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# MORPHOLOGICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION OF CAÑARI FAMILY NAMES IN THE SOUTHERN ANDES OF ECUADOR

## *Contextualización morfológica de los apellidos cañaris en los Andes del sur del Ecuador*

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### Abstract

Before the arrival of the Incas in the 15th century, the Cañari people were mainly located in the territories that nowadays are the provinces of Azuay and Cañar in the Southern Andes of Ecuador. The city of Cuenca, capital of the province of Azuay, was known as Guapdondélic, which literally means “plain as big as the sky” in Cañari, a language that is extinct today, but whose legacy has survived in the anthroponyms and toponyms of the region. Despite the extinction of the Cañari language, family names in Cuenca are vivid markers of the Cañari heritage. Then, bearing in mind the dynamic nature of language contact and morphological borrowing, it is not surprising that the Cañari anthroponyms still existing in the region show not only Cañari morphemes but a combination of both Kichwa roots and Cañari affixes. Consequently, to unveil this Cañari heritage, the present study discusses the affixation of a total of fifty-six Cañari family names, contextualizing such morphological analysis in its historical and toponymical settings through the triangulation of validated document sources.

### Keywords

Cañari family names, Cañari affixation, morphology, morphological borrowing, Kichwa–Cañari heritage

### Palabras clave

Apellidos cañaris, afijación cañari, morfología, préstamos morfológicos, herencia kichwa–cañari

### Resumen

Antes de la llegada de los incas en el siglo XV, el pueblo cañari se asentaba principalmente en los territorios que hoy conforman las provincias de Azuay y Cañar, en los Andes del sur del Ecuador. La ciudad de Cuenca, capital de la provincia de Azuay, era conocida como Guapdondélic, que literalmente significa “llanura tan grande como el cielo” en la lengua cañari, hoy extinta, pero cuyo legado ha sobrevivido en los antropónimos y topónimos de la región. A pesar de la extinción de la lengua, los apellidos en Cuenca son un claro testimonio de la herencia cañari. Considerando la naturaleza dinámica del contacto lingüístico y los préstamos morfológicos, no sorprende que los antropónimos cañaris aún existentes en la región muestren no solo morfemas cañaris, sino una combinación de raíces kichwas y afijos cañaris. En consecuencia, para develar esta herencia, el presente estudio analiza la afijación de un total de cincuenta y seis apellidos cañaris, contextualizando dicho análisis morfológico en un escenario histórico y toponímico a través de la triangulación de fuentes documentales validadas.

## 1.

## Introduction

**A brief historical contextualization of the Cañaris and their language**

The Cañari people were mainly located in the territories that nowadays are the provinces of Azuay and Cañar (Reinoso, 2017) in the Southern Andes of Ecuador, and based on toponymic research, there is also evidence of their presence in areas of the current provinces of Guayas, El Oro, Chimborazo, Loja, Zamora Chinchipe, and Morona Santiago (Encalada Vásquez, 2021). Regarding their language, the Cañari people referred to their native tongue as Cañar (Cordero & Encalada, 2021; Montaluisa Chasiquiza, 2019), an indigenous language that has died in its spoken form, but survives in the toponyms, phytonyms, and anthroponyms of the Southern Andes of the country.

Before the arrival of the Incas, what today is the city of Cuenca was known as Guapdondélic, Cañari expression that can be translated as “plain as big as the sky” (Encalada Vásquez, 2021). In the 15th century, the Inca domination of the Chinchaysuyu started, and with it, its cultural and linguistic expansion through the territories that integrated the Inca state known as Tahuantinsuyu (Espinoza & Achig, 1989). At the time the Inca Huayna Capac ruled, he ceded the lands of Quito, today, Ecuador, to his son Atahualpa, while leaving Huascar to inherit the city of Cuzco, with the intention of having the two brothers rule separately but supportively (Bauer, 2015). The Cañari people respected Huayna Capac as he was born in Tumipampa, the name the Incas gave to the Cañari Guapdondélic. After Huayna

Capac’s death, his sons Atahualpa and Huascar started a civil war and fought over succession to the throne of the Inca Empire. The Cañaris were the first to deny Atahualpa as their monarch, and they allied with Huascar in an attempt to recover their freedom and territory; however, they were dominated by the Incas and had to suffer the consequences of their defeat (Iglesias, 1987). As a result of the Inca conquest, Quechua was imposed as the dominant language of the region, gradually risking the existence and maintenance of the Cañari language. However, due to the dynamic nature of languages, Quechua, whose Ecuadorian dialect is known as Kichwa today, was inadvertently nourished by Cañari linguistic elements. As explained by González Suárez (1878), the language of the conquerors was mainly enriched by incorporating Cañari voices into the Quechua lexicon (Encalada Vásquez, 2021), a linguistic phenomenon that can be found today in hybrid family names and toponyms.

