

**FACE PAINT & FEATHERS: ETHNIC IDENTITY AS SYMBOLIC RESOURCE IN
THE INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT OF ECUADOR**

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(ABSTRACT)

The indigenous of the Amazon region of Ecuador unite against the petroleum industry and destructive resource extraction practices in order to preserve environment and indigenous cultures. Since the 1990s, the indigenous movement of Ecuador has played out in the international arena and become a transnational movement, which includes social actors from the international legal, human rights, and environmental communities. This transnational movement exemplifies identity politics through the projection of ethnicity and essentialized signifiers of indigeness. Indigenous actors, Ecuadoran nongovernmental organizations, international filmmakers, and US nongovernmental organizations all use ethnic identity and signifiers via documentaries and cyberspace as symbolic resources to represent the movement.

This thesis explores the intersection of external actors (international community of filmmakers and NGOs) and internal actors' (the indigenous themselves and Ecuadoran NGOs) projection of ethnicity as symbolic resource. Utilizing resource mobilization theory and new social movement theory as a syncretic to understand the movement and theoretical contributions of identity and representation to explore the process of mobilization, the study explores the question of ethnic identity as symbolic resource in four documentaries and on fifteen websites. The discourse analysis of the four documentaries and content analysis of the fifteen websites illustrate that there is consistency in the message within the transnational social movement community of actors who strive to work for and on behalf of the indigenous of the Ecuadoran Amazon.

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MULTIMEDIA

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ACRONYMS

ADA	Americans for Democratic Action
CONAIE	Confederation of Ecuadorian Indigenous Nationalities
CONFENAIE	Confederation of the Indigenous Nations of the Ecuadorian Amazon
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
ECUARUNARI	“Brotherhood of Indigenous Peoples”
ETC	Ecological Trading Company
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSM	New Social Movement
NSMT	New Social Movement Theory
ONHAE	Organization of the Huaorani Nation of the Ecuadorian Amazon
RM	Resource Mobilization
RMT	Resource Mobilization Theory
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SMO	Social Movement Organization
SMC	Social Movement Community
SMI	Social Movement Industry
SNCC	Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee
YPSA	Young People’s Socialist Alliance

“Social movements of twenty-five years ago [1967] had strong state/political orientations and that, in contrast, many of today’s actors are searching for their own cultural identities and spaces for social expression, political or otherwise.”¹

-Fernando Calderón, et al.

“Many indigenous peoples had nothing left to lose—except their identity. Lacking material or organizational resources, South American Indians were able to develop and project this identity internationally through a politics of information. In a way that illuminates the emerging shape of transnational politics, South American Indians went from oral history to sound bites in one generation.”²

-Alison Brysk

Chapter 1

Purpose & Motivations

The opening image of this thesis symbolically and effectively represents the indigenous mobilization of Ecuador from the 1990s to the present. Taken at an organizational meeting of CONAIE, an umbrella indigenous organization that fights nationally and internationally for the recognition of indigenous rights in Ecuador, this Achuar representative proudly proclaims his ethnicity with his application of face paint and feathers. However, what is most significant about this image is that it is projected to the international community via the internet. This Achuar representative is simultaneously the *represented* and the documenter of others’ proud proclamations/*representations* of ethnic identity. Therefore, he exhibits agency as he proclaims his indigenusness to the international community via modern technology and presents ethnic identity as an essential quality to be preserved, as well as a resource for international mobilization.

Throughout the 1990s to the present the indigenous movement of Ecuador has often been played out in the international arena; and the preservation and representation of ethnic identity are central to this movement. The 1990s were characterized by unprecedented indigenous political uprisings as the indigenous of the Oriente region of Ecuador responded to destructive resource extraction practices of multinational and national oil companies by uniting in organizations and demanding remedy for their communities and environment. Perhaps what is most captivating about this movement are the various avenues taken by indigenous groups to reach out to the international legal, environmental rights, and human/indigenous rights

communities. This movement exemplifies a transnational movement that relies on the international community for resources and attention.

Alison Brysk argues that indigenous social movements of Latin America emerged at a time when the modern power structures of the nation state were “withering, widening, and wavering.”³ As a result, the forum for expressing demands and protesting injustice has become an increasingly international one. Indeed, the very issue of places/spaces for articulating the grievances and demands of a social movement is undergoing a transformation. Instead of the nation-state and traditional politics being the principal arenas for change, indigenous actors have begun using “images, models, facts, and messages as forms of power in the international system.” As one indigenous rights activist asserted, “Of course we look for international levers, and when they are there we use them. But when they’re not, we’ve still got media and information.”⁴

As the opening image suggests, remote groups such as the Huaorani, hunters and gatherers numbering no more than 1,500, have effectively and powerfully captivated the world’s attention due to their utilization of modern and postmodern technologies. Through the medium of documentaries and cyberspace, indigenous groups embrace the practice of the proclamation and projection of ethnic identity as a primary agent for change. Much of the literature on the indigenous mobilization of Ecuador’s Oriente region suggests that the movement has been successful and is significant because it is an “internationalized”⁵ movement that encompasses what Stefano Varese terms the philosophy of “Act globally—Think locally.”⁶ Like the Zapatista movement in Chiapas, Mexico, the indigenous federations/organizations of the Oriente have reached out to the international community via the internet, as well as through the participation in filmed documentaries. As these indigenous communities and organizations strive to protect their ways of life and their land from oil companies’ misuse of their land, their “indigeness” is simultaneously an end goal (indigenous rights) and a resource as they represent their ethnicity via the internet and documentaries.

However, does this internationalized, transnational model of a social movement grant them the desired outcome of land reparation and recognition of ancestral lands? While the utilization of modern and postmodern technologies has gained them international attention to their plight, is the appropriation of this technology empowering? As international environmental, human rights, and indigenous rights NGOs represent the plight of the indigenous

and the Oriente, do the indigenous benefit from this representation or are the indigenous romanticized, perhaps even commodified, to further an individual NGO's agenda? Does there exist what Edward Said terms a hegemonic relationship as the Western community interprets and represents indigenous groups in an attempt to "render its mysteries plain for and to the West?"⁷ As Smith, Burke, and Ward ask in *Indigenous Cultures in an Interconnected World*, is the indigenous appropriation of and engagement in 21st century technology an "empowerment or threat?"⁸

Methodology

These questions serve as the guiding parameter to analyze the indigenous movement of the Oriente region. The purpose of this research is twofold: (1) to explore the question of indigenous mobilization within the framework of social movement theories and (2) to utilize the lens of identity and representation as analytical frameworks in the analysis of nongovernmental Organizations' websites and documentaries in order to examine the process of indigenous mobilization in the Ecuadoran Amazon Basin. To explore the question of representation of indigenous identity this study offers a content analysis of fifteen websites and discourse analysis of four documentaries that represent the indigenous struggle against national and multinational petroleum companies. It must be stressed that this study explores the intersection of international actors (indigenous rights activists, filmmakers, and NGOs), Ecuadoran NGOs, and indigenous voluntary associations that work to improve the indigenous and environmental condition in the Amazon region of Ecuador. Thus, the focus of study is the process of mobilization and the middle ground of transnational activism. While this study does not attempt to answer questions of movement success and efficacy, it does attempt to determine whether there is consistency in the message proclaimed by those actors that align themselves with the Oriente plight and the Oriente indigenous message. Therefore, this study explores the transnational social movement message alone, and voices, websites, and publications of oil companies are not included in this study.

The four documentaries are *Saviors of the Forest*, *Flames in the Forest*, *Trinkets & Beads*, and *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse*. Bill Nichols' typology of documentaries will be utilized to analyze the documentaries.⁹ Discourse analysis will also be employed to analyze the language, symbols, and meanings presented in the documentaries. The fifteen websites are United States based non-governmental organization (NGO) sites, Ecuador-based NGOs, and two

indigenous voluntary associations. The organizations that operate websites include: *United States-based NGOs* (Rain Forest Action Network, Amazon Watch, Sierra Club, Advocacy Project, The Pachamama Alliance, Amazon Alliance, Conservation International), *Ecuador-based NGOs* (Oilwatch, Jatun Sacha, Frente de la Defensa de la Amazonia, Fundación Selva-Vida Sin Fronteras, Acción Ecológica, FUNDESIN), and *Ecuadoran indigenous voluntary associations* (CONFENIAE and CONAIE). Each organization has a corresponding website that represents the Oriente indigenous struggle. The content analysis of these sources assesses the frequency of images and symbolic rhetoric in the website texts in an attempt to assess patterns in representation.

Background: Black Gold and the Oriente

Oil companies have made their indelible and destructive mark on Ecuador's Oriente since 1967 when commercial quantities of oil were first discovered by Texaco.¹⁰ Drilling began in 1972 and continues today as "current oil exploration activities span three million hectares and are carried out by Petroecuador [Ecuador's national oil company] and nine foreign companies."¹¹ By 1991 these companies had extracted 1.5 billion barrels of oil, spilling and illegally dumping millions of gallons of crude in the process.¹² Alan Hatly powerfully describes the goals and ambitions of the oil companies:

Oil companies do not go into an area because the Orientian jungle in Ecuador, or whether it be China, or Wyoming and set out to destroy the environment, to corrupt a people, nor to destroy . . . whatever, the forest, or whatever. Oil companies go in usually with an effort to spend as little money as possible, to find oil as quickly as possible, and to come out with a maximum profit."¹³

In order to "come out with a maximum profit" oil companies have used missionaries to control indigenous people; caused deforestation due to road construction; and polluted waterways, the land, and the air.¹⁴ Aided by the Ecuadoran government's failure to enforce environmental provisions, oil companies continue to extract petroleum with little to no regard for the Oriente and its people.

The Oriente, located in the eastern part of Ecuador, forms part of the western Amazon basin and encompasses thirteen million hectares of tropical rain forest.¹⁵ The Oriente is home to eight indigenous groups—Quichua, Shuar, Achuar, Cofan, Huaorani, Shiwiar, Secoya, and Siona—as well as migrating colonists from the coastal and highland regions. The rain forests of the Oriente are among the most "biologically diverse natural ecosystems of the earth." One

tropical ecologist even claims, “it is surely the richest biotic zone on Earth.”¹⁶ The 9,000 to 12,000 species of plants, 600 species of birds, 500 species of fish, and 120 species of mammals found in the Oriente have served to sustain the indigenous peoples for thousands of years.¹⁷ The tropical forests of the Oriente not only help sustain the indigenous people of the region, but also all of Ecuador as the rain forests “help control flooding and erosion, even in the river’s lower reaches.”¹⁸ Because the burning or clearing of forests releases carbon dioxide and increases the potential for global warming, the argument can be made that the impacts of the destruction of the Oriente have global implications as well.¹⁹

Much of what is known about petroleum extraction practices and environmental destruction in the Oriente is due to Judith Kimerling, a North American attorney and former Latin American Representative for the Natural Resources Defense Council.²⁰ Her book *Amazon Crude* serves as a foundation for the study of oil companies and petroleum extraction in Ecuador.²¹ She continues to work tirelessly as an advocate and legal consultant with indigenous confederations in Ecuador, and the Huaorani in particular, despite threats of arrest and deportation from the Ecuadoran government.²² Much of the following information on the Ecuadoran government and oil companies’ impact on the environment and people is based on her research.

Upon discovering commercial quantities of oil in the Oriente, Texaco pursued ways of reaching the remote resource. However, one group stood as an obstacle to the black gold: the Huaorani, a group long considered spear throwing savages (“Auca”). The Huaorani had successfully driven off Shell Oil two decades prior to Texaco’s arrival and swore to drive Texaco away as well. As Texaco began to develop oil camps, the Huaorani invaded the camps, stole supplies, and killed several workers. “But this time, the certainty that the region’s reserves were commercially viable sparked an oil boom. Texaco and the government were determined to develop the oil reserves.”²³ Fortunately for Texaco, the Ecuadoran government recommended that Texaco contact Rachel Saint, a missionary with the Summer Institute of Linguistics.²⁴ Having established a relationship with the Huaorani in 1958, Saint was able to relocate some of the Huaorani to her Christian community, Tihueno.

Saint worked with “an open checkbook” from Texaco to relocate the Huaorani. Foreign oil companies, including but not limited to Texaco, have a long history in Ecuador of collaboration with evangelical missionaries to “pacify” both the Huaorani and other Amazonian peoples. There is a clear concurrence of interests not only between the oil

companies and the missionaries, but also with the Ecuadoran government, which has permitted and sometimes assisted the pacification activities, consistent with its general view that the Amazon is a frontier to be conquered and the indigenous peoples should be assimilated into the dominant national culture.²⁵

Once a significant number of Huaorani were contained and pacified, Texaco was well on its way to “find oil as quickly as possible, and to come out with a maximum profit.” Texaco’s policies and strategies towards the environment and the indigenous people of the region quickly set the precedent for future oil companies’ policies, or lack thereof, in the Oriente.

Forty to fifty percent of Ecuador’s national budget and export income is generated from the extraction of petroleum. Significantly, environmental protection in regard to resource extraction is the responsibility of the Ecuadoran government under both national and international law.²⁶ Nevertheless, the government of Ecuador has repeatedly disregarded its own written law. “The Constitution of Ecuador guarantees the right to an environment free of contamination, and directs the government to protect that right and promote conservation.”²⁷ The contract that authorized Texaco’s right to drill in the Oriente required Texaco to “adopt appropriate measures to protect plant and animal life and other natural resources, and to prevent contamination of air, soil, and water.”²⁸ Therefore, the written law remains a discourse that is neither enforced nor respected by governmental officials who value profit over environmental conservation.

Ironically, since foreign oil companies have drilled into Ecuadoran soil, the national population of those living in poverty increased to sixty seven percent in 1996 from forty seven percent in 1975.²⁹ Rather than diversifying the economy, the Ecuadoran government continues to entice foreign oil companies to drill in the Oriente with its weak environmental regulatory policies. As Kimerling writes, “routine violations, such as the prohibition of dumping oil on roads are overlooked [by the government]” and the government “has essentially behaved like a business partner to the industry.”³⁰ She provides the rationale for the Ecuadoran government’s lack of enforcement of environmental regulations:

The government has financial incentives to keep environmental protection costs to a minimum as it reimburses the production and exploration costs of operators developing commercial reserves. In addition, many officials fear that if environmental protection becomes costly, investment will go elsewhere. Oil companies are virtually self-regulating in environmental matters and standards are predominantly determined by the companies’ internal policies rather than by the rule of the law.³¹

The oil companies' practices and procedures of extracting oil in the Oriente illustrate that most of their policies on environmental protection and conservation are limited at best. The very mentality exhibited by many foreign oil companies towards the region, as well as that of the Ecuadoran government, demonstrates the attitude that the area and its people are relegated to an inferior and "Other" status. Therefore, enforcement of environmental regulations is not a primary concern or policy.

It is estimated that 16.8 million gallons of oil have been spilled in the Amazon watershed, approximately sixty percent more or seven times that of the Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska.³² "Spills from flow lines alone dump an estimated 17,000 to 21,000 gallons of oil into the Oriente roughly every two weeks."³³ Most spills are overlooked; and when clean up efforts do ensue, they are inadequate and irresponsible. The pipeline system in the Oriente is characterized by above ground pipes that zigzag across many rivers and streams. Unfortunately, these pipes are especially susceptible to spills "because the region is geologically active and deforestations in some areas is extensive . . . and the secondary pipelines are vulnerable to rupture by rivers swollen with rains and heavy runoff, and landslides."³⁴ When pipes burst or spill, the clean up is "limited to locating the damaged area of the pipeline, turning off the flow of oil into that portion of the line, waiting for the oil in the line to spill out, and then repairing the damage."³⁵

A Petroecuador oil spill in 1989 received national press attention and "sparked the first spill 'cleanup' program in the history of the oil boom."³⁶ That press coverage pictured oil in the waterways, as well as dead fish, birds, and other wildlife. The public responded with fury, thus prompting Petroecuador to promise that a "group of specialists" would clean up the area with "specialized equipment."³⁷ Petroecuador's "group of specialists" was in actuality a small group of Siona and colonists who were paid a pittance to "use their bare hands to scoop petroleum from the surface of contaminated waters."³⁸ The "specialized equipment," plastic bags filled with the spilled oil, were then buried in unlined holes in the ground. Before the "clean up" was completed and the holes covered, the oil was spilling from the plastic bags.

From there, the oil can be expected to recontaminate the flooded forests and lakes of Cuyabeno, as toxic leachate migrates through groundwater and into surface waters, or as buried wastes find their way to the surface and spill into the environment. . . . [The workers] complained about headaches, skin rashes, and respiratory problems, but were not given any medication or protective clothing; they were only given gasoline to clean

their hands at the end of the day. The Siona also reported that children in a village in the spill area got diarrhea from drinking contaminated water.³⁹

Joe Kane also tells of an oil spill during his time in Huaorani territory in 1992.

Ecuador's mainstream neighbors, Peru and Brazil, declared states of emergency, but Petroecuador shrugged off the problem. "It looks much worse than it is," an official said. "The water underneath is perfectly fine."⁴⁰

For two days raw crude flowed into the Napo River from a broken valve with an estimated 21,000 to 80,000 gallons contaminating a forty square mile area.

Oil spills are not the only source of contamination and environmental destruction. "Oil development inflicts adverse impacts on the land and the people of the Oriente at every stage, from initial seismic studies and exploratory drilling through production and transportation."⁴¹ While companies test for commercial amounts of petroleum, they "fell trees, clear trails and heliports, destroy crops, drill holes, and detonate explosives, typically without regard for the presence of homes, gardens, streams, lakes, or sacred areas."⁴² Wildlife is scared away as helicopters and increased human impact are present. Indigenous men must leave their families for longer time periods in order to find game, thus undermining the traditional social and family structure.⁴³

Once commercial amounts are confirmed and drilling and production begins, companies build roads, which lead to deforestation and colonization. More than "500 kilometers of roads [have been] built by the oil industry . . . [which has] resulted in the colonization of some one million hectares of rain forest."⁴⁴ Colonization is augmented by the Ecuadoran government's refusal to respect and acknowledge indigenous land claims or environmentally protected areas, such as the Yasuni National Park found inside Huaorani territory.⁴⁵ While the Ecuadoran government recognizes that indigenous peoples hold the right to the land surface, subsurface rights belong to the state; consequently, there is no recognition of indigenous claims when giving oil companies access to indigenous homeland territories.⁴⁶ Also, colonization resulting from land distribution policies has created soil erosion and water contamination as colonists continue to clear forests for pasture and cash crops that are sold to petroleum workers. Significantly, colonization has also contributed to worsening the health and economic conditions among tribal peoples in the Oriente.

As they and others force indigenous people from their traditional hunting and fishing grounds and degrade the forest resources on which those people depend, indigenous

people also can become “poor”—unable to find fish, game, fruits, nuts, other foods, medicines, and materials that they need for domestic and religious purposes.⁴⁷

Even when indigenous people are able to find fish and game, there is no guarantee that wildlife will be uncontaminated and safe to eat.

In addition to the negative impacts of colonization, the 235 active oil wells, originally drilled by Texaco, produce over 5 million gallons of toxic wastes that contaminate waterways and the land everyday.⁴⁸ Fish, wildlife, and plants are polluted as crude waste is dumped into unlined pits, which then seeps into the groundwater. Crude waste is also dumped on roads as a method to control dust, which eventually washes into indigenous communities with the rain.⁴⁹ Finally, the air is polluted and the potential for acid rain increases as flaring gas in the Oriente is common place.⁵⁰ An estimated “235,600 million cubic feet of gas have been burned in the Oriente since oil production began in 1972.”⁵¹

Petroleum development and its lack of enforcement of environmental regulations, demonstrated by the government of Ecuador and foreign oil companies, threaten the cultural and physical survival of indigenous tribal peoples in the Oriente. Clearly, attitudes among the Ecuadoran government and the oil companies relegate them to an inferior and “Other” status.⁵² The effects on the indigenous people are indeed great. Traditional social structures, economies, and ways of life are undermined by environmental destruction and the disregard for indigenous land rights. “Without control over their lands, indigenous people will not be able to adapt in their own ways to a changing world.”⁵³ Indigenous people are further unable to adapt in their own ways because of the collaboration of the Ecuadoran government and oil companies with missionaries. This alone has created an increased dependence on outsiders for food and other subsistence items that is uncharacteristic of the independence valued among groups such as the Huorani. The increasing need and opportunity for cash income create tension and struggles within communities and “disrupt[s] the traditional balance of power, status, and rights.”⁵⁴ In response to the destruction of indigenous land and ways of life, indigenous groups of the Ecuadoran Amazon Basin are mobilizing behind their ethnic identity as they pursue cultural and physical survival; and their mobilization reflects the tectonic shift that began to emerge during the 1960s in the dynamics of social movements.

Literature Review: The Emergence of Ethnicity as Resource and Goal

1968 marked a watershed year, a year characterized by international transformations of social structures and ideologies. Immanuel Wallerstein asserts that 1968 was “one of the great, formative events in the history of our modern world-system.”⁵⁵ He proposes two legacies of 1968 in regard to the structure and form of social movements. The first legacy presents 1968 as the “ideological tomb of the concept of the ‘leading role’ of the industrial proletariat,” and “revolutionary movements representing ‘minority’ or underdog strata need no longer, and no longer do, take second place to revolutionary movements representing presumed ‘majority’ groups.”⁵⁶ Prior to 1968 antisystemic movements took shape in either socialist or nationalist movements. These two varieties of “old left” movements tended to “represent the interests of the ‘primary’ oppressed—either the ‘working class’ of a given country or the ‘nation’ whose national expression was unfulfilled.”⁵⁷ Such movements, based on Marxist ideology of class-consciousness and resistance, adopted the view that the complaints of “other” politically or economically oppressed groups such as indigenous peoples were “at best secondary and at worst diversionary.”⁵⁸ The old movements based on class argued that their own political achievement would eventually filter down to those other groups once a revolutionary government had been established.

But once they [revolutionary governments] were in state power, the practical consequences could be assessed on the basis of some evidence. By 1968, many such assessments had been made, and the opponents of the multiple “other” inequalities could argue, with some plausibility, that the achievement of power by “old left” groups had not in fact ended these “other” inequalities, or at least had not sufficiently changed the multiple group hierarchies that had previously existed.⁵⁹

In addition to the assessment that the old-left, class-based model did not accurately represent the “other” oppressed groups, it has also become apparent that the reality of capitalism was much more complex than previously held by Marx and other theorists. The archetype of the proletarian—urban, male, adult factory worker—was a minority by 1950.⁶⁰ Therefore, to use the urban proletariat as the organizing force and model was inapplicable to other social strata. In fact, the “Other” groups began questioning and expanding the notion of nationality, thus critiquing the nationalist movement as a one-size-fits-all model.

Nationalities were rather the product of a complex process of ongoing social creation, combining the achievement of consciousness (by themselves and others) and socio-juridical labeling. It followed that for every nation there could and would be sub-nations in what threatened to be an unending cascade.⁶¹

The gatherings, demonstrations and riots of 1968, therefore, led to new critiques of defined models of resistance, movements, and nationalities. And those critiques would lead to the concept of identity as a mobilizing and cohering force; it is this critique that leads to Wallerstein's second legacy of 1968. He writes, "the debate on the fundamental strategy of social transformation has been reopened among the antisystemic movements, and will be the key political debate of the coming twenty years."⁶² A principle legacy of 1968 is that it opened the door for other models and forms of resistance, as is the case of Ecuador. In fact, "other" groups, such as indigenous tribal peoples, have mobilized and created new spaces for systemic change rather than "waiting upon some other revolution"⁶³ to liberate them.

Wallerstein posits the legacies of 1968 as foundation for the analysis that indigenous movements challenge and expand the available arenas for social change. Not only are "Other" groups in the post 1968 era gaining momentum and agency, they also demand new space for action, particularly in Latin America. Calderón, Piscitelli, and Reyna illustrate that the "state is no longer the object of attraction."⁶⁴ They argue that Latin American societies are increasingly complex and the Latin American "sociopolitical process is undergoing a process of inflexion" as "the prevailing institutional scheme" cannot adequately respond to the emerging demands of "other" groups. The argument is not that the demands of indigenous groups are apolitical, but rather that these movements "are aspiring not only to actualize the rights of social and political citizenship but also to create a space of institutional conflict in which to express their demands."⁶⁵ The authors propose that this process of creating a space for agency and change is best referred to as a syncretism.

By syncretism, we point exactly to this process: the creative metamorphosis of old forms into new ones, the transposition of universal theories and concepts into locally relevant forms of understanding, and the rendering of ahistorical frameworks into concrete forms of explanation. Someday, perhaps, the role and importance of this type of syncretism, which characterizes the production of local theories in Latin America, will be recognized as part of a broader ecology of ideas.⁶⁶

Roldolfo Stavenhagen echoes the previous authors' conceptualization of syncretism. He hypothesizes:

Something has changed in the relationship between the state and indigenous peoples—old grievances and new demands have come together to forge new identities; new ideologies are competing with older and long-established paradigms; theories of social change, modernization, and nation building are being reassessed in the light of the long-

neglected and ignored “ethnic question;” and, last but not least, the way politics was played for so long is now undergoing a change.⁶⁷

Therefore, a central component of the metamorphosis of old forms into new ones is not only the creation of new spaces to voice grievances and demands, but also the emphasis placed on ethnic identity as a mobilizing and cohering force.

As previously explained by Wallerstein, indigenous needs and demands were not met by relegating them to peasant class status; therefore, indigenous peoples have focused on their own ethnicity as a unifying agent. Traditional attitudes towards indigenous ethnicity confined the preservation of ethnicity and indigenous culture in museums, or to tourism.⁶⁸ Indigenous peoples, however, are rallying behind their ethnic identity, thus making ethnicity an agent of change. However, ethnic identity not only serves as a possible symbol for change, but also is implicit in indigenous demands. For indigenous groups of the Oriente ethnicity is not only a symbol, but also the very thing they are trying to preserve.

Deborah Yasher notes that the Ecuadoran indigenous demands for a pluri-national state are significant and characterize the indigenous movement of Ecuador. She argues that Latin American nation building of the nineteenth-century encompassed liberal policies of modernization and capitalism, which paved the way for commercial investment in the Amazon and “sought to create national unity—a policy that legitimated the assimilation of indigenous peoples and attacks on indigenous communal lands . . . In this regard, national politicians and constitutions have either assumed ethnic homogeneity or disregarded the political salience of ethnic diversity.”⁶⁹ Yet, the indigenous of Ecuador, articulated through indigenous organizations such as CONAIE, challenge and critique the idea of national homogeneity. Catherine Walsh argues,

The strengthening of the indigenous movement [of Ecuador] . . . as an important social and political actor with “ethnic” demands, including the creation of a plurinational state—positioned *lo indígena* in a new and different way in relation to *lo blanco-mestizo* and to the historically homogenizing national project.⁷⁰

Additionally, Alison Brysk argues that the indigenous movement of Ecuador is best characterized as a new social movement as it is “based on identity and consciousness rather than objective material position.”⁷¹ Furthermore, she argues that indigenous peoples have crossed local village and kinship identities to form organizations that use ethnicity as a unifying force. Two such examples of indigenous organizations in Ecuador are the Confederation of

Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadoran Amazon (CONFENAIE) and the Ecuadoran Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities (CONAIE). These organizations have allowed indigenous groups to express their demands on both the state and international level.

Indigenous organizations' utilizations of international arenas and avenues are defining characteristics of the indigenous movement in Ecuador. Because indigenous groups are marginalized by the nation state, they have responded by appealing to the international legal, environmental, and human rights communities. Again, Brysk poses that "international relations are an increasingly important determinant of domestic social change, while transnational alliances play a growing role in social movement activity."⁷² She refers to the indigenous movement as a "paradox." Because of the very marginalization of indigenous groups, it would appear that they would have little power internationally. However, she writes:

We will see that the internationalization of Indian rights occurred precisely *because* indigenous social movements were weak domestically; some of their domestic weaknesses actually facilitated transnational alliance building and effectiveness . . . The current debate within indigenous movements on class versus ethnicity must be informed by a deeper examination of the international power of ethnicity *as a form of information* that has empowered a movement rich in identity but poor in everything else.⁷³

Similarly, Stefano Varese argues that the "think locally, act globally" ideology of the indigenous movement of Ecuador has⁷⁴ evolved into a "movement that epitomizes 'local knowledge' and consciousness [that] has engaged in extensive international activity with surprising success."

Because indigenous organizations focus on ethnic identity as a mobilizing force, they are able to draw upon international support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the legal community. Chris Jochnick asserts that human rights NGOs "offered these communities a rare alternative to the dominant discourse, guaranteeing them a right to a healthy environment that was clearly being violated by Texaco's regular dumping of toxic wastes into their water supplies."⁷⁵ Kristina Egan argues that the indigenous struggle against petroleum development in the Oriente captures the attention of diverse activist NGO groups in the international community.⁷⁶ Thomas O'Connor suggests that the mobilization in Ecuador unites environmental rights and human/indigenous rights NGOs in a way that was never experienced before. He argues that environmental NGOs had always focused on the Amazon, yet incorporating people into that world represents a new conceptualization.

In October 1989 at a meeting in Washington D.C., indigenous peoples stressed that many environmentalists “concentrate just on the trees and the butterflies,” without recognizing that indigenous peoples are part of the Amazon rain forest as well. The following year, Amazon Indians from five countries met in Lima, Peru to discuss with ecologists their critical nexus to the Amazon Basin.⁷⁷

Clearly, the projection of ethnic identity has become a powerful tool when merging the concepts of environmental and human rights.

Indigenous people can also draw on their traditional hunting and gathering lifestyles, as well as project themselves as the protectors of the forest, as illustrated in Joe Kane’s eyewitness account of life with the Huaorani.⁷⁸ Egan writes, “By casting themselves as the guardians of the Amazon rain forest, and hence the keepers of this treasure for the entire globe, the Oriente organizations hit a powerful chord. Environmental preservation becomes linked with cultural survival.”⁷⁹ The projection of ethnicity to the international community, then, is significant for the legal, environmental, and human/indigenous rights communities.

Like the indigenous movement in Chiapas (Mexico), an important tactic for reaching out to the international community and international NGOs has been via the internet and participation in documentaries.⁸⁰ There is an extensive body of literature that discusses the significance of indigenous participation in these technologies.⁸¹ As indigenous groups and communities appropriate video and the internet to project their identity and plight to the international community, they create new spaces for agency. However, as they engage the international community, specifically NGOs, potentially outside actors may challenge indigenous empowerment and autonomy. Stefano Varese writes, “[i]t could be argued that in the Latin American Indian movement we are seeing an increased participation of non-Indian individuals in influential positions, as well as substantial external ideological influences”⁸² Such external ideological influences can very well create a hegemonic relationship between the indigenous and Western NGOs. Egan warns that the Oriente plight is a “tropical forest story [that is] an export commodity. The very durability of the North-South connection is put at risk by the nature of the market for green issues.”⁸³

As the literature suggests, this thesis will accept as its premise that the indigenous organizations and activists indeed use ethnic identity in order to appeal for resources and support from the international community. Of particular interest are the ways in which the indigenous and Ecuador-based NGOs represent indigenous ethnicity on their websites and how the

international NGOs reproject/re-represent that ethnicity. In brief, this study analyzes indigenous participation in documentaries and on the internet, as well as examines how United States and Ecuador based NGOs represent the Oriente struggle on their organizations' websites.

Definition of Key Concepts

Several concepts that will be used in this thesis need to be defined. First, I will draw on resource mobilization theory (RMT) and new social movement theory (NSMT) to explain the indigenous movement of Ecuador. Like Calderón, et al. suggest, I will present these two theories as a “syncretic.” That is, while these two theories have traditionally been analyzed as competing paradigms, I will argue that the integration of these two approaches best provides a macro and micro explanation of the movement. Nevertheless, in the analysis of representation of ethnicity on websites and documentaries, the definition of a social movement as understood within new social movement theory is most useful and applicable. That definition illustrates a social constructionist perspective that defines a movement as the construction and dissemination of meaning/information.⁸⁴ Alberto Melucci defines social movements as processes whereby social actors “through their relations” negotiate and construct meaning.⁸⁵ This definition is particularly significant when analyzing the projection of ethnic identity in documentaries and on websites as a strategy for change.

In this context, meaning is understood as the representation of ethnic identity. A collective ethnic identity, therefore, is not an “innate essence but a social process of construction.”⁸⁶ Ethnic identity is a mutable and ever-changing concept. Furthermore, the very idea of who can claim to have an indigenous ethnic identity is self-determined. Stavenhagen writes that according to many indigenous organizations/federations, identifying oneself as Indian is a matter of honor and should not be regulated by the state. While the state attempts to define indigenous based on language, ancestral heritage, and land base, indigenous organizations insist on self-identification.⁸⁷

Finally, representation must be clarified because I am interested in the ways in which the indigenous represent themselves on websites and in documentaries as well as how the international community represents them. For assessing representation I draw on Stuart Hall's conceptualization, which compliments Melucci's definition of social movement and Larraín Ibáñez's concept of identity. In this way, the indigenous movement is played out in the form of symbolic practices and expressive action. Hall writes,

Things don't *mean*: we construct meaning, using representational systems—concepts and signs. Constructivists do not deny the existence of the material world. However, it is not the material world which conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts. It is social actors who use the conceptual system of their culture and the linguistic and other representational systems [websites and documentaries] to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to communicate about the world meaningfully to others.⁸⁸

Indeed, the very concepts and signs that are strategically evoked in the Oriente movement are the subject of study in this thesis. The analysis of the language used in documentaries and websites will reveal the concepts and meanings attributed to the Oriente region and peoples, and the analysis of visual images on film and on websites will reveal the signs, particularly traditional signs of indigenusness (feathers and facepaint) that portray ethnic identity. Therefore, if this movement exemplifies ethnic identity politics as the literature suggests, then the production, utilization, and ultimate representation of that ethnic identity is of paramount importance. In this way, the representation of ethnicity as a strategy for change is an example of a symbolic resource. As Alison Brysk asserts, indigenous peoples lack material resources and rely on non-material, symbolic resources (feathers, spears, facepaint, etc) to appeal to international audiences.

