se comen mi yuca y malogran mi chacra, la casa se malogra. Por eso este proyecto esta bueno para los más jóvenes. Yo tengo hijos que ahora van a la escuela y hay que cuidarlos.

children are attending school, he moves by himself, otherwise, his family moves to the lodge with him.

Besides abandoning their houses and gardens, working in the lodge also means that they cannot eat traditional food. In the Tourism Zone, hunting and gardening, which are the two main source of food for Matsigenka people, are strictly prohibited. Transporting food from the communities was found to be problematic because food would spoil in the hot weather. As a result, only canned food and other Western products such as pasta and rice are available in the lodge.⁸⁴ Thus, working in the lodge meant a sacrifice and great adjustment for staff and their families because their diet at the lodge dramatically shifts. Several Matsigenka people and outsiders tell stories about the Matsigenka people's resistance to the lack of their traditional food in *their* lodge at the beginning of its operation, but what I found was great frustration and nostalgia among the staff in the lodge.

If a man leaves his family back home, he has to make sure that another male family member will share meat with his "abandoned" family which, according to traditions, is expected to happen (Shepard, personal communication, February 2005). Men's responsibility involves supplying meat. Done in the rainy season, hunting is a male domain. In the dry season it is fishing, which is a male and female domain (Jonhson 2003).

In spite of this tradition, I found several cases in which wives and their children were lacking meat in their diet while the husbands were working at the lodge. While I was visiting Yomibato, Marcos,⁸⁵ who had just returned from working for six months at the lodge, he said, "Leaving my wife alone was hard. She and my children ate little meat while I was [at the lodge] because nobody went hunting for them. My wife managed to work in the garden to harvest manioc

⁸⁴ Ms. Luna explained to me that through the radio she orders these products from a store in Boca Manu (the closest village bordering PNM) and arranges to have them delivered to the lodge.

⁸⁵ Marcos is the real name of this young Matsigenka man.

and sometimes she did some fishing”.⁸⁶ Also, Paulina,⁸⁷ Marco’s wife, said that “If Casa Matsiguenka had a garden, I and my children would have gone there because it would have meant that there was manioc. We cannot live without manioc; we eat it every day”.⁸⁸ In short, Paulina tolerated her husband’s absence to obtain some money for buying basic goods – knives, axes, machete, some clothes, iron pots, tools for fishing, some school supplies for children and mosquito nets. Such sacrifice, however, came at the expense of the family’s diet. The family needed manioc and wanted their children to attend school, so Paulina and her children did not join Marcos at the lodge.

In sum, choosing to work in the lodge as manager or as staff is a family decision, which Matsiguenka families take on primarily for monetary income. However, whether or not to work in the lodge for some families may be a *dilemma* between goods or “good food.” For young men and their families, however, the decision to work for their lodge is by far a better option than having to look for a job out of PNM, an option that usually results in exploitation. As Romulo (2005), the Tayakome community president puts it:

Before the Matsiguenka lodge existed I had to go to Boca Manu to look for a job to be able to get batteries, a mosquito net and other things. Now we only need to go to *Salvadorcillo* [the Matsiguenka lodge] to work and earn some money.

5.2.2. La Chacra (the garden): “When are we having the Casa Matsiguenka’s Chacra?”

One of the issues often repeated to me by the Matsiguenka people and Ms. Luna was the Casa Matsiguenka’s lack of a garden (*chacra*). It was evident that not having a garden in which to grow manioc (*manihot esculenta*) in their lodge was

⁸⁶ Lo que más me ha afecto fue dejar a mi esposa sola. Ellos comieron muy poca carne durante mi ausencia, pues nadie va ha cazar para ellos. Mi esposa se las arreglaba para trabajar y cultivar en la chacra para conseguir yuca y a veces pescar.

⁸⁷ Paulina is the real name of this young Matsiguenka woman.

⁸⁸ si hubiera una chacra en Casa Matsiguenka, mis hijos y yo habríamos estado dispuestos a ir, pues habría yuca; nosotros no podemos estar sin yuca; es nuestro alimento diario.

a condition that frustrated and challenged the Matsigenka people. It deeply affected their well-being. Gardens for Matsigenka households are by far the most important source of food and medicine (Johnson 2003; Shepard et al. 2001; Ohl 2004). Manioc, according to several studies (Johnson 2003; Ohl 2004) as well as Paulina's testimony above, is the main staple among the Matsigenkas people. Ohl's study (2005) shows that in Tayakome and Yomibato 74% of Matsigenkas' diet consists of manioc. For this reason, the Matsigenka people have been demanding the Park's authorities to allow them the right to have a garden (*la chacra*) at their lodge. By having a garden, the Matsigenka people at the lodge can continue to enjoy their traditional diet and depend less on a Western diet. The Matsigenka people are still allowed to fish but only on the Manu River, not on the lakes. Rafael shared with me about his experience with the diet in the lodge. He expressed, "When catching a fish, it is not tasty to eat without manioc!" And I asked, "With rice?" Rafael replied, "Neither with rice... when cooking a fish even when smoked, there is no taste [without manioc]".⁸⁹

The benefits of having *la chacra* at the lodge would be both socio-cultural and financial. The staff would not have to disrupt their traditional diet and their family could be more likely to accompany their father/husband to the lodge, which would help in avoiding nostalgic or depressing moments for the staff (Ohl and Puygrenier 2004). *La chacra* could also be another tourist attraction at the lodge because through the garden the Matsigenka people could teach their visitors about their land, traditional plants and a sustainable horticultural system (ibid). A garden would also provide a financial benefit because it would decrease the enterprise's dependence on importing outside food and thus reduce expenses incurred to bring supply shipments to the lodge.

Several interviewees (Manu researchers, supporting NGO's personnel, and ironically, even Dr. Seri, the IANP chief) agreed with the benefits of having a *chacra* in Casa Matsigenka. Dr. Seri explained to me that "*La chacra* is a

⁸⁹ Cojes un bagre [pescado], no es agradable comer así sin la yuca.

[JH] Y con arroz? [Rafael] Con arroz, tampoco... ya no es como la yuca...si haces un pescado (un Sungaro o un Bagre) lo cocinamos, lo ahumamos. Pero no hay su sabor [sin yuca].

problem based on lack of communication between regional and national authorities... More than five years have passed since *la chacra* was requested by the Matsigenka enterprise". Dr. Seri approved a *chacra* at the Casa Matsigenka. But even after I left Peru (in April 2005), the Cusco regional INRENA officials had yet to complete their evaluation of the request, and there was no sign of willingness to accelerate this process.