In Tumipampa, the second imperial center after Cuzco (Bray & Echeverría, 2018), Quechua and Cañari experienced language hybridity and expressions such as *Cañaribamba* (The Cañari plain) or *Hatun Cañar* (The Great Cañar) containing roots from both linguistic repertoires, were commonly introduced as toponyms (Encalada Vásquez, 2021). The dynamic interaction of Cañari and Quechua resulted in language borrowing—the incorporation of lexical elements from one language into another (Mesthrie *et al.*, 2009), as a result of the coexistence of both languages and cultures for a period of fifty years until the Inca domination came to an end and later during a period of twenty-five years after the Spanish foundation of Cuenca (Cordero Palacios, 1981). Today, the Cañari language is extinct, and we do not have any written documents to analyze its morphosyntax. What is known about the language is based on the study of the phytonyms, toponyms, and anthroponyms still present in the region (Cordero Palacios, 1981; Encalada Vásquez, 2021). Consequently, our Cañari heritage can only be unveiled through linguistic and historical analysis. In this case, an analysis of a significant number of family names is conducted through the triangulation of document sources.



### Language contact, morphological borrowing, and language loss

The term language contact can be defined as a sociolinguistic phenomenon typically involving “individual users, or a whole speech community, acquainted with at least two languages” (Gardani, 2022, p. 846), which commonly recognizes one of them as the dominant language. In this sense, language contact can be associated with language shift and language loss, as the dominance of one language inevitably puts the other at risk. Throughout the centuries, the disappearance of languages has been associated with political, geographical, and sociocultural aspects. These aspects foreground the fact that one language can highly influence another by first changing its lexicon and morphosyntax and gradually replacing them. Lee (2020) references four factor scales on language endangerment: intergenerational transmission, number of speakers, speaker number trends, and domains of language use. These factors are essential to either maintain or lose a language, most commonly an indigenous language. It is worth mentioning that political factors are closely related to Lee’s factor scales, as dominant languages are commonly vested with political authority, as in the case of the Spanish language in the 15th century, which, due to political power, gradually led to the extinction of the Cañari language. At this point, we can say that any language at risk of disappearing—for instance, the Cañari language during the Spanish colonization—can experience great difficulty for intergenerational transmission, which inevitably decreases the number of speakers and their domains of language use.

In light of the above description, when minoritized languages (Haboud, 2004) manage to survive, they inevitably experience processes of lexical and morphological borrowing. In this study, there is evidence that language contact between Kichwa and Cañari during the 15th century led to both lexical and morphological adaptations. Hence, the historical contextualization of the names discussed in this article provides not only knowledge about the Cañari anthroponyms still existing in the city of Cuenca but also understanding of the dynamics of language contact and morphological borrowing. According to Gardani (2022), language borrowing is typically associated with a loanword, and it can

be of two types: direct or indirect (Sergiivna *et al.*, 2020). Direct borrowing concerns the incorporation of a source language (SL) native word into a recipient language (RL), while indirect borrowing implies the incorporation of a word that the SL has already borrowed from another language. An example of direct borrowing is the French word *omelette* which incorporated into the English language in the 1600s. On the other hand, *feast* can be regarded as an indirect borrowing from French into English, as we can trace it back to the Latin form *festum*. Other forms of borrowing embrace grammatical transfer that involves all grammatical levels as well as phonetic, phonological, prosodic, morphological, and morphosyntactic subcategories. One key characteristic of language borrowing has to do with the acceptance or modification of the lexical category adopted, i.e., the lexical item being borrowed may keep its original features, or it can be modified to suit the characteristics of the language to which it is incorporated. To better understand this idea, Gardani explains that lexical borrowing implies a relationship between the RL and the SL, sometimes allowing the RL to either break its phonological or morphosyntactic patterns to accept the new word or adapt the new lexical acquisition from the SL to the phonological or morphosyntactic rules of the RL. In other cases, such lexical incorporation implies the loss of a phonological or morphosyntactic feature. An example of this type of loss can be found in Ch’ol language borrowings. Typically, Mayan languages do not admit word-initial consonantal clusters, and thus when lexical borrowing from the Spanish language occurs, phonological accommodation is necessary, i.e., deleting, adding, or recombining sounds. The incorporation of the Spanish word *cruz* is a clear example of phonological accommodation in the RL, as in the Mayan Ch’ol, it has become *rus* by deleting one consonant in the Spanish cluster. A similar pattern is found in *Media Lengua*, a mixed language composed of Quichua and Spanish, which exhibits a phonological system that highly reflects that of the Quichua language in its acoustic form (Onosson & Stewart, 2024). Borrowing sounds from Spanish has resulted in the successful incorporation of vowel sequences unfamiliar to the Quichua language. Onosson and Stewart have pointed out that this practice has successfully combined the Quichua vowels /i, u, a/ and the Spanish vowels /a, e, i, o, u/, so that the *media lengua* vowel system can successfully integrate Spanish vowel sequences into Quichua



