



· J E P Á ·



The Jepah, a legendary giant serpent, communicates the terrestrial and subterranean worlds since it is endowed with the transforming power of water. A symbol of wisdom, it is believed that its movement on earth formed lakes and rivers until it reached the sea. He is also transformed into the rainbow, covering his body with the feathers of multicolored birds.

Its relationship with human beings is ambiguous. It is responsible for rain and fertility, owner of the animals and in charge of the transit between worlds. However, it often devours adults and children and, when attacked, dries up the lakes, producing storms and floods.

It is capable of attracting its victims from a long distance, provoking storms and thunders that drag people to the lakes, where Jepá eats them. It can also create whirlpools in rivers, rolling over the bottom and sinking Indian canoes.



Jepá is a **EMBERÁ** creature
Current population: 68.000



The Emberá are indigenous communities of Caribbean descent, living in small, self-sufficient and self-governing villages. They inhabit the Ecuadorian jungle in the republics of Colombia, Ecuador and Panama.

They shy away from large concentrations of population, choosing small family groups scattered throughout the territory. If the number of members of a village grows, part of it disintegrates and founds another village in another place.

They are dedicated to horticulture, although they also practice hunting

(with catanas), fishing and gathering. To grow crops, they do not use fires, but cut down portions of forest and let the remains decompose, to plant on that layer of compost their crops of corn and banana. Much of the work is done in 'mingas', that is, communal work throughout the village.

The government of the community is exercised by a leader, the 'cacique', under the supervision of a council of elders and shamans.

They believe that the world has a supernatural dimension inhabited by the spirits, called 'jai', with which they establish a relationship through the 'jaibanás', that is, the shamans. In their cosmovision there are three types of jai: the aquatic ones, those of the deep forest, and those that are the result of the transformation of the souls of the dead. It is through dealings with the jai that the continuation of natural cycles and communication between the planes of existence is achieved.