The Matsigenka staff have not been passive about the lack of Matsigenka diet in their own lodge. During the first years of the lodge operation, some of Matsigenka staffpeople were planting manioc plants secretly in hidden spots until one day the park guards discovered and destroyed them all. For the Matsigenka people, such violent repression was taken as a huge offence and a vivid memory. The Tayakome president, Romulo (2005) explained to me:

We are poor! The Park authorities do not support us... five years we've been requesting a garden [in Casa Matsigenka] and they don't give us authorization. This has created lots of problems for us. The Park guards destroyed the manioc garden we once made in the lodge.⁹⁰

Moreover, the *chacra* is an issue that has implications that extend beyond the Matsigenka people's health and diet. The *chacra* issue points to the highly *hegemonic* nature of the conservation model in PNM and illustrates the *paradoxes* of "community-based ecotourism" in such context. It also mirrors the highly disparate and oppressive socio-political relationships of class and ethnicity in the region, as the following quote from Dr. Tohe' (2004), an anthropologist and policy researcher-analyst who had worked in PNM for more than a decade, illustrates:

While Casa Matsigenkas lodge's garden was literally destroyed by the Park guards who said that they [the Matsigenka people] did not have authorization [to have a *chacra*]; one Cusqueño owner of a lodge [in the Tourism Zone of PNM] introduced almost 80 non-Native plant species in the Park...and INRENA never objected because that man represents the Cusco associations...but [also]

⁹⁰ Nosotros somos pobres! El Parque no apoyaba...5 años pidiendo chacra. Hace chacra y el parque no autoriza y ha traído hartos problemas. La gente del parque ha destruido nuestra chacra de yuca del albergue.

there's no written document about what is allowed [in the Park], and the Matsigenkas have the right to mobilize in the whole area but there is no written document about it...⁹¹

This anthropologist eloquently articulated the local and regional asymmetries among the social groups linked to the PNM, i.e., the Indigenous peoples versus local and regional political and economic elites. Thus, the ways in which state rules are regionally re-interpreted and reinforced by local authorities (e.g., Park guards) exposes the ways in which ethnicity (the “*indio*” vs. the white and even the *colonos*) and power status redefines rights and duties in PNM. According to the Convention on Biological Diversity (see Article 8, in: www.cbd.int/convention/convention.shtml), “...knowledge, innovations and practices of Indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity” should be promoted. Studies on the Matsigenka agricultural practices are inclined to conclude that these are sustainable practices in the long run (see Ohi 2004; Ohi et al. in press). In sum, not helping the Matsigenka people to have their traditional garden in their lodge is violating the Convention on Biological Diversity and this could be a case appropriately heard by an international court.

Ecotourism market agents create “pristine” images of nature (Duffy 2002; Belsky 2000) in which the Indigenous peoples are cast in romantic and idyllic images of “noble savages living in complete harmony with nature”. But in practice the Indigenous people’s livelihood and the core of their identity – the Matsigenka subsistence activities (hunting and gardening) – are prohibited in their “Matsigenka lodge,” and are furiously repressed when the Matsigenka do not comply with these prohibitions. Not having the right to have a *chacra* in the Casa Matsigenka cannot be seen only as a violation of human rights but also as

⁹¹ En el albergue Matsigenka...el parque destruyó todo esto de las chacras diciendo que no había autorización. Pero a su vez el señor Cusqueño, que tiene el albergue, introdujo unas ochenta plantas exóticas para el Manu... pero ahí nunca había un lío o algo del INRENA porque ese señor...representa gremios en Cusco... pero [tampoco] no está escrito en ninguna parte qué se puede hacer, y los Matsigenka tienen derechos de movilizarse libremente en todo el área pero no está escrito tampoco en ninguna parte.

a manifestation of the *paradoxical* discourse and practice of “community-based ecotourism” in PNM. That is, it is contradictory, particularly in the idea that “community-based ecotourism” ensures the valorization of ethnic cultures. Therefore, under the PNM context, I find it ironic that one of the goals of the Casa Matsigenka ecotourism enterprise in PNM is “being a space to show the Matsigenka culture as a form of self-valorizing of Matsigenka people” (IAN-INRENA chief, personal communication, January 2005).⁹²

5.2.3. Challenges of a “Little Lizard” in the Green Tourism Industry

The main purpose of the Indigenous ecotourism enterprise, according to INRENA’s officials, is to provide a supplemental source of income for the PNM communities and “integrate” them into the national economic system through ecotourism. The challenge of “being integrated” into the capitalist system from which they are structurally different is a complex process and, from my perspective, a controversial idea. On the one hand, their participation in the tourism market, from which they have historically been marginalized, is an endeavour that brings new learning, visions, and ambitions for the Matsigenka people. On the other hand, the idea of “integration” of a group whose sociocultural and economic structure differs from the capitalist system brings moral dilemmas. The Matsigenka people’s economy is subsistence household-based at the core of which is reciprocity and trading of kind.⁹³ “[E]conomically the [Matsigenka] hamlet is held together in part by collaboration in critical activities like house building and obtaining and sharing wild foods” (Johnsons 2003: 168). If efforts towards a process of *articulation*, i.e., creation of links rather

⁹² de tener un espacio de diversión de muestra de la cultura Matsigenka como una forma de generar autoestima, y autovaloración de los pueblos Matsigenka.

⁹³ I use Mayer’s (2002: 105) definition of reciprocity who refers it as “the continuous, normative exchange of services and goods between known persons, in which some time must elapse between and individual prestation and its return...It is a social relationship that ties an individual to other individuals, an individual to social groups, producers to producers, and producers to consumers...The content as well as the manner of what flows from hand to hand are culturally determined”.

than “integration”, are not led with a culturally appropriate approach, this process can lead to a “cultural genocide” and elimination of traditional livelihoods (for debates on articulation see Mayer 2002). That is, rather than making effort to integrate or assimilate these non-capitalist societies, the emphasis I believe should be to articulate them with the capitalist system in ways that allow for them to negotiate their cultural values, knowledge, and practices.

In the process of “doing ecotourism”, Casa Matsigenka has been a tremendous learning experience for every Matsigenka person who has been working at the enterprise project, particularly the managers. As Rafael puts it, “tourism is a great experience...but sometimes there could be problems”. Such learning includes grasping an understanding of concepts embedded within the capitalist business sphere. But, owning and managing an enterprise and obtaining monetary income implies structurally different notions and experiences to the Matsigenka people. For instance, for these people experiences of wage labour and monetary-based commercial activities have been minima (Jonhsons 2003: 38-39). As Mr. Inti (2004), a young lawyer with experience working with Amazonian communities and who was the GTZ facilitator for the lodge enterprise project, voiced:

It was difficult for them [the Matsigenka people]... to understand the concepts of enterprise, savings, utilities, etc. These are basic concepts to managing an enterprise, but do not belong to their world. They practice reciprocity, their investment is different. [For example], if they have something they will share it with the others (their family) and the expectation is that the others will share with them when they have. In other words, their investment is to give to the others because it will be given back to them.

As the above quote points out, the structural differences of the traditional Matsigenka people’s subsistence economy and the monetary market, makes the Matsigenka enterprise’s ownership and management a challenge the magnitude of which they did not predict. One of the difficulties was teaching to the Matsigenka people about the market system concepts mentioned above. People from the supporting institutions (GTZ, FANPE project, APECO and INRENA) tried to transfer knowledge through sporadic workshops (see Table 2).

The main purpose of such training, Mr. Inti explained, was to guide the Matsigenka people through the decision-making process by giving them as much information as possible for them to make informed decisions.

The structural distinction of social groups from out-of-the-way places whose economies differ from dominant capitalism, leads to complex processes of articulation of the reciprocal exchange economy and the market exchange. For instance, the management of money as a commodity of exchange value is very limited for Matsigenka people in PNM, because most of their exchanges are based on barter or reciprocity. Would the enterprise project lead to a process of “integration” of these Matsigenka people, their practices and knowledge to the capitalist system? What articulation process may be unfolding between the traditional economic system of reciprocity and capitalism through the ownership and the participation in their lodge enterprise? I find that paying attention to the complex process unfolding from the linkages of these two diverse economic and sociocultural structures is relevant for monitoring and future research.

