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**“COMO ESPEJOS SE ROMPEN”: IDENTIDADES DE MUJERES INDIGENAS Y POLITICA DE REPRODUCCION CULTURAL EN LA AMAZONIA ECUATORIANA**

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*Estas niñas se miran en la pantalla de la televisión, pero sólo reflejan a los blancos. Y luego... como espejos se rompen*

Estas metáforas sobre identidades sociales de género y sobre cambio social y cultural en el área del Alto Napo de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana en 1990, fueron expresadas por una mujer Napo Quichua como un penetrante comentario sobre las auto-imágenes y el comportamiento sexual de jovencitas, muchas de las cuales son de la edad de sus nietas adolescentes. Este trabajo es un intento de comenzar a descifrar los problemas sociales y culturales que encierran estas metáforas, a través de una interpretación de las narrativas y de las experiencias contemporáneas de las mujeres adultas.

Por algún tiempo ya, durante mis visitas periódicas a la ciudad de Tena y a las comunidades cercanas, he estado inmersa en la vida diaria de las mujeres y más específicamente en recoger las historias de vida de un pequeño grupo de mujeres a quienes he logrado conocer a fondo.<sup>i</sup> Durante los últimos dos temporadas de mi estadía, el problema del enamoramiento y los enredos sexuales indiscriminados y sin control de niñas adolescentes con jóvenes, así como los consiguientes embarazos no previstos, han complicado la vida de estas mujeres adultas, ya abuelas, y han sido el tema dominante de sus conversaciones. Ellas están muy preocupadas por la situación de estas adolescentes que están “fuera de control,” y que frecuentemente se huyen a otras ciudades de la región o a Quito. Un número cada vez mayor de niñas de poblados lejanos ahora se trasladan a Tena buscando no sólo las normales atracciones de la ciudad, tales como la televisión y discotecas, sino también la posibilidad de asistir a los colegios secundarios donde pueden socializar con otras jóvenes de su propia edad. Lo que especialmente preocupa a sus

mayores es que este grupo incluye jóvenes no indígenas y algunos extranjeros, y que las relaciones sexuales son muchas veces iniciadas por las mismas jovencitas. A estas adolescentes se las conoce localmente como “carachamas,” el nombre de un pez nativo muy abundante y fácil de pescar. El “período difícil” de la sexualidad femenina adolescente, en el pasado controlado dentro de las restricciones y la intimidad del grupo de parentesco, se ha convertido en un asunto de escándalo público y éste es el centro de las preocupaciones de sus abuelas. El problema controversial más amplio que subyace en las narrativas de estas mujeres no es solamente la calidad y el ritmo del cambio social moderno, sino también la verdadera esencia de la reproducción social y cultural y el rol que ellas van a jugar en ese proceso. Esta es la razón por la cual el tema de la identidad de las mujeres indígenas y su futura reproducción cultural es el que me interesa tratar en este trabajo.

El tema de contenido real de las experiencias cotidianas de las mujeres, situado en el contexto más amplio de los cambios económicos, sociales, y políticos que experimentan las sociedades Amazónicas no ha sido todavía objeto del interés de los estudiosos de esta área (Seymour-Smith 1991; Bellier 1993). Mi principal objetivo aquí es explorar estos temas a través del estudio de las diferencias de género en la construcción del sentido de ser, de la identidad de las mujeres tal como es experimentada en un proceso de cambio social particular. Voy a examinar cómo las mujeres Napo Quichua recuerdan, relatan, y negocian en la vida cotidiana contemporánea, los múltiples significados de ser una mujer indígena en una sociedad inter-étnica cada vez más compleja. En estas conversaciones las mujeres reviven y reaccionan los acontecimientos y experiencias que están relatando. De esta manera, las representaciones de feminidad que comunican no se agotan en palabras, sino que además incorporan la riqueza de la imaginación visual y de otras experiencias sensoriales de olores, gustos, y sonidos.<sup>ii</sup> Al concentrarme en las memorias narrativas personales de mujeres individuales, y al incorporar el proceso por el cual las mujeres han reelaborado su cultura a través del tiempo, quiero desviar el centro de atención teórico hacia un enfoque más histórico y procesual y dejar de lado por el momento los anteriores modelos de roles de género y de identidades femeninas que tendían a homogeneizar a las mujeres en categorías unitarias encerrándolas en presentes etnográficos hace tiempo desaparecidos (cf., Mohanty 1991; Abu-Lughod 1991).