Outline of the Thesis

Chapter two will focus on resource mobilization theory (RMT) and new social movement theory (NSMT) to analyze the collective action and mobilization of the 1990s to the present. It will begin with the history and description of RMT and present several critiques of RMT to account for the emergence of NSMT. Then, I will present the indigenous movement of Ecuador in a descriptive and instrumental case study in Chapter three where I argue that an “integration” of the two theories best explains this movement.⁸⁹ Chapter four will expand Melucci's concept of creating a collective ethnic identity to include the representation of that ethnic identity to the international community. I will present a theoretical foundation of representation and discourse analysis for the use in my analysis of the four documentaries, and fifteen websites. Chapter five focuses on the analysis of the four documentaries; and Chapter six includes the content analysis of the fifteen websites in an attempt to explore if the participation in and appropriation of technology is a source of empowerment for the indigenous of Ecuador.

Chapter 2: The Theoretical Context: Towards a Theory of Indigenous Mobilization in Ecuador?

Resource Mobilization Theory

“[Resource mobilization theory] examines the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used by authorities to control or incorporate movements.”

McCarthy and Zald¹

History and Key Characteristics

Resource mobilization theory (RMT) originated in the United States during the 1970s as a response to social movement activity of the 1960s, such as the civil rights movement of the United States.² It seemed that Wallerstein’s legacy of 1968 indeed initiated “the debate on the fundamental strategy of social transformation.”³ Existing theories employed to explain social movements were inadequate to many theorists; therefore, resource mobilization theory emerged in an attempt to explain collective action behavior and drew upon political sociology and economic theories as its approach to evaluation. This new approach stood in contrast to the traditional functionalist approach to evaluating social movements, which drew upon the “social psychology of collective behavior.”⁴

Margaret Denton explains the foundation of the traditional approach to the study and evaluation of collective behavior. She asserts that traditional approaches to social movement study, which were particularly prominent from the 1930s to the 1950s, stemmed from Durkheim’s analysis of collective action as “anomic and irrational behavior that is the result of rapid social change.”⁵ She argued that this traditional approach to theorizing social movements was a simplistic one in that prior to the 1970s most theorists examined simple forms of collective behavior, such as mob uprisings. Resource mobilization theory, therefore, developed as a reaction to the traditional and functionalist view of collective behavior theory.⁶ By functionalist view, I refer to the tradition developed by theorists such as Durkheim and Talcott Parsons that explains human behavior by using a “structural-functional approach.”⁷ While there are various definitions and explanations of functionalism, a general description is one that uses biology as an analogy to explain human behavior in society. “Namely, that biological organisms, confronted with a variety of environmental exigencies, must function in relation to these exigencies if they are to survive, and that specialized structures (organs, systems such as the circulatory, digestive, and so on) arise as adaptive mechanisms in this struggle.”⁸ Therefore, the functionalist view

understands society to be an integrated social system and every social event and/or behavior is explained “in terms of the functions they perform—that is, the contributions they make to the continuity of a society.”

Social mobilization and collective action viewed within this paradigm, then, are seen as “non-routine action” which stands contrary to societal norms and regulations.⁹ Alan Scott proposes that within this traditional and functionalist framework, social movements are equivalent to deviant behavior and are thus “non-institutional” in two principal ways. He asserts:

First, action is non-institutional in that it is not oriented towards central social institutions (government, the family, etc.), but challenges the legitimacy of those institutions. Second, the notion can have a stronger sense of action not governed by rules and norms, action which is spontaneous, an ‘eruption’, irrational, etc In the discussion of functionalist analysis it is the tendency to equate social movements with irrational outbursts.¹⁰

Whereas traditional functionalist theory theorized collective action as irrational anomalous behavior and as non-institutional, resource mobilization theorists argued that actors in social movements were rational individuals or groups capable of networking and developing mobilization strategies.¹¹ Likewise, the traditional functionalist theory focused on the micro level of analysis to explain collective action. That is, previous attention was placed on the “individual as the appropriate unit of analysis” rather than focusing on “macropolitical and organizational dynamics.”¹²

Ultimately, then, the origin of social movements tended to be explained by reference to the same dynamics that accounted for individual participation in movement activities. [This explanation] had its origins in social psychological or normative processes operating at the microsociological or individuals levels.¹³

Therefore, resource mobilization theory emphasized the *macro* level that had been overlooked in previous theories/explanations of collective action. The emphasis on the rational individual and the macro level of participation marked a significant theoretical shift in explaining collective action. Furthermore, these “rational individuals” participated as actors based on the “logic of costs and benefits as well as opportunities for action” within the organizational/macro level of participation.¹⁴

The actor in movements and in protest action was not under the sway of sentiments, emotions, and ideologies that guided his or her action By treating the activities of collective actors as tactics and strategy, the analyst could examine movements and

countermovements as engaged in a rational game to achieve specific interests, much like pluralist competition among interest groups in political analysis.¹⁵

In addition, collective action and subsequent social change were believed to take place primarily at the political-institutional level. “Rational actors, employing strategic and instrumental reasoning at the political-institutional level, replaced the irrational crowd as the central object of analysis in studies of collective action.”¹⁶

Drawing from Max Weber’s concept of bureaucratic organization, proponents of resource mobilization theory focused “on how collective action depended on the ability of associations [macro level] to mobilize resources and to conduct the organization on the basis of planned and rational action.”¹⁷ Likewise, resource mobilization theory asserts that collective mobilization and action do not simply emerge as a response to unequal or oppressive conditions, but rather that such conditions are simply the necessary motivating force for collective action. How social grievances generated by unequal or oppressive conditions advance to social action is contingent on the “availability of resources and changes in the opportunities for collective action.”¹⁸ Joe Foweraker further explains that the appropriation of resources is central to converting social grievances into action.

Resource mobilization theory . . . begins with the premise that social discontent is universal but collective action is not. It is inherently difficult to organize a social movement, and the main problem is mobilizing sufficient resources to maintain and expand the movement. Hence . . . resource mobilization is based on the idea that successful movements acquire resources and create advantageous exchange relationships with other groups as they achieve success in fulfilling their goals.¹⁹

Resource mobilization, therefore, interprets social change as a rational process of groups organizing, networking, and managing resources and devotes much attention to political rather than cultural changes. RMT, then, answers the question of *how* social actors/groups pursue their goals and demands at the macro level through the management of resources and the creation of organizations and organizational networks.

Resources are defined as both material and non-material. Examples of material resources include “money, organizational facilities, labour, means of communication” and “non-material resources include legitimacy, loyalty, authority, moral commitment, solidarity.”²⁰ Canel illustrates that the appropriation of resources is not solely a strategy of mobilization, but is also implicit in the very definition of mobilization. “Mobilization is the process by which a group

assembles resources (material and/or non-material) and places them under collective control for the explicit purpose of pursuing the group’s interests through collective action.”²¹ This “resource management” approach of creating and maintaining control of resources is central to the resource mobilization concept of social conflict, which is seen as the struggle for the control of “existing resources and the creation of new ones.”

Canel identifies four factors that influence the process of mobilization: organization, leadership, political opportunity, and the nature of political institutions.²² I present his four factors and descriptions of each in table form and will elaborate on the concept of organization by turning to McCarthy and Zald who are key proponents and developers of resource mobilization theory.

Table 1: Four Factors of Mobilization

<u>Organization</u>	Organization is key for obtaining resources and for maintaining the movement. Collective action and group coherence/solidarity are dependent on social networks and the ability to establish horizontal links to external organizations. McCarthy and Zald consider the networking of organizations to be the fundamental “cell structure of collective action” (Canel 1992, 40).
<u>Leadership</u>	Leadership is important for the success of social movements. Leaders identify and voice grievances, create a sense of group cohesiveness, determine strategies to be used, and make “cost-benefit assessments of the likelihood of success” (Canel 1992, 40-41).
<u>Structure of Political Opportunities</u>	This factor is based on the presupposition that social movement activity does not operate in a vacuum. That is, social movement activity always operates within an environment that is actively trying to “influence, control, or destroy the social movement” (Canel 1992, 41). The structure of political opportunities refers, then, to the conditions and/or structures of the political system that either deter or aid collective action.
<u>The Nature of the Political System</u>	This factor, primarily developed by the work of Tilly, assumes that the success and emergence of social movements depends on the political system’s ability and/or desire to integrate the interests and demands of the group organizations. Ash-Garner and Zald assert that the nature and success of social movements are “conditioned by the size of the public sector, the degree of centralization of the state and governmental structures, and the nature of existing political parties” (Canel 1992, 42).

Organizations: Characteristics, Competition, and Conflict

Resource mobilization theorists draw upon formal organizational theory to study social movements. It has been established that the conversion of grievances to collective action is

dependent on the development of organizations, which then generate resources to sustain mobilization. For McCarthy and Zald organizations are conceptualized in two principal categories: *social movement organization* and *social movement industry*. Before exploring these two categories, it is important to first present McCarthy and Zald's definition of a social movement: "A social movement is a set of opinions and beliefs in a population representing preferences for changing some elements of the social structure or reward distribution, or both, or a society."²³ A countermovement, on the other hand, is the set of opinions and beliefs that stand in contrast to those exhibited in the social movement. These concepts are important because these preferences for change are more likely to become action and to "spawn organized forms" if the populations expressing these preferences are "highly organized internally."

McCarthy and Zald develop the concept of these "organized forms" as a social movement organization. "A *social movement organization* (SMO) is a complex, or formal, organization that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement and attempts to implement those goals."²⁴ While McCarthy and Zald indicate that organizations can be defined as "web-like structure of informal, unorganized relations of cooperation and communication among local cells,"²⁵ they stress the importance and effectiveness of those SMOs that have a complex structure of organization that may be described as bureaucratic in nature.²⁶ "That is, organizations . . . have several levels of membership, lists of members (however faulty), and some kind of written document describing the structure of the organization."²⁷ In addition, the concept of SMO continuity is important for the success and effectiveness of collective action. Continuity refers to the pre-existing organizations that enable the "spawning" of other organizations. Continuity further allows the focus to be on resources and organization as opposed to ideology as a mobilizing force. "When dealing with existent organized groups, as in labor unions or in the civil rights movement, the emphasis on organization could ignore the already existing ideologies."²⁸ Eduardo Canel further develops the concept of continuity as central to resource mobilization theory.

RMT emphasizes continuity. It explains social movements in relation to resource management, organizational dynamics, political processes, strategies, and social networks. It highlights the instrumental aspects of social movements as they address their demands to the state. It says social movements seek transformations in the reward-distribution systems of modern societies, operate at the political level, and are concerned with system integration and strategic action.²⁹

McCarthy and Zald illustrate the concept of SMOs and continuity within the context of the civil rights movement of the United States. The authors explain that the preference for change was the demand for justice and equal distribution of rights for African Americans. Examples of SMOs that mobilized these preferences to action include the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP).³⁰ They argue that these SMOs translated the preferences and grievances of the African American population to action within the political sphere.

It is important to reemphasize that resource mobilization theory focuses primarily on collective action operating within the political-institutional arena. McAdams, McCarthy, and Zald write that the paradigm shift to resource mobilization theory is marked by the “reassertion of the political.”³¹ These authors assert that this emphasis on the political is a “major contribution . . . in the field of social movements” as RMT “locate[s] social movements squarely within the realm of rational political action.”³² Tilly defines collective action (also accomplished through group organization) as the aim of “new groups—‘challengers’—to enter the political system.”³³ Tilly’s analysis is particularly helpful when evaluating the civil rights movement of the United States. Because the political system excluded African Americans, SMOs worked to grant them entry to the political system. However, even when “well-integrated social groups”³⁴ have already gained entry and are integrated into the political system, resource mobilization theory continues to focus on the political sphere. Tilly explains that these groups, through SMOs, “seek . . . not entry in the polity but access to decision-making spheres to influence policy-making.”³⁵

The concept *social movement industry* (SMI) draws upon the definition of industry as defined in economics.³⁶ That is, industry is the category of preferences within which SMOs are grouped. To illustrate the distinction between SMOs and SMIs, the authors return to the civil rights movement as an illustration. SMOs, such as NAACP and SNCC, have specific goals, demands, and strategies concerning African American rights. These organizations are categorized within the general SMI called the civil rights movement. McCarthy and Zald refer to SMI as “the congeries of organizations that pursue similar goals.”³⁷ Participation in the SMI is characterized by actors participating in multiple SMOs, such as was evident in the 1961 civil rights demonstration in Baltimore.

[M]any of the participants in a 1961 demonstration sponsored by the local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) were also involved in the NAACP, the SCLC, Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), or the Young People's Socialist Alliance (YPSA). These organizations either were primarily concerned with goals similar to those of CORE or included such goals as subsets of broader ranges of social change goals.³⁸

Individual actors can participate in multiple SMOs within a social movement industry. However, it is also possible for social movement organizations to be associated with multiple social movement industries. A SMO with the goal of obtaining “liberalized alterations in laws, practices and public opinion concerning abortion”³⁹ for example, may be grouped into the SMI known as “the women’s liberation movement” or the SMI referred to as the “population control movement.” The ability of SMOs to associate themselves with multiple SMIs can broaden their available resource base, augmenting the potential of networking and interaction. This strategy has been particularly embraced by indigenous organizations in Ecuador, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

An important dynamic of social movement organizations (SMOs) and the social movement industry (SMI) is found at the level of interaction among SMOs. McCarthy and Zald indicate that while this is an important point, there is little analysis of this interaction found in the literature on social movements.⁴⁰ However, the study of the interaction among SMOs is essential particularly when there is conflict among organizations. The lack of attention to interaction and conflict in the literature is surprising because the survival of organizations and subsequent success of collective action is dependent upon the appropriation of material or non-material resources.⁴¹ Consequently, the points of conflict and competition over resources are particularly pertinent to resource mobilization analysis of social mobilization. Zald and McCarthy write,

Whether we study revolutionary movements, broad or narrow social reform movements . . . we find a variety of SMOs or groups, linked to various segments of supporting constituencies (both institutional and individual), competing among themselves for resources and symbolic leadership, sharing facilities and resources at other times, developing stable and many times differentiated functions, occasionally merging into unified ad hoc coalitions, and occasionally engaging in all-out war against each other.⁴²

It is understood within resource mobilization theory that organizations operate within the existing political institutional system. RMT also assumes continuity as organizations network and “make horizontal links” to other organizations to generate resources to create change. While this networking and linking with other SMOs with similar goals can strengthen

organization effectiveness, there is also the potential for competition and conflict within the SMI. Zald and McCarthy assert that while the cooperation of organizations within a social movement industry would be rational behavior so as to attain the organizations' intended goal, there is conflict because SMOs "share to a greater or lesser extent the same adherent pools."⁴³ As networked SMOs compete for resources from adherents, the individuals or organizations that believe in the goals of the social movement, the legitimacy and future of SMOs are potentially challenged.⁴⁴

The intensity of this competition is related importantly to resource availability, the extensity of the demands SMOs place upon constituents or those who provide the varied resources to the organization, to the social heterogeneity of potential supporters, and to the interaction of these three factors.⁴⁵

Therefore, SMOs compete for resources from external groups/individuals in the SMI.

However, it is important here to differentiate between adherents and *conscience constituents* in SMOs. While an adherent is a group or individuals that believe in the goals of the movement, constituents are those who provide resources to sustain the movement.⁴⁶ *Conscience constituents* provide resources and are "direct supporters of an SMO who do not stand to benefit directly from its success in goal accomplishment."⁴⁷ The concept of conscience constituents will be further explored in the case study of indigenous mobilization in Ecuador. For now, conscience constituents stand as potential competition among SMOs as they struggle for resources from the "same resource base" with the same adherents and constituents. Indeed, Gamson writes that "resources are scarce and, when one views SMOs as organizations, cooperation is no more inherent than competition."⁴⁸ Clearly, internal power relations within an organization as well as those power relations influencing the interaction among SMOs determine the availability and "flow" of resources.

SMOs also experience conflict and competition from those outside of the SMI or movement. McCarthy and Zald recognize the existence of countermovements, which are a set of opinions and beliefs that stand in contrast to those exhibited in the social movement or a SMO.⁴⁹ Therefore, as "like-minded SMOs" compete among themselves for resources, they are also subject to conflict from SMOs in an oppositional countermovement. Gamson writes "[t]he world of SMOs is populated with other actors who are deliberately trying to influence, control, or even destroy it." Indeed, Zald and Useem argue that countermovements arise as a consequence of visible and effective movements and SMOs.

We are interested in how movements generate countermovements, and how they then engage in a sometimes loosely coupled tango of mobilization and demobilizationBy advocating change, by attacking the established interests, by mobilizing symbols and raising costs to others, they [SMOs] create grievances and provide opportunities for organizational entrepreneurs to define countermovement goals and issues.⁵⁰

Resource mobilization theory, therefore, emphasizes organizations as the primary agent for change and framework for collective action. RM theorists underscore the interaction/competition among organizations as these groups attain resources to promote the goals and interests of the movement.

In sum, RMT emerged as a paradigm shift for analyzing collective action at the macro level of organizational participation. However, while providing an effective unit of analysis, no theory is infallible or irrefutable. Neither are theories static or dogmatic frameworks. Instead, theories are constantly evaluated and scrutinized for inconsistencies and shortcomings as theorists attempt to explain collective action behavior. Indeed, theorists are obligated to constantly examine whether theories “are coherent, logically consistent, and empirically supported”⁵¹ in order for theory to remain an effective tool for evaluating and predicting collective action behavior.

The Emergence of a “New” Theory? Challenges & Critiques of Resource Mobilization Theory

“While there is no clearly defined contender for theoretical dominance, we are nonetheless entering a period of sustained debate and theoretical turmoil which may well lead to such an alternative.”

-Steven M. Buechler⁵²

Since its development in the 1970s, the resource mobilization theoretical framework for explaining the “how” of social mobilization and collective action and the emphasis on the macro level of analysis has remained the dominant framework for studying social movements. Dissatisfied with the existing theories of collective behavior and social resistance models, theorists such as McCarthy and Zald developed RM theory in response to the prevalence of social movement activities of the 1960s.⁵³ RM theory represented a paradigm shift from viewing collective behavior as irrational and abnormal to focusing on the rational actor working within a formal organization for change. However, many theorists have begun to challenge the prevailing RM theory and search for alternative paradigms. One paradigm that has emerged is the new

social movement theory developed in Europe by Castells, Touraine, Habermas, and Melucci⁵⁴ and embraced by American theorists such as Buechler and Cohen.

In this section, I will focus primarily on the challenges and critiques as articulated by Buechler in his article “Beyond Resource Mobilization?: Emerging Trends in Social Movement Theory,” while intermittently drawing on critiques made by other theorists. This article has been chosen for its effective explanations and analysis of RM theory’s weaknesses and for its case study approach. Buechler posits his critiques within the context of his research on the women’s movement in the United States; he also “identifies a number of emerging trends in social movement theory which collectively imply the need for a new theoretical paradigm.”⁵⁵ Buechler identifies ten weaknesses, or “theoretical challenges” of RM theory. In an attempt to synthesize Buechler’s challenges, I will focus primarily on the challenges that are most germane to the emergence of new social movement theory. As these challenges are presented, characteristics of new social movement theory will be explored, with particular emphasis on the work of Alberto Melucci. These challenges will then be applied within the context of the strategies and characteristics of indigenous mobilization.

Before analyzing the critiques that have most contributed to the emergence of new social movement theory, it is important to present the foundational challenge that most separates resource mobilization theory from new social movement theory. The underlying conceptual weakness stressed by the critiques of RM theory is that in its attempt to explain the *how* of social mobilization, there is an overemphasis on the organizational framework and “instrumental-rational actor”⁵⁶ and not enough emphasis on the *why* of collective action.⁵⁷ That is, why do individual actors become involved in an organization or network in the first place? What factors, other than the availability of resources, contribute to the formation of organizations and/or movement sustainability? The answers to these questions reflect the re-shifting from the macro approach to the micro/individual approach. Another central critique of RMT is the overemphasis on the political-institutional sphere and a lack of focus on cultural factors and cultural change. The cultural factors, brought to the “theoretical foreground”⁵⁸ by NSM theorists, are ideology, collective identity, and expressive action.

“Deconstructing” the Organizational Framework

The organizational framework is what Foweraker calls an “economic model of human agency” that emphasizes instrumental means/end action. However, “the careful weighing of

costs and benefits implied by the means/end model falls far short of a universal or complete account of collective action, if only because action may be its own reward.”⁵⁹ Furthermore, “social actors are presumed to exercise this rationality without reference to their social context . . . and it is impossible to see how the actor’s preferences are formed, or how costs and benefits are calculated.” Therefore, the focus on the rational actor participating in an organization based on cost benefit analysis may explain the strategies of mobilization but does not explain why the actor becomes involved in collective action because it removes the actor from his or her “social context.” The critique of the organizational model does not go so far as to assert that organizations are not an important factor for sustained mobilization, rather that organizations may be less centralized and less “economical” in nature.

While Buechler commends RMT for its emphasis on organizations as a necessary agent of change, he calls for a “deconstruction” of organizations,⁶⁰ thus making the conceptualization of organizations a theoretical challenge for resource mobilization theory. Buechler asserts that there is “an organizational bias” within RM theory in that RM theorists primarily focus on formally organized SMOs as the most effective agents but overlook the importance of informal organizations and networks. Again, he turns to the women’s movement case study. While the women’s movement indeed utilized the RM strategy of appealing to the continuity of pre-existing organizations to facilitate mobilization and generate resources, a critical strategy included the links to informal organizations. Buechler argues that the concept of a social movement community (SMC) is needed. While this is arguably similar to McCarthy and Zald’s concept of a social movement industry, what is stressed within the SMC is the cooperation of “informally organized networks of movement activists.”⁶¹

The women’s liberation sector is perhaps the best example of an SMC because this sector consciously and explicitly repudiated formal organization on ideological grounds, and strove to discover and implement more egalitarian forms of organization. The women’s rights sector offers more typical examples of SMOs (like the National Organization for Women) but even here, the periods of most successful activism by such organizations have been in conjunction with informally organized SMCs.⁶²

The lesson that is generalized from this case study challenges the RM assumption that complex and formal organizations are the principal agents of collective action. Therefore, the call for a “deconstructed” conceptualization of organizations is an important critique that has been echoed by other theorists.

McAdams also stresses the importance of a “social movement community,” yet integrates the RMT concept of continuity with his “activist subculture.”⁶³ Like Buechler’s critique, McAdams focuses on informal networks and organizations that are overlooked in RMT. Adding to this critique is his emphasis on ideology in these pre-existing organizations.

[W]hat is too often overlooked in structural accounts of movement emergence is the extent to which these established organizations/networks are themselves embedded in long-standing activist subcultures capable of sustaining the ideational traditions needed to revitalize activism following a period of movement dormancy.⁶⁴

Significantly, one aspect of continuity that is overlooked by RM theorists is that pre-existing organizations not only provide “organizational resources” such as leaders, communication networks, or meeting places but also provide “cultural resources” into which succeeding generations of activists can dip to fashion ideologically similar, but chronologically separate, movements.⁶⁵ He illustrates this concept of dipping into cultural materials by turning to the generations of American peace movements. He argues that because there is a rich pacifist tradition sustained by religious groups (Quakers, Mennonites, and Unitarians) and secular-humanist organizations such as American Friends Service Committee and Fellowship of Reconciliation.⁶⁶ Subsequent movements have drawn on this cultural tradition, or cultural resource, in order to initiate new mobilizations.

The general challenge is the critique that RMT has “privileged the political, organizational, and network/structural aspects of social movements while giving the more cultural or ideational dimensions of collective action short shrift.”⁶⁷ Therefore, the lack of cultural factors as mobilizing forces, or as movement objectives, are an important theoretical challenge to RMT. The critique of RMT is not limited to its emphasis on organizations, though; That critique extends to RM theorists ignoring the potency of ideology.

Ideology

Buechler argues that RM theory has minimized the importance of ideology as a motivating force for turning grievances into action. Indeed, the author argues that RM theory simplifies the concept of ideology and equates ideology with the “expression of grievances, and then dismissing both as constant background factors with little explanatory relevance.”⁶⁸ He underscores the importance of ideology in that ideology “encompasses the ideas, beliefs, values, symbols and meanings that motivate individual participation and give coherence to collective action.” Since RM theory views individual participants as rational actors that participate in

collective action based on cost benefit analysis, ideology is especially important in order to explain participant involvement even when the costs seemingly outweigh the benefits.⁶⁹ Furthermore, when movement goals are manifested as public goods or changes in public policy that benefit the aggrieved group but “cannot be denied to non-participants, the free-rider dilemma is created because it is individually rational for each actor to let others win the goal and then share the benefits without the costs.”⁷⁰ Buechler writes,

Ideology often performs multiple functions, including transforming vague dissatisfactions into a politicized agenda, providing a sense of collective identity, and defining certain goods as potential movement resources. It may be that for some constituencies, these processes may be taken-for-granted and do not require analysis. But it is also clear that for many others, the multiple roles of ideology are critical prerequisites for effective movement mobilization.⁷¹

Therefore, the role of ideology to theorists such as Buechler and Denton is essential to explain participation in collective action.

Buechler exemplifies the importance of ideology as a “prerequisite for movement mobilization” within the context of the women’s movement. The prominence of the slogan “the personal is political” illustrates the deliberate strategy of utilizing ideology to make grievances political and to generate a collective identity based on gender.⁷² Buechler asserts that it is through this development of ideology that “they [women] re-interpret their social environment as consisting of potential movement resources.”⁷³ Subsequent women’s movements since the 1960s and 1970s have all been rooted in different ideologies such as liberal, radical, socialist, or lesbian.⁷⁴ “[T]he only fair generalization is that there has never been a significant movement sector [within the women’s movement] which does not have a distinct and well-developed ideological position.”⁷⁵

Collective Identity and Expressive Action

Buechler also argues that movements are often not composed of homogenous individuals, an issue that is a “theoretical silence”⁷⁶ within RMT. “RMT cannot explain the processes of group formation and the origins of the organizational forms it presupposes; it fails to explain how a social category—an aggregate of people with shared characteristics—develops a sense of identity and becomes a social group.”⁷⁷ Therefore, the construction and articulation of a collective identity are important for new social movement theorists, even though collective identity may develop after much conflict and negotiation among actors. While McCarthy and

Zald highlight the conflict and competition among SMOs, NSMT focus is on competition and conflict over resources but not over movement objectives or goals, “although it may be one of the critical determinants of movement mobilization and outcomes.”⁷⁸

Melucci, a key developer and proponent of new social movement theory, argues that diversity and conflict are important aspects to the development of a collective identity, as well as to the articulation of movement objectives. In addition, Melucci argues that the concept of social action must be transformed.

We must rethink social action into the process by which meaning is constructed through interaction. It is actors who, through their relations, produce and recognize the sense of what they are doing . . . Conflicts, therefore, act as signals of both the constructed nature of social action and its tendency to crystallize into structures and systems.⁷⁹

While McCarthy and Zald make the theoretical leap from grievances to mobilized organizations, Melucci fills that “silence” with emphasis on the process of interaction that is necessary for the formation of organizations and the articulation of meaning and objectives. I believe that this process of interaction encompasses a micro approach as the focus is placed on individuals deciding whether they will or will not participate in organizational collective action.

Furthermore, Melucci argues that the analytical starting point assumed by RM theorists, the existence of an aggrieved group that initiates an organization to orchestrate change, represents a theoretical weakness. He argues that the lack of emphasis on the process prior to organization is what should be of interest to theorists in order to explain collective action. “What was formerly considered a datum (the existence of a movement) is precisely what needs to be explained.”⁸⁰

Melucci writes,

For this purpose, neither the macro-structural models of collective action nor those based on individuals’ motivation are satisfactory, for they lack an understanding of an intermediate level of collective action. This level comprises the processes through which individuals recognize that they share certain orientations in common and on that basis decide to act together.⁸¹

Therefore, what is essential to explaining the existence and emergence of an aggrieved group is the deliberate conceptualization of a collective identity.

Further developing the challenge that RM theorists downplay diversity and identity, Cohen asserts that, “the resource-mobilization approach, which resolutely pursues the objectifying logic of empirical-analytical social science, is interested primarily in aggregate data and not in questions of identity.”⁸² Indeed, the emphasis on the “aggregate” nature of aggrieved

groups “presuppose[s] a theory of identity.”⁸³ Melucci further critiques RM theory’s lack of emphasis on the formation of identity. “RMT thus postulates a process of actors’ construction of their identity, without, however, examining this process.”⁸⁴

Indeed, it seems that the identity that is stressed within the RMT framework is that of the actor as rational. However, new social movement theorists stress that the rational actor model of RMT must be “transcended.”⁸⁵ Melucci argues that a conceptualization of identity as related to the motivating social factors behind mobilization is a more accurate explanation of involvement in social movement activity “because ‘collective action is never based solely on cost-benefit calculation, and a collective identity is never entirely negotiable.’”⁸⁶ Consequently, the construction of a collective identity is a necessary process that allows actors to “produce the common cognitive frameworks that enable them to assess their environment and to calculate the costs and benefits of their action.”⁸⁷

Therefore, the challenge is not for a complete negation of the RMT concept of cost and benefits, but rather that the existing definition, which is an over-simplified rationale for collective action, be expanded to include collective identity. Melucci acknowledges that individuals are concerned with the costs and benefits of collective action and that through the formation of a collective identity individual actors feel that the costs of “individuals’ investment in collective action” are decreased.⁸⁸ He argues that, “the process of constructing, maintaining and altering a collective identity provides the basis for actors to shape their expectations and calculate the costs and benefits of their action.”⁸⁹

Furthermore, the concept of cost and benefits is embedded in the very definition of collective identity.

Collective identity is an interactive and shared definition produced by several interacting individuals who are concerned with the orientations of their action as well as the field of opportunities and constraints in which their action takes place.⁹⁰

Melucci, then, asserts that collective identity assists in explaining why individuals participate in organizations, as “a collective identity that is symbolically meaningful to participants . . . logically precedes any meaningful calculation of the costs and benefits of joining in collective action.”⁹¹ He also turns to collective identity as a way to explain how groups and organizations are formed. He argues that collective identity can lead to the “crystallization” and formation of both “institutionalized and less institutionalized forms of action.”⁹²

Collective identity formation is a delicate process and requires continual investments. As it comes to resemble more institutionalized forms of social action, collective identity may crystallize into organizational forms, a system of formal rules, and patterns of leadership. In less institutionalized forms of action its character more closely resembles a process, which must be continually activated in order for action to be possible.⁹³

The process of collective identity takes place in social networks, which are “fields of social relationships where, through negotiation among various groups, a collective identity is structured.”⁹⁴ Similar to McAdam’s “activist subcultures,” social networks “provide individuals and groups with a relatively stable point of reference from which to rebuild identities split among the various memberships, roles, and time scales of social experience.”⁹⁵

To the point, Buechler’s case study on the women’s movement illustrates a movement dependent on the establishment of a collective identity based on gender, while exemplifying the need for the continual negotiation and rearticulation of that identity.⁹⁶ Like Melucci’s critique of RMT, Buechler argues that “pre-existing constituency of women cannot be taken-for-granted, but rather must be painstakingly constructed and maintained if women’s movements are to be successful.”⁹⁷

Similarly, indigenous mobilization also relies on the construction of collective ethnic identity as both a mobilizing force and a strategy of action. Melucci argues that “the processes of globalization reactivate ethnic and national-based forms of action that seek to give a stable and recognizable basis to identity.”⁹⁸ Therefore, indigenous groups are organizing for the preservation of their ethnicity as they strategically and symbolically utilize the very projection of that ethnic identity as a strategy for change. “Ethnic symbolism and concrete reference to a motherland lay a foundation for the development of a culture and language for the identity of individuals and groups in a space that has lost its traditional boundaries.”⁹⁹

The construction of collective identity is an important example of expressive action within a cultural framework. Expressive action is directly related to the concept of collective identity in that expressive action refers to the “symbolic dimensions of social action” and to the construction of “meaning, symbols, and signification within a movement.”¹⁰⁰ New social movement theory depends on expressive action as a tool for analyzing collective behavior and collective action. Likewise, participants in movements rely on expressive action to establish cohesive organizations and to articulate their demands and objectives. Therefore, the lack of expressive action in RMT constitutes another theoretical challenge.

Because RMT stresses the political-institutional sphere, “social movements tend to be reduced to political protests . . . [and] RMT neglects the normative and symbolic dimensions of social action.”¹⁰¹ Canel argues that the actors within the RM model are rational actors vying for resources, yet their actions lack cultural context and meaning.

Contemporary social movements are more than political actors pursuing economic goals and/or seeking to exchange goods in the political market and/or to gain entry into the polity. As NSM theory points out, they are concerned with control of symbolic production, the creation of meaning, and the constitution of new identities.¹⁰²

Jean Cohen also asserts that the arena for expressing grievances and/or the objectives for change must transcend the political-institutional arena. She writes:

They [NSM theorists] also maintain that one cannot apply neoutilitarian, rational-actor models to collective actors whose conflictual interaction is not restricted to political exchanges, negotiations, and/or strategic calculations between adversaries. This means that the logic of collective interaction entails something other than strategic or instrumental rationality.¹⁰³

Thus, while RM theory focuses on instrumental action within the political-institutional sphere, NSM theory focuses on expressive action of constructing meaning and cultural significance. This focus on expressive action expands the arena of collective action from the institutional sphere to grass-roots struggles that are independent of formal organizations or political demands.

