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**Trekking Through History: The Huaorani of Amazonian Ecuador.** Laura M. Rival. Columbia University Press, New York, 2002. Pp. xiii + 257. Illus., tables, index. \$60.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-231-11844.

Rival's *Trekking Through History* is an ethnographic account of the Huaorani of Ecuador contextualized through a historical ecological approach. Although the Huaorani use domesticated plants, she describes them as primarily nomadic trekkers, engaged in a hunting and gathering mode of subsistence. In part, this book is a critique of William Balée's agricultural regression model of Amazonian foraging, which posits that foraging in some Amazonian groups likely arose as a postcontact adaptation, with loss of knowledge of how to cultivate being one consequence of colonization (e.g., Balée 1994). Rival argues that Huaorani nomadic trekking is not necessarily a postcolonial adaptation, but instead is more likely a long-standing tradition that represents a political choice to trek rather than to cultivate. Although the two views would seem opposed at first glance, I believe they are complementary, for they are addressing different questions. Balée's work places more emphasis on ecological change, critical historical events, and the loss of indigenous cultural knowledge, while Rival's work places more emphasis on environmental perception, historicity, and ontology.

Balée has addressed the question of why the Guajá foragers of eastern Brazilian Amazonia do not know how to propagate domesticated plants. Based on the presence of linguistic artifacts of domesticates in their language, ethnohistorical evidence, and their adaptation to anthropogenic forests, Balée's work has provided a convincing case that the Guajá were formerly a horticultural people. He places the likely time for their loss of indigenous horticultural knowledge subsequent to the devastating and chaotic circumstances following European colonization. Guajá foraging involves exploiting dominant palm colonizers of old fallow fields, the fruits of which serve as a caloric staple. Further, his model pro-

vides an explanation of the process through which domesticates may be sequentially lost, with high investment bitter manioc disappearing before low-start up cost maize.

In *Trekking Through History*, Rival is addressing a related, but rather different issue: why the Huaorani, who *do* know how to grow domesticated plants, prefer and emphasize nomadic foraging over sedentary horticulture. Taking inspiration from Sahllins that history is organized through structures of meaning, she argues that Huaorani nomadic foraging is not necessarily postcolonial, but likely a manifestation of long-standing cultural and political forces that were in place prior to European colonization.

Rival reaches her conclusions by analyzing an essential division in Huaorani thought between true people—the Huaorani—and all non-Huaorani others. She also describes the essential relationship between the Huaorani and non-Huaorani as being based on predator/prey dynamics: “others” are always predators and the Huaorani are always prey. This holds true whether the other is a supernatural being, a non-Huaorani Amerindian, or a European colonist. These ways of being and relations among beings are expressed repeatedly in myth, in cosmology, as well as in interpretations of more recent historical events. The construction transcends specific history for it is through the structural relationship between predator and prey which the mythic, the sacred, and all historical events are understood. One of the most intriguing discussions in Rival’s work is that it is also the structure through which Huaorani homicide of other Huaorani is framed. Simply put, the death of a kinsman is viewed to appropriately invoke rage. A Huaorani, in this state of necessary rage, temporarily becomes “other” and therefore predatory.

Rival describes Huaorani foraging as one manifestation of the relationship between predator and prey. Foraging is a tangible expression of Huaorani embodiment as prey, fleeing from predatory others, whoever those specific others may be. As such, the European colonist is no different from any other non-Huaorani, even if the individual is a Huaorani temporarily taking the position of a predatory, non-Huaorani other. However, foraging is not merely ontological flight. Rival describes food procurement as an encounter with the past. The Huaorani recognize the forest as a patchwork of old fallows, light gaps, and old growth forest with differential proliferation of plants and animals in these zones. Forest sites and cleared fields are remembered not only for their characteristic species, but are historical mnemonics for the activities of specific individuals and more generalized ancestral areas. Foraging includes not only collecting nondomesticated plants, but remnant cultigens from recently abandoned fallows. Anthropogenic growth itself is amplified through planting chonta palm seedlings in cleared fields resulting from past activities.

Rival stresses that it is also important to understand that foraging and flight are viewed as temporary conditions. Huaorani identity is centered in the long-house to which one returns. Here, kinship and community are created, reinforced, and magnified through day to day interactions. Consanguinity is described as far more dependent on lived relationships than genealogical links. Further, co-residents become consanguinealized through sharing of “substance” (food, semen, breast milk, illness, parasites, space, etc.). Thus, one risks becoming “other” if

foraging and flight are not predicated upon and actualized by the eventual return to the longhouse.

Rival's fascinating ethnography demonstrates that ecological adaptation cannot be understood as resource extraction alone, it is deeply embedded in Huaorani identity, sociality, symbolism, and historicity. As she states, "I have analyzed trekking, not as a mundane activity relating to the pragmatics of subsistence and to environmental or historical adaptation, but rather, as a fundamental way of reproducing society through time (p. 178)." *Trekking Through History* is the fourth book in Columbia University Press's Historical Ecology Series, edited by William Balée and Carole L. Crumley, and Rival's work represents an important contribution to this developing approach. In my mind, the most important question her book raises for historical ecology is whether or not Amazonian foraging is a meaningful category of analysis amenable at all to a general model. The Maku of the Northwest Amazon are foragers, yet are involved in direct trade relations with Tukanoan food producers. The Guajá have probably lost indigenous horticultural knowledge, but live independently from food producers through exploitation of anthropogenic forests. The Huaorani know how to grow plants, yet prefer foraging to horticulture. Given these particular cases: Is it possible to integrate continuity and change, history and historicity, epistemology and ontology among Amazonian foragers? Or, are the historical, cultural, and ecological conditions (pre- or post-contact) under which foraging is practiced in specific groups particular enough that generalization is futile?

Loretta Cormier  
University of Alabama, Birmingham  
Birmingham, Alabama

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