Approaching from the ecological-social systems and sustainable development frameworks, Ohi (2004; 2005) studied the effects of the enterprise on the Matsigenka living. This researcher (2005: 37) concludes that the effects of Matsigenka enterprise on its people’s livelihood are quite low. One of the main effects of the enterprise is a decrease in infant mortality, due to the improvement of the primary health care service in these communities. In other words, it seems that there have not yet been significant structural changes in the Matsigenka traditional economy and cultural structure.

Table 2: The enterprise project the Casa Matsiguenka (CM) stages, objectives and workshops. Source: Table adapted from Herrera 2006: 39-40.

Year	Stage	Objectives	Workshops
1996-1997	Planning & building CM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To set up the lodge To develop the services management of the lodge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings for project objective and establishment of the multi-community enterprise
1997-1998	Construction of CM lodge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build the lodge infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Plan design Motivational & intercultural bilingual handbooks use workshops
1999-2000	Adaptation & learning tourism services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide tools for CM planning and management Strengthen Matsiguenka self-esteem and cultural identity Elaboration & implementation of sociocultural & environmental monitoring plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for lodge ownership & management Evaluation of training Giant otters management Sociocultural monitoring
2001-2002	Improvement of tourism management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in tourism service Learning enterprise management Practicing maintenance of lodge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sociocultural & environmental workshop Training
2003-2004	Self-learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to self-manage the enterprise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosting tour groups

I found that since the supporting institutions abandoned the ecotourism project, the learning accomplished is learning-by-doing. For instance, as one of the first Matsiguenka managers of the lodge, Rafael taught the new managers and staff. With this purpose in mind, Rafael was visiting and staying in the lodge sporadically. In one of my visits to the lodge I met Nicolas,⁹⁴ a young man who barely said his name to me, quietly observed everything. He received orders primarily from the manager (Carlos) in their Matsiguenka language.⁹⁵ I was told that Nicolas barely spoke any Spanish because he never went to school. He just migrated to Yomibato from Manu River headwaters where the non-contacted Matsiguenka groups live in complete “voluntary isolation.” Nicolas case is one example of why the Matsiguenka leaders persist in demanding better education and ongoing training. Many times during my fieldwork people requested English-

⁹⁴ Nicolas is the real name of the person

⁹⁵ Carlos is the real name of the person.

language training from me. People want to learn Spanish and English so they can guide the tourists.

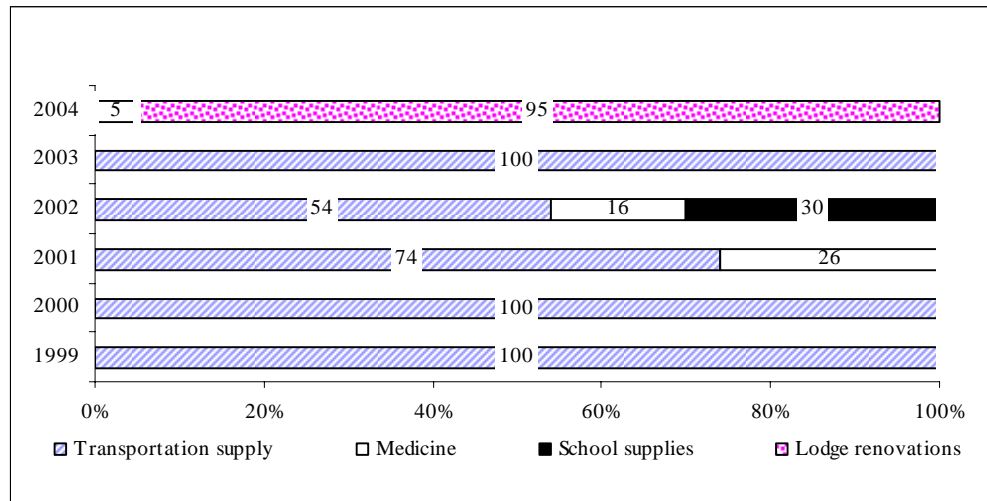
Although decision-making in the enterprise has been community-driven, in practice, decision-making relies heavily on Ms. Luna, the assistant manager. Such a situation not only places strong pressure on this person, but restrains communities in their capacity to make informed decisions about the enterprise. I believe that such dependency on one person in the enterprise, regardless of her good intentions, is a potential for emerging patronizing relationships between the *Cusqueño* tourism professionals and the Matsigenka people. I find that there is a need to organize something such as an advisory network for the Indigenous enterprise (see recommendations in Appendix 1).

Finally, I learnt through talking with the Matsigenka people and through Ohl's study that the small monetary income that is generated through the Casa Matsigenka (an average of US \$130.00 per household annually) has a significant positive impact in the Matsigenka families' income. In fact, it is their only source of monetary income. As the Tayakome president puts it: "If the lodge didn't exist, there would not be money for us to buy clothes and other basic stuff. Now, we don't need to bother Fitzcarrald or Boca Manu's Mayor about our problems and necessities".⁹⁶

The fact that they do not need to rely on donations but rather can work in *their own* Matsigenka lodge and *earn* money to obtain goods, despite the pitfalls discussed above, nevertheless contributes to a sense of empowerment for these Indigenous Communities. However, as the Matsigenka leaders clearly expressed to me, their goal is for the ecotourism enterprise to produce enough profit to ensure that their entire community benefits rather than only select individuals (i.e., the staff and managers). Although the Indigenous enterprise has produced some benefit for their communities (see Figure 13), it is hardly a profitable enterprise.

⁹⁶ Si no hubiera albergue no hubiera plata para comprar ropa y mas cosas. Ahora no tenemos por que molestar al alcalde de Fitzcarrald de Boca Manu. Ya no molestamos a las autoridades con esos nuestros problemas y necesidades.

Figure 13. Percentage annual economic benefits for Tayakome & Yomibato from the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsiguenka (1999-2004). Source: Herrera 2006: 45



The Matsiguenka leaders' enterprise goals are, I believe, common among Indigenous community-based enterprises, and coincide with the global definition of ecotourism by international organizations such as the World Tourism Organization (WTO): ecotourism is a "means of avoiding environmental degradation while sharing economic benefits with the local people" (Toepfer 2001). We need to understand "local" to mean a group of people who have a deep historical cultural connection to the physical locality in which they live, as well as, I argue, the contemporary populations of the Amazon, such as *Colonos*. But in practice, such ecotourism's goal represents a considerable challenge. Frustration and concerns among the participants of the Matsiguenka Indigenous enterprise reveal the challenges and contradictions in the way this community-based ecotourism has been restrained by the political and economic forces which dominate tourism in PNM.