phonology to adapt bilinguals' vowel production while maintaining, at the same time, phonological contrasts which are not stated in Quichua.

Morphological borrowing, on the other hand, can be defined as the incorporation of inflectional and derivational morphemes into an RL. Gardani has pointed out that derivational affixes are more frequently borrowed than inflectional affixes, as in the case of the French derivational suffix *-able*, which was transferred to the English language by dropping its initial letter /h/. Nowadays, this derivational suffix meaning "capable" commonly derives English adjectives from verbs (e.g., breakable, understandable, or readable). Fisher *et al.* (2022) have also studied allomorphy in Pennsylvania Dutch (PD), to illustrate the different phonological representations of a single morphosyntactic feature, and the complexity of borrowing inflectional morphemes— those predominantly associated with subject-verb agreement and plural formation. According to Fisher *et al.*, when morphological borrowing occurs in bilingual settings, speakers highly consider prosody as a key factor for determining if the morphological borrowing can be allowed or not, underscoring the complexity of inflectional-morpheme borrowing and consequently the complexity of the bilingual mind. A clear illustration of this linguistic phenomenon is evidenced in the distribution of nominal plurals in Dutch and Standard German, which predominantly generate word-final trochees (a combination of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable). Additionally, in PD-English bilinguals, Fisher *et al.* have found that inflectional morphology is highly difficult to borrow in language contact scenarios, perhaps mainly due to the fact that plurality, for example, depends on different root-types and lexical trees that have been internalized in the bilingual mind, with the exception of certain borrowings from the English language.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, i.e., the identification of Cañari family names in Cuenca, the linguistic examination of the anthroponyms was based on the Cañari affixes that have already been identified through an exhaustive process of morphological comparison and segmentation according to validated document sources (Encalada Vásquez, 2021). Nonetheless, a morphological approach to Cañari family names cannot be

detached from historical contextualization, and thus recognizing these surnames as Cañari also requires placing them in historical and toponymical settings. Hence, this work expands the existing literature about the topic by 1) recognizing morphological borrowing as one of the key features of the Kichwa-Cañari surnames identified in the region; 2) morphologically categorizing Cañari and Kichwa-Cañari surnames found in the city of Cuenca; and 3) providing Kichwa-Cañari surnames to illustrate language contact and morphological borrowing as determining factors leading to language shift and sometimes language loss.

## 2.

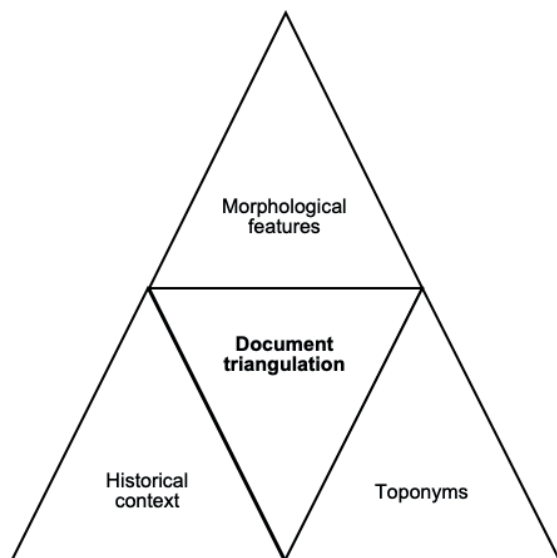
### Methodology

#### Data collection procedure

Data was collected from the 2019-to-2023 telephone directories of the city of Cuenca, from which 318 indigenous family names were identified. All surnames were alphabetically organized for morphological, historical, and toponymical contextualization, considering validated document sources for triangulation.

