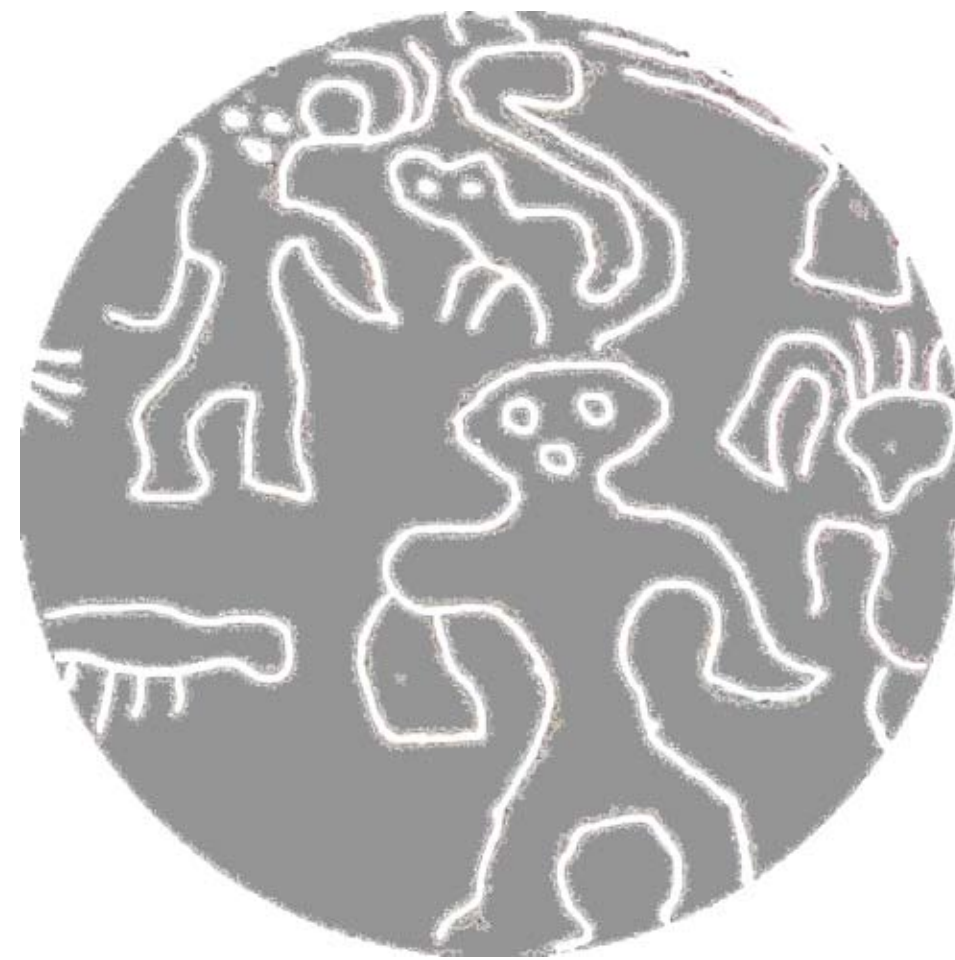


INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FROM THE SNOW-TOPPED MOUNTAINS OF SANTA MARTA, COLOMBIA

Our Ancestral View of Territory



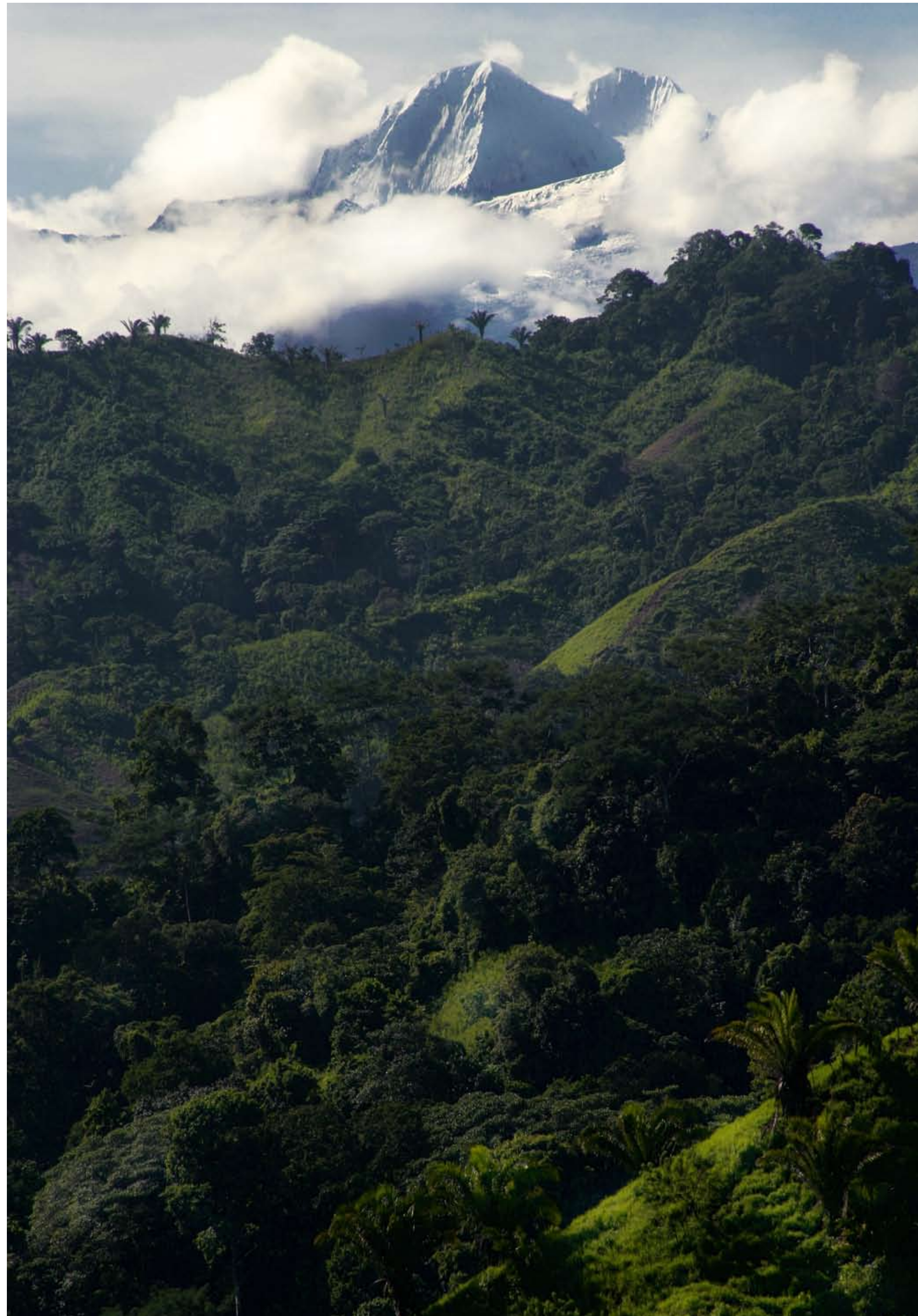
Wíntukua Arhuaco/ Kággaba Kogui/ Wiwa Arzario/ Kaku´chukwa Kankuamo

“The time has come for the people from the outside to understand, without wrongful translations, what is our view of the territory and why the violations to our Law of Origin are so serious.”