5.3. "Wild Green Capitalism" in Manu National Park

In Peru, the rainforest has become a commodity fabricated mainly by an international tourism market fostered by state and environmental NGOs as a form of "sustainable" development and protection of "untouchable nature". The south-eastern regional tourism market, as explained in Chapter 4, has expanded

from traditional Incan-trails tourism to “discovering the jungle” or commoditizing the rainforests as a new “green” tourist attraction. Due to its appeal to the international tourism market, to national nature conservation policy, and to the regional economic market to expand, undertaking an ecotourism project always involves a multiplicity of local and non-local interests in competition with one another (Lanfant 1995). Ecotourism is “firmly locked into notions of ‘green capitalism’, thus it cannot provide radical sustainable development, contrary to its supporters’ claim. Ecotourism is a business that has to compete with other business and it focuses on profit rather than conservation” (Duffy 2002). As such, ecotourism constitutes a *paradox*. The huge disparity of interests and both socioeconomic and political capital between the Indigenous ecotourism enterprise and the private *Cusqueño* ecotourism sector in Manu National Park has generated ferocious competition that escalated to a crisis for the Indigenous enterprise. As I explained earlier, I have come to call this context “wild green capitalism”; the Indigenous enterprise is like a “little lizard among crocodiles” in which the latter has almost monopolized the Manu tourism market. Since its inauguration, the Matsiguenka enterprise only had a lodge to provide accommodation services for tourists. Thus, the Indigenous enterprise ironically depends on its business rivals for hosting tourists!

5.3.1. An Alliance of the Indigenous Enterprise with the “Crocodiles”?

The Matsiguenka enterprise gave rise to huge conflicts of interest not only among governmental and non-governmental institutions but also in the private tourism sector. Through their Ecotour Manu ASSC, the official Manu tour agencies have lobbied for their own interests to maintain control of the Manu tourism market, and the emergence of Casa Matsiguenka threatened this goal. Therefore, the relationship between Casa Matsiguenka and the Ecotour Manu ASSC has been far from smooth. Interestingly, I found that from the private sector owners’ perspective this uneasy relationship has more to do with the outside individuals and institutions that support the Indigenous enterprise than with the Matsiguenka people themselves. With frustration, Mr. Otter (2005), one

of the operators with the longest established history of business in Manu, said that:

The relationship between the tour operators and Casa Matsigenka is terrible...we are seven [operators] in Cusco... associated in a union, Ecotour Manu...so it was easy to invite us...to explain [to] us: "this is the project [the Matsigenka lodge] we want to do, what do you think? how should it be?... you bring the tourists, what do they need?"...They didn't even invite us to the lodge inauguration; actually, GTZ headman told me "we don't need your tourists!"... [So], we have used Casa Matsigenka as the last source, when there was nowhere to accommodate our tourists, because everything was full or because the river took away our camping sites...That has been our tactic.⁹⁷

As reflected in the quote, this Manu tour operator believes that as the "founders" of the tourism market in Manu, Ecotour Manu ASSC members should be entitled to special privileges for decision-making on the Matsigenka enterprise project and in the PNM tourism management.

Eng Cedro explained to me that the Matsigenka enterprise does not manage a "lodge" but a "house" (*casa*), because it only provides accommodation,⁹⁸ i.e., rooms and huts to sleep, but it does not provide other services such as food or drinks; thus, it does not reach the "standards for being assigned as a lodge". For this reason it is called *Casa Matsigenka* (Matsigenka House). Also, until 2005 this enterprise was not licensed to be a tour operator;

⁹⁷ Entonces la relación que ha tenido la Casa Matsigenka con los operadores turísticos ha sido pésima...Somos 7 y estamos acá en Cusco y hasta estamos asociados en un gremio, en Ecotour Manu... entonces era muy fácil para ellos habernos citados a un par de talleres y decir "este es nuestro proyecto queremos hacer esto, que les parece, cómo debe ser...porque son los que traen a los turistas, qué cosas necesitan sus turistas". No te digo que ni si quiera a la inauguración nos invitaron. E inclusive a mí GTZ me llegó a decir: "que no necesitaban nuestros turistas!"... [entonces] hemos utilizado la casa Matsigenka como último recurso, cuando no teníamos dónde llevar a nuestros turistas, porque todo lo demás estaba lleno o porque el río se llevó nuestros campamentos... Y sigue así, esa es la tónica.

⁹⁸ Every tour group arrives with a tour guide, other personnel (cook, boat driver, etc.) hired by the tour operators and with the food, drinks, snacks and anything else they will prepare and consume while staying in Casa Matsigenka.

thus, technically it could not sell tourism packages directly to its own clients. Instead, Casa Matsiguenka received tourists mostly from other operators, the “official Manu tour operators who are, of course, their competitors.” (Shepard et al. in press). Somehow (it was not explained to me) the project’s original idea was that the private tour operators would cooperate by bringing their tourists to Casa Matsiguenka. But, as the above quote illustrates, that has not been the case.

Hence, one of the great challenges for the Indigenous lodge enterprise has been to maintain its share of the market despite the official Manu tour operators’ attempts to shut it out of the market. To ensure visitors to Casa Matsiguenka, the lodge was allowed to arrange “experimental tour groups”.⁹⁹ The original purpose of this model was to help the Casa Matsiguenka lodge staff attract tour group visits to acquire and strengthen their tour service skills. However, during the period of my fieldwork, the Casa Matsiguenka management was using such modality arbitrarily in response to the urgent needs of the Indigenous enterprise to survive the low demand from the official tour operators.

Community-based ecotourism projects could end up helping the interests of local, regional and global elites because the political nature of decision-making processes often excludes communities and their interests; “As a result, in many community schemes, a form of tokenism in public participation has developed” (Duffy 2002: 103). But, as the Casa Matsiguenka case demonstrated, if the community-based ecotourism project did not match the local/regional elites’ immediate interests, such elites could turn into furious competitors and co-opting agents of community-based ecotourism.

On several occasions Ecotour Manu ASSC has attempted to take control of the Casa Matsiguenka enterprise. Being owned and built by Matsiguenka people, resembling a Matsiguenka household (compare Figure 8 with Figure 9), and with Matsiguenka staff, this Indigenous lodge becomes a very attractive

⁹⁹ Such modality consisted of tourist groups organized by the Matsiguenka enterprise in partnership with FANPE and other tour agencies. During the early years of the lodge operation, GTZ reached this “experimental tour groups” agreement with INRENA for the Casa Matsiguenka.

product for the ecotourism marketing. Such attractiveness has triggered the official Manu operators to approach the communities proposing “joint ventures”. For instance, the Ecotour Manu ASSC has sympathetically suggested several times that if the communities were to allow them to administer the Casa Matsigenka, Ecotour Manu ASSC would pay a royalty to the Indigenous communities’ owners of the lodge.