Mi segundo objetivo analítico es explorar cómo las *luchas intra-culturales* (Sider 1991; Smith 1991) nos permiten revelar las historias de género mientras éstas se producen, en vez de ocultarlas detrás de un pulido texto homogeneizante. Las narrativas de las abuelas indígenas no están articuladas en afirmaciones transparentes acerca de la “cultura” como un legado pristino del pasado, sino como conscientes, cuidadosamente consideradas, y emocionadas reflexiones insertas en sus propias representaciones y prácticas en el “espacio doméstico,” donde sus propias etnohistorias están inscritas (cf., Sider 1991). Además, como se me hizo claro algún tiempo atrás cuando trabajé recogiendo la historia de vida de un anciano indígena (Muratorio 1991), los hombres y mujeres Napo Quichua, tanto viejos como jóvenes, sostienen conflictivos, y a veces contradictorios, discursos de género. Estos discursos han cambiado con el tiempo, y siguen cambiando, aunque siempre es posible detectar en todos ellos los vestigios de calladas premisas culturales comunes.

Finalmente, aunque existen excelentes estudios acerca de las complejidades contemporáneas de la reproducción cultural en otras sociedades Amazónicas (Véase esp., Jackson 1989, 1995; Turner 1991, 1992), éstos no han tratado directamente el problema de género. Mi argumento es que el conflicto intergeneracional tratado en este trabajo como una disputa entre mujeres sobre las prácticas e imágenes de la feminidad, ofrece un escenario privilegiado para tener una mejor comprensión de los discursos verbales dominantes sobre el proceso de reproducción cultural indígena que están siendo pronunciados, principalmente por hombres, en los escenarios públicos nacionales e internacionales. Las narrativas de las mujeres Napo Quichua requieren una lectura sutil y procesual sin las anteojeras Occidentales que, como Strathern (1984) ha argumentado, relegan la domesticidad a una forma inferior de confinamiento, o imponen nociones de identidad e individualidad que sólo se alcanzan a través de una dolorosa separación de relaciones sociales culturalmente significativas. Consciente de las dificultades implícitas en tomar este enfoque para entender las prácticas de las mujeres sin caer en los mismos errores que criticamos, voy sin embargo a proponer aquí que un estudio profundo de las narrativas autobiográficas y de otras de las formas expresivas personales de las mujeres indígenas en su propio y auto-definido espacio doméstico, proveen una llave importante para revelar las ocultas historicidades de las identidades culturales de esas mujeres.

### **El contexto más amplio de los argumentos de las mujeres**

Los Napo-Quichua del área de Tena-Archidona comparten con miles de otros Quichua-hablantes de las Tierras Bajas una cultura tradicional de floresta tropical basada en la cacería, la pesca, la recolección, y la agricultura de roza. Sin embargo, a diferencia de otros grupos indígenas, muy temprano en el período Colonial, los Napo Quichua se vieron obligados a adaptar sus estrategias de supervivencia primero a las demandas económicas, políticas, y culturales de los conquistadores Españoles, y más tarde a los esfuerzos del Estado y los gobiernos locales de incorporarlos a la sociedad nacional. El imponer una política de sedentarización fue la clave de ese intento de tornar un supuesto "salvajismo" en "civilización." Aunque los Napo Quichua resistieron esta política de varias formas, en el largo plazo, ésta fue decisiva en erosionar su acceso a la tierra y en su habilidad de practicar en pleno sus actividades de subsistencia.

La mayoría de los agentes de contacto comunicaron a los indígenas un mensaje que representaba a su forma de vida como "inferior," y que por lo tanto tenía que ser substituída por cualquiera fuese la entonces actual concepción hegemónica de costumbres "civilizadas." Esto fue especialmente puesto en vigor en lo que se refiere a la sexualidad y a las relaciones de género. Los misioneros Católicos percibían los cuerpos de los indígenas Amazónicos como particularmente "incivilizados." Consideraban que los Napo Quichua carecían de todo sentido de moralidad y que estaban afectados de urgencias sexuales "poco naturales" que debían ser controladas dentro del matrimonio. El abogar matrimonios tempranos para las mujeres, o su confinamiento en conventos fueron las dos políticas más consistentes que los misioneros Católicos trataron de imponer en esta área para regular y controlar la esfera doméstica indígena. Temprano en este siglo, el estado Liberal también intervino directamente en la vida privada y familiar indígena, particularmente con legislación acerca del matrimonio civil, el divorcio, y la escolaridad universal (Moscoso 1996; Goetschel 1996). Desde entonces, la regulación y disciplina estatal de la sexualidad y las prácticas de socialización, además de las transformaciones económicas, han contribuído a los cambios en autoridad y poder que las familias y los grupos de parentesco indígenas están experimentando actualmente. Por varios