RMT & NSMT: Towards a Theory for Indigenous Mobilization?

I have presented a synthesis of two prevailing theories of social mobilization and collective action in order to explore the historical and social contexts for the emergence of RMT and NSMT, as well as to present the key characteristics and objectives of both theories. A further objective of explaining RMT and NSMT is to lay the theoretical groundwork to be applied to indigenous mobilization of the Ecuadoran Amazon Basin, with particular emphasis on the Oriente region. In the following case study, I pursue the challenges and critiques of both theories within the context of the strategies and objectives of indigenous organizations and networks of Ecuador. I pursue what these theories do and do not explain based on in-depth case study data and use these theories to better understand the significance and effectiveness of indigenous mobilization.

In the case study I apply both theories as a syncretic model, as Canel advocates. He argues that together these paradigms can create a more complete theory of social mobilization. Each theory shares commonalities such as the conceptualizations of action and organization “that

are specific to contemporary (post)industrial societies.”¹⁰⁴ For both theories, collective action is normal behavior that generates from participation in some form of group or organization. Likewise, “the two theories also agree that the passage from condition to action cannot be explained by the objective conditions themselves, because these conditions are mediated by discursive practices, ideologies, political processes, or resource management.”¹⁰⁵ Consequently, I present the case study of Ecuador not only in an effort to explore the significance of the indigenous mobilization of the Oriente, but also to further explore the application of social movement theory.

Chapter 3: Indigenous Mobilization: The Case in Ecuador

“We had to show the government the depth of our support. We were determined to take charge of our own destinies.”

-Shuar leader Ampam Karakas¹

In order to explore the significance of indigenous mobilization in Ecuador and the value of applying social movement theory developed in chapter two, I will employ an instrumental case study. An instrumental case study approach allows me to gain insight into indigenous mobilization as well as to “refine [the] theoretical explanation” of RMT and NSMT.² Likewise, I will adopt a descriptive case study approach. By a descriptive approach, I refer to “the formation and identification of a viable theoretical orientation” that is then applied to the research question or “propositions.”³ Therefore, RMT and NSMT will serve as “a kind of operating framework for the case study to follow.”⁴

Setting: Ecuador’s Ethnic Geography

As discussed in the background section of chapter one, petroleum extraction and oil companies have made an indelible and destructive mark on Ecuador’s Oriente region since 1967 when commercial quantities of oil were first discovered by Texaco. Since then, 1.5 billion barrels of oil have been extracted from the Oriente region. The consequences of this extraction are millions of gallons of crude oil spilled in the region and the environmental, physical/health, and cultural impacts that this pollution creates. Indigenous peoples have responded to this systematic disregard for their environment, communities, and cultures and engaged in unprecedented social action at the national and international level. Before exploring the evolution of this process and how indigenous individuals have united in organizational form in the following case study, it is important to first set the stage by exploring the physical and cultural geography of Ecuador.

Ecuador is a rural Andean country in South America that neighbors Peru and Colombia with a population of approximately 10 million people. It is estimated that forty percent of the Ecuadoran population are indigenous.⁵ This remains an estimate due in part to the allowance of self-identification in the census, as well as political controversy regarding the identification of ethnicity and race. Allen Gerlach explains the controversial nature of identifying ethnicity and race in Ecuador.

Some claim the Ecuadorean population is 40% Indian, 40% Cholo [mixture of Indian and white], 10% white, and 10% black. Others insist the composition is 25% Indian and 55% Cholo . . . while many simply say that about 80% of the people are Indians and Cholos, with the remainder equally divided between blacks and whites.⁶

Regardless, diverse ethnic groups reside in the three regions of Ecuador: the Coast, the Sierra Highlands, and the Amazon. (See Figure 1 for a map of Ecuador and Figure 2 for a map of the distribution of ethnic/cultural groups).

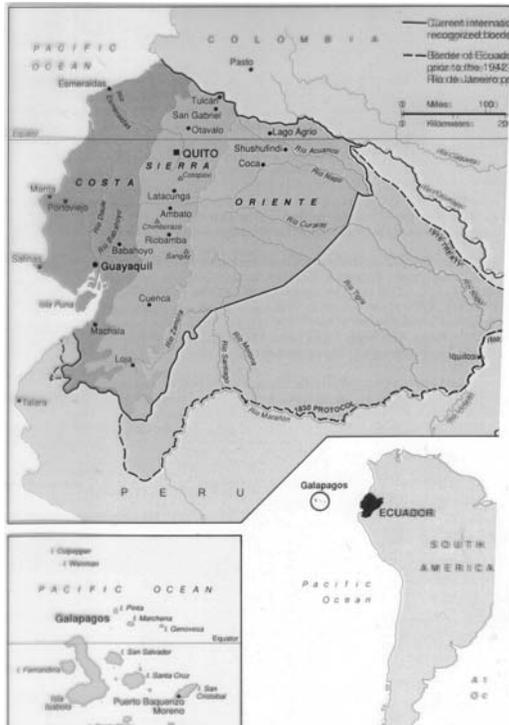


Fig. 1.
 Source: Judith Kimerling, *Amazon Crude*. (New York: Natural Resources Defense Council). 1991

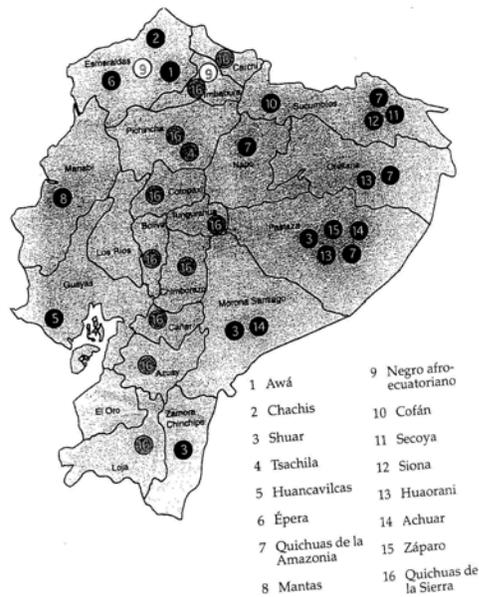


Fig. 2.
 Source: Allen Gerlach, *Indians, Oil, and Politics: A Recent history of Ecuador*. (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2003), frontmatter.

The Coast with its port city of Guayaquil is the hub of export agriculture such as bananas, sugar, coffee, and African palm. Over half of the Ecuador’s total population lives in the Coastal region.⁷ The majority of the population in the coastal region consists of Cholos, yet indigenous ethnic groups live in this region as well. The three largest groups are the Awás, Chachis, and Eperas. The smaller remaining groups are the Tsachilas, Mantas, and the Huancavilcas. Afro-Ecuadorans also predominately reside in the coastal Esmeralda province.⁸ The Highland region, which is predominately agricultural, is heavily populated with Quichua Indians.⁹ Descended

from the Incas of Peru, the Quichuas “are marked by a number of differences, above all in their allegiance to their respective nationalities and communities, and are distinguished by local traditions and dress and linguistic variations.”¹⁰ Examples of these local traditions and dress include wool weaving and traditional blue ponchos worn by males.

The Quichuas also inhabit the Amazon region, which is the region of focus for this thesis, and are known as the Oriente Quichuas. (See Figure 3 for a map of Amazon indigenous groups).



Fig. 3.
 Source: Judith Kimerling, *Amazon Crude*. (New York: Natural Resources Defense Council, 1991).

Amazon or Oriente Indians are known for their “sophisticated adaptation to their jungle environment, one characterized by highly complex interaction with an enormous array of plants and animals.”¹¹ These indigenous groups are also known for their application of *achiote* extract dye to adorn faces as well as the use of blowguns and poisonous darts to capture their prey. Indigenous groups of the Amazon rely on the medicinal and nutritive properties of plants to heal illnesses and to supplement their diets. Therefore, indigenous groups who live in traditional communities in the Amazon region engage in hunting and gathering practices. “Nature provided other levels of support for the rain forest’s indigenous people. Waterfall rites and reverence to trees, boas, jaguars and other creatures helped to spiritually ground the Indians in the cosmos.”¹²

The Oriente Quichas are the largest indigenous group in the Amazon with the Shuar as the second-largest group. The Shuar were among the first ethnic groups of the Amazon to organize politically, as will be seen in the following case study. While modern day Shuar live very differently from their ancestors, their ancestors were known as fierce warriors who engaged in *tsansta*, or head hunting.¹³

Other groups while less numerous than the Quichuas complete the ethnic tapestry of the Oriente. The Achuar historically valued independence and were very isolated from other indigenous groups in the region. The ancestor warriors of the modern day Achuars painted their faces with *achiote* and believed in the consumption of hallucinogenic drugs to garner strength and courage for battle. Achuar women routinely made *chicha*, a fermented drink made from manioc. Another warrior group, the Huaorani, whose traditional lands have the most petroleum, were historically known as *aucas* or “savages” by the Quichuas. They “engaged in near-constant warfare over the centuries” and were well-known for their hunting and gathering skills.¹⁴ Traditional dress for the Huaorani males includes “only a cord made of cotton wrapped around the waist to keep the penis upright.” The Huaorani also warred with the Siona and Secoya who, along with the Cofan, live in the northern most province of the Amazon. All three of these latter groups dress in tunics made from barkcloth and are known for their pottery techniques. Finally, the smallest group of the Amazon/Oriente Indians are the Záparos. They also dress in tunics from barkcloth and use *achiote* dye for body and textile painting. Like the Huaorani, they are known for their expertise in making and using blowdarts and lances.¹⁵

Every ethnic group in Ecuador has suffered the successive stages of colonization, modernization, and globalization. Coastal indigenous groups and Afro-Ecuadorans’ traditional ways of life and rights to land were altered by modernized commercial banana, coffee, and palm nut plantations during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.¹⁶ The employment opportunities on the plantations caused internal migration from the Highlands and emigration from Colombia, thus creating problems due to colonization and altering traditional ways of life. Amazon groups have also been dispossessed following the discovery of commercial quantities of petroleum in the Oriente region since 1967. So too have indigenous groups in Ecuador suffered from racism and elitism from the colonial period to modern day. For example, Friedrich Hassaurek, the U.S. minister to Ecuador in the 1860’s, wrote: “The word Indian is a term of contempt, even among the Indians themselves, who cannot offer a greater insult to one another than by the epithet *Indio*

bruto.”¹⁷ Finally, prior to the 1970s indigenous peoples did not fit into the political schema. “Politics prior to the oil boom of the 1970s was elitist; few Ecuadorans participated in the election process. Barely three percent of the population cast votes in the presidential election of 1888, and in 1925 the percentage was about eleven.”¹⁸

However, as the following case study will illustrate, by the 1960s the winds of change were in motion. Indigenous peoples from all regions of Ecuador began uniting in organizational form and proclaiming their place at the proverbial political table, as well as proclaiming their rights as distinctly indigenous ones. Similarly, they began to challenge Indian ethnicity as a concept of contempt and converted it to one of pride, empowerment, and political mobilization.

Indigenous Organizations

The Shuar Federation, established in the 1960s as one of the first indigenous organizations, served as a model for later organizations. The Shuar formed their federation in order to protect their land from colonizers and commercial investors. Before long the Shuar Federation realized that indigenous peoples must unite as one to protect their land and identity.

In the process [they] discovered that the struggle over land rights could not be separated from their survival as an ethnically distinct people with their own traditions and cultural identity . . . Though motivated by economic and social considerations (preservation of ancestral lands, access to productive resources), the struggle of the Shuar cannot be described strictly as a “class struggle,” in distinction to the conflicts over land between peasants and landowners that took place more or less at the same time in the Andean highlands. To the extent that the Shuar, and other lowland indigenous peoples, were not inserted clearly into an agrarian class structure, their organization took on more of a communal and ethnic character than the more class-oriented movements of indigenous peasants elsewhere in Latin America.¹⁹

With the advent of commercial quantities of oil found in the Amazon, the Shuar people were further affected by destructive resource extraction practices. Therefore, in an effort to ensure their survival as ethnically distinct people, in 1983 the Shuar and the Quichua united to form the Confederation of the Indigenous Nations of the Ecuadorian Amazon (CONFENIAE).²⁰ They subsequently united with other lowland peoples despite language barriers and historical tribal rivalries to form their SMO, and they used ethnic identity (i.e. Melucci’s collective identity) as a cohering and mobilizing agent. This SMO’s goals, or preferences for change, included the insistence on self-government, the formal and political recognition of native lands, and the “right to rule on proposals to exploit the resources in their territories.”²¹ It soon became

apparent, however, that voicing these grievances was not enough. While the union of rivaling or previously isolated indigenous peoples was culturally and historically significant, the leadership quickly realized that CONFENIAE must soon operate within the political sphere in order to orchestrate change.²²

To strengthen access to the political sphere CONFENIAE first orchestrated the union of indigenous peoples from the Amazon, the lowlands, and the highlands.²³ This union was characterized by the participation of individuals with no prior association with an organization and by the participation of pre-existing organizations, such as ECUARUNARI, the “Brotherhood of Indigenous Peoples.”²⁴ The union led to the 1986 formation of the Confederation of Ecuadoran Indigenous Nationalities (CONAIE), the umbrella organization for indigenous groups in Ecuador.²⁵ CONAIE was the first of its kind in South America as it united highland and rain forest peoples, groups long known for their fundamental cultural differences. While specific goals and demands may have differed among those in the organization, the consensus was that change could only be accomplished through organized initiatives which required organizational form. Leonardo Viteri, a leader in CONAIE, underscores the significance of this cooperation. “In the Amazon, we are trying to defend the lands of our ancestors. In the sierra they are trying to recover the lands taken from their ancestors. We agreed to support each other’s struggle.”²⁶ Indeed, the establishment of a formal organization enabled the aggrieved indigenous peoples to make demands within the political arena.

Added to the demands of CONFENIAE were the demands for the “recognition of Ecuador as a multinational state and Quichua as one of its official languages, as well as bilingual education, agrarian reform in the highlands, and the demarcation of Indian lands in the rain forest.”²⁷ CONAIE’s ability to express these demands rationally and effectively within the political sphere was made clear in the 1988 presidential election of Rodrigo Borja. Campaigning on a government reform platform and recognizing the growing influence of CONAIE, Borja agreed to CONAIE’s demands. However, upon taking office, Borja did not fulfill his campaign promises.²⁸

In response to empty promises, CONAIE organized a political protest in Quito. The protest began as a hunger strike by two hundred indigenous leaders in the Santo Domingo church in Quito. Borja sent troops to the church in an effort to control the indigenous leaders, yet the Church intervened and the government conceded with an accord, which the government

then later denied. That denial by the government directly led to the Indian Uprising of 1990.²⁹ The indigenous response was great. Fabián Muenala expressed the surprise that CONAIE leaders felt concerning the level of participation. “[CONAIE leaders] hadn’t realized what the magnitude of response to its call would be. The people exploded against the injustices they were suffering, and their energy and force paralyzed the entire country.”³⁰

Contributing to the success of the political protest was the level of networking and “horizontal links” made with external organizations that sympathized with the grievances and demands of CONAIE. Within the framework of resource mobilization theory, this is significant in that it illustrates CONAIE’s ability to appeal to adherents and to broaden its resource base. The Church offered its position as mediator to help CONAIE communicate and mediate with the government. CONAIE also received support from labor, peasant, and women’s organizations. Support came from individuals as well, such as cholo taxi drivers, chola marketwomen, and creole intellectuals.³¹

With the Church acting as mediator, the government finally conceded and agreed to negotiate with CONAIE.

The Indian rebellion [of 1990] had brought the Ecuadoran government to the bargaining table, but had not persuaded it to compromise on substantive issues. As one official insisted on condition of anonymity: “The government can not allow a small group of Indians to control its development policies and oil revenues.”³²

However, it became increasingly clear to indigenous leaders that the 1990 action was not sufficient; and CONAIE planned another protest in April 1992. No small group by 1992, seven thousand Shuar, Achuar, and Quichua in April embarked on a two-week march from the Amazon to Quito. That march made the indelible impression on the government that the indigenous of Ecuador were powerful political and social actors.

The 1990 and 1992 protests marked years of struggle, but also of success. Forming organizations and strategically operating within the existing political/institutional system of Ecuador, all while seeing the “prevailing institutional scheme as inadequate,”³³ resulted in the indigenous peoples’ recognition as cultural and political actors. Indeed, an important element of CONAIE’s demands was political change.

CONAIE demanded that the political arena be expanded and transformed to include them and provide a space for change. Two accomplishments that emerged from the 1992 march included the establishment of a public development agency for indigenous affairs and the

creation of Pachakutik, an ethnic political party.³⁴ Since its founding, it has “won legislative seats and played an important role in the constituent assembly that declared Ecuador a multicultural state.”³⁵ However, I wish to underscore that even as the uprisings of the 1990s operated within the political sphere these groups were “aspiring not only to actualize the rights of social and political citizenship but also to create a space of institutional conflict in which to express their demands.”³⁶ Likewise, central to their demands was, and continues to be, the official recognition of their ethnic identity.

[A]nother, more profound, demand was put on the table: [CONAIE’S president] asked for a constitutional amendment declaring Ecuador to be a “pluri-national, multi-ethnic” state. Having been second-class citizens for centuries, CONAIE members were asking not only for better living conditions through the granting of land rights, but were asserting the legitimacy of their ethnicity and their traditional forest lifestyles.³⁷

Ethnicity, then, and the collective, cultural identity derived from that ethnicity had political potency.

RMT & NSMT: An Integrational Approach

Clearly, resource mobilization is helpful when analyzing organizational macro level of collective action. Similarly, because ethnic identity served as both a goal and a strategy for change, new social movement theory and Melucci’s development of the formation of collective identity helped explain why individuals at the micro level chose to participate in collective action. Before further developing the importance of the construction of a collective ethnic identity, I wish to frame the indigenous mobilization of the Oriente region within the context of RMT. Table 2 summarizes the key definitions of resources, SMO, SMI, and conscience constituents by defining them within in the context of the Oriente region. I will then develop these four concepts in a discussion on conflict and competition among the SMOs of the Oriente region.

Table 2: Definitions

Resource mobilization theory	Indigenous Mobilization of Ecuador
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<p><u>Resources</u></p>	<p><i>Material Resources:</i> Examples of material resources that indigenous organizations seek are organizational facilities, money, and means of communication. An important resource/strategy among many indigenous organizations is the appropriation of video and cyberspace (Ginsburg 1991, 1994; Melucci 1994; Ribiero 1998). Another important material resource is legal counsel (Kimerling 1991; Kane 1995).</p> <p><i>Non-material Resources:</i> Solidarity is an important non-material resource as diverse indigenous groups, many of which share a history of conflict and tribal battles, such as the Shuar, Huarani, and Quichua among others unite to fight petroleum extraction. Likewise, an essential non-material resource is ethnic identity. This identity is then projected and represented as a strategy for change (Melucci 1994; Brysk 1996; Nygren 1998).</p>
<p><i>Social Movement Organization</i></p>	<p><i>Local/Communal SMOs:</i> Shuar Federation (Stavenhagen 1995), ECUARUNARI (“The Brotherhood of [Quichua] Indigenous Peoples”) (Winn 1999), ONHAE (The Organization of the Huaorani Nation of the Ecuadoran Amazon) (Kane 1995).</p> <p><i>Transcommunal/National SMOs:</i> CONFENAIE and CONAIE (Winn 1999).</p>
<p><i>Social Movement Industry</i></p>	<p>The indigenous mobilization of the Ecuadoran Amazon are courted by many international non-government organizations from the environmentalist/ecologist movement, the international human rights movement, indigenous rights movement, and international law advocates.</p>
<p><i>Conscience Constituents</i></p>	<p><i>International Law Constituents:</i> Judith Kimerling, North American lawyer and activist, has written extensively on the consequences that petroleum extraction practices has had on the environment and people of the Oriente. Her work has brought the issue to the forefront in legal journals such as the <i>Hastings International and Comparative Law Review</i> (Symposium Issue, 1991) and the <i>Columbia Journal of Environmental Law</i> (26:2, 2001). She also has served as legal counsel for indigenous organizations such as CONFENAIE.</p> <p><i>Environmental Constituents:</i> Rainforest Action Network, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Earth First, Sierra Club, Amazon Watch, Amazon Alliance, Jatun Sacha, Oilwatch, Frente de la Defensa de la</p>

	<p>Amazonia, Fundación Selva-Vida Sin Fronteras, Acción Ecológica</p> <p><i>Human Rights Constituents:</i> United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Rights (Report E/CN.4/Sub.2/2003/22), Advocacy Project, The Pachamama Alliance</p> <p><i>Journalist/Filmmaker Constituents:</i> Joe Kane, Bullfrog films, and Films for the Humanities and Sciences, Inc.</p>
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Cooperation, Competition, and Conflict: Indigenous SMOs

Zald and McCarthy stress the potential for conflict and competition among SMOs for resources as they compete with other organizations within a social movement industry and as they compete for support of conscience constituents. The formation of CONAIE was an attempt to eliminate conflict and competition among tribes, clans, communities, and pre-existing organizations to form a powerful umbrella organization in order to achieve political goals. It is important to note, however, that CONAIE was not a homogenous group exempt from inter-group conflict or struggle.

Fabián Muenala, a university student and leader in CONAIE, explained that the process of forming CONAIE required that these pre-existing organizations and indigenous peoples become “familiar with each other’s cultures and histories” and spent some years “working out common positions on controversial issues.”³⁸ What is significant, then, regarding the competition and conflict during the formation of CONAIE was not the conflict among pre-existing organizations, or conflict resulting from many SMOs competing for resources within the SMI of, say, the “indigenous rights movement.” Rather, conflict came from many differing SMIs competing for CONAIE to be associated with their agendas. Fabián Muenala described this time of competition.

There were many outside influences that tried to bend our interests to suit theirs: The Marxists wanted us to be part of a class-based peasant organization, the Christians wanted us to be part of a religious movement, the *indigenistas* wanted us to become dependent on foreign aid agencies, and the *indianistas* wanted us to reject everything Western and re-create the Inca empire. [But] in the end, we developed our own positions, in accordance with our own criteria and experience.³⁹

Despite the pressure from external influences, CONAIE was able to form an organization and voice grievances.

Still, CONAIE has not been exempt from internal power struggles and dissension among members. An example of this is the Huaorani's discontent with the leadership of CONAIE. The Huaorani felt that CONAIE was no longer supporting their goals and that leadership was showing preferential treatment to the Quichua group, particularly when allocating financial resources.⁴⁰ In response, the Huaorani established the Organization of the Huaorani Nation of the Ecuadoran Amazon (ONHAE). Therefore, SMOs may divide and sub-divide if some individuals in the group feel that there is corruption or inequality in allocating resources or in goal objectives.

Conflict also stems from external actors who oppose the communal or transcommunal/national SMOs. While not a developed countermovement, evangelical missionaries in the Oriente pressure the SMOs. For example, even though responsible for aiding Texaco in relocating the Huaorani to a Christian community, Rachel Saint had gained a powerful position in the Huaorani community, Toñampare. The Huaorani in this and surrounding communities were dependent on Saint for food, as she had forbidden certain hunting and gathering techniques for its use of taboos. Joe Kane, a North American journalist and environmental activist, writes an eyewitness account of life with the Huaorani. He describes Rachel Saint's influential power over the Huaorani.

Rachel Saint's relationship with the Huaorani was not one of shared faith but of power and reward. For years she controlled Huaorani dealings with the government and the Company, and, to a great extent, she continued to control the radio, the air traffic, and the entry of outside goods and services, including what few health workers and medical supplies found their way to Toñampare.⁴¹

In a visit to Toñampare, Kane asked Saint what she thought of CONFENIAE's goal of introducing school curriculum that would teach certain aspects of the traditional Huaorani culture. She responded, "I have warned the people to stay away from such dangerous organizations. They're Communists."⁴² Kane gives the account of Saint's branding Enrique, an instrumental founder of ONHAE, a Communist. "Rachel branded him a Communist and his family ostracized him—and such ostracism in a clan society can be tantamount to a death sentence."⁴³ Therefore, within the context of indigenous mobilization in the Oriente region, opposition from external actors may result in very personal costs.

Finally, indigenous SMOs recognize that they must appeal to various social movement industries, such as the environmental movement, human rights movement, and international law advocates. Likewise, they appeal to conscience constituents, those groups or individuals that are direct supporters of a movement but do not stand to directly gain from attainment of the movements goals. However, Kane asserts that there is conflict among the conscience constituents as they struggle to determine how to allocate resources and struggle to agree on which goals of the movement to support.

Many environmental and human-rights groups claimed to be working on behalf of the Huaorani, or the land they lived on. Letter-writing campaigns, boycotts, lawsuits, grants, and foundations were being pitched and caught by the likes of CARE, Cultural Survival, The Nature Conservancy, the Natural Resources Defense Council, Wildlife Conservation International, the Sierra Club, the World Wildlife Fund and a dozen other organizations, including RAN. In terms of both cost and reward, the money involved was substantial—tens of millions of dollars—and the infighting bitter.⁴⁴

Consequently, while the collaboration of conscience constituents, such as environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOS) with indigenous SMOs may lead to the attainment of movement goals or resources, collaboration may contribute to conflict and competition.

Kristina Egan argues that the indigenous plight of the Oriente region is a “tropical forest story” that grabs the attention and imagination of international NGOs.⁴⁵ However, Egan warns that this “tropical forest story is an export commodity . . . [and the] very durability of the North-South connection is put at risk by the nature of the market for green issues.”⁴⁶ Because indigenous groups increasingly depend on financial resources from conscience constituents in North American NGOs, the movement could experience serious problems if NGOs take on new issues. If the Northern demand for the issue of rain forest conservation or indigenous human rights issues declines, then SMOs such as CONAIE will no longer be supplied with material or even non-material resources.

Collective Identity: A Mobilizing, Cohesive, and Strategic Agent

Collective identity, a NSMT concept, aids in a SMO’s ability to appeal to international constituents. Anthropologist Stefano Varese refers to the use of international arenas/avenues to further local concerns as “Think locally, act globally.”⁴⁷ The success comes from the use of a collective ethnic/indigenous identity as a mobilizing force, and then subsequently projecting that identity to the international community to gain support from the constituents that reflect similar movement goals as the ones the SMO projects. Alison Brysk argues that “international relations

are an increasingly important determinant of domestic social change, while transnational alliances play a growing role in social movement activity.”⁴⁸ Therefore, because indigenous SMOs focus on ethnic identity as a mobilizing force, they are able to draw upon international support from NGOs.

It is important to reiterate that a construction of ethnic identity explains the micro level of involvement within an SMO, that is, why individuals become involved in collective action. Poignant examples from the documentary film *Flames of the Forest* and others will be developed in a subsequent chapter to illustrate the concept of a collective identity. Clearly, collective identity emerges from the local level and is deliberately used in movement/SMO discourse to encourage individuals in remote communities to join the larger fight.

Ethnicity as Resource: A Mobilization “Success Story?”

The Organization of the Huaorani Nation of the Ecuadoran Amazon (ONHEA) planned a strike in Quito in 1994 to protest the appropriation of Huaorani sacred lands by Maxus Energy oil company. Moi, vice-president of the SMO, told Joe Kane, “The Huaorani and the *ecochicas*” were coming to Quito to tell the “Company to get out.”⁴⁹ That 1994 Huaorani “strike” serves as an illustration of the integration of RMT and NSMT both as an approach to analysis and in practice. The 1994 demonstration in Quito encompassed the macro/organizational approach to collective action as the strike was organized and planned among the leadership of an SMO, the Organization of the Huaorani Nation of the Ecuadoran Amazon. Moi’s *ecochicas* refer to members of a Quito-based environmentalist organization that served as conscience constituents for the demonstration. That episode also illustrated the use of a collective identity as a strategy for change. The impact of the strike was centered not in the number of Huaorani who would march the streets of Quito, but rather in the representation of those Huaorani. ONHAE decided that marchers should look “indigenous.” While many Huaorani have abandoned traditional dress due to missionary influence, almost all donned traditional dress and brandished spears to call attention to their movement. The projection of the ethnic identity of the Huaorani was key to the success of the strike.

While the preservation of ethnic identity is very genuine and important to the Huaorani, they understand that in order to gain momentum (and resources) that they must represent their ethnic identity as a strategy and symbolic, non-material resource to command the attention of the national and international arenas. The Huaorani also employ the strategy of gaining support

from conscience constituents within the North American NGOs to propel their demands. Not only did the demonstration incorporate Ecuadoran constituents (*ecochicas*) but also drew support from Rainforest Action Network, a North American NGO.⁵⁰ Rainforest Action Network financed the march and arranged for the international press coverage of the strike.⁵¹ The 1994 action, then, serves to illustrate the integration of RMT and NSMT: that action utilized ethnic identity as an agent for change as well as the organizational/macro approach of RMT. Therefore, the integration of these two theories facilitates analysis of collective action in practice and serves as a unit of analysis for the study of indigenous mobilization.

The utilization of ethnicity as a mobilizing resource, as well as a symbolic resource for change exemplifies identity politics. While movement goals in large part focus on land claims, there are also proclamations to maintain and protect indigenous identity. Therefore, ethnicity has become center stage in an international struggle of identity politics. Just as the Huaorani utilized ethnicity (spears and native dress) in the march to Quito, so do the Huaorani and other Oriente indigenous groups utilize ethnicity as a symbolic resource in the appeals to the international community. Identity politics in the international arena can prove to be very powerful and “exportable” to Western audiences and yield attention and resources to sustain distant movements. However, questions about contested representation and agendas emerge as international conscious constituents, such as filmmakers and NGOs, join the indigenous struggle and re-represent indigenous ethnicity as they strive to work on the behalf of the indigenous of Ecuador. The following three chapters turn to this contested ground where the international and national/local meet within the realm of documentaries and cyberspace. The integrated theoretical insights of RMT and NSMT along with the theoretical lens of representation and identity will facilitate the exploration of the potentially contested ground in the international social movement industry.

Chapter 4: Identity Construction and Representation

“Identity is in fashion and everyone speaks and writes about it, but this general interest has not usually been accompanied by intellectual clarity about the various meanings of the concept and the contexts within which it has been developed.”¹

-Jorge Larraín Ibáñez

The previous chapters explored resource mobilization theory and new social movement theory to explain indigenous movements in Ecuador. Clearly, indigenous SMOs and individuals have utilized ethnicity and the representation of ethnicity as a resource and strategy for generating international support and attention to their movement. In this way, ethnicity encompasses the collective identity that the indigenous create to motivate action via an organized movement. However, the formation of collective identity based on ethnicity is an ongoing constructed, interactive, and communicative process “between actors who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions.”² Identity after all is not an “innate essence but a social process of construction.”³

Within the new social movement paradigm identity is a process characterized by conflict and struggle, as well as a process that unites individuals as they become emotionally and intimately connected to the collective identity. As Melucci writes, “Collective identity is never entirely negotiable because participation in collective action is endowed with meaning which cannot be reduced to cost-benefit calculation and always mobilizes emotions as well.”⁴ In addition, Melucci argues that the construction of a collective identity is an interactive process among the many actors involved in the struggle who “define the meaning of their action and the field of opportunities and constraints for such an action. This common definition must be conceived as a process, for it is constructed and negotiated through the ongoing relationships linking individuals or groups.”⁵ The subject of this and the following chapters is new social movement theory’s concept of collective identity and social movement as symbolic practices and expressive action, as well as the use of ethnicity as a symbolic resource.

In the ongoing attempt to analyze the significance of the indigenous movement of Ecuador within the paradigms of resource mobilization and new social movement theory, I am particularly intrigued by the notion of a collective indigenous identity as both the impetus and process for creating change. As these groups appropriate video and participate in cyberspace, how do they create, sustain, and ultimately *represent* their collective identity? Indeed, do these

individuals/communities/organizations represented in the documentaries and websites define and represent themselves as emotionally and meaningfully connected to a negotiated collective identity of indigenesness? Similarly, do outside actors such as filmmakers and nongovernmental organizations via their websites represent the indigenous as a collective whole that is ethnically and historically static?

Theoretical Groundwork: Discourse Analysis, Identity, and Representation

Before beginning the discourse analysis of the four documentaries in chapter five and content analysis of websites in chapter six, it is necessary to lay the theoretical groundwork and develop the key terms of discourse, identity, and representation within their theoretical/historical contexts. To begin, discourse analysis “is defined as 1) concerned with language use beyond the boundaries of a sentence, and 2) concerned with the interrelationships between language and society.”⁶ It must be stated that for the purpose of this thesis, I present a synthesized definition of discourse analysis with particular emphasis on the work of Foucault. Discourse analysis stems from a theoretical and historical tradition that has been developed within various disciplines such as philosophy with the works of Wittgenstein and Derrida, sociology with the influence of Foucault, and sociolinguistics with the contributions of Saussure.⁷ I do not intend to expand this vast theoretical tradition, but rather to define the parameters of discourse analysis as it will be applied to my discussion of identity and representation in documentaries.

Discourse analysis is not restricted to the study of the spoken or written word. It also encompasses the study of “multi-media texts and practices on the internet.”⁸ In addition, discourse is concerned with the way in which language constructs and influences knowledge, power, and identity.

Discourse analysis foregrounds language use as social action, language use as situated performance, language use as tied to social relations and *identities, power, inequality and social struggle*, language use as essentially a matter of ‘practices’ rather than just structures’ [italics mine].⁹

For Michel Foucault discourse is a socially normalizing agent that is concerned with power and the construction of knowledge. However, Foucault’s concept of power does not necessarily imply a negative influence, but rather emphasizes the role that discourse has in constructing knowledge and meaning.