Amado Villafañá, Arhuacan Director of Photography

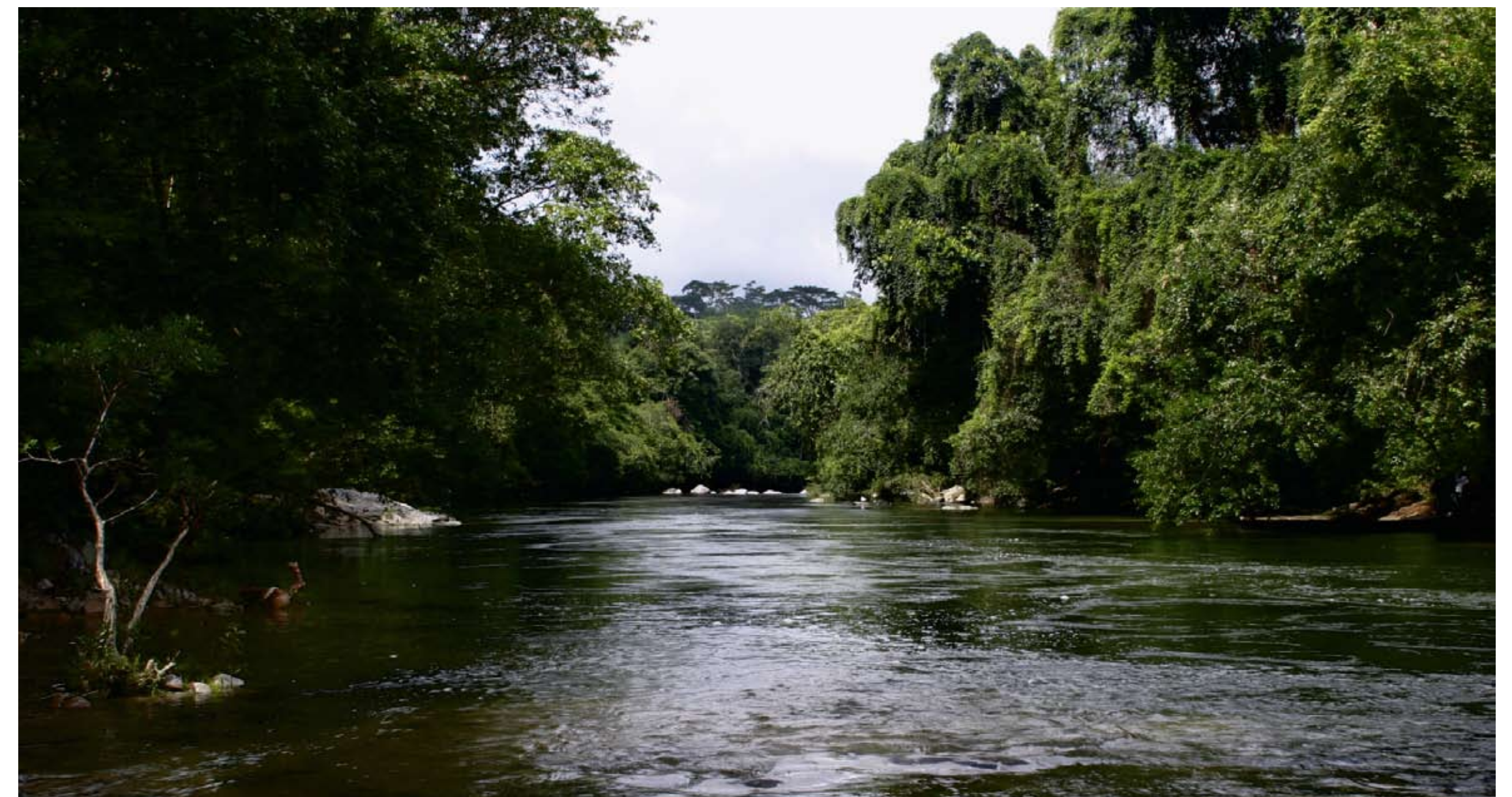


Our Territory



Chundua Peak

Danilo Villafaña, 2005



Don Diego River

Danilo Villafaña, 2004



Sacred place at Tayrona

Amado Villafaña, 2006

Niwi Úmukin Arhuaco/ Senúnulang Kogui/ Ungumakana Wiwa/ Ancestral Territory Kankuamo



View from Kennedy Hill

Danilo Villafaña, 2003

For us, the Sierra Nevada is the origin, the beginning
and the centre of the world.



Eugenio Villafaña, Arhuacan Mamo, in El Morro, Santa Marta

OGT Archives, 2006

The Sierra Nevada is thought and reality.



Kogui child on the Doanama Sacred Stone, Santa Marta

Amado Villafaña, 2006

We are the heart of the world.



Butterfly on the banks of the Aguja River

Danillo Villafañe, 2004

We have the mission to keep the world balanced spiritually.