But the Matsigenka communities have not accepted any such offers. They have not agreed to rent or sell their lodge to the private tour agencies. As the Tayakome’s leaders told me, “we want to do it ourselves.” Nonetheless, the cost of not allying with the private sector dominating Manu tourism market has been high. Put differently, the Matsigenka communities from PNM are embedded in diametrical regional sociopolitical and economic oppositions that intensely hinder the success of the community-based Indigenous ecotourism enterprise. More than one of my interviewees suggested that there are huge prejudices against Indigenous peoples in Peru (i.e., anti- Indigeneity, *anti-indigenismos*), and the difficulties of the Matsigenka enterprise are a manifestation of such racism. Ms. Barbasco, a former chief of PNM, talked of this segregation:

[The business people] think that the Natives don’t have the right to be entrepreneurs. That is, these people believe that [the Natives] don’t have the capacity so they should pay others to develop their [Matsigenka] lodge...¹⁰⁰

The Casa Matsigenka made close to US \$20,000 in the first year of its operation in 1999. However, soon after, a new agreement between the private sector and the state was approved affecting the Indigenous lodge to such an extent that a crisis erupted — a crisis that from my and my non-governmental interviewees’ perspectives is tantamount to a boycott against the community-based ecotourism enterprise. In 2000, the eight tour agencies operating in PNM reached an agreement with INRENA in which each one was granted campsite

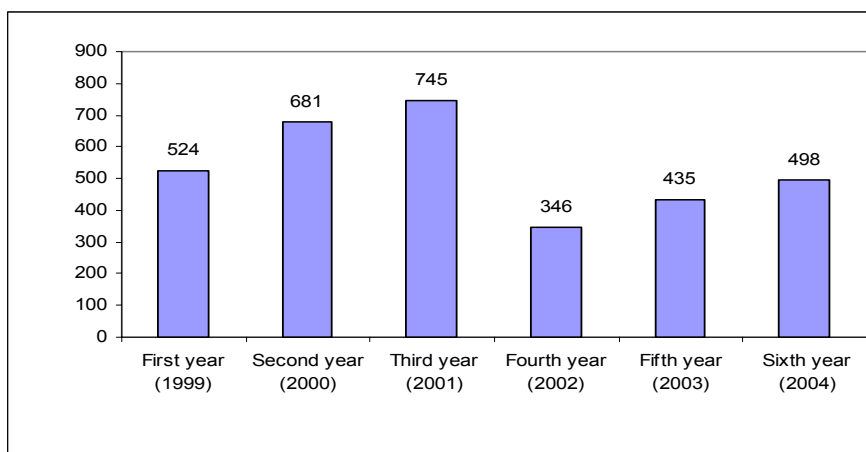
¹⁰⁰ [Los empresarios] piensan que los Nativos no tienen derechos para también ser empresarios. O sea no los creen con suficiente capacidad y por último si no tienen esa capacidad pueden pagar para que alguien desarrolle ese albergue...

concessions to build its camps next to Cosha Salvador, for which they pay a fee.¹⁰¹ The agreement was signed under the condition that *only* members of Ecotour-Manu ASSC (comprising eight tour agencies at that time) would be allowed to operate within the PNM; therefore, the private sector consortium monopolized the Manu tourism market. I found that Ms. Barbasco, who talked about the business people's racism against the Indigenous people, ironically was the former PNM chief involved in the agreement detrimental to the Casa Matsigenka. This government official believed that "there [are] tourists for lodges and tourists for camping sites" and that the agreement with Ecotour-Manu ASSC would not affect Casa Matsigenka. Nevertheless, after Ecotour Manu ASSC members established and opened their campsites (between 2001 and 2002), the number of tour groups visiting Casa Matsigenka experienced a significant decline; for instance, from 2001 to 2002 tour visit decreased 46% (see Figure 14).

Despite the challenges, boycotts, and consequent business crisis, I found that the Indigenous enterprise leaders, with the support of the assistant managers and other individuals and organizations, have been persistent in lobbying in their own interest. This persistence has provoked a process of negotiation, that despite being slow, ambiguous, and fragile, is progressing. In 2005, INRENA approved a new PNM Tourism Regulation (*Reglamento de Uso Turístico*) allowing the Casa Matsigenka to partner with tour agencies independent from Ecotour Manu ASSC. In 2006, I was told the Matsigenka enterprise obtained the license to operate in PNM as a tour agency. Such status implies more new challenges for the Matsigenka families but also brings about other possibilities for the Indigenous enterprise. I believe that, in the political realm, the acquisition of a license for the Indigenous enterprise symbolizes a step forward in its ongoing negotiation process with the state and private tourism sector to gain access and rights for mobilizing in the green market.

¹⁰¹ In exchange for these concessions, the tour agencies agreed to pay the PNM office an annual fee equivalent to 7 UIT (*Unidad Impositiva Tributaria*; in 2000, each UIT was equivalent to US \$840.00).

Figure 14. Number of tourists visiting the Casa Matsigenka from 1999 through 2004).
Source: Herrera 2006: 45



From my perspective as an anthropologist and advocate for the Matsigenka people, and one who has heard from all sides in this complex story, the restoration of rights for local people as actors in tourism and conservation is a main concern. To achieve these rights, access to tourism activities should be encouraged, not only through implementing lodges and facilitating jobs, but also through providing long term educational programs that enhance the locals' capacity to successfully accomplish new economic activities (see also recommendations in Appendix 1). By consistently providing training, opportunities to participate in tourism activities and in decision-making processes, participation can be feasible not only for elite young men but for other members of the community. In practical terms, the Casa Matsigenka lodge aims to be a way to gain compensation for communities losing access to land and resources in PNM. However, experiences such as the Matsigenka people-owned enterprise have implications that extend beyond economics: they send a political message to the dominant oppressing forces of the regional, national and global economic and political systems. This is so not only because this Indigenous enterprise experience shows the strong agency and development capacity of the Matsigenka communities, but also because it challenges the long historical, political and economic asymmetric marginalizing relationships in the rainforest region. Despite the unsuccessful economic outcomes of aiming for collective benefits from the enterprise, the Casa Matsigenka experience opens

a window of hope for the Matsigenka people to actively counterbalance its historical oppression. I am hopeful that the negotiation processes triggered by this Indigenous enterprise will take place in a fair way so that these Indigenous people can reach their goals of self-determination. It is crucial that they obtain “the ability to determine one’s own future on one’s own land” (McIntosh 1999), rather than being forced to isolation or to economically and culturally assimilate into a modern capitalist system. These self-determination goals, however, encompass issues and opportunities that go far beyond participating in “ecotourism” and require a whole new re-structuring of conservation after an intercultural institutional conservation model, that is, a model of conservation that is culturally appropriate.

The following words from a group interview with the Tayakome Matsigenka leaders (2005) capture the degree of pride, enthusiasm, capacity development and self-determination that have emerged through their lodge project:

CEDIA thought that we would not be able to manage a lodge because we speak little Spanish; for this reason they wanted to bring outsiders [to work in the lodge]. But we want to do it ourselves...if it fails we’ll know that we cannot do it. But Casa Matsigenka remains open, so that must mean that we can do it and want to do it ourselves.¹⁰²

Therefore, despite the disparity, limitations and great challenges to compete in the green market, Casa Matsigenka is not only an experience that means economic competition, but it also elicits a powerful, inspiring political message from the Matsigenka communities in PNM. These Indigenous people are courageously innovating and wrestling with the “big crocodiles” of “wild green capitalism”. This Indigenous enterprise illustrates the struggles that are leading to

¹⁰² CEDIA decía que nosotros no vamos a conseguir hacer el albergue porque nosotros no hablamos mucho español, por esta razón CEDIA quería traer gente de fuera. Pero nosotros queremos hacerlo solos y ver como seguir adelante. Nosotros aun seguimos con la Casa Matsigenka y si fracasamos sabremos que no podemos. Hasta ahora Casa Matsigenka sigue funcionando, entonces parece que si podemos hacerlo. Nosotros queremos hacerlo nosotros mismos.

negotiating processes for the recognition of rights to access resources and goods, for present and future generations, in a political and socioeconomic context of oppression, marginalization and domination of hegemonic notions of “people”, “places”, “wilderness” and “nature”.