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it ‘excludes,’ it ‘represses,’ it ‘censors,’ it ‘abstracts,’ it ‘masks,’ it ‘conceals.’ In fact,

power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production.¹⁰

Foucault, then, argues that “nothing has any meaning outside of discourse.”¹¹ Therefore, topics such as madness and punishment have meaning because of the discourse surrounding those topics and not out of some essential characteristic found in these topics. It is here that Foucault’s concept of discourse is pertinent to the construction of identity. Just as ‘madness’ is given ideological meaning due to the construction of discourse so is an individual (or group of individuals) given meaning/identity through discourse.

Foucault also asserts that the “subject is produced within discourse” and as the discourse changes throughout time and within evolving cultural contexts so to does the subject.¹² Hall synthesizes Foucault’s concept of how human beings are discursively constructed.

Foucault writes that ‘My objective...has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects...It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else’s control and dependence, and tied to his own (sic) identity by a conscience and self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to.’¹³

Consequently, discourse is intrinsically linked to concepts of identity and representation.

Hall argues that Foucault’s emphasis on the constructed nature of discourse is significant when developing a theory of representation, which is simply defined by Hall as “production of meaning through language, discourse, and image.”¹⁴ The focus on individuals as discursively constructed underscores the concept that “individuals . . . will not be able to take meaning until they have identified with those positions which the discourse constructs, *subjected* themselves to its rules, and hence become the *subjects of its power/knowledge*.”¹⁵ External groups have created their own discourses of ethnic identity and/or the indigenous struggle in the Ecuadoran Amazon Basin. Part of the purpose here is to explore what meanings are projected to construct those indigenous subjects.

It is important to stress here that discourse is not limited to what is said, imaged, or portrayed; it is also found in the silences. For example, if an environmental organization’s agenda is preservation of the rainforest and the ecosystem rather than the proclamation of indigenous or human rights, then the “silence” of human interaction with the environment constructs an identity of the indigenous. The meaning this agenda/discourse reflects what

William Denevan terms the Pristine Myth, in which “the native people [are] transparent in the landscape, living as natural elements of the ecosphere.”¹⁶ However, even as indigenous peoples are dependent on the balance of the ecosphere for survival, they have not always used resources “in a sound ecological way.” While the pristine myth interpretation is not an exhaustive explanation of this “silence” in the discourse, it serves as an illustration that discourse is concerned more with representation or a constructed reality than with absolute truth. Indeed, Foucault asserts that “[T]ruth is not an absolute but a historical product, the focus of a form of discourse that emerges only at particular times and places.”¹⁷ Therefore, the negation of an absolute truth (i.e. an attempt at an empirical reflection of reality or subject) gives power to discourse as a constructed and ideological tool for representing a subject as laden with meaning.

I wish to underscore Foucault’s two definitions of a subject as one who is “subject to someone else’s control and dependence” and as one who is “tied to his own identity by a conscience and self-knowledge.”¹⁸ These definitions are central to my question about who creates indigenous identity and what agendas are at play among the indigenous groups themselves and external organizations/actors. In general terms Foucault’s first definition can be applied to external actors who attempt to interpret and present a meaning of indigenous identity and struggle; his second definition refers to the indigenous groups’ construction of a collective identity for themselves.¹⁹ Before exploring the idea of indigenous construction of “self-knowledge” and collective identity, I wish to conclude Foucault’s discussion of discourse as power and “a subject controlled by someone else’s control” by turning to Edward Said’s *Orientalism*.

While *Orientalism* refers to the West’s representations of the Orient, the concepts of discourse as constructed and as a tool of power/authority along with representation as ideological and a producer of meanings can be applied to the question of agenda. Said argues that “the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, or varying degrees of a complex hegemony . . . *Orientalism*, therefore, is not an airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice . . .”²⁰ The concept of a created body of theory and practice links back to the idea of discourse as not only linguistic, but also as a producer of what one does. Discourse can contribute to the formation of a subject who is constructed by someone else. The constructed subject will serve as a point of departure when

using discourse analysis to analyze websites and documentaries of American or European individuals/organizations.

Said admonishes *Orientalism* as the representation of the Orient opposed to and therefore inferior to the West, as well as critiques it for creating a subject (constructed) controlled by the West. However, I wish to deviate slightly from Said's emphasis on power and hegemony as a deliberate exercise of power and subordination of subjects. One should not conclude that because an external group may have an agenda of showing rainforest destruction in documentary form that the group deliberately represents and constructs an inferior subject. Rather, one must always bear in mind the ideological meanings that influence an external actor's representation of the indigenous.

For if it is true that no production of knowledge in the human sciences can ever ignore or disclaim its author's involvement as a human subject in his own circumstances, then it must also be true that for a European or American studying the Orient [or Ecuador's Oriente] there can be no disclaiming the main circumstances of *his* actuality: that he comes up against the Orient as a European or American first, as an individual second.²¹

Therefore, just as the indigenous subject is constructed and represented through discourse, so is the analyzer/activist/filmmaker influenced by the cultural and political significance of being American or European perhaps without realizing these influences at work. Accordingly, I do not strive to attribute ideological meaning to "agenda" as that which is negative, hegemonic, or always contrary to the objectives and proclamations of indigenous peoples.

Comparatively, agenda and American/European representation of indigenous identity must always be placed in the context of audience. In recognizing audience, one may interpret the discourse/representation more effectively. Henrietta Lidchi develops the question of audience in her interpretation of representation in ethnographic museums. She argues that ethnographic museums have now moved away from the tradition of an Orientalist representation of ethnicity to one that is a more inclusive model: those who are represented in the museum have a right "to have a say in exhibition construction."²² Regardless, the concern with "consumption"²³ and audience continues to influence the ways in which ethnic groups are (re)presented and defined.

In locating the causes of changes in the practices of exhibiting, and therefore representing, we must also look at the wider social context. Museums as public institutions seek and survive on the basis of constituency. Ethnographic displays may be

affected by the changes in anthropological discourse, but it is their relevance and popularity with visitors that determines their survival.²⁴

Lidchi's concept of consumption is important when analyzing representation as influenced by an individual or group's agenda.

Consumption and the question of audience are also germane to websites and documentaries. Indeed, the economic/social success of a filmmaker's documentary depends in part on the filmmaker's ability to "appeal to the public" and "in some way to concord with the collective view of this audience, since their survival depends on" the audience's consumption of the representation/product.²⁵ Therefore, the tendency exists for the website designer/filmmaker to appease his or her audience so that the audience's pre-existing "representations of the world [to] be confirmed." However, this does not suggest that just because there is an agenda with an intended audience that the represented subject is an inferior Other. To return to the aforementioned example concerning a documentary with an agenda/audience focused towards the preservation of the rainforest, one cannot conclude that because there is a representation of "environment without people" that the indigenous are presented in mythologized or negative terms. Rather, the analyzer must recognize that those silences exist and in acknowledging them reveal the discourse for what it is: a representation of a time and place, not an absolute truth or empirical reflection of that time, place, or people.

To reiterate, discourse and representation are not restricted to the realm of external power relations with a superior authoritative power (North American or European researchers/activists/filmmakers) and an inferior Other (indigenous groups of the Oriente). Similar to Foucault's second definition of a subject, discourse and representation are articulated by the indigenous groups themselves thus giving shape to their collective identity. Indeed, according to new social movement theorists such as Alberto Melucci and intellectuals like Alison Brysk, this creation of collective identity is one that gives indigenous peoples mobilizing power and has contributed to their emergence in the international arena and their appropriation of video and cyberspace.

Drawing from the works of Hall, Giddens, and Anderson, Jorge Larraín Ibáñez argues that the construction of collective identity is a result of "cultural identities."²⁶ Cultural identities are "culturally defined characteristics, which are shared by many in a group" and these "cultural identities work by producing meaning and stories with which individuals can identify."²⁷

Therefore, Larraín Ibáñez argues that collective identity is what Benedict Anderson terms an “imagined community.”²⁸

What Anderson says of the nation is also partly applicable, I think, to other cultural identities like sexuality, ethnicity, class, gender, etc. In all these cases, the members of these imagined communities are limited but will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.²⁹

The image of their communion and solidarity is paramount to the shared identity of indigenous peoples of the Oriente. As explored in the case study of chapter three, the diverse ethnic groups in the Oriente in many cases remain isolated from one another and have diverse histories, cultures, and languages. However, through the use of representational systems—concepts and signs—these diverse groups come together in an imagined, constructed community of indigeness and tradition.

While Larraín Ibáñez emphasizes the discourse of the nation in creating collective identity, his analysis of symbolic and historical myth as constructing present identities is pertinent to the contemporary indigenous construction of identity. “Here one finds glorious historical events, images, symbols, [representations], landscapes, and rituals but also ‘invented traditions which, purporting to be very old, try to express in a symbolic way the continuity with a great past.’”³⁰ Central to this mythologizing of past identities is the supposition that there is a “timelessness of origins and traditions,”³¹ propelling the collective identity of indigenous ethnicity as connected to the environment and grounded in place. Yet, like discourse, collective identity is not an essential absolute truth, but rather a constructed process that changes with time and is constantly situated in different cultural contexts. Quoting from Stuart Hall, Larraín Ibáñez writes, “[C]ultural identities come from somewhere, have histories . . . Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power.”³²

Identities in essence evolve; they are less situated in place and time than more reflections of changing discourses and cultural contexts. This is an important point of departure for the indigenous appropriation of technology such as cyberspace and video. Larraín Ibáñez argues that the phenomenon of globalization and technology, or the “space-time compression,”³³ has changed the way in which individuals represent themselves collectively.

Space-time compression is the concept that refers to processes that revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time in such a manner, that we are forced to alter, some times in quite a radical way, the manner in which we represent ourselves to the world. The word compression is used because the history of capitalism has been characterized by acceleration in the pace of life, while spatial barriers are surpassed to the point that the world sometimes seems to implode on us.³⁴

Melucci also turns to the advent of technology and globalization in his discussion of collective identity formation. He argues that the emergence of “an information society” dissolves spatial boundaries, which “raises new transnational problems over the control, circulation, and exchange of information.”³⁵

Within this framework, information is defined as a “symbolic and therefore reflexive resource. It is not a thing; it is a good which to be produced and exchanged presupposes a capacity for symbolization and decodification.”³⁶ In this thesis Melucci’s information, or that which is produced and exchanged through various media, is the articulation and representation of ethnic identity and the meanings attributed to the indigenous with analysis focusing on the interaction between the indigenous and international community’s “control, circulation, and exchange” of that information [ethnic identity/meaning]. Finally, Alison Brysk’s concept of pre-modern peoples operating within a postmodern world is essential to the discussion of the representation of ethnic identity. She argues that within the postmodern framework “social movements can use images, models, facts, and messages as forms of power in the international system.”³⁷ Therefore, identity and representation through words and multi-media is an essential strategy to Indian rights activists and the indigenous SMOs themselves.³⁸

Conclusion: Theoretical Contributions

The subsequent two chapters will explore the interaction between the indigenous and international community’s control, circulation, and exchange of ethnic identity/meaning. Therefore, the significance of the theoretical contributions of discourse and representation are vital for understanding the representational systems used by national/local Ecuadoran SMOs/NGOs and external NGOs to represent the indigenous. The explored theories of representation and identity construction of this chapter strengthen the concept of RMT and NSMT as an integrated theory to explain social action. As the case study demonstrated, indigenous organizations unite as SMOs and the international community becomes the social movement industry that sustains the movement. However, NSMT explains the micro level of

interaction in which individuals and communities negotiate meaning and *construct* a common identity in which to join SMOs in the first place. Therefore, the theories of representation and identity construction are necessary concepts to explore this process and uncover the layers of significance to ethnic identity construction and projection of that identity to the international community. By adopting the lens of representation and identity to study documentaries and websites, I will be able to answer the question of whether the indigenous represent themselves and/or represented as emotionally and meaningfully connected to a negotiated collective identity of indigenouness.

Chapter 5: Documentaries

“Oil companies need oil, lumber companies need wood, colonos need land, and camera guys need footage.”

-*Saviors of the Forest*

This chapter explores ethnic identity as presented in four documentaries: *Trinkets & Beads*, *Flames in the Forest*, *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse*, and *Saviors of the Forest*. This exploration focuses on the NSMT micro level of identity construction and utilization of ethnicity as a symbolic resource to mobilize and sustain mobilization. In assessing the representations, arguments, and agendas of indigenous people and filmmakers, the lens of identity and representation serves as the framework for the analysis of these documentaries. I will address two questions asked in chapter four: (1) How do indigenous individuals/communities/organizations in the documentaries define and represent themselves as emotionally and meaningfully connected to a negotiated collective identity of indigenesness? (2) Do outside actors, namely filmmakers, represent the indigenous as a collective whole that is ethnically and historically static?

Three of the documentaries were made in the 1990s as indigenous peoples and confederations in the Oriente region of Ecuador began mobilizing and protesting the devastating effects of resource extraction. The fourth, *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse*, was made in 2002; it tells the story of oil destruction through the lens of the *Aguinda v. Texaco* court case. While each documentary exhibits unique agendas, representations, and discourses concerning this region, each shares a common thematic thread: they all pertain to the issue of resource extraction by national and multinational oil and lumber companies and its effects on the environment and/or indigenous peoples. Therefore, the concept of agenda and audience as factors that influence what is or is not represented in the documentaries will be explored. Finally, along with discourse analysis I will use Bill Nichols' typology¹ of four modes of representation adopted in documentary filmmaking: expository, observational, interactive, and reflexive.²

Documentaries & Modes of Representation

Before providing general definitions of these four modes and then analyzing each documentary individually, it is important to first underscore the emphasis placed on the audience or the viewer in the genre of documentary. Nichols argues that documentary must first be defined as “in relation to its viewers” rather than in “(discursive) textual terms.”³ That is, he

argues, if a documentary is viewed as a culturally and historically isolated text, “there is nothing that absolutely or infallibly distinguishes documentary from fiction. The distinguishing mark of documentary may be less intrinsic to the text than a function of the assumptions and expectations brought to the process of viewing the text.”⁴ Likewise, the documentary filmmaker relies on the audience’s ability to draw upon previous experience and knowledge when viewing the documentary.

Most basically, viewers will develop procedural skills of comprehension and interpretation that will allow them to make sense of a documentary. These procedures are a form of recipe knowledge derived from an active process of making inferences based on prior knowledge and the text itself. (This knowledge would encompass such things as recognizing a picture of Martin Luther King, Jr. as the likeness of a historical figure...and hypothesizing the presentation of a solution once a problem begins to be described.) The text provides cues while the viewer proposes hypotheses, which are either confirmed or abandoned.⁵

Similar to Lidchi’s analysis of audience in a museum, the filmmaker also relies on his audience’s prior knowledge or ideology. In addition, the filmmaker assumes that the viewer “sets out to process the film with an understanding that the metaphorical distance from historical reality established from the outset by fiction (“Once upon a time . . .”) has been closed (“And that’s the way it is . . .”).”⁶ However, this is not to suggest that the documentary filmmaker is not subject to imposing meaning and ideology on his or her attempt to portray reality.

Like the viewer, the filmmaker also approaches the task of filmmaking with presuppositions and agendas. Indeed, while the documentary does not present a fiction that requires viewers to suspend any concept of reality, the documentary can only present pieces of reality to formulate an argument, thus creating a discourse of meaning. “Every edit or cut is a step forward in an argument.”⁷ Therefore, the “text presents a metonymic representation of the world . . . (the sounds and images bear a relation of part[s] to a whole).”⁸ Thus, filmmakers are engaged in interpretation and producing meaning as they choose/edit the parts that will be represented. Similarly, the four modes of representation available to the documentary filmmaker aids in his or her “discursive formation at a given historical moment.”⁹

Nichols’ four modes of representation are expository, observational, interactive, and reflexive.¹⁰ Here I present definitions in brief and then will apply these modes to the four documentaries. It should be noted, however, that while some modes developed out of critique or reaction to another mode we should not presuppose or conclude that a “linear chronology and . .

. an implicit evolution towards a greater complexity and self-awareness” are characteristic of documentary film.¹¹ Also, while each mode has prevailed within certain areas or time, most documentaries are not restricted to one mode as one film can and many times does combine and alter modes. Much as discourse changes throughout time, so do modes of representation within documentary evolve.

The expository mode utilizes what Nichols terms the “Voice-of God commentary.”¹² That is, there is a voice of an unknown and “omniscient narrator in direct verbal address.”¹³ This mode emerged as a critique of the superficial elements in films of fiction. The emphases within this typology are “objectivity, generalization, economy of analysis, and filmmaker’s privileged knowledge”¹⁴ of a people, time, or place. The observational mode emerged in part as a reaction to the “moralizing quality of expository documentary”¹⁵ and as an adaptation of developing recording and camera equipment. New evolutions in sound and camera equipment allowed the filmmaker to be more mobile and, thus, record more discreetly. The objective of the filmmaker within this mode is to observe and record human subjects as impartially and inconspicuously as possible. In addition, the observational mode “emphasizes impartiality, intimate detail and texture of lived experience, the behavior of subjects within social formations (families, institutions, communities), and at moments of historical or personal crisis.”¹⁶

In contrast, the interactive and reflexive modes situate the filmmaker in the documentary itself. While in observational mode the filmmaker is concerned with anonymity and with interacting with the observed human subject in “indirect verbal address,” the filmmaker in interactive and reflexive modes makes evident his or her perspective.¹⁷ Within the interactive mode, the filmmaker lets his or her voice be known in interaction with the subjects in the film. The filmmaker relies strongly on the use of interviews, monologues, and/or dialogues, which may engage the filmmaker in direct address with subjects. This mode is also characterized by the “filmmakers [acknowledgement of] the determining nature of their own intervention directly or indirectly.”¹⁸ Therefore, the filmmaker is concerned with the interpretation of the plight or experience of the subjects in the film and situates him/herself as an instrumental actor among the subjects.

The reflexive mode is “the most self-aware mode.” It strategically and purposefully underscores documentary as representation, rather than empirical reflections of reality. Perhaps, this mode is most closely related to Foucault’s concept of discourse and representation.

Reflexive documentary arose from a desire to make the conventions of representation themselves more apparent and to challenge the impression of reality which the other three modes normally conveyed unproblematically . . . [I]t uses many of the same devices as other documentaries but sets them on edge so that the viewer's attention is drawn to the device as well as the effect.¹⁹

In essence, the reflexive mode critiques conventions of representational realism by making known the constructive nature of representation.

The typology of documentary will serve as both a unit of analysis in interpreting the discourses of documentaries and as a structural/organizational tool. *Trinkets & Beads* and *Flames in the Forest* will be analyzed as illustrations of the observational mode of representation. *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse* reflects the interactive mode. And *Saviors of the Forest* will be explored within the frameworks of interactive and reflexive modes of representation.

Trinket & Beads and Flames in the Forest

Trinkets & Beads

Bill Nichols asserts that “[D]ocumentaries . . . do not differ from fictions in their constructedness as texts, but in the representations they make. At the heart of documentary is less a *story* and its imaginary world than an *argument* about the historical world.”²⁰ *Trinkets & Beads* illustrates Nichols assertion that documentary is an argument that “stands for or represents the views of individuals, groups, or agencies . . . and makes a representation, or a case, an argument, about the world explicitly or implicitly.”²¹ It is important to note that Nichols’s notion of argument parallels and reflects the concept of agenda as developed in chapter four. Nichols also conceptualizes representation within documentary in a way that complements Stuart Hall’s conceptualization that representation is a “production of meaning through language, discourse, and image.”²² Nichols draws from a definition of representation, which focuses on the political representation of a “group or class by standing for or in place of them with the right or authority to act on their account.”²³ He further writes,

In addition, representation means “The action of placing a fact, etc., before another or others by means of discourse; a statement or account, esp one intended to convey a particular view or impression of a matter in order to influence opinion or action” Here . . . representation is allied with rhetoric, persuasion, and argument rather than with likeness or [empirical] reproduction.²⁴

For Nichols, representation encompasses discourse.

Trinkets & Beads strives to represent the Huaorani indigenous group, a remote group of rainforest peoples numbering no more than 1,500, and their historical struggle against North American missionaries and their contemporary struggle against multinational and national oil companies. The filmmaker portrays the oil companies, missionaries, and the Ecuadoran government as hegemonic actors that destroy, displace, and disregard the Huaorani and their traditional way of life. Indeed, the opening scene of an aerial view of the Amazon River includes the caption, “This is the story of a three year struggle between one small Amazon tribe and international oil companies.”²⁵ Significantly, *Trinkets & Beads* places the account of Moi, a Huaorani leader and activist, before the accounts of the oil company consultants and the missionaries in order to invoke sympathy, anger, and/or “action” among the audience.²⁶ Moi tells the viewers of the environmental destruction and community displacement caused by oil companies and missionaries. Moi represents the voice of authority and serves as a symbol of indigenous peoples affected by the destructive practices of the oil companies. His authority/knowledge is grounded in place, reflecting Larraín Ibáñez’s concept of a mythologizing of indigenous identity as connected to the environment and a result of a “timelessness of origins and traditions.”²⁷ Indeed, *Trinkets & Beads* begins with Moi’s assertion of Huaorani historical authority.

Huaorani means people from the forest . . . from inside the forest. We are people with the same feet, the same eyes but a different culture and language. We live in the forest. The Huaorani have existed for thousands of years. We always had our traditions [such as] face painting and holes in our ears.²⁸

The identity of the Huaorani as expressed by Moi is one that encompasses tradition.

Similarly, Moi’s claim to legitimate authority is based on the Huaorani’s historical presence in the forest; and that legitimacy is grounded in indigenous culture and language. The use of Moi as the voice of authority and symbol reflects Hansen, Needham, and Nichols’ articulation of ethnographic documentaries. The authors assert that “ethnography addresses the domain of knowledge” which is symbolically represented/articulated by a male.²⁹ “Ethnography’s symbolic representation of power and authority centers on the male. The male as “man”—symbol of cultural achievement—is the star of ethnography, celebrated in close-ups as the talking informant.”³⁰ Moi also helps to illustrate that the filmmaker is concerned not only with representing the environmental destruction of the Amazon, but also the effects this destruction has on the indigenous peoples.

It is also evident that the filmmakers appeal to the environmental and human rights audiences, as there is ample evidence of the environmental and human elements of the destructive practices of petroleum extraction. Examples of environmental elements are seen in the aerial shots of deforestation, shots of oil flowing thickly in streams and rivers, footage of oil fires, and the image of trucks dumping raw crude on roadways. Human elements are seen in the story of a *colona* woman whose hands were damaged after pulling a hen out of an oil contaminated pond, the comments by a doctor, footage of sick indigenous and colonos in a Coca hospital that detail diseases/illnesses that have resulted from oil contamination, and the indigenous stories of displacement due to road construction and petroleum exploration.

The primary technique of the documentary is an observational mode of representation because the filmmaker is inconspicuous and the film focuses on the Huaorani's "moments of historical or personal crisis"³¹ with particular emphasis on the expansion of petroleum extraction in Huaorani native lands and their subsequent 1992 protest in Quito. Still, elements of the expository mode are also evident with the periodic display of a caption or text, providing the viewer with factual background or historical information. While the filmmaker does not intervene directly via narration, these captions remind the viewer that the filmmaker is providing the audience with "privileged knowledge" and is making an argument against oil companies. Examples of these full-screen texts include:

50 years ago oil was discovered in Ecuador's Amazon Rainforest, home to over 20 Indian tribes. Only the Huaorani, a tribe of 1,500, have successfully fought to keep the oil companies off most of their land.

In 1992, a new oil company, Maxus planned to drill in the heart of Huaorani territory.

In 1993, Maxus signed an agreement with the Huaorani to drill for oil throughout their territory. This area is the size of Massachusetts and includes the Yasuni National Park, a World Bio-Sphere Reserve.³²

Clearly, these full-screen captions provide the audience with factual information regarding petroleum extraction in the Oriente region, as well as help to illustrate the filmmaker's agenda of representing the destructive practices of oil companies.

The filmmaker's use of music and aerial views of deforested areas in the Amazon that serve as background for each caption further facilitate the argument/agenda. As if announcing the villain in a horror movie, the music played with each caption is menacing and dissonant.³³

Nichols terms this use of music as “emotional artistic proof . . . proof based on appeals to an audience’s emotional disposition. This proof is often assigned to compelling images in television news, to music in some documentaries, and to juxtapositions that attach feelings of empathy or repulsion to subjects in a novel way.”³⁴ Therefore, the use of music is a rhetorical/argumentative tool used by the filmmaker to appeal to the audience’s emotion when information concerning the practices of oil companies is presented.

This same dissonant music and an aerial view of the brightly lit Dallas skyline at night are used to announce the comments by Alan Hatly, a United States oil consultant. Accompanied by the menacing music, the skyline is converted into a subject—a subject that represents the US oil companies’ greed and US culture of consumption. This argument is exemplified by the filmmaker’s periodic inclusion of Alan Hatly’s comments. Here, the power of discourse is exemplified; and that discourse serves as a persuasive tool used by the filmmaker.

The discourse of representatives of the oil industry, the evangelical missionary Rachel Saint, and the Ecuadoran government is used strategically to contrast the discourse of Moi and other indigenous peoples in the documentary. Rather than providing a voice-over-commentary that explicitly proclaims the agenda/argument of the documentary, the filmmaker allows the discourse of these external actors to represent *themselves* as destructive, heartless, or hegemonic actors. In short, discourse as power is exemplified in *Trinkets & Beads* as the filmmaker uses the very words of the oil companies, missionaries, and the Ecuadoran government to further his agenda against these actors.

A powerful example of juxtaposing the discourse of the oil companies and missionaries with the voice of authority of Moi is the inclusion of clips from a 1957 *This Is Your Life* television episode. The episode features a young Rachel Saint, a missionary from the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and her work with the Huaorani. In the clip Ralph Edwards, the host, introduces Rachel Saint and her Huaorani companion, Dayuma.

I would like to present to you two very charming and interesting ladies. First the lady who has been working among the most *primitive and most savage* Indian tribes in Peru and Ecuador, Ms. Rachel Saint. And her good friend, the first member of the fierce Auca tribe ever to leave the jungles of Ecuador, Dayuma. Dayuma speaks only the language of the Aucas, a tribe still living in the *stone age*, having *not even yet learned to live in communities*, still living in scattered and isolated family units among *jungle* streams and rivers.³⁵ [italics mine]

As the host is giving his introduction, still-shot images of Huaorani are presented, yet all look crazed or deformed. The images of the Huaorani in the *This Is Your Life* episode stand in stark contrast to the contemporary images of the Huaorani who now varingly don Western t-shirts, dresses, shorts, native headdresses, and facepaint. In addition, the language used in the 1957 episode reflects Edward Said's concept of the "Other." The discourse in both word and image represents the Huaorani as "savage," "living in the stone age," and "primitive." Furthermore, Rachel Saint is represented as the solution to their barbarianism. However, the discourse of Moi/voice of authority represents an alternative view.

In this community some live by hunting and some by fishing. We go swimming and bathe in the river. We travel to neighboring villages for visits or celebrations . . . that's always been our normal life. I go to the city to tell them how we live here and teach them that we do not want to leave. We have everything here. I laugh more here and it is more peaceful.³⁶

Moi portrays the Huaorani concept of community and value of simplicity as central to his culture and critiques Rachel Saint's influence on the Huaorani way of life.

The documentary also includes part of a 1993 "interview" with Rachel Saint. Still in Ecuador, she reflects back on her arrival to the Oriente region. "When I finally came here, I had a wonderful reception. I rounded the bend on the next river over and they looked wonderful to me and they looked better maybe than they do today with all the things that they have picked up from outsiders."³⁷ The viewer is struck by her last sentence that refers to negative influences from outsiders because it is evident that the filmmaker and Moi represent Rachel Saint as the "outsider." Again, the filmmaker allows Rachel Saint's words to "speak for themselves" and contribute to his agenda of supporting the Huaorani and opposing environmental and cultural destruction (ethnocide). This tactic is further exemplified by following Rachel Saint's 1993 interview with the following account by Moi.

She [Rachel Saint] went on her own from community to community. She said she was our sister so they couldn't kill her. She told lies—that God was coming, that the world was going to end. There were many deaths just after the missionaries came. There were lots of diseases we didn't know of in those times. Ten, twenty would die in one day. We are what is left over.³⁸

Moi's account essentially accuses Rachel Saint and her Christian communities of altering and destroying the Huaorani way of life. His comments contradicting Rachel Saint's assertions deny any authority to her discourse.

The discourse of the oil companies, as exemplified by Alan Hatly's words, also serves to further the argument of the filmmaker. The following three quotes expressed by Alan Hatly, a U.S. oil representative, illustrate a pejorative attitude towards the Huaorani and the Amazon region.

I really don't know where the idea of an environmental impact or some type of a wrong doing by the oil companies—where this was all generated. I can't believe that these are the same people that I knew in the early sixties when I was living in Ecuador that are causing these problems and making these complaints. In those days, the Indians of Ecuador were relatively simple people.

I would suggest to you that an Indian living in the jungle and ends up dying at thirty-seven years old and sees most of his children die by one or two years old is hardly the type of life that most people want to protect.

The rainforest is a term that I really don't know where it came from. It's a term that was coined by somebody for some reason, probably the *National Geographic*. But it was a jungle, and the jungle is the jungle, sort of thing.³⁹

Like the *This Is Your Life* clip, Hatly's first two quotes represent the Huaorani in condescending and inferior terms. The Huaorani's protests against the oil companies are dismissed as Hatly proclaims that their traditional way of life is not the "type of life that most people want to protect." However, the footage from the 1992 street demonstration, discussed in chapter three, illustrates that Moi and other Huaorani are serious about defending their way of life and environment. Finally, Hatly's third comment demotes the rain forest, an abundant and diverse biosphere and lifesource for the Huaorani, to jungle status, thus making the environmental destruction easily overlooked and disregarded. Moi on the other hand always uses the word *forest* and describes it as "the heart of the world and here we can breathe."⁴⁰ These contradicting discourses serve to inform the audience of the oil company's attitudes and also serve to invoke sympathy/support for the filmmaker's argument in favor of the Huaorani.

Finally, the documentary's title cannot be underestimated as a discursive and persuasive tool. *Trinkets & Beads* has layered meanings; it is descriptive of the treaty signed between Maxus, an oil company, and one segment of the Huaorani tribe authorizing Maxus to drill in Huaorani territory; it also contains historical and symbolic meaning. Representatives from Maxus and the Ecuadoran government organized an official gathering in Rachel Saint's mission reserve, Toñampare, in 1993 to officially "celebrate" the signing of the agreement to drill in Huaorani territory. Alicia Durán Ballen, the daughter of Ecuador's president at the time, is

shown hugging a Huaorani woman and giving her a gold earring in appreciation of the woman's gift of a feathered headdress. After posing for a picture, Durán Ballen turns to an American Maxus representative and jokingly says in English, "Do you think that was a fair trade?" The Maxus representative responds, "That's how we got Manhattan, you know, with trinkets and beads." Again, this exchange is portrayed to villainize the oil companies and the Ecuadoran government.

Moi's account of the signing of the agreement illustrates the manipulation of the Huaorani through shiny gifts and broken promises. "Part of the community, those from the mission reserve, sat down and negotiated with the Maxus. But the rest of us didn't know this, and we walked away. They manipulated us and divided us with gifts."⁴¹ The power of this manipulation is evident in the account of Giovanni Schiavone, an oil consultant to the government of Ecuador.

If we can make a comparison with the oil companies and when Christopher Columbus arrived 500 years ago, it is the same. He brought some mirrors and necklaces and things like that, fancy things, and it is the same kind of approach that was done 500 years ago by the Spaniards. Now the difference is that instead of Spaniards, they are the oil companies. We cannot pinpoint Maxus. No, all the oil companies that are working in any country with rainforests, protected areas, or for example, Alaska, are affecting the environment.⁴²

By referencing Columbus, the filmmaker symbolically evokes The Black Legend and makes the argument that the oil companies strive to conquer the indigenous just as the Spaniards in their pursuit of gold and glory conquered them 500 years ago.

Trinkets & Beads concludes with Moi's account of protesting the presence of Maxus in Huaorani territory and reacting to broken promises. "Maxus said they would promote education and health, and they offered all these things. But nothing truly happened. They lied to us. So after one year, we united and launched an attack against Maxus." As Moi discusses a Huaorani attack on oil company trucks, the filmmakers show him wearing a feathered headdress and holding a spear. This representation is essential to the filmmaker's agenda to present the Huaorani as having agency and grounded in ethnic identity and place. Moi states, "We are trying to go back to the way we used to live, in many communities. We, the Huaorani, we now want a calm life. If we don't, the Huaorani will disappear. That's the reason we're getting organized because we'd like to continue living like our ancestors."

Evoking the timeless tradition of ancestors is central to Moi's representation of ethnic identity as a mobilizing tool and symbolic resource for change. Moi's account of the "attack against Maxus" exemplifies the use of a collective Huaorani identity. As Moi is narrating the account of the attack, the documentary shows a reenactment of Huaorani sneaking through the forest in native dress and carrying spears. Moi narrates:

First, all the communities got together and headed for the bridge. There were about 110 of us. We reached the bridge at about 6:30 just when the bosses of Maxus arrived. Armed with spears, we stopped the cars and deflated the tires. We stopped around 140 cars, trucks and pick-upsAfter we launched our attack, the soldiers arrived, first 200 of them. The old people started to cut down the palms to make more spears. But then more soldiers came: 300, 400, 500. The Huaorani put down their weapons and decided to negotiate honestly. The well-armed soldiers started leaving, as the Huaorani ordered; but they hid and when we left, they tried to attack us. So we said to the army, "You lied to us...and we can see that today there will be no solution. Now, we don't expect anything from Maxus because they did bad things to us. We see that as Huaorani people."⁴³

What is significant about Moi's account is not the factual accuracy of the account, but rather the representation of the Huaorani as resilient and active agents. The audience never hears this account through the perspective of Maxus or the military. An observant viewer may question if there really were 500 military personnel that arrived to subordinate the 110 Huaorani, or if there were really 110 Huaorani that day on the bridge. Regardless, Moi serves as the voice of authority. Significance is found in the representation of Huaorani ethnic identity and agency, rather than an empirical/factual reproduction of the event.