siglos entonces en esta sociedad Amazónica particular, las subjetividades de género han sido diálogos conflictivos, no sólo entre hombres y mujeres indígenas, sino también entre ellos y el mundo no-indígena más amplio. Sin embargo, con el tiempo, tanto mujeres como hombres indígenas lograron negociar identidades de género que no fueron meros reflejos de las construcciones hegemónicas del Estado y de la Iglesia, sino que las incorporaron o las subvirtieron para acomodarlas a sus propios proyectos culturales (Muratorio 1995a).

Pero en los últimos años el ritmo de cambio se ha acelerado considerablemente en la Amazonía Ecuatoriana, principalmente debido a la explotación de las considerables reservas de petróleo de esta región. La nueva infraestructura de caminos, unida a la demanda de trabajo y servicios de la industria petrolera, proveyeron los principales incentivos para el influjo masivo de colonos, para el crecimiento urbano, y para la creciente incorporación de la población indígena a la economía de mercado. Estas transformaciones económicas, además de los periódicos conflictos fronterizos entre Ecuador y Perú, han contribuido a consolidar la presencia del estado y de los militares en esta región, así como el hace tiempo relegado reconocimiento de las realidades sociales y culturales de esta región en la conciencia nacional. Como en muchas otras partes del mundo, las nuevas tecnologías de comunicación, especialmente la radio y la televisión, han sido decisivas en la incorporación de los jóvenes Napo Quichua de ambos sexos a la cultura económica globalizante. Más aún, en la década de 1990, la preocupación internacional por la degradación ambiental de la floresta Amazónica ha atraído un gran número de ambientalistas extranjeros con diferentes versiones de proyectos de desarrollo sostenible, particularmente de ecoturismo. Muchos de estos proyectos de ecoturismo están siendo manejados por gente indígena y prometen no sólo bosques vírgenes, sino también “interesantes experiencias inter-culturales” (Muratorio 1995b). La presencia de Europeos y Norteamericanos, muchos de los cuales residen en el área por largos períodos de tiempo, está teniendo un efecto considerable en la vida cotidiana de hombres y mujeres Napo Quichua, así como en las políticas locales de diferencias étnicas.<sup>iii</sup>

Sin embargo, el factor más importante en conformar las políticas de diferencias étnicas ha sido la ya autónoma voz de los diferentes pueblos indígenas a través de sus organizaciones. Tanto a nivel nacional como localmente en la región Amazónica, estas organizaciones han sido

lideradas por hombres. Los intelectuales y profesionales indígenas han construido un discurso genérico de Indianidad que reclama una historia común de reivindicación étnica. Como otros discursos indígenas similares desde la época Colonial, este discurso de las organizaciones usa categorías históricas y modernas Occidentales, tales como los conceptos de “cultura” y “ambientalismo” (Brown 1993:319-320; Jackson 1995) y ha tenido un éxito incuestionable en abrir espacios políticos significativos para los pueblos indígenas frente al estado. Sin embargo, el carácter homogeneizante de la identidad étnica proyectada por las federaciones indígenas silencia las complejidades de los distintos grupos étnicos y las diferencias de género internas a las sociedades locales; un problema que recién comienza a surgir públicamente.<sup>iv</sup> Culturalmente este discurso propone una forma de esencialismo conservador que naturaliza las identidades de las mujeres, más comunmente propiciando una identificación estereotípica de la mujer con la Madre Tierra, mientras que al mismo tiempo marginaliza sus voces al no proveer espacios reales para su efectiva participación política. Mientras que proclama a las mujeres como las portadoras esenciales de la tradición cultural, el discurso de las federaciones no provee los lineamientos cotidianos para vivir una etnicidad “políticamente correcta.”<sup>v</sup>