**Figure 1**

*Document sources for triangulation*



### Data analysis procedure

The analysis procedure involved the triangulation of at least two sources of information (Heale & Forbes, 2013) to have a surname classified as Cañari, and thus to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021). The following inclusion criteria were considered for categorization: 1) surnames having Cañari roots or affixes; 2) surnames that are also toponyms in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar, former Cañari territory; and 3) surnames reported as Cañari in historical bibliography. A total of 262 family names were excluded from data analysis due to two main reasons: 1) they were identified as indigenous surnames having roots or affixes other than Cañari morphemes, or 2) they did not align with any of the inclusion criteria considered for this study.

Encalada Vázquez's (2021) morphological comparison and segmentation provided a robust source of information about Cañari affixes, which, when contrasted with historical references, allowed a more reliable source of information. To illustrate the analysis and triangulation procedure conducted in this study, consider the Cañari suffix *-cela* as an example. Document analysis showed that there is agreement on the fact that the Cañari suffix *-cela* has

the meaning of “belonging to a group or descendant of a group”. Some examples of Cañari surnames in Cuenca having this suffix are Cayamcela, Dumancela, Macancela, Saquicela, and Tenecela. Then, the historical setting of family names was also a source of information for determining whether a surname could be categorized as Cañari or not. For instance, the historical archives that Cárdenas (2004) has examined report that the Cañari ethnicity was organized in *cacicazgos*, i.e., groups of families under the government of an indigenous leader known as *cacique*. Then, these historical records pointed out Cañari names such as Joan Tenecela and Diego Saquicela as *caciques* in Gualaceo (1592) and Chordeleg (1683), respectively. Consequently, the analysis of morphological and historical combinations has allowed the researcher to provide a description of the current Cañari family names in the city of Cuenca, as well as a recognition of Kichwa-Cañari combinations falling into morphological borrowing.

### 3.

## Results

The following categorization is the result of morphological analysis and historical and toponymical contextualization through document source triangulation. A total of eleven Cañari morphemes were identified within fifty-six family names in Cuenca. These morphemes have been classified as Cañari roots, prefixes, or suffixes, which, in some cases, appear in Cañari or Kichwa-Cañari combinations. These linguistic amalgamations have allowed the researcher to identify morphological borrowing by analyzing the meaning of the linguistic elements present in such combinations.

Cañari family names ending in the Cañari suffix *-al* or *-ar*

The Cañari suffix *-al* or *-ar* whose meaning is unknown (Encalada Vásquez, 2021) appears in two family names in Cuenca: *Asmal* and *Cañar*; this suffix is also present in Cañari toponyms such as *Aymal*, *Gañal*, *Guvar*, *Palpal*, *Tahual* and *Tepal* in the province of Azuay and toponyms such as *Puchar*, *Sharar* and *Shuclloyubar* in the province of Cañar. From a historical perspective, both family names are registered as Cañari *caciques*. According to Cárdenas (2004), Francisco Hasmal was a Cañari *cacique* in 1582 in what today is Guachapala, a territorial division in the province of Azuay. Regarding the family name Cañar, Encalada Vásquez (2021) points out that, in the austral region of what is today Ecuador, centuries before the Incan invasion, there was an ethnic group that identified itself as Cañari and whose language was known as Cañar (Cordero, 1981). In addition, the Spanish chronicler Cieza de León (1518–1554), in his *Chronicle of Peru*, describes that, leaving the city of Tomebamba (former Cañari Guapdondélic), the great road to Cuzco ran through the province of the Cañaris and reached *Cañaribamba* and *Hatuncañari*, two main administrative centers of the region (Cieza de León, 2005). Table 1 therefore, shows the Cañari surnames ending in the suffix *-al* or *-ar* and the sources of information compared.

Table 1

Cañari family names in Cuenca ending in the Cañari suffix *-al* or *-ar*

Cañari family names	Sources of information
Asmal (originally Hasmal)	Cárdenas (2004); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Cañar	Cieza de León (2005); Encalada Vásquez (2021).

Cañari family names ending in the Cañari suffix *-an*

Cárdenas (2004) pointed out that the Cañar suffix *-an* can be found in the Cañari surnames *Burguán*, *Casiguán*, *Chalaguán*, and *Yatán*, which are almost extinct in the territory, as well as in the Cañari toponyms *Amañan*, *Buerán*, and *Awelán* in the province of Cañar. This suffix, whose meaning is unknown (Encalada Vásquez, 2021), was found in two family names in Cuenca: *Faicán* and *Jadán* (Table 2). In the case of *Faicán*, it has been reported as a Cañari family name (Cordero Palacios, 1981), including a historical reference stating that Ricardo Faicán was a Cañari *cacique* in 1751 (Cárdenas, 2004). Regarding *Jadán*, this surname is also a toponym in Azuay (Cordero Palacios, 1981).