Flames in the Forest

Flames in the Forest adopts similar rhetorical tools to make an argument for the indigenous people. While *Trinket & Beads* represents the plight of the Huaorani, *Flames in the Forest* follows Luis Vargas, president of CONFENIAE (Indigenous Nations of the Ecuadoran Amazon), as he travels to communities in the Oriente region in order to educate the indigenous about the environmental destruction of the oil companies. The documentary begins with footage of Luis Vargas on a subway in London. It is not until much later in the documentary that the audience learns that he has gone to London to speak with representatives from British Gas to protest the renewal of a two-year contract with the Ecuadoran government that approves continued petroleum extraction in the Coca area. While on the subway, Luis Vargas says, "I am here so that my voice of protest as an Indian leader will be heard, so that people around the world will hear about our protest against the multinational corporations, especially the *petroleras* in the

Amazon region.”⁴⁴ Like Moi, Vargas is represented as the “voice of authority” in the documentary.

Comparatively, the representation of indigenous ethnic identity is also grounded in the environment and in a timelessness of traditional peoples serving as protectors of the environment. This representation of indigenous identity in *Trinkets & Beads* and *Flames in the Forest* reflects the concept of symbolic or historical myth discussed by Larraín Ibáñez and Roland Barthes.⁴⁵ In both documentaries, signifiers such as spears, native dress, feathered headdresses, face/body paint, and discourse that conjures visions of the indigenous as one with nature and historically/spiritually related to ancient ancestors creates a completed message/representation of *indigenous-ness*. This *indigenous-ness* creates what Benedict Anderson and Larraín Ibáñez term an “imagined community.”⁴⁶ That is, these culturally defined characteristics of *lo indígena* (indigenous-ness) provide meaning and create a sense of communion even among communities/individuals who have no interaction.

As within the framework of Stuart Hall’s conceptualization of representation developed in chapter five, the indigenous-ness in these two documentaries is a result of the “representational practice known as ‘stereotyping,’⁴⁷ that is, the reducing of “people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by Nature.”⁴⁸ The filmmakers use these essentialized stereotypes to represent the indigenous: to make an argument or assign meaning to that which is indigenous with the presentation of these signifiers through image and narrative. However, what is significant in both documentaries is that the indigenous subjects of these films use these same images/signifiers and naturalizing/essentializing discourse to represent *themselves*.

This essentialized self-representation of indigenous-ness is a result of their status as traditional peoples, yet also a deliberate use of Barthes’ concept of myth to construct a collective identity in order to mobilize against the oil companies. While the Huaorani in *Trinkets & Beads* and the Quichua, Achuar, and Cofan in *Flames in the Forest* are, indeed, traditional and genuinely identify themselves as timelessly connected to tradition and to their ancestors, the viewer sees that these indigenous peoples deliberately use these signifiers when they strive to appear powerful or when defending place. An example of this in *Flames in the Forest* is in an opening shot of Achuar women and men pointing out a deforested clearing to the filmmaker. The Achuar are wearing store-bought clothing, yet all carry blow darts or spears and wear face

paint as if engaging in battle. An Achuar man asserts before the camera, “We, the Achuar, have lived in these lands for many generations here in Ecuador’s southern Amazon region, as our ancestors taught us.”⁴⁹ That representation of an ancestral-warrior identity is evoked to grant them authority and power against the oil companies.

Furthermore, Vargas and CONFENIE use the documentary as the medium through which to project, create, and sustain this “mythologized” collective identity among isolated communities. In turn, the filmmaker appropriates these self-representations to further his agenda and to speak to an audience that is concerned with environmental destruction or human rights violations. Therefore, rather than these signifiers and stereotypes creating a representation of Said’s inferior “Other” or Foucault’s concept of a subject controlled by “someone else’s control and dependence,” the self-representation by the indigenous illustrates Foucault’s concept of a subject who is “tied to his own identity by a conscience and self-knowledge.” Therefore, the filmmaker presents indigenous self-representations; and both the indigenous subjects and the filmmaker use these representations to promote complementary agendas. In both documentaries the indigenous not only exhibit agency in their self-representation/identity construction, but also in their insistence to represent their knowledge of environmental destruction. Rather than the filmmaker taking the active role in showing the environmental destruction and presenting the indigenous communities as background, the indigenous men and women take center stage.

A central theme throughout *Flames in the Forest* is that the indigenous peoples must see the destruction for themselves to denounce destructive practices. Two Quichua women protagonists, Hilda and Neomi, meet with Vargas at CONFENIAE headquarters. Vargas shows them maps of the Oriente region and points out where oil operations occur. Neomi has her own radio program and she plans to go with Hilda to the communities surrounding Lago Agrio to witness the environmental destruction. Neomi says,

I work at the radio. My reports are heard by many Indian communities. Some of the reports are about the problems we face. That’s why I’m planning this journey. This is the land where I was born, where my parents were born, and where my grandparents lived in the old days Our forests are our life. This is what our parents taught us. We cannot live without the forests nor without our lands or our rivers.⁵⁰

The two women travel to the Cuyabeno area and are guided through the region by an elder from the region, Victoriano. Victoriano points out the oil on the riverbanks and tells the women of the water contamination and the subsequent extermination of alligators, boas, and fish. After seeing

evidence of the contamination, Neomi responds, “We couldn’t denounce this because we hadn’t seen it ourselves. We didn’t know the river was so contaminated. We’ve been drinking the water!”

Significantly, authority is granted to eye-witness knowledge: these women are participating in a documentary that will then present this “evidence” to their home community, Sarayacu, and to the international community. After meeting with Victoriano, the women are seen walking around an open oil pit. Their dialogue shows their appropriation of video to prove the destructive practices of the oil companies.⁵¹

Neomi: Petroleo. Petroleo everywhere. This looks like a lagoon in hell. This is what they should be filming. It looks as if the water is mostly oil.

Hilda: Yes, it goes from one pit to another The smell is wiping out everyone who lives in this part of the Amazon. It’s boiling. The oil is boiling I’ve never seen anything like it in all my life.

Neomi: But what would our elders in Sarayacu think if they saw all this?

*Hilda: Look at all this, Neomi! [Points to about 15-20 dead butterflies.] Look at the butterflies! Poor things! Look at all the dead butterflies! Let me film it!*⁵²

The women’s references to documenting/filming the environmental destruction serve as an illustration/argument for the power of documentary. Therefore, without saying so, the filmmaker argues for the authority of the filmed image.

Upon returning from their trip to Cuyabeno, Hilda travels with Vargas to Curintza, an Achuar community in Southern Ecuador. Importantly, the viewer only now sees Hilda wearing traditional face paint; she is in a community presenting the video that she and Neomi filmed. After watching the video, an elder who is wearing a white t-shirt and a feathered headdress addresses the community. “As she says, we must defend our lands. We must go to Quito and talk to them in our own language. Then they will realize that we really are from here, that we are the true, native people of the forest. We must all unite and defend our lands.”⁵³ The elder’s comments to the community reflect Alberto Melucci’s conceptualization of deliberately constructing a collective ethnic identity. The elder stresses the importance of speaking in their indigenous language and mobilizes them to action by defining them as the authentic defenders of the forest.

Another powerful example of constructing and mythologizing ethnic identity to mobilize indigenous communities to action is found in a parable told by an elderly Achuar woman.

I will tell you a story about a boa that ate people. Its mouth was as big as a house. It was wiping out the people. It ate so many people [that] they were being wiped out. One man dreamt he had discovered a way to save the people. In the dream, he was told to use a cane knife, which was double-edged. When he entered the river, the boa swallowed him alive. Inside the boa, he saw many other people. He'd been told, "When you're inside the boa use your knife to cut out the heart." It is the same now, with the companies that come and take all the oil. They take all our wealth, everything. They're trying to kill us. *But just as the people did with the boa . . . we're getting organized and are fighting back.* Now our people have really woken up.⁵⁴ [italics mine]

The use of parable/storytelling is reminiscent of the oral tradition of the indigenous and symbolic of continuity with the past. At the conclusion of the documentary, the filmmaker returns to this woman who adds a final comment to her parable: "Just as in the past the man cut the heart out of the boa and stopped it from eating the people, we will put an end to the oil companies." She then pauses, smiles, and directly addresses the camera. She says, "All right? This is the message I want you to take to your people." With this assertion, the audience understands that the indigenous are appropriating the camera and by extension the documentary to further their own agenda of legitimizing their ethnic identity as grounded in tradition and place and their goal of mobilizing against the oil companies.

Flames in the Forest is more about the argument/agenda of CONFENAIE and the indigenous communities than the agenda of the filmmaker. As Vargas stands in front of a burning oil pit at night, he says, "We're denouncing this to the world and demanding a halt to oil exploration."⁵⁵ In order to denounce this to the world, the indigenous appropriate the medium of documentary and video for themselves. Self-representation is essential to appropriation and it is evident in the documentary that the indigenous, concerned with how the filmmaker will represent them, prefer to present their own views of their identity and community.

In sum, even though the filmmaker adopts the observational mode of representation and strives to be inconspicuous, we have two examples of the indigenous directly addressing the camera/filmmaker. One example is the woman telling the filmmaker that she wants him to bring the message of the parable to "your people." The other example occurs when Vargas arrives at Curintza with Hilda. As Vargas greets the leaders in the community, one gestures towards the camera and says, "Where are these gringos from?" Vargas continues to greet the other members in the community and blatantly ignores the question of the leader. However, another member in the community asks, "Why have you brought so many people? We don't want them here. Let's

beat them up, including him [Vargas].” Vargas calmly responds, “No, leave them alone.” After a few more moments of Vargas shaking hands and greeting the community, the leader responds, “If they [the filmmaker/camera crew] speak badly of us, that’s when we’ll get them.” This exchange is significant because it explicitly calls attention to documentary as discourse and a medium of representation. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of the indigenous approving of the filmmaker’s representation of their ethnic identity. These moments of direct interaction with the cameramen communicate to the audience that the indigenous know they are being represented and that it is their *self-representation* that is the “authentic”⁵⁶ representation of *indigenou-ness*.

Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse

Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse includes the story of the decade long legal struggle by communities in the Oriente region for judicial remedies to and compensation for environmental damage and harmful health conditions that have resulted from careless extraction and disposal practices by oil companies. *Aguinda v. Texaco*, the landmark class action suit against Texaco,⁵⁷ takes centerstage in this documentary. *Aguinda v. Texaco* was brought in United States District Court for the Southern District of New York on November 3, 1993. The case was organized by a team of lawyers from Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New York.⁵⁸ The lead attorney for the case was Ecuadoran national and United States citizen, Dr. Cristóbal Bonifaz. In the 1993 case the “[P]laintiffs and the class [sought] compensatory and punitive damages, and equitable relief, to remedy the pollution and contamination of the plaintiffs' environment and the personal injuries and property damage caused thereby.”⁵⁹

This class action suit represents approximately 30,000 indigenous individuals and charges that Texaco was “negligent and reckless” and intentionally permitted “outrageous acts and omissions” while operating in the Oriente.⁶⁰ The team utilized the Alien Torts Claims Act (ACTA) as a basis for the suit. “ACTA allows foreign plaintiffs to sue defendants of any nationality in a U.S. federal court for a tort constituting a violation of international law.”⁶¹ Furthermore, Bonifaz and his team argued that the case should be heard in the federal district court in New York because Texaco headquarters were located there and because that was where all the major decisions relating to the oil extraction in Ecuador were made.

Texaco motioned to dismiss the complaint on the grounds that Texaco had sold its shares and drilling sites to Ecuador’s national oil company, Petroecuador in 1992. The company

essentially argued Texaco was not responsible for environmental damage. Nevertheless, upon the transfer of Texaco's drilling sites to Petroecuador in 1992, Texaco agreed to "carry out environmental remediation work in its former concession areas in cooperation with Petroecuador."⁶² Approved by the government and Petroecuador, Texaco spent \$40 million on the remediation project.⁶³ In its motion to dismiss, Texaco argued that it had already gone above and beyond any responsibilities for environmental remediations. Furthermore, Texaco's legal team argued that the courts of the United States were an "inconvenient forum for adjudicating such claims."⁶⁴

The Ecuadoran government also submitted an amicus brief in favor of Texaco's motion to dismiss the case, arguing that granting jurisdiction and subsequent remedies in the United States would "cause a disincentive to U.S. firms considering investment in Ecuador."⁶⁵ Furthermore, the Ecuadoran government protested the lawsuit on grounds that international law "requires the case to be heard in Ecuadoran rather than U.S. courts."⁶⁶ The Ecuadoran foreign relations ministry made those claims based on the recognition of Ecuador's sovereignty over natural resources under international environmental law. Ecuador's ambassador to the United States told the court that Ecuador "is not willing, under any circumstances, to waive its sovereign immunity and be subject to ruling by Courts in the United States."⁶⁷ Finally, after ten years of appeals in the United States federal court system, the New York court ruled on May 30, 2001, that Texaco (and the Ecuadoran government) "had demonstrated the availability of an adequate alternative forum and that the ordinarily strong presumption favoring the plaintiffs' chosen forum was overcome by a balance of the relevant private and public interest factors tilting heavily in favor of the alternative forum."⁶⁸

Bonifaz and his team refiled the lawsuit in the Ecuadoran court system on May 7, 2003. While Ecuador had not previously legislated class action proceedings, the 1999 Law of Environmental Management did allow that citizens might gather as a class and demand that their constitutional right "to live in a clear environment free from contamination" be upheld. Bonifaz's team and the Amazon Defense Front (an indigenous-peasant non-governmental organization based in Quito) were the first to file suit under the new law.⁶⁹ The initial phase of the case opened in Ecuador on October 25, 2003, in a small rural court house in Lago Agrio in the province of Nueva Loja.⁷⁰ Since 2003, Judge Alberto Guerra Bastidas has heard testimony and gathered factual evidence. Currently, he is engaged in onsite judicial inspections, a process

whereby he is visiting approximately thirty of the 627 unlined oilpits documented in the complaint.⁷¹ In these visits Judge Guerra Bastidas will speak to the indigenous and peasant residents who reside in communities surrounding these pits in an attempt to uncover the health affects of the contamination.

While a ruling is still to be made, members of the plaintiff's team are "cautiously optimistic."⁷² They presented evidence that Texaco's \$40 million remediation project consisted of covering up some of the oil pits with dirt, rather than following industry cleanup procedures. The plaintiffs believe that this evidence will illustrate that Texaco intentionally violated the human right to a clean environment of the individuals living around the oil operations and that the "operator of the oil wells considered Ecuador a second-class country, unworthy of modern oil-drilling safeguards."⁷³ Furthermore, the complainants as well as others in the academic legal community, believe that if successful, this case will set a significant international precedent for multinational corporations operating overseas. Jeffrey Dunoff, a law professor at Temple University expresses, "It's a great international case, a cutting-edge issue of when multinational corporations can be held liable under international law."⁷⁴ Bonifaz and his team also feel that this case is not only significant for the communities surrounding the oilpits in Ecuador, but also because it is an attempt to create global justice in a world ruled by multinational companies and international deals. Bonifaz asserts, "[T]his case is an attempt to globalize justice. If justice were globalized, people wouldn't be so against globalized trade."⁷⁵

Bonifaz's quote illustrates the filmmaker's argument in *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse*. The documentary in part tells the story of *Aguinda v. Texaco* as a case-study to explore the question of globalization and the affects that multinational corporations have on developing countries. Cristóbal Bonifaz and Steven Donziger, lawyers for the plaintiffs, emerge as principal protagonists in the documentary. Judith Kimerling, a legal and environmental/indigenous rights activist, is also a principal actor. Ricardo Reis Vega, general counsel and vice president of ChevronTexaco's Latin American products division, is a principal figure too. Analyzed as an interactive documentary, the narrator "situates [himself] as an instrumental actor among the subjects" and provides the viewer with information regarding the court case and the environmental destruction that occurred while Texaco operated in the Oriente. The opening narration of the documentary engages the viewer (Western audience) as indirect, yet accountable, participants in the Oriente struggle.

Few of us realize that many of the goods that we use each day are byproducts of oil. Our civilization could not exist without oil. But, the easy oil has long since been found so now oil companies must scour the ends of the earth to uncover new sources. We need the oil, but to what extreme must the industry go to satisfy the West's thirst for fuel? This program will journey from the Amazonian jungle of Ecuador to the war-torn savannah of Angola to see how oil companies are being forced to change the way they do business. Because, oil could bring blessings to poor people in developing countries, but too often it is a curse.⁷⁶

Images of products made from oil such as lipstick, as well as images of highways and closed gas pumps serve as background images to this narration. While the narrator does not directly interview or interact with the subjects in the documentary, his reflections and references to "we" refers not only to the camera crew, but also to Western audiences whose lifestyles and "thirst for oil" directly and indirectly affect the environments and peoples of developing countries. Therefore, the agenda of the documentary is to emotionally engage the audience to be conscientious and responsible consumers and to understand their role in the world economy.

Additionally, the documentary strives to represent the significance of the case on the international environmental, human rights, legal, and corporate communities as illustrated in the following two quotes. Upon arriving to Lago Agrio the evening before the trial, the narrator reflects:

The next morning, plane loads of interested parties were converging on Lago Agrio. A potential \$6 billion dollar lawsuit against Texaco was about to be heard in the local court. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, The *LA Times*, and *Reuters* all sent reporters to cover the first day of the trial. Because today not just the world economy, but public opinion and corporate liability are being globalized.

What makes this trial echo around the world is that Cristóbal Bonifaz won a landmark ruling in a US court that if the plaintiffs win their case against Texaco in the courts of Ecuador, damages will be enforceable in America. It is a huge precedent and one that could cost the oil giant billions. No wonder our hotel was overrun with lawyers, ecologists, lobbyists, and reporters.

The preceding quotes illustrate that this court case speaks to various audiences and agendas. These quotes also illustrate that the filmmaker through the narrator reflects on these events not as a passive and objective observer of the case, but as an engaged participant striving to represent the question of corporate liability and responsible/sustainable development for countries like Ecuador.

Unlike *Trinkets & Beads* and *Flames in the Forest*, the narrator in *Extreme Oil* takes the task of representing the situation to the international community upon himself, rather than permitting the indigenous participants in the documentary to represent themselves actively. Therefore, where indigenous self-representation was salient in *Trinkets & Beads* and *Flames in the Forest*, the filmmaker and the narrator in this documentary offer representations of the indigenous. A powerful example of this is an opening scene in which Moi, the protagonist from *Trinkets & Beads*, is guiding a camera man in a canoe. However, Moi does not speak for himself. The voiceover of the narrator speaks for him.

We are deep in the tropical rain forest of Ecuador. The men and women of the Huaorani tribe have gone fishing. Moi is one of their leaders. He is determined that they should preserve their ancient way of life. Moi believes that oil would be a curse to his people. He fears that it will pollute the jungle where he and his tribe have always hunted and gathered and fished. Moi's tribe numbers about 1,500.

This is not to suggest that the filmmaker/narrator subordinated Moi and other indigenous participants in the film. Rather, like the environmental activists shown gathered around the court case in Lago Agrio and like lawyers Bonifaz and Donziger, the narrator actively spoke on behalf of all the individuals from the diverse communities.

In a very real way, this documentary is a consequence of sustained transnational activism on the part of social movement actors such as the complainants' legal team, environmental activists, and indigenous rights activists. This is significant within the framework of an internationalized movement that actively engages activists and scholars from the Western community, because it raises questions of agenda and overdependence on external actors' interpretations of and solutions for the problems. While NGO activists and individuals, like Judith Kimerling, dedicate time and resources to finding solutions to problems, real questions of indigenous agency arise.

The imaging of indigenous concerns by external actors may indeed conflict with indigenous imaging of their own concerns. The following reflection of the narrator illustrates this question of agency. At one point in the documentary, Judith Kimerling takes the camera crew to Comuna San Carlos, a Quichua community that surrounds a wellsite developed by Texaco and now operated by Petroecuador. The narrator reflects:

As we approached the village, we began to see pipelines running along the road. We had arranged to meet people from the community in a large clearing here. Judith Kimerling

has been coming here for a long time. When she first asked about pollution, no one knew what she meant. There was no such word in their language.

This quote evokes an image of a pristine people who had lived in harmony with nature, perhaps as invisible subjects blended in with the backdrop of nature where the very concept of pollution does not even exist. Cristóbal Bonifaz also conjures this image by saying that when Texaco arrived in 1969, “. . . this was virgin territory, this was pristine rain forest.” Such imaging represents the indigenous individuals as romanticized and mythologized subjects whose culture and environmental situation needs to be interpreted and explained by external actors, which raises genuine concerns regarding indigenous acting as active agents in their communities. The narrator’s interpretation of the event represents Kimerling as the actor who interprets and explains for the Quichua their own lived experience.

Significantly, however, when the documentary allows the indigenous actors to represent and speak for themselves, women emerge as powerful actors. In the same visit to Comuna San Carlos, it is women wearing feathered headdresses, beads, and charcoal face paint who take Kimerling and the camera crew to a river to show them the swirling crude oil on the surface. These women serve as the community representatives and several speak directly to the camera. One Quichua woman says, “Before the water was clean. There were animals and fish, we had food to eat: yucca, and we were happy living that way; and we thought that we would live that way forever. But the arrival of Texaco was very bad and now all the wild animals have gone.” Another says, “There is still a lot of contamination. We want it all cleared off. It is useless.” The documentary takes the viewer to one of the thirty contaminated sites that will be viewed by the judge. “The judge had announced that he would visit some of the controversial sites. So, we decided to get a preview of the evidence. Our driver was Jorge Urollo and he specializes in what he calls, “ToxiTours.”⁷⁷ They visit the home of Rosa Matango, one of the plaintiffs mentioned in the suit against Texaco. Rosa, then, takes them to see the contamination that has occurred on her land.

To get to Rosa’s patch of land, you have to go through the oil station. So, later than afternoon Rosa lead us round to the back of the plant and to the muddy banks of a stream. She showed us how oil had soaked into the earth and how it had polluted the water. Crouching down to the water, we could smell the reek of oil. We crossed the stream and got to the other side of the gorge. These are Rosa’s pigs. Their backs and sides were covered in oil.

Unlike Nichols' observations about the legitimacy of male authority, in *Extreme Oil* indigenous and peasant women emerge as actors who represent their communities and who are striving for justice via the *Aguinda. v. Texaco* case.

Ultimately, *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse* highlights the many external and internal actors working for change in the Oriente region. It critiques the present practices of multinational corporations and strives to contribute to the overall discussion of responsible corporate procedures within the globalized context. However, a closer examination also illustrates that while Western consumers and activists urge accountability and engage in an attempt to “globalize justice,” the real challenges to indigenous agency exist as external actors speak for them.

Saviors of the Forest

While representation of indigenous peoples and communities are central themes in *Trinkets & Beads* and *Flames in the Forest*, the lack of indigenous representation is salient in *Saviors of the Forest*. Speaking to the environmental rights audience, *Saviors of the Forest* is the story of two “camera guys” from Los Angeles and their search for the “bad guys—the *petroleros* who were destroying Indian lands.”⁷⁸ In addition to the quirky and sometimes humorous camera-shots, a significant element throughout the documentary is that the two filmmakers become protagonists in their own documentary. Exemplifying the interactive and reflexive modes of documentary representation, the filmmakers routinely interact with the other subjects on film and narrate their reflections on the documentary/representation process itself. Therefore, the filmmakers not only directly address the subjects in the film, but also address the audience as if we were a part of the filmmaking process. Bill Nichols writes that these interactions with the audience inform us that in addition to developing the argument/agenda of the topic of the documentary (rainforest destruction), exploring the “process of representation itself” is also an important goal of the filmmakers.⁷⁹

From the opening scene, the filmmakers interact with the audience and reflect on their representation of environmental destruction. The opening scene, which more closely resembles the opening credits of an MTV reality show than an environmentalist documentary, pans to three *colonos* cutting down trees with chainsaws while loud heavy metal music blares in the background. In a voiceover, the audience hears the first reflections of one of the filmmakers, Terry Schwartz:

It was right about then, that I started to think something was out of whack. I mean we had come to Ecuador to save the rainforest; and then there we were getting these guys to cut down trees for us. I mean, I only have one question: What happened?⁸⁰

Within the framework of agenda and audience, *Saviors of the Forest* is unique in that the filmmakers openly and explicitly inform the viewer of their objectives and questions of representation.

In spite of successful film industry careers in LA, the two “camera guys,” as they refer to themselves, inspired by the 1990 Earth Day festival in Santa Monica, decided to “save the rainforest.” One of them narrates, “One day, you wake up and say—I want to use what I know to do something. You know, better. For us, it was ecology. Why? Why not? You do not have to be Carl Sagen to figure out what shape this planet is in.”⁸¹ After launching a TV news program to promote ecological awareness, only to be accused of copyright violation for using footage from national news programs, the two filmmakers learned about a “group of Ecuadoran Indians coming to town to talk about rainforest destruction.” The two L.A. film guys joined other film crews and news stations to document this “group of Ecuadoran Indians” who came to speak to North American journalists and environmental rights activists. At this point in the documentary the filmmakers’ agenda and focus of the filmmakers become evident. This group of Ecuadoran Indians is never named, which stands in contrast to the identification of the Huaorani plight in *Trinkets & Beads* and the Achuar, Cofan, and Quichua in *Flames in the Forest*.

While the two L.A. film guys reflect on the main indigenous speaker, Vicente, it becomes apparent that the story these two filmmakers wish to tell is about the trees and international environmental rights groups, not the indigenous.

We were pretty green as far as international activists go, but one guy Vicente was great. He had never been out of the rainforest before and he got up in front of this big audience and told them that his ancestors were from another planet and that he was ready to die to stop these *petroleros*, people from oil companies So what we did was buy a couple of plane tickets and head to Ecuador.⁸²

Upon their arrival in Quito, the filmmakers contact Doug Ferguson, an Australian environmentalist who had served as translator for the “group of Indians” that inspired them to travel to Ecuador in the first place. At Doug’s house, they meet “lots of people working on rainforest issues in some way or another.”⁸³ Specifically, Doug introduces them to Lucinda and

Chris, two British woodworkers, who have partnered with Doug to form the Ecological Trading Company (ETC). Reacting to the unavailability of wood from “sustainable sources,” Lucinda, Chris, and Doug joined forces to introduce sustainable forestry in Ecuador’s rainforest communities. The goal of the ETC is to develop a management system whereby trees are counted and then a management plan is implemented to regulate how many trees might be cut down without causing permanent harm to the forest. Furthermore, the ETC would then encourage *colonos* and indigenous communities to partner with the ETC, cut down the trees using the management plan and the eco-friendly Trekkasaw, and sell the lumber to the ETC instead of the national lumber companies. Chris further articulates ETC’s goals and objectives. “We just thought it was fun to try and get something started where clearly nobody else is providing us with that story. And that’s why we’re here—we’re generating a story from scratch.”

The use of the word “story,” particularly when viewed through the lens of agenda and discourse, raises the issue of agendas and dynamics in the environmental SMI. Lucinda and Chris express that as woodworkers they were concerned with their contribution to deforestation and the extinction of tropical hardwoods. Yet, why use the word “story?” Since the 1992 Earth Summit, “sustainability” had become *en vogue* in the ecological and environmental movements; and it seems that the ETC hoped to contribute to this international environmental discourse (story). Indeed, after accompanying Chris to a meeting with the 1995 Club, the filmmakers question the issue of “sustainability” in their reflections to the audience. The members of 1995 Club, organized by the Worldwide Fund for Nature, were trying to get hardware and furniture stores to sign an agreement to buy only sustainable wood products by 1995. Therefore, Chris came to a meeting in hopes of selling the lumber generated by the ETC’s efforts in Ecuador. However, because the entire meeting was spent debating the definition of “sustainability,” no one could agree to buy the ETC lumber. After showing footage of this debate, Terry reflected:

They refused to buy sustainable wood they thought was sustainable until everyone could sustain a sustainable definition of sustainability . . . Or something like that. By the time it was all over, the only thing people looked like they had sustained was a serious headache.⁸⁴

In *Saviors of the Forest*, the filmmakers bring the issue of environmentalist discourse utilized in the environmental SMI to the forefront. Gradually, they realize that finding the “villain” of

deforestation and environmental destruction in the Ecuadoran Amazon would be more complex than they originally thought and that environmentalist discourse portrayed.

Indeed, the original goal of the filmmakers was to find the villains behind the environmental destruction of the Amazon. “We thought about doing our film about the ETC, but then we decided against it---we decided we wanted to shoot the bad guys—the *petroleros* who were destroying Indian lands.”⁸⁵ Indeed, the filmmakers followed the pipeline; however, when they got to the end, they didn’t find the villain they had expected. “We just saw an abandoned clearing the size of a football field and a discarded can of drill bit lubricant.” They then turned their attention to the problem of deforestation resulting from road construction and Endesa, an Ecuadoran lumber company. They conversed with Manuel Durini, the president of Endesa, about the company’s involvement in the deforestation problem. However, he informed them that only thirty-five percent of wood cut in the rainforest ever got to the lumber industry; the other sixty-five percent, cut and most likely burned, got lost.”⁸⁶ Furthermore, Durini informed them that since lumber was the company’s economic resource, Endesa was just as concerned with deforestation as were the filmmakers. That led the filmmakers to conclude that in order to find their bad guys they must “follow the sound of the chainsaw.” Yet again, instead of finding a villain, they discover *colonos* who cut down trees to clear lands in order to grow and sell cash crops in order to survive. Disillusioned with their quest to “find the bad guys,” the filmmakers conclude that, “[I]t was better to focus the story on Doug and Chris because, after all they were trying to save the rainforest, not destroy it.”

The two L.A. film guys then shifted focus from the problem of deforestation to the ETC’s struggle to get the government of Ecuador to release their portable sawmill [brandname: Trekkasaw] from customs and to get enough funding for the continuation of the ETC. The filmmakers follow Doug, Chris, and Lucinda as they partner with Earth First, a London based environmental NGO, and attempt to get funding from Teddy Goldsmith, a billionaire who had seen “the environmental light and dedicated money to environmental causes.”⁸⁷ At a meeting in Goldsmith’s house in London, Terry narrates that Chris was having a difficult time explaining the deforestation problem in Ecuador and convincing Goldsmith of the goals of the ETC. Therefore, the filmmakers intervene and show Goldsmith their footage. “We did the only thing two camera guys could—We showed Teddy what they were talking about.” Therefore, the

filmmakers save the day, subtly arguing for the power of representation through documentary and documentary as resource for social movement actors.

The two L.A. film guys then return to Los Angeles and shortly thereafter are contacted by two Green Peace activists to film a protest against the Hollywood film industry's use of rainforest plywood for set designs. The protest would involve the collaboration of Green Peace, Rainforest Action Network (RAN), and Earth First. These environmental organizations wanted the filmmakers to film their take-over of a cargo ship carrying a supply of plywood, or as one Green Peace activist termed, "the horizontal rainforest."⁸⁸

This discourse by the filmmakers underscores the question of agenda and audience. Just as they question the discourse of sustainability and the "villianization" of *colonos* and lumber companies, their reflections indicate a challenge to the agendas of international environmental organizations. This is not to suggest that the filmmakers believe that the environmental agenda is unworthy; still, their reflections illuminate that a discourse and an agenda exist. Therefore, in their quest to "save the rainforest" they ultimately end up telling the story of the complexity of the global environmental social movement industry.

Conclusion: Language, Feathers, and Gender

Each documentary has its unique agenda and manner of representing the indigenous plight in the Oriente region. Whether following leaders of indigenous organizations as they attempt to "lobby" indigenous communities of the Oriente or telling the story of a landmark court case in Ecuador, each documentary strives to tell the story of the environmental contamination due to petroleum extraction and explores strategies and solutions for dealing with such problems. There are also significant and common themes of representation of indigenous ethnicity that emerge in each of the documentaries. This chapter began with the questions of how the indigenous/communities/organizations in the four documentaries define and represent themselves and whether outside actors represent the indigenous as a collective whole that is ethnically and historically static. To begin, the common themes of self-representation of ethnic identity that emerge include language that evokes a timelessness and mythologized past, visual representations of indigenusness that embody typical indigenous signifiers such as facepaint and feathered headdresses, and the emergence of indigenous women as active agents.⁸⁹

As I grapple with complex questions of indigenusness and self-representation in

documentary films, I find it helpful to return to Melucci's process of identity construction within a social movement. Melucci argues that the collective identity is constantly negotiated and redefined within changing contexts. Therefore, as the indigenous such as Moi, Vargas, and others in the documentaries utilize language that illustrates the indigenous as protectors of the earth and evoke authority based on ancestral heritage, perhaps they are consciously adopting the language of the environmental SMI to appeal to the environmental community. However, even as the language is politically used to further an agenda, one cannot conclude that Moi and Vargas do not have a legitimate and emotional connection to their constructed identities.

Furthermore, the indigenous manipulation of language demonstrates political/cultural agency. Even as the indigenous adopt the discourse of [Western] environmentalism, the indigenous in the documentaries are in control of these representations. Linguistic anthropologist Susan Gal writes, "control of such representations of reality, and control of the means by which they are communicated and reproduced, are equally sources of social power."⁹⁰ Furthermore, the utilization of parable and language that evokes an ancestral-warrior past helps to sustain the movement at the local and international level because such language unites local groups to action and appeals to international expectations of indigenusness.