Before seeing the light

Our Law of Origin



The Law of Origin has given us the principles and norms that regulate the order of our territory.
Although we speak different languages our principles are the same for the four peoples.

Photos from OGT Archives, 2006-2009

Seyn zare Arhuaco/ Sé Kogui/ Shenbuta Wiwa/ Mundo espiritual Kankuamo



Sunrise at Chendukua

Amado Villafaña, 2009

In the beginning, the world was darkness, spirit, thought
in which the order of everything that exists came into being.



Full moon at Chendukua

Amado Villafaña, 2009

The step from darkness into light marks the border between the spiritual and the material, the tangible from the intangible.



On the Mamankana Moors

Amado Villafaña, 2005

Before coming into being in the material world all things were like people,
the offspring of our great spiritual mother.



The Doanama Sacred Stone

Amado Villafaña, 2005



OGT Archives, 1996

The principles that govern us are molded in the territory
and are codes that are found on the stones, on the hills, the peaks and the rivers.



Arhuaco and Kogui Mamos at Doanama

Amado Villafañá, 2006

Our traditional leaders, the *mamos*, have the task communicating with the spiritual world.



Arhuaco and Kogui Mamos at Doanama

Danilo Villafañe, 2006



Sacred place at Makutama

Roberto Mojica, 2009

The *mamos* are constantly rebuilding the balance between the spiritual and the material worlds, reviving the norms that are laid down in the Law of Origin.



Sacred lake and Chundua Peak

Amado villafaña, 2004

Through rainfall, streams and rivers the sacred places of the moors
connect to those of the coast.



Arhuacos at Nabowa

Amado Villafaña, 2004

The water of the moors, coming from the rains brought by the wind,
returns to the sea in the shape of rivers.



Don Diego River

Danilo Villafaña, 2004



Kuncha Navingumu, Arhuacan Mamo

Danilo Villafaña, 2004

The water cycle perpetuates and recreates the balance of the world
and the deep relationship between the coast and the mountains.

The Principal of Order

Since the beginning, a particular territory and knowledge was bestowed on each of the four peoples.



The Koguis were given the north face of the Sierra from the Tucurinca Edge to the Ranchería River along the coastline up to the snow peaks.



The Arhuacos were given the materials, stones, rocks from Mamatoco in a direct line to the Chundua Peak and from there to the Hurtado lagoon to look after.



The Wiwa were given the materials of fruits and seeds and insects to heal from Dibulla up to the Badillo River and on the inner face up to the snow peaks.



The Kankuamo were given the territory from the Badillo River to the Hurtado Lagoon with access to the snow peaks.

Amado Villafañá, 2007

K'adukwu Arhuaco/ Ezwama Kogui/ Mamanoa Wiwa



Meeting of Kogui Mamos at Pueblo Viejo

Danilo Villafañe, 2006

The four territories are divided into greater and lesser districts
in which there are sacred places of government.



Meeting of Arhaucan authorities at Gunmaku

Amada Villafañá, 2006

The knowledge for the management of the territory
is deposited in the sacred places of government.



Arhuacan government place at Kankavarúa

Amado Villafaña, 2009

Each place of government has a spiritual owner
and a specific *mamo*.