Table 2

Cañari family names in Cuenca ending in the Cañari suffix *-an*

Cañari family names	Sources of information
Faicán	Cárdenas (2004); Cordero Palacios (1981).
Jadán	Cárdenas (2004); Cordero Palacios (1981).

Cañari family names ending in the Cañari suffix *-ay*

The Cañari suffix *-ay*, whose meaning is unknown (Encalada Vásquez, 2021), appears in seven family names in Cuenca. The suffix can also be traced in different toponyms in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar, former Cañari settlements. Some of these toponyms are *Taday*, *Biblinca*, *Monay* (Cárdenas, 2004), and *Dubllay* (Cordero, 1981). In the case of *Dubllay*, today, the toponym appears as *Dubliay* in two locations in Azuay and Cañar. Therefore, the seven surnames identified in Cuenca can be regarded as Cañari, considering their suffixation and historical contextualization as family names or toponyms existing in former Cañari settlements (Table 3).



Table 3

*Cañari family names in Cuenca ending in the Cañari suffix -ay*

Cañari family names	Sources of information
Asitimbay	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Buñay	Cardenas (2004); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Dugllay	Cordero Palacios (1981); Cárdenas (2004); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Saquipay	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Sucozhañay (originally Sucushagñay)	Cordero Palacios (1981); Cárdenas (2004); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Tamay	Cárdenas (2004); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Zhangallimbay	Encalada (2021).

**Cañari family names ending in the Cañari suffix -cay**

The Cañari suffix *-cay*, whose meaning is “water” (Encalada Vásquez, 2021), was found in five family names in Cuenca. One family name has been registered as a Cañari surname (Cordero Palacios, 1981; Encalada Vásquez, 2021), while four surnames can also be classified as toponyms in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar (Encalada Vásquez, 2021), where it is common to find various toponyms ending in the suffix *-cay*, sometimes showing an explicit relation between the name and its characteristics. *Yanuncay*, a river in Cuenca, is a clear example of such a relation, as its hybrid name literally means “dark water” from the Kichwa free root *yana* meaning “dark” and the Cañari suffix *-cay* meaning “water”. If indeed the Kichwa root *yana* is the base

in this combination, the Cañari suffix *-cay* becomes an example of a morphological borrowing affecting the phonology of the Kichwa base, i.e., *yana* has been phonologically transformed to accept the suffix *-cay* by changing the final vowel and adding the consonant sound /n/. However, if the Kichwa root in *Yanuncay* is *yanuna*, which means “to cook”, then the phonological adaptation implies the dropping of the final vowel sound to maintain the consonant /n/ sound before the suffix *-cay*. We can therefore hypothesize that this phonological adaptation responds to the ease of articulation, which means that Kichwa speakers in the 15<sup>th</sup> century simplified pronunciation. In this particular case, the phonemes /n/ and /k/ are nearby sounds, and they apparently appear together to facilitate pronunciation. A similar phonological adaptation has been found in Kichwa–Cañari compounds having the suffix *-cela*. Table 4 lists the Cañari family names in Cuenca ending in the suffix *-cay*.

Table 4

*Cañari family names in Cuenca ending in the Cañari suffix -cay*

Cañari family names	Sources of information
Buncay	Cañari surname; a hill in Sigsig, Azuay
Culcay or Cullcay	Cañari surname; a place in Paccha, Azuay
Guncay	Cañari surname; a place in El Valle, Azuay
Paucay	Cañari surname
Zhicay (originally Zhiucay)	Cañari surname; a hill in Molleturo, Azuay

**Cañari family names ending in the suffix -cela**

The Cañari suffix *-cela*, whose meaning is “belonging to a group or descendant of a group”, was found in thirteen family names in Cuenca. Most of these surnames are a combination of Kichwa and Cañari. For example, the surname *Cochancela*, which includes the Kichwa free root *kucha* “lake” and the Cañari suffix *-cela*, can be interpreted as “belonging to the group of people

from the lake” (Encalada Vásquez, 2021). This hybridity can be regarded as the result of the linguistic and cultural encounter between the Incas and the ethnic groups that already inhabited the Sierra region of the Chinchaysuyu, the northern territory of the Inca Empire that extended from Cuzco in Peru to Quito in Ecuador (Portocarrero & Borba, 2015). An important assumption based on this linguistic encounter is that the Cañari suffix *-cela* can be classified as a derivational morpheme borrowed by Kichwa speakers in the 15th century. This interpretation is made considering Gardani’s (2022) assertion that derivational morphology is more commonly borrowed. Indeed, the suffix *-cela*, as shown in table 5, exhibits a derivational nature as the suffix is attached to nouns and verbs, similar to other languages’ derivational processes.