Similarly, the visual representations of indigenusness in all of the documentaries follow Beth A. Conklin's argument that the indigenous incorporate the West's understanding of "authentic" indigenous visual codes such as feathers, beads, and charcoal face paint. She writes:

A review of photographs of Brazilian Indian representatives in a variety of magazines, newspapers, videos, films and NGO publications reveals considerable selectivity.

Traditional elements that are emphasized include: semi-nudity (men often do not wear shirts); colorful ornaments, especially feathered headdresses and earrings; and body paints, principally red annatto and black charcoal, applied in rather limited quantities, principally to the face, arms, and torso. A notable feature of these body decorations is their impermanence: feathers, annatto, and charcoal can be easily put on and taken off.⁹¹

In the documentaries, feathers, beads, charcoal or *achiote* face paint, semi-nudity among the males, and spears were commonly used in community meetings, protests, and in meetings with oil representatives to visually express indigenusness. Conklin's critique of the "impermanent characteristic" of these visual features becomes the most significant and powerful characteristic of this visual representation when one argues that these visual codes are purposefully controlled

by the indigenous as a strategy for change. In *Flames in the Forest*, Neomi and Hilda are simply wearing t-shirts, pants, and rubber boots as they visit the communities in the north. However, when Neomi reports to Curintza with Vargas, she is wearing face paint and beads. This visual representation of her indigenusness is not only for the benefit of the documentary audience, but also for the indigenous community. This visual image provides her with authority and illustrates that this movement utilizes symbolic meanings of indigenusness to generate resources and international support.

Finally, in each of the documentaries women at the community level are seen as active actors. Women such as Neomi and Hilda serve as eyewitnesses to the environmental contamination for their home community in *Flames of the Forest* and women serve as the hosts/representatives for the filmmaker/camera crew in *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse*. While women are seen as agents for change, there are also some limitations to their activism. Women in the documentaries are outspoken in local community meetings and in their interactions with the filmmakers; however, whenever a delegation from the communities meets with oil representatives, as illustrated in *Trinkets & Beads* and *Flames in the Forests*, women are never present. Therefore, at the public and formal political level men emerge as the powerful actors. Clearly, the imaging of gender across cultures in documentaries goes beyond Nichol's point of male as symbol of authority.

Analysis of indigenous representation is complex and multilayered, particularly when indigenous self-representation is influenced by the West's expectations and ideologies of indigenusness. At what point does the filmmaker's representation of indigenusness end and indigenous self-representation begin? Like Bonifaz and Donziger's predictions for the *Aguinda v. Texaco* outcome, I am "cautiously optimistic" that the indigenous are illustrating agency and control of their own representations. Significantly, while face paint and feathered headdresses are stereotypical representations of indigenusness and at first glance an illustration of the filmmakers imaging of indigenous as culturally and historically static, the very impermanence of these images (the actuality that the indigenous in the documentary take these signifiers on and off in changing contexts) exemplifies the negotiated, constructed nature of ethnic identity. Therefore, I conclude that the outside actors, filmmakers/Western environmental activists, in the documentaries do not present the indigenous as historically static, but as negotiators of meaning and active agents. While real questions of agenda and manipulation of indigenous peoples are

ever- present, I believe that the indigenous are astute to appropriate and manipulate these expectations to generate international support for their local struggle of environmental remediation and recognition of their cultural/human rights. The illustration and representation of indigenous is not only evident in documentary. As I show in chapter six, the web has also become a contested space of social action.

Chapter 6: Cyberspace: A Contested Space of Social Action?

“Magic, for better and for worse, pervades the Web—both as a material and symbolic practice of identity transformation, but also as the mythic representation of this transformative capacity.”¹

The World Wide Web has emerged as a means for international communication, networked political and commercial enterprises, and a medium for political and social activism. Reaching 50 million users within four years of its emergence in 1993 and with more than 20 million Web sites by 2002, the overarching power of the Internet to reach countless audiences provides social movements with new arenas for change.² The 1994 Zapatista uprising led by Subcomandante Marcos in Chiapas, Mexico illustrated the powerful shift in social activism that utilized the web and websites to orchestrate change as, “two days after the uprising, Subcomandante Marcos—the figurehead of the movement—was online.”³ This revolutionary medium collapsed gaps in distance/place as Subcomandante Marcos and his guerrilla forces were able to communicate in real time within a networked global community to an international audience to further the Zapatista cause. Garrido and Halavais write, “The Zapatista movement has been called both a model social movement on the one hand and the first instance of Net warfare on the other, views that are both equally accurate.”⁴

The Zapatista movement’s appropriation of technology and, most importantly, the use of the World Wide Web as a tactic for change certainly served as a model for future social movements. Specifically, the strategy of constructing websites has been embraced by the umbrella indigenous organizations CONFENIAE and CONAIE as they vie for international support and resources (e.g. financial, material, legal etc.) in their struggle against destructive resource extraction practices of national and international petroleum companies. Like the Zapatista movement of Chiapas, which was concerned with indigenous and land rights, the indigenous of Ecuador reach out to the global community through the powerful medium of the Internet that is at once visual and textual and transcends boundaries of time, geography, and language. Referencing the Zapatista movement, Garrido and Halavais wrote:

The effective use of communication networks has broadened the scale of action for these movements, empowering their struggle internationally and opening new spaces—what might be called “virtual publics”—that move beyond the exchange of information to facilitate *shared culture, coordination and solidarity*.⁵ [italics mine]

That assessment of the Zapatista movement illustrates both the significance of technology and the World Wide Web for resource mobilization and provides an important foundation for the challenges and questions concerning power and agenda as international NGOs participate in local indigenous struggles via websites.

Indeed, the World Wide Web enables the Mexican Zapatistas, Bolivian environmentalists, and indigenous organizations in Ecuador to “link up with individuals, groups, and organizations—particularly in the industrialized world.”⁶ In terms of Resource Mobilization Theory terminology, developed in chapter two, the World Wide Web expands the arena for the Social Movement Industry of national and international environmental and indigenous rights organizations in which to “fight” for the Oriente cause. Like Larraín Ibáñez’s concept of a space-time compression, cyberspace has caused the “immediate, conscious experiencing of the shrinking of the world; [and] the mesmerizing sensation of access to an infinite availability of information and interlocution.”⁷ In essence, the Social Movement Industry has joined the indigenous of the Oriente in “communal” activist struggle with the proverbial bullhorn and protest banner being replaced with soundbites, hypertext, and hyperlinks. Furthermore, the Web allows for an increased potential to convert internet users to conscience constituents of the cause as they may respond to organizational petitions, participate in ecotourism and “sustainable development” projects run by the organization, or donate financial resources via the website.

While the documentaries may inform and emotionally inspire the international environmental and human rights audiences, websites offer more opportunities for direct and indirect participation in the struggle. However, is there international “solidarity” and a “shared” sense of culture within the Social Movement Industry? Are the messages and images portrayed the same or do organizational agendas (i.e. human rights, environmental rights, indigenous rights) shape, transform, and change the indigenous message to reflect the particular agenda of an NGO? Are the “signifiers of indigenous-ness” (feathers, face paint and beads) that are evident in the documentaries of chapter five salient in the websites?

As spatial boundaries dissolve, new issues arise over the “control, circulation, and exchange of information.”⁸ It is important that information, or that which is produced and exchanged among the international and national/local websites, includes the representation of ethnic identity and the meanings attributed to the indigenous and region. As evident in documentary film the issue of representation have emerged as US and Quito based NGOs engage

in the projection of indigenous identity. To return to social movement theory, while RMT explains the participation of United States NGOs in the Oriente struggle as a social movement industry that works on behalf of the indigenous and with the goal of environmental preservation in the Amazon, New Social Movement Theory helps illuminate the use of websites and by extension the language and images represented on websites as symbolic resources. Alberto Melucci writes, “Contemporary systems provide individuals with symbolic resources which heighten their potential for individuation—that is, their potential for autonomy and self-realization.”⁹ However, this chapter is not only concerned with CONAIE and CONFENAIE’s representation of symbolic resources to appeal to a large base of social constituents, but also United States and Ecuador NGOs’ use of symbolic resources. Therefore, this chapter examines the intersection of Ecuador NGOs and United States NGOs’ use of symbolic resources to represent the region and people of the Oriente. The NGO websites are seen as the “institutional vehicles that articulate protest and collective action” as well as the lens from which to evaluate organizational agendas and representations of indigenusness.¹⁰

The intersection of Ecuador and United States NGOs’ participation in the Oriente struggle via websites forms what Conklin and Graham term the “middle ground.” “The middle ground is a political space, an arena of intercultural communication, exchange, and joint political action.”¹¹ The authors argue that, like Melucci’s symbolic resources, the middle ground is the space of symbolic politics where “ideas and images, not common identity or economic interests, mobilize political actions across wide gulfs of distance, language, and culture.”¹² Conklin and Graham further caution of the marketing of symbols which Peter Brosius argues are “strategically deployed essentialisms.”¹³

This symbolic middle ground of interaction can be described as a “raucous, yet highly structured battleground” as “Northern human rights organizations, environmental activists, and Southern grassroots groups are linked together.”¹⁴ Here, Alberto Melucci’s concept of “control over the symbolic levels of action”¹⁵ is germane to the comparison of Ecuadoran and United States NGOs’ representations. “Control can no longer restrict itself to the external regulation of the production/appropriation of resources; it must also intervene in the internal processes of the formation of attitudes.”¹⁶ The formation of attitudes relates to organizational policies and/or agendas that may shape the way in which the region and people of the Oriente are represented and framed in the websites.

Faye Ginsburg warns of the risk of the marginalization of indigenous self-representation and the supplanting of the NGOs' representation of indigenous identity, and Gustavo Lins Ribeiro writes that the "manipulation of identity is now as easy as playing video games."¹⁷ Ginsburg ponders, "How do we, as activists, media-makers, or scholars, operate in the creation and circulation of discursive frameworks for indigenous media that can either support people's understanding of it or marginalise its significance?"¹⁸ However, as explored in chapter four, it is important to reiterate that agenda is not necessarily a hegemonic force that creates an inferior subject, nor can the external (US groups) be viewed as solely engaged in strategically employing essentialisms that subvert indigenous self-representation. Rather, indigenous self-representation also incorporates the essentialized signifiers of indigeness, as seen in the documentaries of chapter five. Peter Brosius explains,

Critiques of essentialism developed in conjunction with our [anthropologists'] efforts to understand how such representations create and support patterns of inequality. It is thus rather ironic that just at the moment that anthropologists have embraced such a critical perspective, historically marginalized communities have begun to recognize the political potency of strategically deployed essentialisms.¹⁹

As evidenced in the documentaries, indigenous self-representation also encompasses the use of essentialisms in indigenous dress as social actors such as when Hilda donned traditional feathered head wear and facepaint to address her local community, or when Huaoranis in the 1994 "strike" in Quito employed essentialized dress to capture the attention of petroleum companies and media in Quito. Therefore, both international and national/local organizations are aware of audiences' expectations of how an indigenous will look and speak. Conklin and Graham suggest, "The symbolic value of Indian images is especially important to NGOs since their fund-raising depends heavily on voluntary contributions from sympathetic donors."²⁰

The question of audience and consumption also reveals itself as organizations must be aware of the expectations of the potentially fickle nature of internet users who make up the imagined Web community. Jodi Dean writes,

A cyberspace community is self-selecting, exactly what a real community is not; it is contingent and transient, depending on a shared interest of those with the attention span of a thirty-second soundbite. The essence of a real community is its presumptive perpetuity—you have to worry about other people because they will always be there. In a cyberspace community you can shut people off at the click of a mouse and go elsewhere.²¹

In light of these questions and challenges, this chapter explores the ways in which international United States based and national Ecuador based organizations frame/represent the indigenous struggle and environmental destruction of the Oriente region on fifteen websites.

Methodology and Operationalization

Content Analysis: A Quantitative & Qualitative Approach

The principle methodology for website analysis is content analysis augmented by Krippendorff’s inclusion of a qualitative approach. Krippendorff asserts that content analysis is a “way of understanding the symbolic qualities of texts” and that “[c]ontent analysis aims to analyse those references in any one group of texts in a replicable and valid manner.”²² That is, adopting content analysis as the method to compare and analyze the visual and textual representation of the Oriente indigenous and region found in websites ensures replicability and enables the researcher “to be methodologically explicit (rather than relying on ‘unconscious’ strategies).”²³ However, the analysis of representation of ethnic identity requires a qualitative interpretation of that which is coded and recorded as representation is multilayered and extends beyond empirically observable signifiers such as headdresses vs. ballcaps to the symbolic meaning of indigenusness that is more difficult to observe/record. This study also builds on Catherine Lutz and Jane Collin’s 1993 study on the representation of non-Western peoples in *National Geographic* magazine of over three decades.²⁴ They also adopted content analysis as their method to operationalize their analysis of the pictures but then incorporated qualitative interpretations/conclusions to their data by analyzing the relationship of their coding categories to overarching themes depicted in the photographs.

In an attempt to analyze both the images and texts of the websites, I established visual and textual representation variables then coded a sampling of websites. The variables are used to assess organizational agendas and ideologies in the way in which the indigenous and Oriente region are presented in the websites. Before defining the variables, the following table presents the research sample with a synopsis of organizational mission statements.

Table 3: US based NGOs used in Content Analysis

Amazon Watch www.amazonwatch.org	Amazon Watch is a socio-environmental organization (NGO) based in San Francisco, California. Their mission is to “work with indigenous and environmental organizations in the Amazon Basin to defend the environment and advance indigenous people’s rights.”
Rainforest Action	Rainforest Action Network, based in San Francisco,

Network (RAN) www.ran.org www.rainforestweb.org	California, is a socio-environmental NGO that “campaigns for the forests, their inhabitants and the natural systems that sustain life by transforming the global marketplace through grassroots organizing, education and non-violent action.” RAN features campaigns and action alerts for rainforests worldwide.
The Pachamama Alliance www.pachamama.org	Pachamama Alliance is a San Francisco based NGO whose primary focus is the Amazon region of Ecuador. The organization developed out of a direct relationship with indigenous leaders in the Oriente. Their mission is to preserve rainforests, empower indigenous peoples, and create a “new global vision of equity and sustainability for all.”
Sierra Club www.sierraClub.org	Sierra Club, based in New York, is an environmental organization with a large project scope such as striving to preserve rainforests, arctic regions and endangered species worldwide.
The Advocacy Project www.advocacynet.org	Based in Washington, D.C., the Advocacy Project is a “peace and human rights” organization with active projects/campaigns worldwide.
Amazon Alliance www.amazonalliance.org	Based in Washington, D.C., Amazon Alliance is an indigenous rights organization that aims to “defend the rights, territories and environment of indigenous and traditional peoples of the Amazon Basin.
Conservation International www.conservation.org	Based in Washington, D.C., Conservation International’s mission is to “conserve the Earth’s living natural heritage, our global biodiversity, and to demonstrate that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature.”

Table 4: Ecuador based NGOS and Indigenous Voluntary Associations used in Content Analysis

Fundación Selva Vida Sin Fronteras www.selvaeco.org	Based in Quito, Ecuador, FSVSF is an NGO that promotes sustainable development projects with the mission of “harmonizing social, economic and political development with environment protection.”
Acción Ecológica www.accionecologica.org	Based in Quito, Ecuador, Acción Ecológica is an NGO that harmonizes environmental rights and indigenous rights. “A través de nuestro trabajo ponemos de manifiesto nuestro rechazo a las actividades productivas a gran escala, que atentan contra los derechos colectivos y ambientales de las comunidades locales.”
Alianza Jatun Sacha www.jatunsacha.org	Founded in 1985 and based in Quito, Ecuador, Jatun Sacha is an NGO “dedicated to the conservation, investigation and management of ecologically important habitats, environmental education and community development.”
FUNEDESIN	An NGO dedicated to “work with local communities to

(Foundation for Integrated Education and Development) www.funedesin.org	develop community-based medical care and ecotourism programs, establish sustainable agricultural practices, improve education, provide environmentally sustainable economic alternatives and conserve the rain forest.”
Frente de Defensa de la Amazonia (FDA) www.ecuanex.net.ec	Based in Quito, FDA is a NGO whose mission is “la defensa de nuestra Región Amazónica, de sus recursos naturales y de la vida de sus habitantes.”
CONAIE www.conaie.org	Explored in chapter two, this umbrella, indigenous voluntary association works for the recognition of indigenous rights in Ecuador. Mission includes the recognition of multilingual education, Ecuador as a plurinational state, and self-determination rights.
CONFENIAE www.unii.net/confeniae	Like CONAIE, it is an umbrella indigenous voluntary association that works for the recognition of indigenous rights in Ecuador, with particular emphasis on the peoples from the Amazon region.
Oilwatch www.oilwatch.org.ec	Founded and based in Quito, Oilwatch is a NGO that opposes petroleum activities in tropical countries worldwide. Oilwatch proclaims itself to be a “network of resistance to the negative impacts of fossil fuels activities on peoples and their environment.”

The majority of the US and Ecuador based NGOs link indigenous/human rights, environmental rights and development issues in their mission statements. While environmental/biodiversity conservation is a common mission that unites all the organizations, no website excludes the importance or the presence of the indigenous in the region in its mission statement or organizational principles. Consequently, it was not possible to categorize the groups as exclusively environmental or exclusively indigenous/human rights, because the websites in this study link environmental conservation with human survival in the Oriente. However, this does not suggest that one website may not stress the importance of indigenous rights (i.e. petroleum extraction’s impacts on traditional culture and land rights) over the environmental impacts on the biodiversity of the region, or vice versa. Indeed, it is precisely these priorities/ideologies in organizational agendas and missions that this study hopes to reveal. Therefore, this analysis focuses on the intersection of external agendas/representations (international NGOs) and internal/local (national NGOs) agendas/representations of indigenusness and the Oriente plight.

The variables listed below in Table 5 were applied to US based organizations and Ecuador based organizations in an attempt to see if any patterns of representation emerge in the websites.

Table 5: Textual and Visual Variables

TEXTUAL: Sustainability/Sustainable projects Eco-tourism/eco-educational programs Indigenous rights Biodiversity/ecosystem Impacts “environmental” Impacts “cultural” Grass-roots/local resistance
VISUAL: Human vs. Environment # of photos of environment (no people) # of photos with indigenous as central subject Gender of Central Figure in Photo Female Male Male and female Dress of Central Figure in Photo Traditional Garb “Storebought” clothes Mix of traditional and storebought clothes

Each website was coded for manifest content frequency of each of the textual and visual variables. See Appendix A for frequency of textual variables and Appendix B for the frequency of visual variables. Additionally, only texts and captioned photographs pertaining to resource extraction in the Oriente region were coded in order to limit the parameters of the study and to account for disproportionate file sizes and subpages on the websites.²⁵ Therefore, only texts such as petition/letter writing campaigns, action alerts, organizational reports, and descriptions of organizational projects/programs in the Oriente region were selected for coding. The number of texts that were coded for each website ranged from four to seven subpages and totaled 164 captioned photographs.²⁶ Once the websites were coded for frequency of each variable in the text and photographs, a T-test was run for each category (US NGOs and Ecuador NGOs/Indigenous Voluntary Associations) with a confidence level of $p < .05$ and a probability of 95% in order to glean statistically significant differences and similarities in each category’s representation of the Oriente people and region. A T-test was chosen because the sample size is smaller than thirty and a T-test is a hypothesis test used to determine if “an assertion of a characteristic of a population is reasonable.”²⁷ A T-test does this by determining whether the means of two samples with a “normal distribution could have the same means when standard deviations are

unknown, but assumed equal.”²⁸ Therefore, a T-test is an appropriate measurement for determining differences in textual variable means between US based and Ecuador based websites.

Definition of Variables: What Qualitative Patterns Do They Reveal?

As explained in the previous section, recording the frequency of the textual and visual variables intends to reveal qualitative themes/patterns in representation. As seen in the documentary, *Saviors of the Forest*, *sustainability* became a “buzzword” in environmental rights and development circles even when no participant could “sustain a sustainable definition of sustainability.”²⁹ Mirovitskaya and Ascher examine the complexity of the concept of sustainability. They write,

The term originally came from the realm of natural-resource management, where it refers to a regime for renewable resource use that would maintain specific levels of harvesting over time. This initial meaning was first broadened by ecologists who applied it to the task of preservation of the status and function of the ecosystems. Later, representatives of other disciplines made this term a part of their lexicon, which eventually resulted in the extreme ambiguity of its current use and wide range of options to achieve it.³⁰

Regardless of the ambiguity and “unsustainability” of a definition for the concept, the use of the term has become an important rhetorical tool for NGOs since the 1992 Rio de Janeiro “Earth Summit” Conference. At that United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), more commonly known as the “Earth Summit” conferees signed the “Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.” That declaration articulated twenty-seven international principles for conserving and protecting the environment. Principle 1 asserted that “human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.”³¹ Similarly, Principle 8 proclaimed “to achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies.”³² Thus, the ideology of sustainability and sustainable development merged with environmental and development policies. Most importantly, human beings became intrinsically linked to environmental concerns. For the purposes of this study, I argue that “sustainability” is deliberately used as a symbolic resource to reach the development, indigenous/human rights, and environmental rights communities/audiences.

Ecotourism has also emerged as a “buzzword” to appeal to audiences concerned with environmental and cultural protection issues. Robert G. Healy writes, “governmental and nongovernmental entities that support many protected areas have come to regard tourism as a source of political support and economic revenue, both for the protected areas and for adjoining communities that might otherwise threaten them.”³³ While a polemic term and frequently critiqued as a potential hegemonic influence on local communities and environments by external “First World” organizations, it is again a symbolic/rhetorical resource used by NGOs.

The variables *indigenous rights*, *impacts “cultural,”* and *grass-roots/local resistance* assess the extent to which an organization stresses the effects of petroleum extraction on indigenous culture rather than environment. Indigenous rights is defined as references to self-determination, land rights based on ethnicity and ancestry, claims for a pluriethnic state, and recognition of indigenous knowledge and language rights.³⁴ *Impacts “cultural”* is defined as the impact of petroleum extraction on traditional communities and ways of life such as hunting and gathering. Finally, *grass-roots/local resistance* measures the importance placed on indigenous/local agency in the struggle against petroleum companies and destructive governmental policies. References to *biodiversity/ecosystem* and *impacts “environmental”* reveal the importance placed on the impacts of petroleum extraction on flora and fauna rather than human subjects and communities. “*Biodiversity* is a term which is often used implicitly and sometimes explicitly to justify the designation of areas for some degree of protection from development and exploitation.”³⁵ This use of the term many times includes designating the area for protection against human inhabitants and, therefore, contributes to the Pristine Myth dynamic. *Impacts “environmental”* is defined as references to river/land contamination, deforestation, and loss of species. Collectively, these variables intend to reveal whether priority in representation is placed on humans or environment even as the organizations link environmental survival with human/cultural survival. Are the indigenous presented as active actors with authority who are linked to the land through tradition, history and spiritual ancestry or is Denevan’s “pristine myth”(see chapter four) evident as the indigenous are represented as passive invisible subjects in the environment?

The visual representation variables also examine this human/environment dynamic in representation. The *Human vs. Environment* variables reveal priorities given to human subjects or destruction to environment (photos of environment with no human elements shown).³⁶ The

Dress of Indigenous variables measure the degree of the use of “strategically deployed essentialisms” and signifiers of indigenosity (see Chapter 4 and 5). The traditional garb variable would reflect ethnic essentialism and/or signifiers of indigenosity, while storebought clothes, or a mixture of traditional and storebought clothes would reveal the complexity and evolving process of indigenous identity. Photographs were coded as *traditional garb* if the indigenous subject was *exclusively* portrayed wearing any combination of the following: traditional rainforest dress, face/body paint, traditional body piercing, headdresses, blowdarts, and spears. *Storebought clothes* included elements such as rubber boots, shorts, t-shirts, dresses, etc. A *mixture of storebought clothes and traditional dress* include the combination of face/paint, headdresses, spears/blowdarts with t-shirts, rubber boots, shorts, etc.

Contestations and Representations: Text & Image

Researcher Predictions: Textual Representations

Sustainability and Ecotourism/Eco-Education Projects

The variables *sustainability* and *ecotourism/eco-education projects* are expected to be represented in most of the US based and Ecuador based NGOs’ websites. David Reid argues that “sustainable development [was] the catchphrase of the 1990s” and that “NGOs have committed themselves to its principles and have adopted policies to promote it.”³⁷ The range of issues in sustainable development includes, but is not limited to: “global pollution of atmosphere and oceans, loss of biodiversity and degradation of agroecosystems arising from deforestation, . . . growing inequality between the world’s rich and poor, and concern for international equity among nations to recompense for past unsustainable resource extraction and pollution.”³⁸ William Fisher writes that NGOs have increasingly undertaken the role of “implementing grassroots or sustainable development . . . objectives formerly ignored or left to governmental agencies.”³⁹ Therefore, sustainability is a rallying cry used by many NGOs concerned with environmental and human/indigenous rights issues, and not just those NGOs from economically and politically enriched countries like the United States. Steven Sanderson writes that in Latin American environmental politics, “conservation, [economic] growth and sustainability must go together.”⁴⁰ Also, Al Gedicks argues that the sustainable development discourse and paradigm has allowed for the participation of “native leadership in environmental battles.”⁴¹ Marie Price and Anthony J. Bebbington further assert that Latin American NGOs use the discourse of sustainability and strive to create sustainable development policies.⁴² Price argues that the

sustainable development paradigm appeals to Latin American NGOs because it broadens environmentalism and melds “environmental stewardship with needs of the poor.”⁴³ She further asserts,

“[t]he tenets of sustainable development strongly influence NGOs that are active in development and conservation in Latin America. By promoting extractive reserves, tropical-forest action plans, environmental education, alternative tree crops, and the revival of traditional multicrop agricultural systems, Latin American environmental groups demonstrate their concern for balancing resource use with resource management. The sustainable-development paradigm recognizes pressing economic needs without imposing impossible standards of altruistic preservation.”⁴⁴

Finally, Julie Fisher states that “the nongovernmental organizations founded in the Third World in recent years are already implementing sustainable development and are increasingly challenging and sometimes changing government policy.”⁴⁵

Ecotourism and *Eco-education programs* arguably fall under the umbrella of sustainable development.⁴⁶ Mirovitskaya and Ascher explain that implicit in ecotourism is the goal of creating positive impacts in the destination which “may include both protection of the resource at the destination and generation of economic benefits for local people.”⁴⁷ Karen Ziffer’s definition of ecotourism, written for Conservation International’s literature, illustrates the conservation community’s view on the concept as linked to sustainable development.

Ecotourism: A form of tourism inspired primarily by the natural history of an area, including its indigenous cultures. The ecotourist visits relatively undeveloped areas in the spirit of appreciation, participation and sensitivity. The ecotourist practices a non-consumptive use of wildlife and natural resources and contributes to the visited area through labor or financial means aimed at directly benefiting the conservation of the site and the economic well-being of the local residents.⁴⁸

Martin Mowforth and Ian Munt add that the socio-environmental movement and socio-environmental NGOs have spearheaded and supported ecotourism in the name of sustainability. They write,

. . . [T]he new socio-environmental movement has rounded upon some forms of tourism (that is, mass tourism) and promoted others (alternative, appropriate, sustainable, and so on). Concerns have centred on the need to protect endangered habitats, maintain biodiversity and promote minority rights. An example of the latter is Survival, an INGO supporting and campaigning on behalf of tribal peoples.⁴⁹

Joan Giannecchini also writes of conservation/environmental organizations involvement in ecotourism. She writes that traditionally conservation organizations have played the role of

consultant to the \$3 trillion tourism/service industry and governments regarding tourism in biodiverse or ecologically sensitive areas. However, she argues that the “limits of this role have been reached” and that the conservation community has been and “will increasingly be required to adopt a more active, aggressive posture vis-à-vis the tourism industry and participate in [these] development projects.”⁵⁰

In sum, ecotourism projects undertaken by NGOs are well-intended solutions to bring empowering forms of revenue to communities already enmeshed in a capitalist system and to establish environmental reserves for the preservation of natural resources. While critical challenges exist to ecotourism as a sustainable approach to development,⁵¹ it seems that both US based groups and Ecuador based groups engage in ecotourism projects.⁵² As James Fair analyzes in his analysis of NGO ecotourism projects in Ecuador commented, “Jatun Sacha [a sample in this study] has started a programme to take visitors to stay with families and to be shown round the trails by local guides. It is a key part of Jatun Sacha’s ecotourism that local people benefit economically from the venture.”⁵³ Whether for better or for worse, international conservation NGOs, national/local conservation NGOs, and local communities embrace and participate in ecotourism. Thus, the variables *ecotourism* and *eco-educational programs* should be evident in both US and Ecuador based NGO websites.

Biodiversity and Impacts “Environmental”

The sustainability discourse contributes to closing the human/indigenous rights vs. environmental rights divide. Indigenous peoples and human culture are increasingly a part of the environmentalist/conservationist discourse and NGOs concerned with environmental issues, such as those in my sample, are linking environmental and cultural protection. As Peter Brosius writes,

Environmental discourses are changing in response to critiques of elitism, to charges that they ignore social justice issues, to accusations that they are a form of neocolonialism, and to criticisms that they ignore North/South imbalances. Institutions are emerging and evolving. Things are moving very fast.⁵⁴

Beth Conklin and Laura Graham further assert that international relationships between environmental NGOs and native peoples “represent a departure from the traditional orientations of both conservationist and native-rights movements.” They write,

Until recently, environmental advocacy focused on protecting flora and fauna; the presence of people (including native inhabitants) tended to be seen as an obstacle to

environmental preservation. As environmental philosophy shifted to emphasize sustainable development rather than strict preservation, the search for models of sustainable uses of rain forest resources created an ecological rationale for defending indigenous land rights. Environmentalists discovered the value of indigenous knowledge, and environmental organizations discovered the strategic value of allying with indigenous causes.⁵⁵

Biodiversity, impacts “environmental” and the remaining textual variables are applied in order to evaluate whether this changing discourse is evident in the sample.

Already acknowledged as non-mutually exclusive organizations, these variables will illuminate whether US based groups continue to advocate with an agenda of “strict preservation” or if, indeed, external groups no longer see native inhabitants as “obstacles.” Have the US groups in this sample shaken the mantle of elitism and the rhetoric of pristine environments to incorporate indigenous rights, indigenous knowledge, and value for indigenous culture in the areas they are trying to preserve? Or, has the discourse of devastation to flora and fauna *sans* humans remained alive and well?

These questions are significant. As David Reid argued, the United Nations Biodiversity Convention, produced during the Rio Summit in 1992, continued the discourse of biodiversity and species protection as priority to cultural protection even when participants were expressing the importance of sustainability.

The Biodiversity Convention was weakened by the stance of the USA, whose principal objective was to protect its biotechnology industry. The convention pays more attention to access to species, technology transfer and biotechnology as a solution to loss of biodiversity than it does to the need to protect both the biodiversity on which people depend for livelihoods and the indigenous knowledge and culture of the people themselves.⁵⁶

Mowforth and Munt also note that environmental issues among Western societies are “still widely associated with ecology rather than society or culture.”⁵⁷ While the authors assert that there is a shift in discourse to include culture and human elements, they assert that Western conservationists still focus on biodiversity (flora and fauna) protection rather than cultural protection.

Unfortunately for indigenous peoples, most western conservationists still cling to romantic, Eurocentric conception of nature as an empty, unspoiled wilderness, separate from and uncontaminated by humanity . . . in which the indigenous inhabitants of these “wildernesses” are at best an inconvenient disruption of the great romantic myth, at worst a menace to be repelled by barbed wire and guns.⁵⁸

Notably, Marie Price argues that southern hemisphere NGOs are qualitatively different from their northern hemisphere counterparts because they have less of an “aesthetic and scientific” approach to biodiversity conservation and more of an “anthropocentric environmental ethic [that] incorporates the ideas of environmental stewardship, human development, and social justice.”⁵⁹ Therefore, while biodiversity and environmental impacts due to petroleum extraction in the Oriente will be represented in both US and Ecuador based websites, it is predicted that these variables will be seen more frequently in US based websites.

Indigenous Rights, Impacts “Cultural,” and Grassroots/local Resistance

Given Marie Price’s assertion that southern hemisphere NGOs incorporate human development and social justice issues in the environmental discourse, it is predicted that these variables will be seen most frequently in Ecuador based websites. Henry J. Steiner writes that even among human rights organizations, Third World human/indigenous rights organizations link economic rights, such as rights to natural resources for economic gain, as well as social and cultural rights more strongly than their First World counterparts. “Attention to economic, social and cultural rights constitutes the single strongest link among participants from Third World NGOs, and the single sharpest break from First World NGOs.”⁶⁰ Anthony J. Bebbington, et al. argue that while the indigenous movement in the Oriente region is a movement in response to environmental pollution and unsustainable resource extraction, implicit in this protest is the defense of indigenous culture and identity. They write,

The defense of land was seen as the *sine qua non* of Indian culture (without land there would be no livelihood), and was linked to other programmes of education and cultural activity, promoting particular visions of Indian identity grounded in traditional practices.⁶¹

Elsa Stamatopoulou also asserts that indigenous peoples link the protection of natural resources with both physical and cultural survival, therefore any discourse used in the movement by indigenous peoples will associate environmental degradation to cultural degradation, as well as assert their rights to the land and natural resources.⁶² Bron Taylor et al. write, “[f]ew environmental movements in less affluent countries have their primary origins in ecological concerns or focus exclusively on environmental issues. Most commonly, such groups have their genesis in the survival efforts of persons and communities living at the margins of existence.”⁶³

Finally, Ronald Niezen argues that identity politics, indigenous rights, and cultural survival are always linked to issues of land and natural resource use among indigenous participants.⁶⁴

Researcher Predictions: Visual Representations

Human vs. Environment

The variables in this category, *photos of environment (no people)* and *photos of indigenous as central figure*, are an extension of the *biodiversity/impacts “environmental”* and *indigenous rights/impacts “cultural”* argument. That is, because it is predicted that US groups will focus primarily on environmental impacts, these websites will show more images of environment with no people. In contrast, because Latin American NGOs and indigenous groups such as CONFENAIE and CONAIE link cultural survival with environmental conservation, the Ecuador based websites will have a fairly equal representation of environment and people.