Chapter 6: Closing Thoughts: “Wild Green Capitalism”— Whose “Nature”? Whose Conservation? Whose Future?

My experience in researching the Indigenous ecotourism enterprise with the Matsigenka people in Manu National Park (PNM) in Peru clearly illustrates the ongoing colonizing and patronizing nature of the Peruvian state towards Indigenous peoples and their homeland. As historical external colonization and contemporary internal colonization are ongoing processes, both are deeply linked to the expansion of capitalism that maintains asymmetric relationships and the marginalization of Indigenous peoples in Peru. Such colonizing forces have shaped and continue to trigger discriminatory and racist relationships. Through these asymmetric power relationships of socioeconomic class and ethnicity, sociocultural-constructed dominant notions of space, place, nature and human beings (particularly Indigenous peoples) become hegemonic and in turn marginalize the inhabitants and residents of these areas, i.e., “the locals”.

Thus, the continuities and disjunctions of colonialism, to which I refer in my theoretical framework making reference to Gledhill (2002) and Tsing (1993), are quite obvious in Peruvian contemporary history. The glaring continuity of colonial structures is apparent in the contemporary history of the Matsigenka people in Manu. The presence of missionaries along with the state in this region played a paramount role in the restructuring of these social groups into communities during the twentieth century in ways that reproduced colonial and patronizing dynamics.

The disjunctions or “gaps” reflected in “displacement”, i.e., marginality, to which Tsing (1993) refers, are also indisputable in the case of state approach towards the Matsigenka peoples and their territories in Manu. The imposition of notions of both “Native Community” and “Protected Areas” through laws illustrates the complexities and pitfalls of this colonial state approach. Through land tenure systems based on Western notions of “community” that do not match with the Amazonian indigenous ideas, the colonizing Peruvian state has defined and shifted the access to land in ways that often have disrupted the Amazonian

groups' traditional livelihoods. Moreover, the colonial approach of the national legal system hinders the development of intercultural agreements to allow alternative relationship models between people and their environment (García and Surrallés 2005).

The Peruvian colonial state approach of domination and marginalization has been replicated in the Peruvian biodiversity conservation model in ways that reflect the “contradictions of marginality”, to which Tsing (1993) suggests paying attention in doing analysis on the margins. Due to the dominant Western notion of “nature” as “pristine”, protected areas such as PNM were created under the deep contradiction of “untouchable forest”, when actually these areas are the homeland of diverse Indigenous populations (see Shepard 2003; Shepard et al. in press). Considerable effort to reverse such top-down conservation has been made by Indigenous peoples' organizations (2005). In Peru, this Indigenous struggle against top-down conservation has resulted in very few initiatives of community-based conservation (such as Community Reserves). Nevertheless, from the basis of knowing that “community” is more often a foreign concept that was imposed on the Peruvian Amazonian Indigenous peoples, I am curious about the lessons, challenges and limitations that may emerge from the application of “community-based” approach to conservation and natural resource management in these regions.¹⁰³ Recognition of Indigenous peoples' territory rights is slow, complex, and the results are as yet incipient and ambiguous. It is evident, though, that the politics of nature conservation still lacks socioeconomic, political and, particularly, culturally-sensitive and appropriate approaches. Shepard et al. (in press: 1) call our attention to the “socio-environmentalism” perspective that emerged in the 1980s as an alliance between environmentalists, rubber tappers' unions and indigenous federations in South America.

[This new perspective is] an alternative to the North American preservationist-conservationist model. Socio-environmentalism

¹⁰³ There is a clear link between my research and the process of the Indigenous peoples' territoriality struggles/negotiation, but because this theme is not my focus, I do not develop such analysis.

affirms the multiple associations between cultural and biological diversity...and takes a politically active stance on biodiversity conservation as inseparable from issues of social justice and cultural and territorial rights for Indigenous and forest peoples.

I strongly believe that the notion of socio-environmentalism is necessary to follow. These authors (Shepard et al. in press: 1) propose that the ideal and lowest-cost approach for Manu's biodiversity conservation is "...through a 'tenure for defense' trade: indigenous communities receive explicit benefits (direct and indirect) in exchange for helping to defend the park against incursion and managing vulnerable resources such as game animals".

In attempts to tackle the marginalization of Matsigenka communities in PNM and to "integrate" them into the larger economic system, the state gave the green light for these Indigenous people to "learn to be entrepreneurs of ecotourism". This is the only option for socioeconomic development and conservation given to the PNM residents. Berkes (personal communication, March 2007) advises that conservation and "poverty" could be tackled through models such as sustainable livelihoods rather than sustainable development. A sustainable livelihood framework focuses on providing many options to improve the quality of life for people (see Scoones 1998; Herrera 2003), and in so doing the resilience (i.e., given many options) of these peoples increases. Indigenous peoples are limited to a very low resilience option, from a sustainable livelihood standpoint, when using ecotourism as the only option for sustainable living and income generation in protected areas.

The Multicommunal Enterprise Matsigenka and its lodge Casa Matsigenka are the result initiative for socioeconomic development and conservation, and it is unfolding through interesting processes. This Indigenous ecotourism enterprise triggers and accelerates processes of socioeconomic, political negotiations. From being absolutely marginalized, these Indigenous communities are slowly shedding light on a political and economic negotiation process among the multiple stakeholders involved with PNM. Despite the several contradictions of community-based ecotourism that I summarize below, the Matsigenka people shared with me their pride, motivation, hope and enthusiasm

of owning and controlling their Indigenous enterprise, in other words, their agency.

What does ecotourism really mean on the ground in PNM? How is the process of negotiation over its various meanings unfolding for the PNM Indigenous people? And, how are the Indigenous people in PNM experiencing “ecotourism”? These are some of the questions that I ask and analyze in the two last chapters of this thesis. To respond to these questions I have studied the experiences of the Matsigenka owners of the Casa Matsigenka, and I draw upon narratives on ecotourism collected in my five-month fieldwork with the multiple stakeholders of the Manu tourism industry.

From a global perspective, the International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people” (UNEP 2001: 5). Through an anthropological lens, ecotourism is a set of social relations (Frohlick, personal communication, February 2007) and when community-based, ecotourism is a “*special* kind of integration to the market” for the rural communities, according to Stronza (2001b). However, when taking a close look at the PNM tourism market “reality” through the multiple narratives and experiences of ecotourism of the PNM stakeholders, I find undeniable evidence of inconsistencies between the discourse and the practice of ecotourism. The narratives I collected from the multiple stakeholders describe diverse meanings of ecotourism reflecting multiple competing interests at the local, regional, national and international levels. Such multiplicity of the meanings of ecotourism makes it a blurry, contradictory, and misleading concept and practice. The self-nomination label of “ecotourism” (whether community-based or not) becomes a buzzword. And, far from bringing relevant socioeconomic benefits to the “local peoples’ communities” in and surrounding areas of PNM, when ecotourism is not community owned and controlled, which is the general case in the Amazon, most often it perpetuates business practices of exploitation and marginalization of local peoples (Indigenous peoples, *colonos* and other people with limited power).

Hence, ecotourism becomes a buzzword that generates and preserves asymmetric colonial relationships of class and ethnicity.