Consequently, the family names in Table 5 containing the Cañari suffix *-cela* preceded by either a Kichwa or a Cañari root underscore language contact and borrowing as a typical linguistic behavior in the Andes at that time. The derivational Cañari suffix *-cela* appears preceded by Kichwa nouns such as *kucha*, *waman*, and *pilla* and by Kichwa verbs such as *cayana*, *makana* and *sakina*, showing that indeed the Cañari linguistic elements adopted by Kichwa enriched its lexicon and allowed the creation of new derivations. As previously discussed, language borrowing also refers to the acceptance or modification of the adopted lexical category, including phonological accommodations. In the set of data analyzed in this work, we can only hypothesize about phonological accommodations, since the combinations *Cayamcela*, *Macancela*, and *Guamancela* exhibit what may be the incorporation of the consonant /n/ sound after the vowel sound /a/, probably to facilitate pronunciation. However, data are not sufficient to support this statement, and further research must be conducted.

Finally, regarding Cañari-Cañari combinations, the family name *Dumancela*, combining the free root *Dumma* and the suffix *-cela*, deserves to be highlighted as *Dumma* refers to the name of a famous Cañari *cacique* who resisted the invasion of Inca Tupac Yupanqui in 1460 with the support of other *caciques* (Cárdenas, 2004). Then, the family name *Dumancela* can be interpreted as “belonging to the family of or descendant of the Cacique

*Dumma*”. Figures 2 and 3 show the archeological vestiges of the Castle of the Cacique *Dumma* in Sigsig, a predominant Cañari settlement in Azuay, Ecuador.

**Table 5**  
*Kichwa–Cañari and Cañari–Cañari family names in Cuenca ending in the suffix -cela*

Cañari family names	Morphological combinations
Cayamcela	Kichwa <i>cayana</i> “to call or invite” + <i>-cela</i>
Cochancela	Kichwa <i>kucha</i> “lake” + <i>-cela</i>
Dumancela	Cañari surname <i>Dumma</i> + <i>-cela</i>
Guamancela	Kichwa <i>waman</i> “hawk” + <i>-cela</i>
Macancela	Kichwa <i>makana</i> “a kind of wooden weapon” + <i>-cela</i>
Nivicela	Kichwa <i>nihui</i> “Andean plant” + <i>-cela</i>
Pillacela	Kichwa <i>pilla</i> “beetle” + <i>-cela</i>
Sagbaicela	Kichwa <i>sawariy</i> “to marry” + <i>-cela</i>
Saquicela	Kichwa <i>sakina</i> “to abandon” + <i>-cela</i>
Tenecela	Cañari surname <i>Tene</i> + <i>-cela</i>
Velecela	Kichwa <i>huili</i> “a type of Andean tree” + <i>-cela</i>
Yadaicela	Kichwa <i>yata</i> “place” + <i>-cela</i> .
Yaurincela	Kichwa <i>yauri</i> “warm place” + <i>-cela</i>

Note. Adapted from Encalada Vásquez, O. (2021). *Los Cañaris y su lengua*, Cuenca: Editorial Don Bosco.

**Figure 2**

*Archeological vestiges of the Castle of the Cañari Cacique Dumma in the Archeological Complex of Chobshi in Sigsig, Azuay*



Photograph: Hernán Jaramillo-Ochoa

**Figure 3**

*A Stone Wall of the Castle of the Cañari Cacique Dumma in the Archeological Complex of Chobshi in Sigsig, Azuay*



Photograph: Sandra Cabrera-Moreno



**Cañari family names having the Cañari morpheme *déleg* as a free root**

The Cañari morpheme *déleg* or *dilig*, meaning “large plain”, can be traced as a root or a suffix in various toponyms in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar. For example, *Deleg*, *Bedeleg*, *Chordeleg*, *Gordéleg*, and *Gualadéleg* in Azuay and *Gundilig*, *Pindilig*, and *Shindilig* in Cañar. Regarding family names in Cuenca, there is only one surname having *déleg* as a free root, as seen in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Cañari family names having the morpheme *déleg**

Cañari family names	Sources of information
Deleg	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021); Montaluisa Chasiquiza (2019).