Gender

This and the remaining category, *Dress of Indigenous figure*, measure photographs that have indigenous individuals, not the environment, as the central subject. It is predicted that when US and Ecuador based groups represent indigenous individuals there will be an equal representation of men and women. Bron Taylor et al. assert that women are very active in environmental movements in less affluent countries because the degradation of the environment is a direct threat to their traditional roles as caretakers of their families. They write, “women play important and often decisive roles. This is remarkable given the traditional subjugation of women in most of these countries.”⁶⁵ Indeed, one of the Ecuador based NGOs in this sample, Fundación Selva Vida Sin Fronteras, was founded by twelve women concerned with destructive resource extraction procedures in the Oriente and its affects on local people.⁶⁶ Escobar et al. argue that there is a “growing convergence between women’s and environmental movements” because women and indigenous peoples are grounded in place and environment. They write, “place is the anchoring point of many women’s lives, and the source of livelihood and culture for ethnic peoples.”⁶⁷ Therefore, women and men will be represented in the images on the fifteen websites.

Dress of Indigenous Figures

Face paint, feathered headdresses, and spears were strategically used to evoke authority and authenticity in the four documentaries discussed in chapter five. Perhaps it is this visual representation of indigenous ethnicity and identity that is most “exportable” to the international

community and, therefore, the strongest of symbolic resources used by the indigenous and the Social Movement Industry to appeal to international social constituents. As Beth A. Conklin writes, “[n]ative Amazonians who once took pains to hide external signs of indigenous identity behind mass-produced Western clothing now proclaim their cultural distinctiveness with headdresses, body paint, beads, and feathers.”⁶⁸ She argues that this shift in dress and representation is a reflection of changing internal social dynamics as Indians are asserting their rights to language and self-determination within the local/national political sphere. However, she also argues that this shift is due to the international community’s ideas and expectations of indigenous-ness. Therefore, she argues that indigenous activists take on these ideas and expectations in their dress to appeal to the international community. She writes,

. . . [T]he revival of native body decorations in some groups developed in the context of two major trends: the spread of new technologies and infrastructure to formerly isolated areas of the Amazon basin, and the internationalization of local Indian rights struggles through the linkage to environmentalism [T]he nature of contemporary eco-politics—especially its dependence on global media—intensifies pressures for Indian activists to conform to certain images.⁶⁹

Conklin’s argument, along with Brosius’ concept of “strategically deployed essentialisms” in indigenous visual representation, attests to the premise that indigenous activists in the Oriente region strategically utilize traditional notions of “indigenoussness” as symbolic resources and expressive action when appealing to local and international communities. Whether or not these traditional notions are consequences of Western discourses is beyond the scope of this study. However, what is significant is that both US organizations and Ecuador based organizations utilize these indigenous signifiers to “export” the indigenous image and message to the world. Therefore, it is predicted that traditional garb (headdresses, face paint, feathers, spears) will be represented more frequently than storebought clothes or mixture of storebought and traditional in the fifteen websites.

Results

Textual Representation

The seven US based NGO websites were categorized as US websites and the eight Ecuador based NGO websites were categorized as Ecuador websites. The frequency averages of these two categories, US websites and Ecuador websites, were compared for significance by

running a t-test with a confidence level of $p < .05$. (See Appendix A for a table of raw data and Appendix C for a bar graph of averages). The t-test results are found below in Table 6.

Table 6
T-test of Textual Variables: US websites and Ecuador websites

<i>Confidence level= $p < .05$</i>		
Textual Variables	Probability	T-Statistic
Sustainability/sustainable projects	96.60	-2.368
Eco-tourism/eco-educational programs	83.12	-1.457
Indigenous rights	36.61	-0.488
Biodiversity/ecosystem	25.37	-0.330
Impacts “environmental”	30.59	0.402
Impacts “cultural”	17.98	0.232
Grassroots resistance	71.32	1.111

As can be seen in Table 6, the frequency of the variable “sustainability/sustainable projects” reached significance ($t = -2.36$, $p < .05$). This test revealed that there is a statistically significant difference in the use of the variable “sustainability/sustainable projects” among US based websites and Ecuador based websites. Therefore, there is a 96.6% chance that the differences are not a result of spuriousness or error. The averages found in the raw data table in Appendix A illustrate that Ecuador based websites use “sustainability” more frequently than US based websites. “Ecotourism/eco-educational projects” failed to reach significance with a probability of 83.12% ($t = -1.457$, $p < .05$). This test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in the use of this variable among the two categories. “Indigenous rights” also failed to reach significance with a probability of 36.61% ($t = -0.488$, $p < .05$), thus revealing that there was no statistically significant difference in the use of this variable among US based and Ecuador based websites. “Biodiversity/ecosystem” also failed to reach significance with a probability of 25.37% ($t = -0.33$, $p < .05$). “Impacts environmental” and “impacts cultural” also failed to reach significance with probabilities of 30.59% and 17.98 %, respectively ($t = 0.402$, $p < .05$, $t = 0.232$, $p < .05$; respectively), as did “Grassroots resistance” with a probability of 71.32% ($t = 1.111$, $p < .05$). In sum, this test revealed that there were no statistically significant differences in the use of the variables “impacts environmental,” “impacts cultural,” and “grassroots resistance” among US based and Ecuador based websites.

Visual Representation

The photographs on Ecuador websites and US websites were compared. However, a t-test of the visual variables was not performed for these categories because there was no normal distribution in the data.⁷⁰ Therefore, I will present the types of photographs in terms of overall percentages for each category.⁷¹ (See Appendix B for a raw data table of the visual variables).

Human vs. Environment

There were a total of 104 photographs coded on the eight Ecuador websites. Of those 104 images, 24% were of environment (no people) and 76% were of indigenous as the central subject. There were a total of 60 photographs coded on the seven US websites. Of those 60 images, 25% were of environment (no people) and 75% were of indigenous as central subject.

Gender

There were a total of 79 photographs with indigenous as central subject on the Ecuador websites. Of those 79 photographs, 51% were male only; 21% were female only; and 28% were of male and female. Of the total 45 photographs with indigenous as central figures on the US websites, 62% were male only; 22% were female only; and 15% were male and female.

Dress of Indigenous

Of the 79 photographs with indigenous as central subject on the Ecuador websites, 18% wore traditional garb, 63% storebought dress and 18% a mix of traditional (spears, body paint, headdresses, etc.) and storebought dress (rubber boots, shorts, t-shirts, etc.). Of the 45 photographs with indigenous as central subject on the US websites, 22% wore traditional garb, 42% storebought dress and 36% a mix of traditional and storebought dress.

Discussion and Conclusions

Sustainability and Ecotourism

“Sustainability” is the only variable that reached significance in the textual t-test. While it was used, as predicted, on both US and Ecuador based websites, it was used more frequently on Ecuador websites. Fundación Selva Vida Sin Fronteras (FSVVSF), Oilwatch, Jatun Sacha, and Foundation for Integrated Education and Development (FUNDESIN) used the word most frequently among the Ecuador websites.

As Mirovitskaya and Asher suggest, the term is used ambiguously in most websites. However Jatun Sacha provides examples of what is meant by sustainable projects; and FSVVSF gives an organizational definition of the term. Examples of its use in four Ecuador websites are as follows:

FUNEDESIN: “We are dedicated to finding **sustainable** solutions in the struggle between the ideals of rain forest preservation and the realities of life in the Ecuadoran Amazon.”

“Our goal is to establish **sustainable** agricultural practices . . . [and] provide environmentally **sustainable** economic alternatives.”⁷²

Oilwatch: “The country [Ecuador] should diversify its economy by giving preference to **sustainable** activities.”⁷³

Jatun Sacha: [We are dedicated to] “a change in forest exploitation to a more **sustainable** economy [and] . . . **sustainable** activities such as community nurseries and demonstration plots.”⁷⁴

FSVSF: “**Sustainable** development implies a harmonious balance between human activity and environment protection.”⁷⁵

CONFENAIE’s website also uses the term as a way for indigenous peoples to continue traditional economies and ways of life. “We propose going ahead with alternative programs of development that consider **sustainable** processes that will permit the indigenous communities to live with dignity and harmony with our environment.”⁷⁶ As Marie Price asserts, the sustainable development paradigm appeals to Latin American NGOs because it links “environmental stewardship with needs of the poor.”⁷⁷ That assertion applies to the Ecuador NGOs in this sample. Furthermore, it is evident that these groups utilize the term as a symbolic resource and “catchphrase” to appeal to social constituents of the movement.

The results of the textual t-tests show that there is no statistically significant difference in the use of the “ecotourism” variable among Ecuador and US websites. Therefore, the prediction that ecotourism would be used frequently on both US and Ecuador websites is confirmed. Ecotourism is presented as an alternative economic activity to address poverty on both US and Ecuador NGO websites. For example Advocacy Project, a U.S. NGO, informs the reader that the “**ecotourism** industry under development in parts of the Oriente could provide jobs to many Ecuadorans by satisfying the curiosity of thousands of tourists without destroying the jungle.”⁷⁸ Three of the eight Ecuador organizations, FSVSF, FUNEDESIN and Jatun Sacha, sponsor ecotourism trips and have rainforest lodges where tourists can “make traditional pottery with an indigenous woman, take an early morning canoe ride to pick up local school children, and learn about sustainable living techniques in ecological cabins, complete with solar powered lights and

septic systems.”⁷⁹ Even CONFENAIE names ecotourism as one of its projected development projects.

While ecotourism can be critiqued as a form of hegemony that commodifies the indigenous as a spectacle or “Other,” it is significant that not only US NGOs use this discourse. The Ecuadoran NGOs and CONFENAIE’s use of ecotourism discourse reflects Foucault’s second notion of subject, that is subject tied to identity.⁸⁰ CONFENAIE and Ecuador NGOs’ participation in ecotourism programs allows foreign visitors to “make pottery” with indigenous subjects and reflects the embracing of a traditional indigenous identity. These groups consciously and strategically embrace their ethnicity and traditional ways of life as a way to generate income and preserve culture. Therefore, these NGOs utilize this term as a source of alternative development and a resource to appeal to First World constituents and tourists.

Human vs. Environment

The results of the textual t-test show that there is no statistically significant difference in the use of the variables “biodiversity/ecosystem” and “impacts environmental” among US and Ecuador based NGO websites. It was predicted that US groups would use this term statistically more frequently than Ecuador based groups given assertions that “western conservationists still cling to romantic, Eurocentric conceptions of nature as an empty, unspoiled wilderness, . . . in which the indigenous inhabitants of these “wilderness” are at best an inconvenient disruption of the great romantic myth”⁸¹ and strict goals of “altruistic preservation.” However, US groups and Ecuador groups use “biodiversity/ecosystem” to describe the region and focus on environmental impacts to inform the internet audience of the damage in the region by harmful petroleum extraction procedures. For example, a petition denouncing Petrobas’ plan to drill in Yasuni National Park on the Rainforest Action Network (RAN) site, states that the plan has “the potential to destroy this fragile **ecosystem**.”⁸² CONFENAIE claims that petroleum extraction “put at risk the conservation of our magnificent **ecosystems**.”⁸³ The Ecuador NGO, Acción Ecológica, tells the internet audience that “la reserva de Yasuní es uno de los lugares con mayor endemismo y **biodiversidad** del mundo” and that the Oriente has “valor por su **biodiversidad**.”⁸⁴ This sample did not illustrate the prediction that US groups would represent the Oriente region in terms of strict preservation and focus only on the flora and fauna. The visual representation category, *Human vs. Environment*, also powerfully illustrates that US and Ecuador NGOs in this sample link environmental conservation with human/cultural preservation.

Only 24% of images on Ecuador sites were of environment (no people) and only 25% of images on US sites were of environment (no people). Therefore, in terms of visual representation, Denevan's "pristine myth" is not evident in the US or Ecuador websites. Images of indigenous as central subjects were the overwhelming majority on US and Ecuador NGO websites, thus making the indigenous very visible and central to this movement.

Many times *biodiversity/ecosystem*, *environmental impacts* and *cultural impacts* were found in the same sentence or paragraph. The Ecuador NGO, Frente de Defensa de la Amazonia (FDA), claims that resource extraction causes the "perdida de la **biodiversidad** florística y faunística" as well as the "perdida de **cultura**."⁸⁵ Similarly, Acción Ecológica denounces "los impactos **ambientales** y **sociales**."⁸⁶ Like the results for the variables "biodiversity/ecosystem" and "impacts environmental," the textual t-test results also show no statistically significant difference in the use of the variables "indigenous rights," "impacts cultural" and "grass-roots resistance." Therefore, the prediction that Ecuador NGOs would focus on these variables statistically more frequently than US groups is not evident in this sample. US NGOs such as Pachamama Alliance and Amazon Watch denounce the "tragic disappearance of **indigenous cultures** [that] has captured the attention of millions of people"⁸⁷ and call on petroleum companies to "respect **indigenous peoples' rights** and halt its divisive tactics."⁸⁸ In a petition to the president of Ecuador, RAN claims that the country needs to "respect the ancestral rights of the Huaorani" and stop drilling in the Yasuni Park.⁸⁹

Gender and Dress of Indigenous Subjects

Women were portrayed as active agents in the documentaries at the local level. Women were also represented in the websites. 21% of the photographs on Ecuador websites were of women only and 22% of the photographs on US websites were of women. Women and men were portrayed in the same photograph on these websites as well (28% Ecuador and 15% US sites). While men were portrayed more frequently for each category, one can conclude that women were represented. However, what is most significant is the way in which the women were represented. Overall, women and men were portrayed as equal participants in the movement. When women were represented, they were shown speaking at or participating in community meetings, pointing out environmental destruction, or protesting in rallies/strikes in urban areas. The representation of women in active rather than submissive, traditional roles in

the photographs is significant because websites are virtual spaces that, once constructed, are open to countless audiences.⁹⁰

The results of indigenous dress were surprising. It was predicted that the variable “traditional garb” would be most frequent in US and Ecuador websites. The literature suggests that essentialized indigenous signifiers (headdresses, feathers, etc.) that conjure traditional and ancestral authority characterize this movement. As Alyson Brysk writes, “South American Indians were able to develop and project this identity internationally through a politics of information.”⁹¹ Additionally, Conklin and Graham argue that “the symbolic value of Indian images is especially important to NGOs since their fund-raising depends heavily on voluntary contributions from sympathetic donors.”⁹² However, the percentages illustrate that traditional garb was not the most represented image of the indigenous on websites. When the variables “traditional garb” and “mixed” are combined, only 36% of the photographs on Ecuador websites include culturally constructed/accepted signs of indigenesness. Therefore, 63% of the photographs on Ecuador websites represent the indigenous in storebought clothing. When the “traditional garb” and “mixed” variables are combined for the US websites, 58% of the total photographs include culturally specific signs of indigenesness. While I cannot conclude *why* there are fewer indigenous signifiers on Ecuador websites, it is possible that the variable “indigenous garb” was misspecified or too limited as a category. It is also possible that even though Conklin and Graham as well as Brosius’ research proves an increasing use of essentialized signifiers of indigenesness, perhaps these signifiers are historically becoming more diluted. Future research should explore these questions; for now, I conclude that these findings do present challenges to the New Social Movement Theory claim that indigenous individuals actively and strategically rely on their ethnic identity to mobilize, generate resources/support, and create change. Given this claim, it is surprising that the percentage of traditional signifiers is not higher for Ecuador sites. Still, Beth Conklin’s claim that “Western notions of [indigenous] cultural identity privilege exotic body images as an index of authenticity”⁹³ is evident because the percentage of traditional signifiers on US groups is 22% higher than Ecuador groups. Therefore, it is evident in the sample that outside groups do, indeed, use essentialized signifiers of indigenesness.

Significance in the Silence

The word “pristine” was originally selected as a textual variable; however, it was excluded for the t-test because it was only used seven times among all the fifteen websites. While it can be concluded that both the US and Ecuador based NGOs link environmental conservation with cultural preservation, it is interesting that only the US websites used this term. None of the Ecuador based websites used the term “pristine” to describe the region. While a frequency of seven is not an overwhelming number, it is interesting that several US organizations evoked this word to describe the environment and Ecuador groups did not, particularly in light of Denevan’s “pristine myth” and Mowforth and Munt’s analysis of Western conservation groups.

A Contested Space of Social Action?

This chapter began with the question of international solidarity and a shared sense of culture within the Social Movement Industry of international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It began with the premise that websites and participation in cyberspace is a form of expressive and symbolic action for change as it is understood within New Social Movement Theory. Therefore, textual rhetoric such as sustainability and indigenous rights are symbolic resources used by NGOs to appeal to international audiences. Visual images such as indigenous in traditional garb are also symbolic resources to motivate internet users to become conscious constituents of the indigenous Oriente movement and donate resources to the cause, or at the very least participate in letter writing campaigns and petitions to halt oil exploration and extraction in the Oriente. While these visual signifiers of indigeness (feathers, face paint, beads, spears.) were not seen as frequently on websites as in the documentaries discussed in chapter five, there was similarity in the type of signifiers that were seen. That is, when the indigenous were portrayed on websites with traditional signifiers, as in the documentaries, they were impermanent in nature; still, feathered headdresses and facepaint were the most common. The motivating question focused on the representation of this struggle by analyzing the intersection of external NGOs (United States) and internal NGOs (Ecuador) representation/framing of this struggle. Is this “middle ground” of virtual political action a contested and “raucous, yet highly structured battleground” as Conklin, Graham, and Brosius assert that it is?

With the exception of the textual variable “sustainability” and the visual variable “indigenous dress,” the representation of the indigenous resistance in the Oriente region by US

and Ecuador based NGOs illustrates remarkable consistency, suggesting a coherent social movement community. The indigenous are portrayed as active agents in this struggle and indigenous rights/cultural preservation is as important as environmental conservation among US and Ecuador based NGOs. While this study does not attempt to determine whether the Ecuador NGO/indigenous voluntary associations' discourse in the websites is a reflection of First World expectations and discourses or vice versa, it does conclude that there are no competing discourses. Consequently, within the framework of Resource Mobilization Theory, this illustrates a positive potential for change as social movement organizations (NGOs) do not proclaim competing messages, goals and/or strategies to appeal to international audiences. Therefore, the groups in this sample do not seem to be in conflict for resources or audiences.

It is clear that there is consistency in the Oriente message. This study further confirms the assertion that mobilization in Ecuador unites environmental rights and human/indigenous rights agendas and audiences. However, future research should explore whether this image of solidarity in the discourse on websites is representative of the overall discourse throughout the Social Movement Industry or if it is unique to the Oriente's social movement community (SMC). In other words, is this conclusion of solidarity merely a reflection of the mediated nature of the internet? Who are the authors of these texts and photographers of the images? Unlike printed and scholarly sources, texts and photographs on websites rarely have bylines and authors. Therefore, it is possible that literature/photos from a RAN or Sierra Club staffer may also end up on the websites of Oilwatch, CONFENAIE or Acción Ecológica. Additionally, the categories of US and Ecuador based websites may be artificial as the boundaries of authorship and space is blurred with regard to the internet. Similarly, a website constructed in Ecuador in English (as was the case for five of the Ecuador websites) is meant for an international audience, rather than consumption only for the Ecuadoran or Spanish-speaking audience only. Therefore, the notion of authorship and space is further expanded. Websites, after all, are mediated virtual spaces and much of what is represented is due to web designers and companies. Future research should explore who or what NGOs/companies construct the websites.

It is also beyond the scope of this study to answer questions of efficacy. Future research should focus on the efficacy of websites as a tool to generate resources and support for the movement. How many internet users are actually converted to conscience constituents of the movement? How many send on-line petitions, donate financially, and/or volunteer in

“sustainable development” projects sponsored by the organizations in the Oriente? Efficacy may also be measured by the accuracy of the information presented on the websites. Are websites regularly updated or are they outdated, as is the case for the CONFENAIE website that has not been updated since 1999? Many questions remain regarding the use of websites as symbolic resource and vehicle for social movement action. Nevertheless, this study concludes that among these fifteen websites there is a SMC within the environmental rights and human rights Social Movement Industry. Both external and internal actors project a common vision of the struggle for change in the Oriente region.

CONCLUSION

The Contributions of Social Movement Theory

This thesis has argued that the indigenous movement of Ecuador illustrates the value of a syncretic integration of Resource Mobilization Theory and New Social Movement Theory. It has shown that filmmakers along with international and national nongovernmental organizations constitute the transnational social movement industry (RMT) that works for and on behalf of indigenous peoples. Most importantly, it has explored the internationalized nature of this movement and examined ethnicity as a symbolic resource (NSMT), as well as an implicit demand in the indigenous discourse. Therefore, NSMT's focus on the micro level of identity construction is an important contribution to understanding this movement. This thesis has focused on this process of identity construction and has explored this social movement as a process of expressive action in which social actors negotiate, produce, and reproduce meaning with the utilization of technology. In the context of the discourse analysis of the documentaries in chapter five and the content analysis of the websites in chapter six, this meaning is understood as the construction and representation of ethnic identity.

The international and national organizations that sponsor websites in my sample are an illustration of RMT's concept of a SMI formed between formally organized SMOs. After all, organizations must have ample material resources (money for server space, technology, and skilled web designers) to establish and sustain websites. Therefore, RMT's concept of formal networks within the SMI is evident in the website sample. However, as Buechler argues, one of NSMT's contribution to the analysis of social mobilization and action is the concept of a social movement community (SMC), that is, the cooperation of "informally organized networks of movement activists."¹ Consequently, despite the existence of formally organized SMOs such as CONAIE and CONFENAIE, the Oriente movement is sustained by the level of informal networks in the SMC. The filmmakers themselves may form part of the international SMI, but many of the individuals imaged in the documentaries are not part of formal organizations, yet are active in the movement and encompass the SMC that sustains the movement. Individuals such as community members who do not formally join CONAIE and CONFENAIE, medical professionals who educate community members on the dangers of petroleum exposure, and elders in the communities that allow participants such as Hilda and Neomi to investigate environmental damage contribute to movement sustainability even though they may not be

formally networked. The very physical and cultural geography of the Oriente region with its wet climate, remote roads, and lack of infrastructure makes the formation of formal organizations and networks difficult. Therefore, the SMC of informal networks and social actors must and does contribute to the sustainability and success of the Oriente movement.

Ethnic Identity as a Symbolic Resource in Documentaries and Websites

NSMT argues that in order for aggrieved individuals to come together in SMOs and/or informal networks of social action that the individuals must go through the “process through which individuals recognize that they share certain orientations in common and on that basis decide to act together.”² In the case of the Oriente the orientation that the aggrieved individuals have in common is ethnicity. Not only is ethnicity a common orientation for indigenous mobilization; the preservation of ethnicity and traditional ways of life is central mobilization as well. However, the process of recognizing and portraying the commonality of ethnicity is characterized by potential for conflict and an active, ongoing process of negotiation. Therefore, the concept of ethnic identity is not an “innate essence but a social process of construction,”³ and social actors must come together and decide how and to whom this ethnic identity will be represented. Significantly, too, the process of identity formation explains *why* individuals become involved in formal and/or informal levels of participation in the movement. The participation in this process binds them personally and emotionally to movement goals because preservation of ethnicity is both goal and resource.

The theoretical contributions of Stuart Hall, Jorge Larraín Ibáñez, Roland Barthes, Alison Brysk, and Beth A. Conklin explored in previous chapters illuminate how and why visual signifiers of indigenesness, such as face paint and feathered headdresses, are strategically used to evoke authority and authenticity at the local community level as well as the public level in proclaiming movement goals. While visual signifiers of indigenesness are evident in both documentaries and websites, the documentaries illustrate the complex and ever-evolving nature of indigenous dress and ethnicity, because the indigenous donned and removed these indigenous signifiers with ease and without conflict. These signifiers, therefore, did not represent an essential truth grounded in empirical reality, but were used as powerful symbols of authority within the social movement. Surprisingly, these signifiers were not evoked as frequently on Ecuadoran websites as in the documentaries. Without knowing the photographers of the images, the contexts in which these photographs are taken, and/or the webdesigners of the websites, it is

difficult to conclude why these signifiers of indigenosity were not represented more frequently as the symbol of authority. However, when signifiers were used, they too were what Beth A. Conklin terms “impermanent in nature” and reflect Peter Brosius’ concept of essentialized signifiers (removable feathered headdresses and charcoal or *achiote* face paint). Therefore, one can conclude that, like the documentaries, this also represents the fluid and strategic nature of ethnicity as symbolic resource.

Language and discourse also represent ethnic identity. Alison Brysk argues that ethnicity is “a form of information that has empowered a movement rich in identity, but poor in everything else.”⁴ Therefore, the discourse used in documentaries and symbolic rhetoric used in websites construct and disseminate information/meaning to the international community regarding the indigenous and the Oriente region. One characteristic of the discourse used in documentaries that delineates from textual representation in websites was the utilization of discourse that evoked an ancestral/warrior heritage and an emotional, mythologized past. The use of parable that evokes the oral tradition of indigenous culture, references to the “old days,” and assertion of traditions that “have existed for thousands of years” in *Flames in the Forest* and *Trinkets & Beads* evoke emotional and mythologized connections to the region. In contrast, the websites did not illustrate the indigenous as emotionally and historically connected to place and were more “political” in nature with references to sustainability and ecotourism. Perhaps the medium of documentary lends itself to illuminate the complex and informal nature of participation and can evoke emotion with the simultaneous juxtaposition of image, camera angles, music, and narration. While links and animated images prevent websites from being linear or one-dimensional, documentaries still seem to provide more dimension and possibilities for participants to actively address the audience.

A Mobilization Success Story?

The fate of the indigenous in the Oriente region is undetermined. The indigenous uprisings of the 1990s and “strikes” have not driven out “the Company” and oil development and petroleum extraction continues in the Ecuadorian Amazon Basin. The plaintiffs in the *Aguinda v. Texaco* suit continue to seek remedy and the Judge in the Lago Agrio lawsuit has yet to issue a finding. Concerned filmmakers, international and Ecuadorian activists, indigenous actors, and nongovernmental organizations still strive to inform international audiences of the environmental

contamination and disregard for indigenous rights/culture in the Oriente region particularly through 20th and late 20th century technologies.

As noted in chapter six, the question of efficacy of the indigenous movement of the Oriente is beyond the scope of this study. However, this study did begin with the question of whether technology and the social movement model of “Think locally—Act globally”⁵ empowered indigenous peoples. It also began with the questions of whether the indigenous are romanticized, perhaps even commodified, by international environmental and indigenous rights NGOs and whether international participation in the movement creates a Saidian hegemonic relationship as the Western community interprets and represents indigenous groups. In light of the continued oil exploration in the Oriente region, one could pessimistically assert that the indigenous of Ecuador are losing the battle. However, I assert that the indigenous are empowered. As evidenced in the documentaries, they are the meaning makers of their own ethnic representation because they have allowed the filmmakers to film and project their ethnicity to the global community. The content analysis of the websites illustrates remarkable consistency in the Oriente message among US based NGOs and Ecuadoran NGOs. The significance of this cannot be underestimated because it provides evidence of a well-networked and well-organized transnational social movement. Therefore, it does appear that a collaborative relationship exists in this sample even when external groups represent the indigenous. Similarly, the filmmakers’ overall agendas were to provide a forum from which indigenous social actors could represent themselves and tell the world their story. Even when there was a lack of indigenous participation in the documentary, as in the case of *Saviors of the Forest*, the filmmakers actively challenged and critiqued the environmentalist discourse that could potentially commodify the indigenous or represent them as inferior subjects who need external actors to explain to them their own lived experiences.

The essentialized indigenous signifiers that are utilized in documentaries and to a lesser extent in the websites do arguably “romanticize” the indigenous. However, what is significant is that the indigenous have recognized the political potency of this romanticized imaging. Therefore, the strategy of putting on and taking off romanticized, essentialized signifiers illustrates political astuteness and empowerment. In this way, the indigenous are proclaiming their place at the global environmental and indigenous rights table. The international audience is listening. The indigenous movement of Ecuador represents what Henry Veltmeyer and James

Petras call a “shift towards a new subject”⁶ as indigenous peoples actively and creatively create new spaces for agency. This shift is significant because indigenous peoples are active, empowered agents of social change rather than subject Others who receive the residual effects of someone else’s movement.

Textual: US based groups	Advocacy Project	Conserv Internet	Amazon Alliance	Amazon Watch	Sierra Club	RAN	Pachamama	Total	Average
sustainability/sustainable projects	5	1	2	2	0	0	5	15	2.14
eco-tourism/eco-educational programs	3	2	2	1	0	1	0	9	1.29
indigenous rights	7	0	1	15	8	8	13	52	7.43
biodiversity/ecosystem	5	11	2	7	0	6	22	41	5.86
impacts "environmental"	20	7	4	12	10	10	7	70	10.00
impacts "cultural"	10	2	6	13	3	8	9	51	7.29
grass-roots resistance	13	0	7	8	1	5	6	40	5.71

Raw data of visual variables

Textual: Ecuador groups	Accion Ecologica	FSVSF	FDA	Oilwatch	Jatun Sacha	CONAIE	CONFEN	FUNDESIN	TOTAL	Average
sustainability/sustainable projects	4	15	4	10	15	1	2	21	72	9.00
eco-tourism/eco-educational programs	0	6	0	1	8	0	4	14	33	4.13
indigenous rights	9	12	6	8	0	11	27	1	74	9.25
biodiversity/ecosystem	5	18	1	13	7	3	6	1	54	6.75
impacts "environmental"	15	16	10	8	3	6	8	6	72	9.00
impacts "cultural"	11	14	7	6	2	2	11	1	54	6.75
grass-roots resistance	6	1	10	1	0	7	2	0	27	3.38

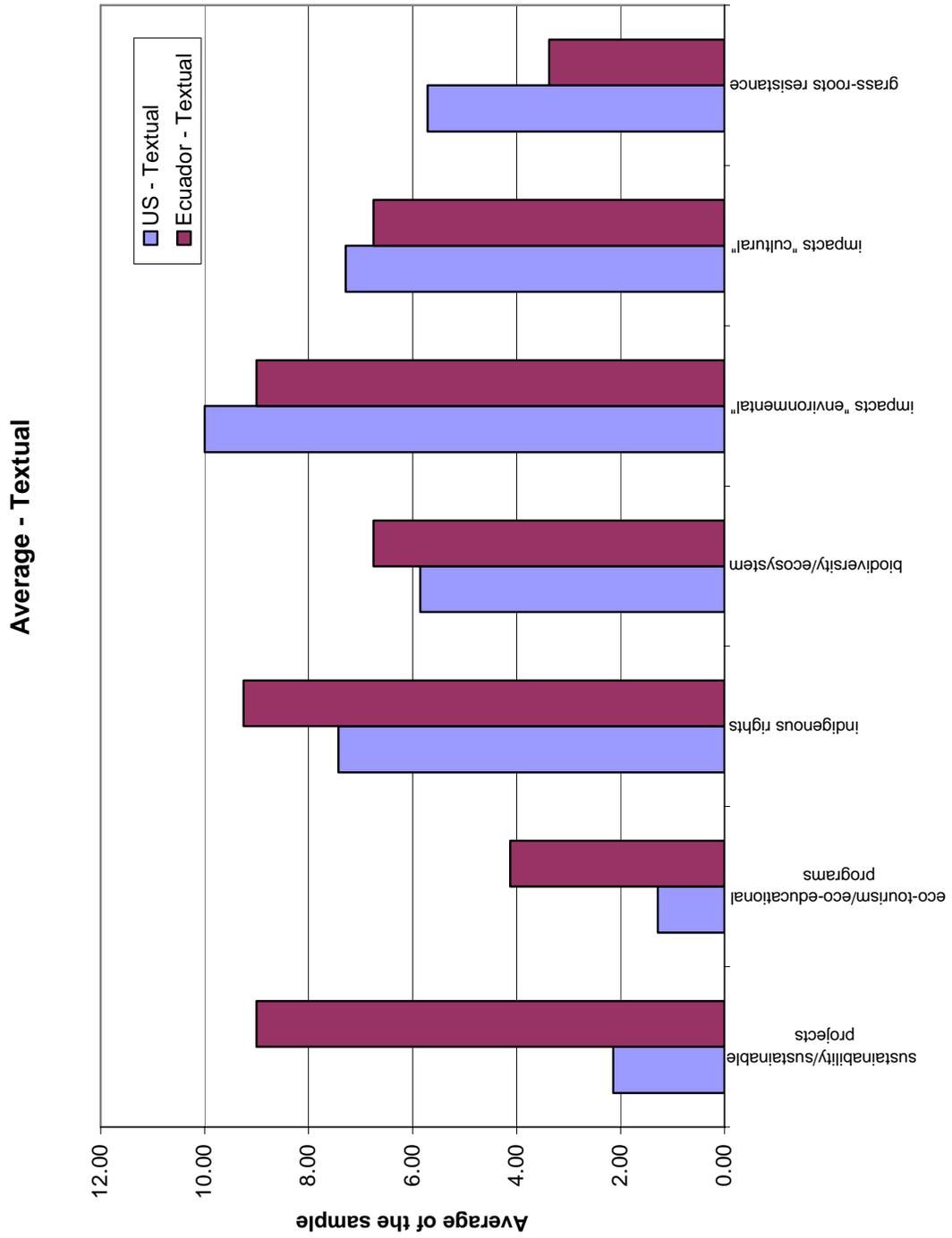
Raw data of textual variables

Visual: Ecuador websites											Average
	Accion Ecologica	FVSF	FDA	Oilwatch	Jatun Sacha	CONAIE	CONFEN	FUNDESIN	TOTAL		
HUMAN VS ENVIRONMENT											
# of photos of environment (n/p)	7	13	2	2	9	0	0	3	25		4.5
# of photos with indigenous as central figure	5	2	13	19	14	22	0	4	79		9.875
GENDER											
female	0	1	1	10	0	4	0	1	17		2.125
male	3	1	5	8	10	12	0	1	40		5
male and female	2	0	7	1	4	6	0	2	22		2.75
DRESS OF INDIGENOUS											
traditional garb	2	1	2	2	0	7	0	0	14		1.75
"storebought" clothes	2	0	10	15	14	5	0	4	50		6.25
mixed	1	1	1	1	0	10	0	0	14		1.75

Raw data of visual variables

Visual US Websites	Advocacy Project	Conserv Internat	Amazon Alliance	Amazon Watch	Sierra Club	RAN	Pachamama	TOTAL	Average
HUMAN VS ENVIRONMENT									
# of photos of environment (n/p)	9	3	1	9	1	3	12	15	5.428571
# of photos with indigenous as central figure	5	0	15	8	1	3	13	45	6.428571
GENDER									
female	0	0	5	3	1	0	1	10	1.428571
male	3	0	7	4	0	2	12	28	4
male and female	2	0	3	1	0	1	0	7	1
DRESS OF INDIGENOUS									
traditional garb	0	0	2	4	0	2	2	10	1.428571
"storebought" clothes	4	0	7	3	1	1	3	19	2.714286
mixed	1	0	6	1	0	0	8	16	2.285714

Raw data of visual variables



Notes

Chapter 1

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7. Moustafa Bayoumi and Andrew Rubin, eds., *The Edward Said Reader* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 87.
8. Claire Smith and Graeme K. Ward, eds., *Indigenous Cultures in an Interconnected World* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), 3.
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10. Judith Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law: Petroleum Development in Protected Natural Areas and Indigenous Homelands in the Ecuadoran Amazon," *Hastings International & Comparative Law Review* 14 (Symposium Issue 1991): 857. [hereinafter "Disregarding Environmental Law"] Portions of this article are adapted from Kimerling's landmark work, *Amazon Crude* (Natural Resource Defense Council, 1991). See *Amazon Crude* for more extensive background on petroleum extraction and its effects on indigenous peoples of the Oriente.
11. Ibid., 858.
12. Ibid., 849.
13. Christopher Walker, *Trinkets & Beads*, videocassette.
14. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law;" "Dislocation, Evangelization, and Contamination: Amazon Crude and the Huaorani People," in *Ethnic Conflict and Governance in*

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15. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law," 849.