As a concept and set of practices I find ecotourism contradictory, misleading and highly problematic for the following reasons. As a “green” form of capitalism, ecotourism is always an *industry*. Even when community-based, the focus is on profit rather than conservation (Duffy 2002) and competition and, hence, relationships among stakeholders of the green market become “wild” and contradictory. I have two key reasons why I use the term “wild” and refer to “wild green capitalism”. First, there is a huge disparity of human and social capital between Indigenous enterprises, like the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsigenka, and many other non-community-based ecotourism businesses. While the former are subsistence hunters and gardeners, i.e., people whose subsistence economy is based on reciprocal exchanges, the latter are tourism and business professionals whose domain is the market economy. Thus, the Matsigenka people’s understanding of business management and access to the market (including marketing) is unequal and structurally quite different. As people with a distinct economic structure than the capitalist mode of production, their learning on the enterprise involves quite an adjustment. Such adjustment also involves experiencing the Western capitalist notion of social relations based on the exchange of services and goods for money, something relatively new to them.

Second, when the green market is a “free market”, e.g., without certification or laws that foster equitability, competition and conflict are intense and tricky, in other words, “wild”. As in the case of PNM, the private tourism sector furiously seeks to dominate and if possible monopolize the tourism market. These two factors create a context of huge disparity and “wild” competition in the global tourism market between Indigenous enterprises Matsigenka and the private tourism sector. I use the metaphor “a little lizard wrestling among crocodiles” to highlight this disparity. As experienced and described in Chapter 5, despite its limitations as community-based, the multicommunal lodge enterprise Matsigenka is struggling to survive, and gradually thriving within “wild green capitalism”. Ecotourism is misleading and

draws “ecotourists” and “local peoples” into a deceiving hegemonic cycle. That is, the private sector uses all accessible means to attract the ecotourists under the disguise of an ecotourism that is “socially and ecologically friendly.” The ecotourists, who under the belief that by taking part in ecotravel they are contributing to a social cause, are actually oblivious to their role in preserving exploitation and marginalization practices of the ecotourism industry around PNM. As Cooke (personal communication, April 2007) suggests, this process serves to trap tourists and “local”/host people “in a hegemonic discursive cycle.” It is discursive in the sense that tourists and ecotourism promoters believe in ecotourism as a beneficial activity for the “local” people, but actually it rarely is so in practice.

In the case of the Matsigenka people, “community” and now also “enterprise” are concepts being imposed upon them, and they have to struggle to adapt themselves to such notions and models to “integrate into the economic market” system. One example of the paradoxes that emerge as a result of this hegemonic cycle is illustrated in the story of the Matsigenka people’s struggle to have the right to have the *chacra* in their Casa Matsigenka. This struggle mirrors the hegemonic discourses of nature conservation, and ultimately capitalism, in which the Indigenous peoples are gradually being further entangled through their “community-based” ecotourism enterprise. Further, the idea of “economic integration” promoted by the state using a top-down development approach and policy, while dealing with the Indigenous groups not as citizens but as savages that need to line up with “modernity”, portrays again the contradictions within the rubric of marginality, to which Tsing (1993) reminds us to pay attention.

I find ecotourism highly problematic because, as a form of green capitalism, it implies the commoditization of “nature,” places and Indigenous peoples. On behalf of neo-liberal conservation, ecotourism encourages the transformation of cultural values of “nature” of host/”local” Indigenous people such as the rainforest people whose concept of nature goes far beyond utilitarian terms. The Matsigenka peoples’ values of nature and land, as explained in

Chapter 3, is *holistic*, encompassing *spiritual* values of “nature” as *sacred* (see, for instance, Berkes et al. 1999). I strongly believe that Western societies should learn from them rather than provoking their transformation. A non-monetary perspective should be taken into account to inspire and create intercultural models for conservation that are inclusive of diverse traditional ecological knowledge and institutional systems for natural resources management. By doing so, we can counterbalance the colonizing and patronizing approaches for natural resource management and conservation. Therefore, by imposing notions of “nature” and “culture” as commodities upon people with little power through neo-liberal strategies of conservation, such as ecotourism or community-based ecotourism, such an initiative becomes a “new form of colonialism” (Belsky 2000). In her analysis of community-based ecotourism in Belize, which I find resembles the PNM context, Belsky (ibid: 288) suggests that:

There is much to suggest that “new tourism” (as ecotourism and community-based ecotourism themselves...) represents a form of “new colonialism.” As a new cultural form of commodity exchange, the Belize industry...restructured itself to meet the desires of international tourists, who were once satisfied to flock to the beaches and coral-rimmed coasts but now want to venture inland for a nature-and-culture-based experience. In response, the Belize tourist industry has demassified, repackaged, and relabeled its holiday product to cater to these presumed desires.

Therefore, as Belsky (ibid) suggests, “We need to ask whose visions construct these cultural goods for whose benefit, and at whose expense?” The following quotes illustrate the complexities of the relationship between the Multicommunal Enterprise Matsiguenka and its owners. More than once referring to her work in the Matsiguenka enterprise, Ms. Luna shared with me her deep concerns (2005):

Sometimes I ask myself if all this experience is for their [the Matsiguenka people] wellbeing or not? This is my concern in this job. Sometimes I pressure INRENA...for Casa Matsiguenka to continue, so they can have a better quality of life... But actually I don't know if this [enterprise] is good for them. In the very bottom of them they want it...but I don't know how much harm could happen when a Matsiguenka person learns about this kind of business...What about if suddenly they wake up wanting to come to the city and realize that they can't do anything here! What job could

they get? As porters? They don't like that! What other job could they get [here in the city]?¹⁰⁴

Ms. Luna is concerned about the long-term implications of Casa Matsigenka on the Matsigenka people in the Park. As part of the complex puzzle of experiences such as community-based ecotourism, I find Indigenous enterprises to be a *double-edge sword*. That is, despite the challenges, contradictions, limitations and “wild” conflict and competition, the Indigenous enterprise Matsigenka clearly mirrors the strong agency of peoples with limited power. Such agency has triggered a process of negotiation that is slowly opening “doors” to the Indigenous peoples in PNM. More importantly, I found a strong sense of hope, self-determination and enthusiasm, particularly from the Matsigenka leaders, concerning their tourism enterprise and the future of their children. The following story underscores the complexities at play at Casa Matsigenka. Mr. Rios (from APECO NGO) recounted a story of an encounter between the Casa Matsigenka managers and the official Manu tour operators in a tourism gathering. One official operator asked the Matsigenka entrepreneurs: “You have an enterprise but it is not profitable...how much do you make? US \$20,000 a month? That is not a profitable enterprise!” In response, one of the Matsigenka managers (Rafael) replied, amazing the full audience:

Yes sir, you are right; it's true what you are saying. But we are not making this enterprise for us, we are doing it for our children; our children will make of it a profitable enterprise just as you want it to be, so you could ask them; meanwhile we are preparing it.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ ...a veces me pregunto si todo esto es para el bien de ellos [los Matsigenkas] o no? ese es el tema que a mi más me preocupa en este trabajo. A veces presiono por un lado al INRENA ... para que la casa Matsigenka siga adelante, para que ellos puedan tener una mejor calidad de vida... Pero yo no sé si realmente eso es bueno o no para ellos. En el fondo, yo sé que ellos quieren... yo no sé cuánto daño se le puede hacer a un Matsigenka a que aprenda a llevar este tipo de negocio... Qué si de un momento a otro despiertan y quieren salir a las ciudades y vean que acá, pues, ellos no pueden hacer nada!?... ¿En qué podrían trabajar? ¿cargadores? A ellos no les gusta ser cargadores. ¿Qué otro trabajo se les daría?