**Cañari family names ending in the Cañari suffix *-i***

The Cañari suffix *-i*, whose meaning is unknown (Encalada Vásquez, 2021) appears in different Cañari toponyms such as *Auñari*, *Caulli*, *Julli*, *Llimbi*, and *Shari* in the province of Azuay. In Cuenca, this suffix was found in five family names that Cordero Palacios (1981) has reported as Cañari: *Atancuri*, *Chasi*, *Duchi*, *Uyaguari*, and *Supliguchi* (Table 7). Regarding *Atancuri*, Cárdenas (2004) notes that in 1600, Pedro Atancuri was a Cañari *cacique* in Cojitambo, province of Cañar. Concerning the surname *Uyaguari*, Cárdenas stated that, in 1783, Feliciano Iyaguari was the governor of a small indigenous parish in Arogsapa in the province of Azuay.

**Table 7**

*Cañari family names in Cuenca ending in the suffix *-i**

Cañari family names	Sources of information
Atancuri	Cárdenas (2004); Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Chasi	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021)
Duchi	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Uyaguari (originally Iyaguari)	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021)
Supliguchi (also Supliguicha)	Cordero Palacios (1981);

**Cañari family names having the morpheme *naula***

The Cañari morpheme *naula*, whose meaning is unknown, can serve either as a free root or a suffix, as evidenced in anthroponymic combinations such as *Naulacela*, *Naulahuari*, *Guapinaula*, or *Dumanaula* (Encalada Vásquez, 2021). In Cuenca, it was found as a free root in one family name and as a suffix in three family names. For example, *Dumanaula* is the union of the free root *Dumma* (Cárdenas, 2004; Cordero Palacios, 1981) and the suffix *-naula*. Concerning the surname *Saquinaula*, it can be inferred that it is a hybrid family name that combines the Kichwa root *sakina* “to abandon” and the Cañar suffix *-naula*. Table 8 illustrates the use of this morpheme either as a free root or a suffix in Cañari family names.

Table 8

*Cañari family names in Cuenca having the morpheme naula as a free root or suffix*

Cañari family names	Sources of information
Benenaula	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Dumanaula	Cárdenas (2004); Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Naula	Cárdenas (2004); Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).
Saquinaula	Cordero Palacios (1981); Encalada Vásquez (2021).

**Other Cañari morphemes in Cañari family names in Cuenca**

The following Cañari family names have less common Cañari morphemes: the prefix *gua-* or *wa-*, the suffix *-shun*, and the root *xima*. Table 9 includes a morphological description of each term and its toponymical or historical contextualization.

Table 9

*Other Cañari roots and affixes in family names in Cuenca*

Cañari family names	Description
Guachún	Guaizhun, a hill in Azogues, Cañar, where there were mercury mines; Guabshun, a place in Deleg, Azuay; Huanshun, a place in San Bartolomé in Sigsig, Azuay; Cañari compound meaning “high hill”; it combines the Cañari morphemes <i>gua-</i> meaning “sky” and <i>-shun</i> meaning “hill” (Encalada Vásquez, 2021).
Guashima or Wazhima	Cañari compound meaning “a type of high corn”; it combines <i>gua-</i> meaning “high” and <i>xima</i> “corn” (Encalada Vásquez, 2021); Juan Guachima is reported as cacique of the Saicay ayllu, near Gualaceo, Azuay, in 1574 (Cárdenas, 2004).

**Other family names identified as Cañari**

The following Cañari family names show no clear affixation (Table 10); however, we can regard them as Cañari free roots or a combination of undetermined Cañari morphemes, considering two main sources of information: 1) Cordero Palacios’ (1981) lexicon of Kichwa and Cañari, in which the author separates one language from the other, making an explicit distinction between Kichwa and Cañari surnames and toponyms; and 2) Cárdenas’ (2004) inventory of Cañari *caciques* in the provinces of Azuay and Cañar between the years 1460 and 1820.