16. Ibid., 850-851.

17. Ibid., 851.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 849.

21. See also Gerard Colby and Charlotte Denet, *Thy Will Be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon: Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995). This book is also considered a foundational book for the study of petroleum extraction and its effects on indigenous peoples and the environment.

22. Joe Kane, *Savages* (New York: Vintage Departures, 1985), 70.

23. Kimerling, "Dislocation, Evangelization, and Contamination: Amazon Crude and the Huaorani People," 77.

24. Ibid.

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26. Kimerling, "Oil, Lawlessness, and Indigenous Struggles in Ecuador's Oriente," in *Green Guerillas: Environmental Conflicts and Initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Helen Collinson (London: Latin America Bureau, 1996), 62.
[Hereinafter "Oil, Lawlessness, and Indigenous Struggles"]

27. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law," 894.

28. Ibid.

29. Judith Kimerling, "Oil, Lawlessness, and Indigenous Struggles," 62.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law", 872.

33. Ibid., 865-866.
34. Ibid., 872.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., 883.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Kane, *Savages*, 157.
41. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law," 860.
42. Ibid., 861.
43. Kimerling, "Dislocation, Evangelization, and Contamination," 83-84.
44. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law," 875.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., 886.
47. Ibid., 875-876.
48. Kimerling, "Oil, Lawlessness, and Indigenous Struggles," 64.
49. Ibid.
50. An estimated "235, 600 million cubic feet of gas have been burned in the Oriente since oil production began in 1972." Ibid.
51. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law," 866.
52. Kimerling, "Oil, Lawlessness, and Indigenous Struggle," 62.
53. Kimerling, "Disregarding Environmental Law," 877.
54. Ibid.

55. Immanuel Wallerstein, "1968, Revolution in the World-System: Theses and Queries" (keynote paper presented at the "1968 as a Global Event" Symposium, Brooklyn College, 20-21 October 1988), Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economics, Historical Systems, and Civilizations, State University of New York at Binghamton, Binghamton, New York, 1.

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58. Ibid., 11.

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63. Ibid., 13.

64. Calderón, Piscitelli, Reyna, "Social Movements: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 23.

65. Ibid., 25.

66. Ibid., 35.

67. Roldolfo Stavenhagen, "Indigenous Peoples: Emerging Actors in Latin America," in *Ethnic Conflict and Governance in Comparative Perspective: Working Paper Series no. 215 of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Latin American Program Conference held November 15, 1994*, ed. Ralph Espach (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, 1995), 1.

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70. Catherine E. Walsh, "The (Re)articulation of Political Subjectivities and Colonial Difference in Ecuador: Reflections on Capitalism and the Geopolitics of Knowledge," 68.

71. Alison Brysk, "Turning Weakness into Strength," 39.

72. Ibid., 38.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid., 39.
75. Chris Jochnick, "Confronting the Impunity of Non-State Actors: New Fields for the Promotion of Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 21.1 (1999): 57.
76. Kristina Egan, "Forging New Alliances in Ecuador's Amazon," *SAIS Review* 16:2 (1996): 131.
77. Thomas O'Connor, "We are Part of Nature: Indigenous People's Rights as a Basis of Environmental Protection in the Amazon Basin," *Colorado Journal of International Environmental Law & Policy* 5 (Winter 1994): 203.
78. Kane, *Savages*.
79. Egan, "Forging New Alliances in Ecuador's Amazon," 131.
80. Maria Garrido and Alexander Halavais, "Mapping Networks of Support for the Zapatista Movement," in *Cyberactivism: Online Activism in Theory and Practice*, eds. Martha McCaughey and Michael D. Ayers (New York: Routledge, 2003), *passim*.
81. See Faye Ginsburg, Lila Abu-Lughod, and Brian Larkin, *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Ginsburg, "Embedded Aesthetics: Creating a Discursive Space for Indigenous Media," *Cultural Anthropology* 9:3 (August 1994): 365-382; Faye Ginsburg, "Indigenous Media: Faustian Contract or Global Village?" *Cultural Anthropology* 6:1 (Feb. 1991): 92-112; Claire Smith and Graeme K. Ward, *Indigenous Cultures in an Interconnected World* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000); and Laura Graham, "How Should an Indian Speak?: Amazonian Indians and the Symbolic Politics of Language in the Global Public Sphere," in *Indigenous Movements, Self-Representation, and the State in Latin America*, eds. Kay B. Warren and Jean E. Jackson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 181-228.
82. Varese, "Ethnopolitics of Indian Resistance in Latin America," 65.
83. Egan, "Forging New Alliances," 136.
84. James D. Bowen, "Decolonizing Democratic Hegemony: The Indigenous Movement and Democratization in Ecuador," MA thesis, Virginia Tech, 2002, 5.
85. Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the Present* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 109.
86. Jorge Larraín Ibáñez, "The Concept of Identity," in *National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America*, eds. Mercedes F. Durán-Cogan and Antonio Gómez-Moriana (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1.

87. Stavenhagen, "Indigenous Peoples: Emerging Actors in Latin America," 10.
88. Stuart Hall, "The Work of Representation," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 25.
89. Eduardo Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization: The Need for Integration," in *Organizing Dissent: Contemporary Social Movements in Theory and Practice*, ed. William K. Carroll (Canada: Garamond Press, 1992), 22.

Notes

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4. McCarthy and Zald, "Resource Mobilization," 16.
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10. Alan Scott, *Ideology and the New Social Movements* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990): 38.
11. Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization," 24.
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17. Johnston, et al., "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements," 4.
18. Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization," 24.
19. Joe Foweraker, *Theorizing Social Movements* (London: Pluto Press, 1995): 16.
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25. Ibid., 41
26. McCarthy and Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," 20.
27. Ibid.
28. Zald, and McCarthy, "Social Movement Industries: Competition and Conflict Among SMOs," 162.
29. Ibid.
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32. Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization," 49.
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40. Zald and McCarthy, "Social Movement Industries: Competition and Conflict Among SMOs," in *Social Movements in an Organizational Society: Collected Essays*, eds. John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1987): 161.
41. McCarthy and Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements," 21.
42. Ibid., 22.
43. Zald and McCarthy, "Social Movement Industries," 161.
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46. Ibid., 164.
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49. McCarthy and Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements," 23.
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59. Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization," 46.
60. Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization," Denton, "Theoretical Perspectives on Social Movements," and Foweraker, *Theorizing Social Movements*, *passim*.
61. Johnston, et al., "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements," 22.
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65. Ibid.
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69. Ibid., 44.
70. Ibid., 36.
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72. Denton, "Theoretical Perspectives on Social Movements," *New Zealand Sociology* 13:2 (November 1998): 221.
73. Buechler, "New Social Movement Theories," 218.
74. Ibid., 222.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid.
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88. Buechler, "Beyond Resource Mobilization? Emerging Trends in Social Movement Theory," *The Sociological Quarterly* 34:2 (1993): 227.
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90. Melucci, *Nomads of the Present*, 35.
91. Ibid., 31.
92. Ibid., 34.
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94. Buechler, "Beyond Resource Mobilization?", 228.
95. Melucci, *Nomads of the Present*, 34-35.
96. Ibid.
97. Melucci, "A Strange Kind of Newness," 117.
98. Ibid.

99. Buechler, "Beyond Resource Mobilization?", 228.

100. Ibid.

101. Melucci, "A Strange Kind of Newness," 111.

102. Ibid. Indeed, the 1992 two-week march to Quito symbolically "retraced the 180-mile ascent of the Andes undertaken a century ago by indigenous chiefs." Groups such as Unión de los Comuneros "Emiliano Zapata" of Mexico and actors in the Katarista movement in Bolivia also "employ vernacular practices, often rooted in the distant past, to articulate their complex demands." See Peter Winn, *Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean*, updated edition. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999): 263; and Calderon, Piscitelli, and Reyna, "Social Movements: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 21.

103. Buechler, "Beyond Resource Mobilization?" 231.

104. Canel, "New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilization," 46.

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Notes

Chapter 3

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5. Melina Selverston-Scher, *Ethnopolitics in Ecuador: Indigenous Rights and the Strengthening of Democracy* (Miami: North-South Center Press, 2001): 5.
6. Allen Gerlach, *Indians, Oil, and Politics: A Recent History of Ecuador* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 2003): 6.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., 9.
9. Quichua refers to the ethnic group as well as the language spoken by these indigenous.
10. Gerlach, *Indians, Oil, and Politics*, 9.
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13. Ibid., 10.
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20. Winn, *The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 259.

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24. Ibid., 261.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 262.
28. Ibid.
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30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., 263.
33. Calderón, et al. "Social Movements: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 24.
34. Winn, *The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean*, 263.
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36. Calderón, et al. "Social Movements: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 24.
37. Egan, "Forging New Alliances in Ecuador's Amazon," *SAIS Review* 16:2 (1996): 130.
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39. Ibid.
40. Kane, *Savages*, 174 and 200-201.
41. Ibid., 89.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid., 21.

44. Ibid., 9-10.

45. Egan, "Forging New Alliances in Ecuador's Amazon," 136.

46. Ibid.

47. Brysk, "Turning Weakness into Strength," 38.

48. Ibid.

49. Kane, *Savages*, 206.

50. Egan, "Forging New Alliances in Ecuador's Amazon," 136.; "Ecochicas" is a term used by Moi in Kane, *Savages*, 206. The term is used in the context of a meeting with representatives from environmental groups in Coca. Most of the representatives were women and Moi joined them in a party after the meeting. Kane further writes, "The *ecochicas* were young and articulate and well educated; most of them had children; several were divorced--still a rarity in heavily Catholic Ecuador. A few lived together communally, sharing child care and rent. They worked hard and they played hard. They put in twelve- and fourteen hour days; they set up picket lines; they occupied offices; they confronted businessmen; they made noise; they danced all night. This was old stuff in the United States, but it was bold and a little dangerous in staid and patriarchal Ecuador. The *ecochicas* were out there, on the edge, making up the rules as they went along," 206.

51. Egan, "Forging New Alliances in Ecuador's Amazon," 136.

Notes

Chapter 4

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2. Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 71.
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6. Dr. Slembrouck, University of Gent, Rozier. [http:// bank.rug.ac.be/da](http://bank.rug.ac.be/da).
7. Stuart Hall, "The Work of Representation," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: SAGE Publications, 1997).
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10. Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), 194.
11. Hall, "The Work of Representation," 45.
12. Ibid., 55.
13. Ibid.
14. Hall, "Introduction,"1.
15. Ibid., 56.
16. William Denevan, "The Pristine Myth: The Landscape of the Americas in 1492," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 82:3 (Sep. 1992): 370.
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18. Hall, "The Work of Representation," 55.

19. My purpose here is not to present an over-simplified and dichotomized concept of subject identity formation. “Someone else’s control” is not limited to external groups. Conflicts of power and authority are certainly present in groups such as CONAIE and CONFENAIE. Yet, this concept of two meanings of subjects is helpful when exploring the issue of agenda and representation.

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21. *Ibid.*, 77.

22. Henrietta Lidchi, “The Poetics and the Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures,” in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), 201.

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24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*, 202.

26. Larraín Ibáñez, “The Concept of Identity,” 14.

27. *Ibid.*, 14, 15.

28. *Ibid.*, 14.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*, 21.

33. *Ibid.*, 22.

34. *Ibid.*

35. Melucci, “A Strange Kind of Newness,” 110.

36. *Ibid.*, 111.

37. Brysk, “Turning Weakness into Strength,” 48.

38. Ibid. Paikan, a Kayapo leader from Brazil, illustrates the significance of this shift to discourse as a strategic avenue for social change and mobilization, commenting, “In the old days, my people were great warriors. Now, instead of war clubs, we are using words.”

Notes

Chapter 5

1. Julianne Burton, "Toward A History of Social Documentary in Latin America," in *The Social Documentary in Latin America*, ed. Julianne Burton (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990), 3.

2. Bill Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 32.

3. Ibid., 24.

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6. Ibid., 28.

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9. Ibid., 32.

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11. Ibid., 33.

12. Ibid., 32.

13. Burton, "Toward a History of Social Documentary," 4.

14. Ibid.

15. Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*, 33.

16. Burton, "Towards a History of Social Documentary in Latin America," 4.

17. Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concept in Documentary*, 33.

18. Burton, "Social Documentary," 5.

19. Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*, 33.

20. Ibid., 111.

21. Ibid., 111-112.
22. Hall, "Introduction," 1.
23. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 111.
24. Ibid.
25. Walker, *Trinkets & Beads*.
26. As the credits role, Joe Kane is thanked for having contributed to the documentary. Therefore, in many ways *Trinkets & Beads* can be described as an extension of *Savages*.
27. Larraín Ibáñez, "The Concept of Identity," 14.
28. Walker, *Trinkets & Beads*.
29. Christian Hansen, Catherine Needham, and Bill Nichols, "Pornography, Ethnography, and the Discourses of Power," in *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*, Bill Nichols (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 217.
30. Ibid.
31. Burton, "Social Documentary," 4.
32. Walker, *Trinkets & Beads*.
33. This use of music functions as a *leitmotif*. A *leitmotif* is a musical phrase used to announce or identify the presence of a recurring idea, theme, or person/character in an orchestral or operatic composition. "Dramatically, [the leitmotif] may serve simply to identify persons, events, and the like, or they may provide foreshadowing or reminiscence of such elements in the drama." See Don Michael Randel, *Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978), 272.
34. Ibid.
35. Walker, *Trinkets & Beads*.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Films for the Humanities & Sciences, *Flames in the Forest*, videocassette.

45. Barthes presents his concept of myth within the framework of a Panzani advertisement for pasta and canned vegetables. Like an Italian cornucopia, the items are shown spilling out of a white string bag and fresh vegetables surround the bag. Barthes argues that the ad is a “myth about Italian national culture.” That is, the “signifiers” (the packages of pasta, canned vegetables/sauce, a tomato, peppers, the string bag, etc) create a “completed message or sign that is linked to a second set of signifieds—a broad, ideological . . . concept of “Italian-ness and becomes a message about the essential meaning of Italian-ness as a national culture.” See Hall, “The Work of Representation,” 39-41.

46. Larraín Ibáñez, “The Concept of Identity,” 15.

47. Hall, “The Spectacle of the ‘Other,’” 225.

48. Ibid., 257.

49. *Flames in the Forest*

50. Ibid.

51. I present this dialogue exactly as it was translated in subtitles on the documentary. While I think this was an accurate translation, I think it is important to present the filmmaker’s translation/interpretation of the exchange rather than my own.

52. *Flames in the Forest*

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid. This parable is quoted as was translated on the video.

55. Ibid.

56. “Authentic” is used cautiously. Authentic should not be interpreted as “real” or “empirical” representations that are grounded in an actual truth. As explored in chapter three, representation is an evolving construction based on the negotiation of meaning across time. I use

“authentic” to illustrate the significance of indigenous self-constructed/negotiated representation as opposed to external/international representations.

57. Texaco merged with Chevron in 2001, thus becoming Chevron-Texaco. However, the court case was brought to the United States in 1993 before Texaco and Chevron merged. Therefore, many of the community members of the Oriente region continue to refer to it simply as Texaco.

58. The attorneys for the plaintiffs are: Joseph C. Kohn, Myles H. Malman, Martin J. D’Urso, and Diana Liberto from Kohn, Nasta and Graf, P.C. in Philadelphia; Cristobal Bonifaz , John Bonifaz and Steven R. Donziger from Massachussetts; and Amy Damen from Sullivan & Damen in White Plains, New York. (*Aguinda v. Texaco, Inc.*, Civ. 7527).

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Tort is a civil law term, which is used for a wrongful act for which damages can be sought by the injured party. See *Websters Dictionary*; and Lisa Lambert, “At the Crossroads of Environmental and Human Rights Standards: *Aguinda v. Texaco, Inc.*: Using the Alien Tort Claims Act to Hold Multinational Corporate Violators of International Laws Accountable in U.S. Courts,” *Journal of Transnational Law & Policy* 10:1 (Fall 2000): 111.

62. Ibid.

63. Jim Barthold, “ChevronTexaco Prepares for Battle in Jungle Courthouse,” *Corporate Legal Times*, February 2004, online.

64. Lambert, “At the Crossroads,” 112.

65. *Aguinda v. Texaco, Inc.*, 1994 WL 142006 (S.D.N.Y, April 11, 1994).

66. Kimerling, “Dislocation, Evangelization, and Contamination: Amazon Crude and the Huorani People,” in *Ethnic Conflict and Governance in Comparative Perspective: Working Paper Series no. 215 of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Latin American Program Conference held November 15, 1994*, ed. Ralph Espach (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, 1995), 89.

67. *Aguinda v. Texaco*, 303 F. 3d 470 (U.S. App. 2002) LexisNexis 16540.

68. Ibid.

69. Lou Dematteis and Suzana Sawyer, “Boiling Oil: ChevronTexaco faces Ecuador’s Courts,” *Institute for Public Affairs in These Times*, Dec. 8 2003, online.

70. Lago Agrio is where the petroleum pipe lines begins and it is in the northern portion of the Oriente region. It is approximately 115 miles west of Quito and 10 miles south of the Colombian border.

71. Interview: Steven Donziger
http://www.oxfamamerica.org/whatwedo/where_we_work/south_america/news_publications/tech

72. Ibid.

73. Barthold, "ChevronTexaco Prepares for Battle in Jungle Courthouse," online.

74. Ibid.

75. Dematteis and Sawyer, "Boiling Oil: ChevronTexaco faces Ecuador's Courts," online.

76. *Extreme Oil: The Oil Curse*, prod. and dir. by Rebecca John, videocassette.

77. "ToxiTours" refer to tours in which Jorge Urollo takes individuals to see the unlined oil pits and environmental contamination.

78. *Saviors of the Forest*, prod. and dir. by Bill Day and Terry Schwartz, Executive Producer Todd Darling, 90 min., The Video Project, videocassette.

79. Nichols, *Representing Reality*, 56. "Whereas the great preponderance of documentary production concerns itself with talking about the historical world, the reflexive mode addresses the question of how we talk about the historical world . . . It internalizes many of the issues and concerns that are the subject of study, not as a secondary or subsequent mode of retrospective analysis, but as an immediate undeferrable issue in social representation itself" (Nichols, 57).

80. *Saviors of the Forest*.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid. “The plan was that a small unit of Earthfirsters would climb up the ship and release the banner, and RAN would be on the dock protesting. They were advocating a complete ban of importation of tropical imports . . . But, would that stop the cutting down of trees? You first have to solve the problem with people. Banning might force Endesa from cutting forests, but not stop colonos from cutting and participating in selling lumber.”

89. In her research on the Brazilian tribal group the K’ayapo, Beth A. Conklin explores how South American Indians that align themselves with international environmental activists to further their own local struggle for environmental remediation or cultural survival appropriate Western environmental language when addressing the international community. She writes, “As some native South Americans have learned to speak the language of Western environmentalism and reframe their cosmological and ecological systems in terms of Western concepts like “respect for Mother earth,” “being close to nature,” and “protecting biosphere diversity,” so some also have learned to use Western visual codes to position themselves politically.” She also argues that even when representing themselves linguistically and visually, their representations are always in relation to the West’s expectations of indigenous authenticity. Like Lidchi’s concept of consumption, indigenous peoples in essence understand and acknowledge what the West expects an Indian to look and talk like and subsequently give the filmmaker that representation. Conklin further argues: “To dress to impress one’s allies and intimidate one’s opponents is nothing new for native Amazonians. What is new in media politics is the extent to which effective presentations of self must be tailored to fit outsiders’ ideas about how “authentic” Indians should appear. How this affects native peoples’ sense of themselves and their feelings of self worth is a complex question with which South American ethnographers are just beginning to grapple.” See Beth A. Conklin, “Body Paint, Feathers, and VCRs: Aesthetics and Authenticity in Amazonian Activism,” in *American Ethnologist* 24:4 (November 1997): 712.

90. Susan Gal, “Language, Gender, and Power: An Anthropological Review,” in *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader*, ed. Alessandro Duranti. (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 425.

91. Conklin, “Body Paint,” 723.

Notes

Chapter 6

1. Brysk, "Turning Weakness into Strength: The Internationalization of Indian Rights," *Latin American Perspectives* 23:2 (Spring 1996): 48.
2. Carin Dessauer, "New Media, Internet News, and the News Habit," in *Society Online: The Internet in Context*, eds. Philip N. Howard and Steve Jones (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2004), 122.
3. Maria Garrido and Alexander Halavais, "Mapping Networks of Support for the Zapatista Movement," in *Cyberactivism: Online Activism in Theory and Practice*, eds. Martha McCaughey and Michael D. Ayers (New York: Routledge, 2003), 166.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 168.
6. Ibid.
7. Gustavo Lins Ribeiro, "Cybercultural Politics: Political Activism at a Distance in a Transnational World," in *Cultures of Politics/Politics of Cultures: Re-Visioning Latin American Social Movements*, eds. Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, and Arturo Escobar (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), 329.
8. Melucci, "A Strange Kind of Newness: What's "New" in New Social Movements?" in *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, eds. Enrique Laraña, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 110.
9. Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 92.
10. William F. Fisher, "Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices," in *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1997): 451.
11. Conklin and Laura R. Graham, "The Shifting Middle Ground: Amazonian Indians and Eco-Politics," in *American Anthropologist* 97:4 (Dec. 1995): 696.
12. Ibid.
13. Peter J. Brosius, "Analyses and Interventions: Anthropological Engagements with Environmentalism," in *Current Anthropology* 40:3 (June 1999): 280.
14. Fisher, "Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices," 453.

15. Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), 92.
16. Ibid.
17. Lins Ribeiro, "Cybercultural Politics," 329.
18. Faye Ginsburg, "Resources of Hope: Learning from the Local in a Transnational Era," in *Indigenous Cultures in an Interconnected World*, eds. Claire Smith & Graeme K. Ward (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), 31.
19. Brosius, "Analyses and Interventions," 281.
20. Conklin and Graham, "The Shifting Middle Ground," 697.
21. Jodi Dean, "Community," in *Unspun: Key Concepts for Understanding the World Wide Web*, ed. Thomas Swiss, (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 5.
22. Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies* (London: Sage Publications, 2001), 55.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 56.
25. This also prevented the over representation in the data of organizations such as Sierra Club and Rainforest Action Network that have more resources, staff and server space than smaller local organizations such as Fundación Selva Vida Sin Fronteras.
26. Only captioned photographs were chosen for coding. Maps, animated drawings, logos and other images were excluded. Photo galleries were excluded unless there were captions or other ways of labeling/organizing the photos. Therefore, I excluded photographs of a waterfall if it was not clear that the waterfall was from the Oriente region and excluded images of indigenous unless it was clear that they were from the Oriente region.
27. http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistical_hypothesis_testing. December 6, 2005.
28. MATLAB 6.5 ©13.
29. *Saviors of the Forest*, prod. and dir. by Bill Day and Terry Schwartz, Executive Producer Todd Darling, 90 min., The Video Project. Videocassette.
30. Natalia Mirovitskaya and William Ascher, eds, *Guide to Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 73.
31. "Rio Declaration on Environment and Development," *Population and Development Review* 18:3 (September 1992): 572.

32. Ibid.
33. Mirovitskaya and Ascher, eds, *Guide to Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy*
34. Stavenhagen, "Indigenous Peoples: Emerging Actors in Latin America," 10-12.
35. Martin Mowforth and Ian Munt, *Tourism & Sustainability: Development & New Tourism in the Third World* (London: Routledge, 2003), 150.
36. The number of photos of environment (no people) was originally two variables; images of pristine environment (beautiful waterfalls, sunsets over the Amazon river, etc.) and destruction of environment (open oil pits, contaminated rivers, dead fish floating on surface of water, etc.). However, the pristine environment and destruction to environment variables were collapsed to the photos of environment (no people). Therefore, the raw data for this variable is a combination of the frequency of pristine environment and destruction to environment images.
37. David Reid, *Sustainable Development: An Introductory Guide*, (London: Earthscan Publications Ltd., 1995), end matter.
38. Ibid., 11.
39. Fisher, "Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices," 444.
40. Steven E. Sanderson, "Environmental Politics in Latin America," in *Environmental Politics in the International Arena: Movements, Parties, Organizations, and Policy*, ed. Sheldon Kamieniecki (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993), 227.
41. Al Gedicks, "Native Peoples and Sustainable Development," in *Green Guerillas: Environmental Conflicts and Initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Helen Collinson (London: Latin America Bureau, 1996), 38.
42. Anthony Bebbington, Hernan Carrasco, Lourdes Peralbo, Galo Ramon, Jorge Trujillo and Victor Torres, "Fragile Lands, Fragile Organizations: Indian Organizations and the Politics of Sustainability in Ecuador," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 18:2 (1993): 179-196; and Marie Price, "Ecopolitics and Environmental Nongovernmental Organizations in Latin America," *Geographical Review* 84:1 (January 1994): 42-58.
43. Price, "Ecopolitics and Environmental Nongovernmental Organizations in Latin America," 48.
44. Ibid., 49.
45. Julie Fisher, *The Road from Rio: Sustainable Development and the Nongovernmental Movement in the Third World* (London: Praeger, 1993): 4.

46. See Joan Giannecchini, "Ecotourism: New Partners, New Relationships," *Conservation Biology* 7:2 (June 1993): 429-432.
47. Mirovitskaya and Ascher, eds, *Guide to Sustainable Development and Environmental Policy*, 278.
48. Giannecchini, "Ecotourism: New Partners, New Relationships," *Conservation Biology* 7:2 (June 1993), 431.
49. Mowforth and Munt, *Tourism and Sustainability: Development and New Tourism in the Third World*, 141.
50. Giannecchini, "Ecotourism," 430.
51. See Erlet Cater, "Contradictions in Sustainable Tourism," *The Geographical Journal* 16:1 (March 1995): 21-28; Mowforth and Munt, *Tourism and Sustainability, passim*; and Juanita Sundberg, "NGO Landscapes in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Guatemala" *Geographical Review* 88:3 (July 1998): 388-412.
52. In his research on islands in the South Pacific, David N. Zurick writes of local village-based enterprises that engage in ecotourism. See David N. Zurick, "Preserving Paradise," *Geographical Review* 85:2 (April 1995): 157-172; and Serge Dedina examines the engagement of fishing communities in Baja California Sur with ecotourism in regard to "saving" the gray whale. See Serge Dedina, *Saving the Gray Whale: People, Politics, and Conservation in Baja California* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2001).
53. James Fair, "Can Ecotourism Save Ecuador's Threatened Cloud Forests?" in *Green Guerillas: Environmental Conflicts and Initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean*, ed. Helen Collinson (London: Latin America Bureau, 1996), 119.
54. Brosius, "Analyses and Interventions: Anthropological Engagements with Environmentalism," 283.
55. Conklin and Graham, "The Shifting Middle Ground," 697.
56. Reid, *Sustainable Development: An Introductory Guide*, 183-184.
57. Mowforth and Munt, *Tourism and Sustainability*, 143.
58. *Ibid.*, 155.
59. Price, "Ecopolitics and Environmental Nongovernmental Organizations in Latin America," 43-44.
60. Henry J. Steiner, *NGOs in the Human Rights Movement*, 31.

61. Bebbington, et al. "Fragile lands, fragile organizations: Indian organizations and the politics of sustainability in Ecuador," 184.
62. Elsa Stamatopoulou, "Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations: Human Rights as a Developing Dynamic," *Human Rights Quarterly* 16:1 (Feb. 1994): 73.
63. Bron Taylor, Heidi Hadsell, Lois Lorentzen, and Rik Scarce. "Grass-Roots Resistance: The Emergence of Popular Environmental Movements in Less Affluent Countries," in *Environmental Politics in the International Arena: Movements, Parties, Organizations, and Policy*, ed. Sheldon Kamieniecki (New York: State University of New York Press, 1993), 69.
64. Ronald Niezen, *The Origins of Indigenism: Human Rights and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
65. Taylor, et al. "Grass-Roots Resistance," 71.
66. <http://www.selvaeco.org>
67. Arturo Escobar, Dianne Rocheleau, and Smitu Kothari, "Environmental Social Movements and the Politics of Place," *development* 45:1 (2002): 28-29.
68. Conklin, "Body Paint, Feathers, and VCRs: Aesthetics and Authenticity in Amazonian Activism," *American Ethnologist* 24:4 (Nov. 1997): 712.
69. Ibid.
70. Normal distribution is a necessary criteria for a t-test. The data was checked for goodness of fit for a normal distribution using Lilliefors test, performed at a 5% significance level. The software used was the Statistics Toolbox in MATLAB 6.5 R13.
71. These percentages were obtained by taking the total number of photographs on the websites as the denominator and dividing it into the total numbers for each variable.
72. www.funedesin.org, August 24, 2005.
73. www.oilwatch.org.ec, August 25, 2005.
74. www.jatunsacha.org, August 24, 2005.
75. www.selvaeco.org, August 24, 2005.
76. www.unii.net/confeniae, August 24, 2005.
77. Price, "Ecopolitics and Environmental Nongovernmental Organizations in Latin America," 48.

78. www.advocacynet.org, August 25, 2005.

79. www.funedesin.org, August 24, 2005.

80. Michel Foucault writes, "There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else's control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience and self-knowledge." See Stuart Hall, "The Work of Representation," in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), 55.

81. Price, "Ecopolitics and Environmental Nongovernmental Organizations in Latin America," 43-44

82. www.rainforestweb.org, August 24, 2005.

83. www.unii.net/confeniae, August 25, 2005.

84. www.accionecologica.org, August 25, 2005

85. www.ecuanex.net, August 25, 2005

86. www.accionecologica.org, August 25, 2005

87. www.pachamama.org, August 26, 2005

88. www.amazonalliance.org, August 25, 2005

89. www.rainforestweb.org, August 24, 2005.

90. Of course, websites are mediated virtual spaces. They are mediated in that internet users, NGOs, and social movement actors must have the means (resources) to and knowledge of the technology to participate in this space. Therefore, once an actor gains access to this space the content and actors are made public to countless audiences. It can also be mediated by web designers and companies which, like the filmmaker constructs/edits the space and determines what images are included and excluded.

91. Brysk, "Turning Weakness into Strength," 48.

92. Conklin and Graham, "The Shifting Middle Ground," 697.

93. Conklin, "Body Paint, Feathers, and VCRs," 712.

Notes

Conclusion

1. Buechler, "New Social Movement Theories," *The Sociological Quarterly* 36:3 (1995): 217.
2. Melucci, *Nomads of the Present* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989): 30.
3. Larraín Ibañez, "The Concept of Identity," 1.
4. Brysk, "Turning Weakness into Strength: The Internationalization of Indian Rights," *Latin American Perspectives* 23:2 (Spring 1996): 39.
5. Varese, "Ethnopolitics of Indian Resistance in Latin America," *Latin American Perspectives* 23:2 (Spring 1996): 65.
6. Henry Valmeyer and James Petras, *The Dynamics of Social Change in Latin America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 2000), 108.

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