Camilo Izquierdo, Arhuacan Mamo



Andrés Nolavita, Wiwa Mamo

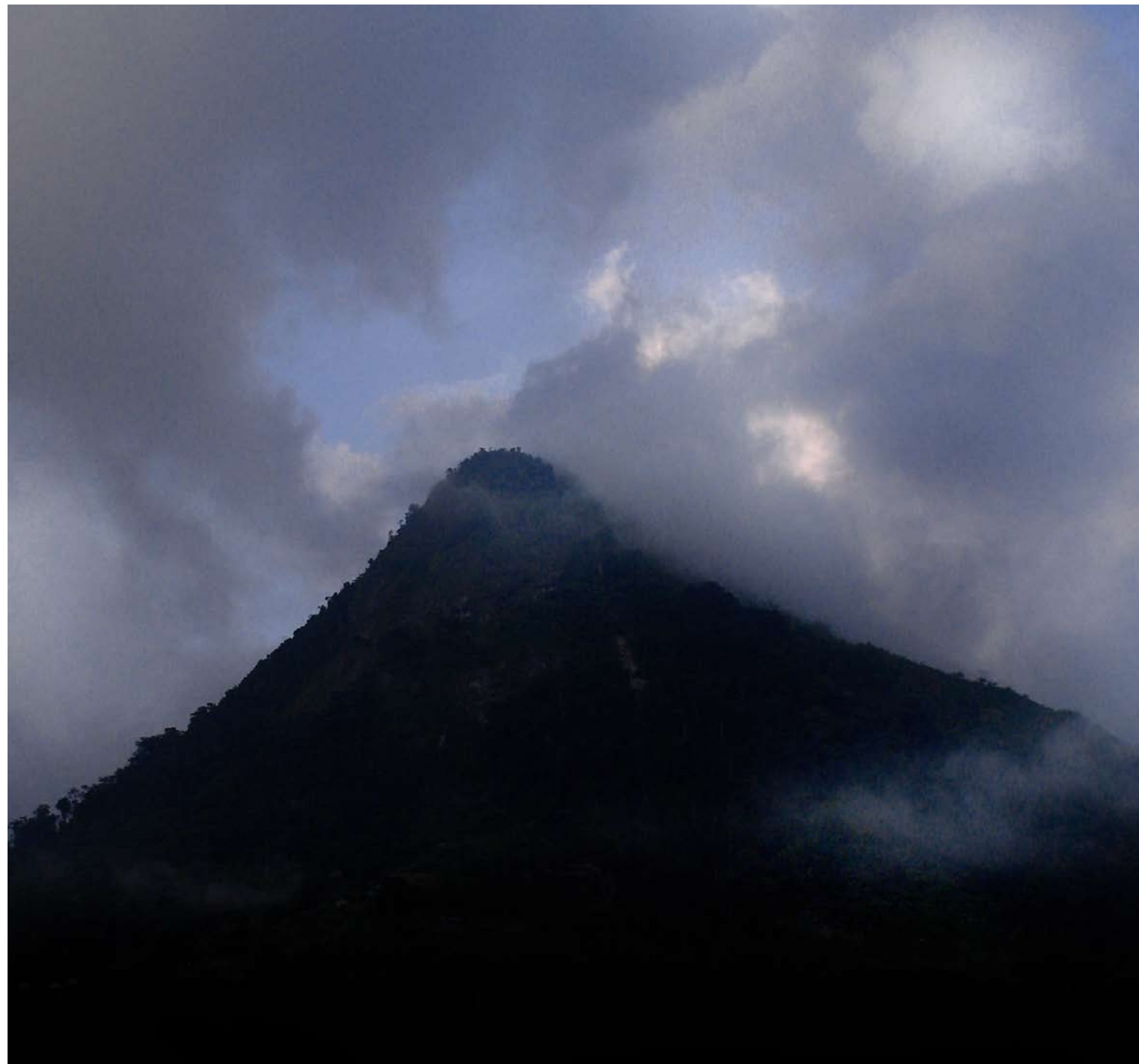
Amado Villafaña, 2008

In these traditional places the *mamos* gather together, journey down to the lower world and bring back the strength to govern according to the Law of Origin.



Our sacred places

The sacred places are sites which are strategically placed in different zones and are those which guide us spiritually on to how to manage the territory as regards different spheres of our environmental, social, political, cultural and economic life.



Sacred hill on the banks of the Garavito River

OGT Archives, 2005



Kogui authority at Pueblo Viejo

OGT Archives, 2005

Mamanoa yina Wiwa/ Ka'duku yina Arhuaco/ Ezwamakué Kogui/ Sacred Places Kankuamo



Arhuacos collecting materials for taxes

Amado Villafañá, 2009

All of our sacred places are spiritually connected,
forming a network that gives meaning to our territory.



Arhuacos building a house

Amado Villafañá, 2006

For any activity that we carry out we must ask for permission from the spiritual owners of those sacred places.
If not, illness, disasters and death will come.