¹⁰⁵ [Agente de turismo] Ustedes tiene una empresa, pero es empresa no es rentable... ¿Cuánto ganan ustedes? USA \$20, 000 mensuales? Eso no es una empresa productiva!

[Rafael] Si señor, seguro que tiene razón, es cierto lo que nos está diciendo, pero nosotros no estamos haciendo esta empresa para nosotros, lo estamos haciendo para nuestros hijos, nuestros hijos son los que van a hacer esta empresa productiva, así como usted quiere que sea, a ellos les va a decir, mientras tanto nosotros estamos preparándolo.

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Appendix 1, Recommendations¹⁰⁶

The following recommendations were proposed in the technical report “Lessons from the Equator Initiative: The *Casa Matsigenka* Community-Based Ecotourism Lodge Enterprise in Manu National Park, Peru” (Herrera 2006). This report was based on interviews and discussions during my fieldwork;¹⁰⁷ a few are reformulations of ideas proposed by other researchers:

i. **To international development institutions that support the Matsigenka Indigenous enterprise project**

Facilitate funding and its management; there is a need for middle and long-term financial support and institutional commitment to the Matsigenka enterprise. Funding should be delivered for general planning; capacity building and strengthening leadership for the Indigenous people;¹⁰⁸ updating and undertaking the sociocultural and environmental monitoring system of the Matsigenka enterprise; and the creation of an evaluation system.

Enhance local capacity and leadership by providing ongoing access to education and training programs to community members, particularly to leaders such as the Indigenous managers. Through interviews the Matsigenka leaders expressed that they needed more training and language education in both Spanish and English. Training will be most effective if the teaching method is through “learning by doing” and delivered in the Indigenous people’s native language. In doing so, the process of a truly Matsigenka-managed lodge can

¹⁰⁶ These recommendations are excerpted from Lesson from the Equator Initiative: The Casa Matsigenka Community-Based Ecotourism Lodge Enterprise in Manu National Park, Jessica Herrera (2006: 36-38).

¹⁰⁷ Other researchers who have done research on the casa Matsigenka project have produced similar recommendations (see Ohi, 2005; Shepard 1998).

¹⁰⁸ I wish to acknowledge Dr. Glenn Shepard of the Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia, Brazil, for providing the main idea for this recommendation.

become a reality. Also, it is important to evaluate how much time in the year the community members are willing to spend working at the lodge.¹⁰⁹ There appears to be a strong interest among some youth members in the communities to receive training to work in the Casa Matsigenka lodge.

Reinforce community organization and improve communication between the enterprise and the communities; for example, provide assistance to create an advisory committee or to reactivate the coordination committee for consultation on the Matsigenka enterprise issues and problems.

Facilitate support for conducting market studies, prepare entrepreneurial business and marketing plans, and assist in their implementation and development. For instance, seek the assistance of professionals to develop tourism marketing plans for the Matsigenka enterprise.

Assist the Matsigenka enterprise in creating and strengthening partnerships with local, regional and international tour agencies that truly exercise both fair trade and ecotourism principles.

Support and facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences between similar projects across regions and countries in Latin America. This can be accomplished through visits to Indigenous and non-Indigenous ecotourism lodge enterprises; participation in national and international forums, festivals and other events and the publication of handbooks or manuals about their experiences. The Matsigenka enterprise has been positively influenced by other Indigenous tourism experiences within Peru and from other countries. A highlight of the exchange experience is to strengthen Matsigenka confidence in their capability to carry out the enterprise project. Nonetheless, more exchanges are required to expand, improve and strengthen the Matsigenka enterprise project.

¹⁰⁹ I wish to acknowledge that this recommendation emerged through personal conversations with Dr. Julia Ohl of the University of East Anglia, UK.

ii. **To INRENA, Department of Protected Areas**

Develop a long-term institutional commitment towards a co-management partnership policy that accounts for the Indigenous inhabitants in PNM through a transparent and collaborative management approach.

INRENA should be flexible but consistent with its regulations in order to facilitate the continued success of the enterprise project.

There is an urgent need for clear tourism market regulations in PNM that address multi-community enterprises, particularly of Indigenous inhabitants in PNM. Through an ongoing and continuous consultation, such a legislation-building process should account for pilot projects such as the Matsiguenka community-based ecotourism enterprise. The different scopes of responsibility of the INRENA central office and the INRENA headquarters office upon this Matsiguenka enterprise should be clearly stated.

Promote ongoing and continuous emphasis on communication among the INRENA headquarters office personnel, the central office, and the Indigenous communities in PNM. For instance, there should be a designated professional committee to work closely with inhabitants in PNM to bridge communication gaps between them and INRENA officials.

Educate all stakeholders with regard to policy and responsibilities; INRENA has recently updated the Anthropological policy for the Indigenous population in PNM. However, it appears that this policy has not been adhered to. In various interviews with different stakeholders of PNM, there was little clear understanding about INRENA's anthropological policy. Also, the Indigenous people in PNM appear not to have a clear idea about what their rights and/or duties are. It is recommended that INRENA provide training workshops for park personnel, regional and local authorities, tourism personnel and other stakeholders on areas

such as PA policy; PNM Indigenous population, culture, rights and duties; environmental conservation in PA; and they should emphasize the need to work together in a concerted effort. Likewise, similar workshops should be provided to the Indigenous population in PNM.

Provide support to small satellite projects that would supplement the ecotourism lodge project and broaden the participation of the community members.¹¹⁰ For example, implementation of traditional garden in the lodge to supplement traditional food for the staff and to show tourists the sustainable agricultural practices of the Matsigenka people; organization of educational activities that include the community school for the creation of a Matsigenka interpretative room, an ethno-botany garden and other projects.

iii. To members of the Matsigenka enterprise

Seek support for the creation of an advisory committee for consultation on the Matsigenka enterprise issues and to assist them in evaluating the progress of their enterprise.

Seek support for the creation and implementation of a marketing plan, including the development and maintenance of a website about the Casa Matsigenka Lodge project.

Seek support for ongoing training programs for the Matsigenka people to work at and manage the lodge. The communities should be encouraged to train and hire youth and young adults. A particular set of training programs should be delivered to improve craft production within the communities.

¹¹⁰ I wish to acknowledge that Biologist Chris Kirkby provided the main idea for this recommendation.

Seek support to update and undertake the sociocultural, environmental and economic monitoring system of the Matsigenka enterprise and to complement it with a health monitoring system.

Protect the Matsigenka people's health; the Matsigenka workers of the lodge are exposed to illnesses for which their immune systems are not prepared. For instance, the Matsigenka are highly susceptible to influenza, which can be devastating and often cause death, and it can be spread to the other community members. Therefore, it is recommended that medical care services be provided to lodge workers, and a complete and updated medical kit should be accessible to the Matsigenkas working at the lodge. The regular visit of MINSA staff to the lodge would be highly beneficial.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Ministry of Health (MINSA).