Table 10

Other family names in Cuenca classified as Cañari

Cañari family names	Description
Aguaiza	Cañari surname
Alulema	Cañari surname
Atariguana	Cañari surname; Francisco Atariguana, Cañari cacique of Arocxapa, Azuay in 1603.
Auquilla	Cañari surname
Bacuilima	Cañari surname
Cahuana	Cañari surname; Tomás Cahuana, cacique of Cañar in 1759
Chica	Cañari surname; Chica or Checa, a toponym in Cuenca, Azuay, territory of the <i>cacique</i> Chica-Capac.
Chicaiza	Cañari surname
Guarquila	Cañari surname; Bernardo Wuarkilla, cacique of Pindilig, Cañar in 1759.
Gutama	Cañari surname
Lema	Cañari surname
Pacurucu	Cañari surname; Diego Pacurucu, cacique of Nultizapa in 1683.
Pulla	Cañari surname; José Puglla, cacique of Burin in 1692.
Suquilanda	Cañari surname
Tenemasa	Cañari surname; Francisco Tenemaza, cacique of Guangras, Cañar in 1595.

Table 11

Summary of Cañari roots and affixes found in Cañari surnames and Kichwa-Cañari combinations in Cuenca

Affixes		Meaning	Surname example
Prefixes	Suffixes		
Gua-		high	Wazhima
Wa-			
	-al or -ar	Unknown	Asmal, Cañar
	-an	Unknown	Faicán
	-ay	Unknown	Asitimbay
	-cay	Water	Culcay
	-cela	Belonging to a group or descendant of a group	Guamancela
	-deleg or -dilig	Large plain	Deleg
	-i	Unknown	Atancuri
	-naula	Unknown	Guapinaula
	-shun	Hill	Guachún
Roots			
Xima		Corn	Wazhima

4. Conclusions

From the 318 indigenous family names identified in Cuenca, Ecuador, fifty-six surnames have been classified as having Cañari elements, relying on morphological analysis and historical and toponymical contextualization through document triangulation. The morphological markers discussed in this study are reminders of the Cañari heritage



still alive in the anthroponyms of the city of Cuenca, a former Cañari settlement in what today is Ecuador. These markers are also reminders of language contact and language borrowing through the centuries. In this context, special attention has been placed on the suffix *-cela* as it can be regarded as an example of a morphological borrowing that has maintained its derivational function in Kichwa–Cañari combinations, similar to what has occurred to the French suffix *-able* that was incorporated into the English language without losing its original meaning. As previously stated, language borrowing goes beyond lexical or morphosyntactic adaptations and includes phonological accommodations. The data analyzed in this study suggests that there might be a phonological accommodation in some Kichwa–Cañari surnames, since, as observed in these combinations, there is an insertion of the consonant sound /n/ or its allomorph /m/ following the Kichwa root. Some of these examples are Cayamcela, Dumancela, Cochancela, and Macancela.

In general, Cañari prefixes, suffixes, and free roots appear in two forms: Cañari words and Kichwa–Cañari morphological combinations, showing the linguistic implications of language contact between the Incas and the Cañari people in the Southern Andes of Ecuador during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is therefore undeniable that languages in contact in diglossic settings undergo processes of lexical, morphological, and morphosyntactic influence that can be either beneficial or detrimental. In the case of the Cañari language, its contact with the Spanish language caused its extinction; however, the survival of Kichwa in the Andes has allowed us, due to language contact and morphological borrowing, to know something about the extinct Cañari language. We have seen, especially in Kichwa–Cañari combinations, part of its morphological system in which suffixation predominates. As no written record of the Cañari language exists, the anthroponyms and toponyms analyzed in this study play an essential role in the reconstruction of morphological and phonological borrowing scenarios, allowing us to make inferences about the linguistic adaptations or modifications that morphological borrowing and, specifically, derivational borrowings from the Cañari language caused to the Kichwa language.

In addition, to language borrowing, the historical context provided in this study may serve as a basis for the examination of the role of diglossia in the gradual extinction of indigenous languages, especially linguistic families in Latin America. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that, through the centuries, language borrowing has been intrinsically related to political factors, and thus as Lee (2020) has stated, dominant languages are vested with political authority. Following that thought, it is also worth distinguishing that political factors are closely related to what Lee (2020) has defined as factor scales that can be either beneficial or detrimental to minoritized languages. Therefore, dominant languages are politically and geographically controlling, as was the case of Spanish in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, a language that, due to such power and influence in the region, gradually led to the extinction of the Cañari language. At this point, we can finally say that the Cañari anthroponyms and toponyms that have survived are a cultural heritage to be treasured; they are reminders of the complexity of language contact and borrowing as well as reminders of how a language can disappear from a speech community.

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No competing interests to declare.

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