The Jukulwa sacred place damaged due to the construction of a port

Amado Villafañá, 2008

For this reason, our sacred places cannot disappear or be violated.

The Lineages



According to the Law of Origin, each one of the four indigenous peoples belongs to some lineages.



The lineages have the duty to nurture and preserve the places of government from which they have originated and all the sacred places in their territory.



Photos from OGT Archives, 2006-2009



Our job is to maintain the connections between the sacred places, make the energy of all the elements of the Sierra and the world circulate.



Wiwa wise woman

Amado Villafañá. 2006



David Gil, Wiwa leader and Pedro Juan Nuivita, Kogui Mamo at Nubiyaka

OGT Archives, 2005

The non-compliance of the duties of a given lineage give rise to imbalance in the territory and, therefore, in social disorder.



At Gunmaku



Amado Villafaña, 2008

In our social life, we have to comply with many obligations,
among which there are four main ceremonies:



Wiwa family at Kemakúmake

OGT Archives, 2005

Birth: this is the appearance of a seed,
the fruit of the harmony of opposite genders.



Young Arhuaco at Doanarimakú

Amado Villafañe, 2006



Kogui girl at Nubiyaka

Danilo Villafañe, 2006

Growth: each seed, according to its gender, must flower when insects and birds come to feed from their sweet honey.



Kogui family at Nubiyaka

OGT Archives, 2005



Rinaldo and his Kogui family at Teyuna

Amado Villafaña, 2003

*Marriage: new seeds appear, the fruit of the harmonizing of the genders
for the conservation of the species.*



Camilo Torres, Arhuacan Mamo at the burial of his daughter

Danilo Villafaña, 2006

Mortuary: the fulfillment of the cycle of life.

Our vision

Strategies for ordering the territory



Wiwa handwoven bags and Poporos (container made from calabash used for coca)

OGT Archives, 2008



Jacinto Zarabata and other Kogui Mamos at Pueblo Viejo

Danilo Villafañe, 2006

The management of the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta must have the Law of Origin as its guiding principle through the full government by our traditional authorities of our districts and sacred places.



Arhuacan meeting at Nabusimake

Amado Villafaña, 2007

It's fundamental that the territory of the Sierra Nevada
returns to its ancestral structure.



Deterioration of Jukulva, our sacred place, due to a construction of a port

Amado Villafañá, 2009

Different threats hinder the full exercise of our cultural mission.