En general, las mujeres indígenas ya mayores simplemente ignoran, o bromean a los líderes hombres acerca de los límites precisos de esta disyuntiva entre la modernidad y la tradición. La ironía y el cuestionamiento burlón -o a veces simplemente los silencios preñados de significado- que las mujeres dirigen a esos líderes, se convierten en las formas en que las mujeres desafían el presunto monopolio de las federaciones sobre las memorias culturales y la redefinición de la historia indígena. Sin embargo, algunos jóvenes de ambos sexos están tentativamente tratando de recobrar una cultura supuestamente “original y pristina,” mientras que otros están afanosamente empeñados en una amnesia cultural. Cuáles son o deben ser los contenidos de la tradición étnica, y quién ejerce control sobre las memorias culturales selectivas e interpreta su significado, en suma, los problemas diarios de la reproducción cultural y la construcción de identidades, son motivo de interminables discusiones y una de las bases de los conflictos intergeneracionales. Estos argumentos internos sobre qué idioma se habla y qué comida se come en la casa, sobre los modelos de roles ofrecidos por las telenovelas, sobre las concepciones de la belleza y la sexualidad femenina, pueden parecer triviales o inconsecuentes,

pero son las manifestaciones locales de los procesos globales de modernización que han transformado todas las cuestiones de reproducción cultural en procesos altamente politizados.<sup>vi</sup>

Como otra gente indígena en el Ecuador y en otras partes del mundo, las jóvenes mujeres Napo Quichua están experimentando los problemas de crecimiento para convertirse en personas sexuales y sociales adultas. Al confrontarse con las experiencias de su propia identidad, estas jóvenes deben transitar los inciertos y cambiantes linderos de por lo menos tres sendas de identidad: la controvertida, pero ya transitada por sus mayores, la más atrayente representada en los medios de masa, y la de más fuerza política ofrecida por las organizaciones indígenas. Aquí sólo dispongo de espacio para examinar en detalle la primera de estas sendas. Me concentraré en el conflicto sobre las ideologías y las prácticas de género desde el punto de vista de la generación de mujeres adultas. Este surgió en la serie de conversaciones ya mencionadas y en los cantos y otros recuerdos que este pequeño grupo de abuelas compartió entre ellas y conmigo cuando los problemas de sus nietas se puso álgido. Las abuelas tienen una relación muy cercana y tierna con sus nietas. Después que sus hijas se han casado y se han ido a vivir a otro lado, casi siempre una abuela les pide una nieta para que venga a vivir con ella. De esta forma las abuelas se sienten particularmente responsables por la crianza y educación de esas niñas y se preocupan de los problemas que éstas están experimentando en la actualidad. No quiero dar la idea de que estas mujeres adultas están entregándose a un mero recuerdo romántico de su pasado, o tratando de recrear una versión “auténtica” de la cultura femenina para contrarrestar una supuesta “falsa conciencia cultural” por parte de la joven generación. Están usando sus memorias de identidad para enfrentar lo que en el presente sienten que es una seria crisis en sus familias. Pero estas mujeres también comunican un casi inevitable sentido de pérdida, la conciencia de que les va a ser casi imposible reproducir adecuadamente para las nuevas generaciones los códigos culturales que las formaron a ellas como mujeres.

### **Las imágenes de feminidad de las abuelas**

Las mujeres mayores hablan acerca de los ideales de feminidad, no sólo para criticar el comportamiento de sus nietas, sino también porque están preocupadas de si sus futuras nueras van a poder encarnar estos ideales. La primera cosa que se enfatiza para que una mujer particular

alcance a ser esta mujer ideal, no es su calidad de madre, sino su estricta adhesión a un elaborado código ético y estético de trabajo considerado esencial para la completa realización del ser personal y social femenino. El cariño y el cuidado de los niños es uno de esos supuestos que las mujeres comparten y dan por sentados, pero no consideran el espacio doméstico principalmente en términos de sus roles reproductivos y su maternidad. En cambio, el trabajo de las mujeres es un asunto de continua contestación. Aquí se reconocen grandes diferencias entre distintas mujeres en términos de conocimiento, habilidades, y actitudes sociales, principalmente en cuanto a la producción, preparación, y consumo de la comida. Las sutilezas de los significados simbólicos de cada tarea son siempre elaborados interminablemente en las conversaciones. Pero más aún lo son las complejidades de las habilidades y gracias sociales que las mujeres deben desplegar cuando realizan estas tareas, así como el daño físico y síquico que pueden sufrir si fallan en realizarlas bien. Con la excepción de los celos, la mera percepción por parte de su marido de que una mujer no ha cumplido con esas tareas domésticas de acuerdo a sus deseos, aún si éstos son arbitrarios, es la excusa más común usada por el hombre para abusarla físicamente.