Coca planted by “colonos” at Don Diego



Huge Dam construction at the Ranchería Sacre River



Coal Mining on ancestral land



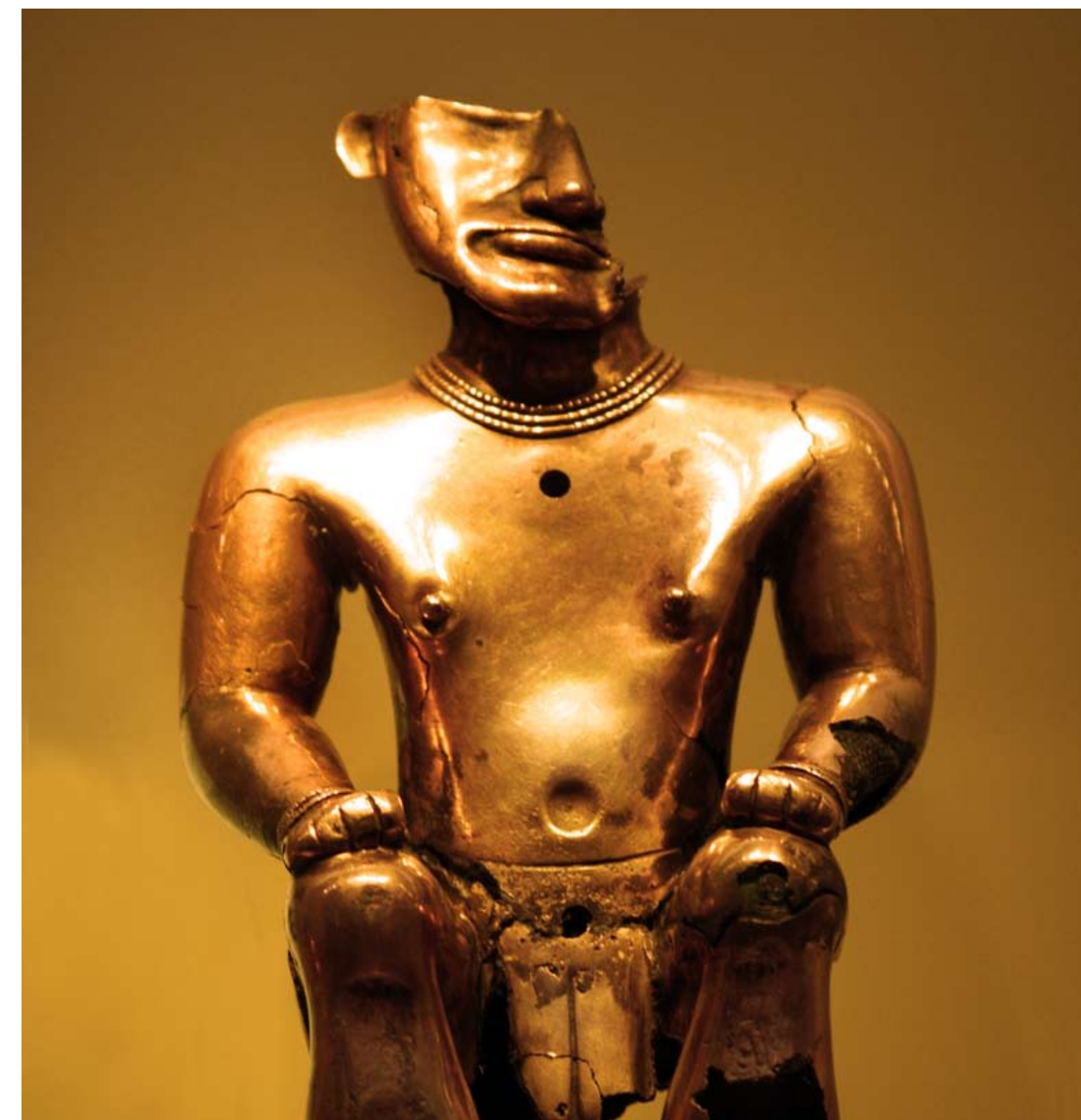
Commercial banana single crop farming on ancestral land

Photos from OGT Archives, 2006-2009

The lands of the “resguardos” do not cover all of our ancestral territory and, because of this, we must carry on extending these and negotiating use of resources.



Mamo taken prisoner during the Capuchin Missions



Indian tombs sacked for valuable objects and sacred places and objects are seized Amado Villafañá, 2009

Despite constitutional advances made,
our cultural integrity remains under threat.



José Romero, Arhuacan Mamo



José Shibulata, Kogui Mamo



Sebastián Loperena, Kogui Mamo



Amado Villafaña, 2008

From time immemorial, the sacred territory of the Sierra Nevada has formed the basis for our culture. It contains the foundations that determine the way we think and our identity.



Zhigoneshi

The Communications Centre

In 2001, by decision of the *mamos*, the idea came up to spread the ancestral vision of the indigenous peoples of the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta, through photographs and videos made by the indigenous communities themselves so that people outside their culture could come to know and appreciate this natural-cultural territory and to establish links of alliance for its preservation.

The human rights situation is serious and threats and murders against us have reached unimagined extremes. Three years later, in the Gonawindúa Tayrona Indigenous Organization, a digital image production centre was born which currently houses an important archive covering a variety of aspects of our culture, brought into being wholly by kogui, wiwa and arhuaco photographers and video cameramen.

This exhibition is the first undertaken by the *Zhigoneshi* Communications Centre showing the efforts of the Territorial Council of Cabildos (an entity that groups together the four indigenous organizations) to put on show in writing and visually the ancestral thoughts on the territorial organization of the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta.



Amado Villafaña, arhuaco



Danilo Villafaña, arhuaco



Roberto Mojica, wiwa

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