La reputación de una mujer como una buena trabajadora comienza a ser formada cuando es muy pequeña y florece cuando ya es madura. Para entonces, al menos otras mujeres reconocen esa reputación. La ceremonia de la transferencia del “*paju*” es sólo una de las más abiertas manifestaciones de este reconocimiento. En este ritual muy doméstico, una mujer más joven o menos competente compra los poderes o “pajus” de una reconocida experta en cultivar yuca, en preparar buena chicha, o en curar una enfermedad específica. El pedido ceremonial y el consiguiente pago de esta transacción forman parte del reconocimiento del status del donante. La reputación de una mujer madura también sirve para acrecentar el valor de sus hijas como futuras cónyuges, una razón importante por la cual estas reputaciones son también celebradas en cantos autobiográficos o en aquellos cantados por las mismas hijas de una mujer prestigiosa. Estos cantos son altamente personalizados y por lo general incluyen el nombre de la mujer que los canta y una referencia a su grupo de parentesco o *ayllu*, como en el siguiente canto:

Mi Maraquitu,  
mujer Cerda,  
se mueve como un colibrí



de flor en flor.  
 Sabe como trabajar la chacra.  
 Todas las mujeres la admiran,  
 nunca compró comida en el pueblo.

Es el aspecto social del trabajo de la mujer el que es esencial para su identidad, primero como hija, y luego como esposa y nuera. La hija desde muy pequeña debe levantarse mucho antes del alba para preparar la huayusa que debe ofrecer a todos los hombres y mujeres de su casa, para ayudar a su madre a preparar la chicha y acompañarla a la chacra, así como para cuidar de sus hermanitos más pequeños. Cuando se casa, preferentemente muy joven, sus tareas inmediatas como nuera son muy similares aunque, alejada del amor materno, emocionalmente más difíciles. Su autonomía como esposa está simbolizada por su derecho a su propia chacra, lo cual le permite entrar en el proceso de producción y circulación de alimentos, pero se espera que su suegra y su esposo van a completar su socialización como mujer adulta, la cual se considera alcanzada cuando ella ha tenido su segundo hijo y la pareja puede mudarse a una vivienda separada. Además, el desempeño de la nueva nuera en la casa de sus suegros es también considerada una prueba de las aptitudes de su madre y su abuela en formar su personalidad a una edad temprana. La reputación de las mujeres es continuamente puesta a prueba públicamente, y es precisamente porque lo que está en juego es tan valioso, que las abuelas se sienten tan preocupadas porque las jovencitas de ahora no quieren hacer las tareas domésticas o las realizan a medias y protestando.

Tanto el carácter construido del “espacio doméstico” como su diversidad etnográfica han sido tratadas exhaustivamente en la literatura feminista. También se ha señalado que en algunas sociedades la línea divisoria entre el trabajo y el ocio es menos rígida que la que requiere el capitalismo Occidental y que, en consecuencia, las categorías evaluativas usadas frecuentemente para caracterizar el trabajo de la mujer tales como “esclavizante” u “opresivo” también son históricamente contingentes y pueden ser, si no siempre etnocéntricas, al menos controvertidas (e.g. Harris 1981; Moore 1988). Las mujeres Napo Quichua generalmente no se quejan de su trabajo diciendo que es aburrido o repetitivo, ni tampoco de que el cuidado de los niños interfiere con su movilidad o con su capacidad de participar en actividades sociales, ya que llevan a sus bebés a todas partes, o pueden dejar a sus otros niños al cuidado de otras mujeres. El espacio

doméstico no es considerado como un confinamiento, ya que no está limitado por las cuatro paredes de la casa ni por la concepción Occidental del hogar como una unidad limitada y socialmente aislada. Por supuesto, las mujeres no creen que un trabajo repetitivo y extenuante como el limpiar la hierba es “entretenido,” pero no se quejan de este trabajo en los términos Cristianos de “redención” por el pecado original. Más bien las mujeres Napo Quichua prefieren enfatizar la posesión de la fuerza física que les permite hacer esas tareas de horticultura, y hablar de la belleza de una chacra bien cultivada- y productiva- como un atributo de su propia identidad, como una metáfora de su propio ser.

La chacra y el hogar son primariamente dominios femeninos; ciertamente sitios del arduo trabajo de las mujeres, pero también espacios donde se hace tiempo para la transmisión de conocimientos, para el intercambio de comadreos, o para la narración de historias y sueños, compartidos con las hijas, nietas, y nueras. Para realizar las tareas domésticas más importantes que, excepto por el cuidado de los niños por supuesto, consisten en la preparación de la comida, la mujer tiene que aventurarse fuera de la casa. Aún áreas del bosque limpiadas alrededor de la casa para las actividades diarias pueden estar pobladas de *supais* o espíritus con quienes las mujeres pueden tener interesantes encuentros, a menudo de carácter erótico. Este hecho es también particularmente verdad cuando las mujeres van a pescar, a lavar oro, o más adentro al monte donde estos seres pueden materializarse con más facilidad. A través de estos encuentros con los espíritus las mujeres adquieren poderes específicos para curar, pescar, lavar oro, o atraer a los hombres. En sus cantos, por ejemplo, una mujer a menudo habla de incorporar, no sólo el poder de los *supais*, sino también las características estéticas y de comportamiento de otros seres vivientes como pájaros, por ejemplo, algunos de los cuales son a su vez los que anuncian la presencia de los espíritus. De esta manera la mujer “se convierte en pájaro” al referirse a sí misma como “mujer tucán” o “mujer picaflor.” Estos poderes son altamente personalizados y objeto de reflexión por la mujer que los posee o los busca. Son importantes en dotar y forjar su propio *samai* ( poder espiritual, aliento ) y forman una parte integral de su identidad. Sin embargo, si bien estos poderes la distinguen a ella como individuo, sólo se hacen realidad cuando se socializan entre seres humanos: cuando son usados para curar y dar alivio a otros, o cuando los productos de esos encuentros espirituales son compartidos con parientes y visitantes.

No hay ni que mencionar, por supuesto, que una mujer que es una buena proveedora de pescado, o de dinero, no sólo complementa las actividades productivas de su marido, sino que también obtiene una considerable autonomía de su autoridad. Además, los productos que las mujeres recogen en el monte, tales como hongos y garabato yuyo, o los pescecitos que pesca, envueltos y cocinados en hoja, son usados para preparar el *huarmi uchu* (ají de la mujer). Este es un tipo de comida que la mujer puede preparar por sí misma, “independientemente” de la contribución de su marido a la economía del hogar. Como todas las comidas incluyen yuca, cuya producción requiere del trabajo masculino, y el *huarmi uchu* no es considerado una comida con la cual se pueda alimentar regularmente a una familia, esta independencia es principalmente simbólica. Las mujeres preparan el *huarmi uchu* para calmar el hambre por el día, pero también lo usan explícitamente para hacer avengorzar al marido que no es un “buen proveedor” de comida.

Las mujeres también expanden su dominio doméstico viajando en búsqueda de ciertos tipos particulares de alimentos. Esto generalmente significa visitar a parientes o a comadres en otras áreas de la selva donde la cacería o la pesca son más abundantes. Parte de la comida obtenida en esa forma siempre se trae de vuelta a la casa para su consumo o circulación. La mujer ha reciprocado por ella con su trabajo en la chacra de la mujer que visitó, o la va a reciprocitar con regalos de otro tipo de comida en el futuro. Como Gow (1989:572-74) ha argumentado en relación a la gente de la floresta tropical del Bajo Urubamba en Perú, esta forma de circulación de alimentos es principalmente llevada a cabo por mujeres e implica relaciones sociales de respeto con aquellos que “aman, piensan, y recuerdan” a otra persona. Entre los Napo Quichua, este tipo de circulación de “memoria cariñosa” (Gow 1989:574), así como la ahora más frecuente participación de las mujeres en la feria semanal de Tena para vender productos de sus chacras y aún de recolección, son consideradas por las mujeres como una expresión de su autonomía frente al control de los hombres. Ellas se quejan de que, principalemnte por celos, sus maridos tratan “injusta e irracionalmente” de cortarles esa libertad con la excusa de que las mujeres van a esos lugares a “reirse” con otros hombres. Cuando las abuelas estaban comparando sus experiencias en una de nuestras conversaciones, no debe sorprendernos de que fue una viuda la que alegremente observó cómo ella podía gozar de su libertad de viajar a

cualquier lugar y a cualquier hora sin ser controlada por un hombre:

Así es como yo busco comida, viajando a distintos lugares. Ningún hombre se atreve a molestarme. Yo viajo para recordar y para tener de qué hablar cuando sea vieja; para recordar todas las buenas cosas que la gente me ha dado de comer.

Ya desde hace muchos años los Napo Quichua no viven exclusivamente de la cacería o de los productos que ellos mismos cultivan. Necesitan regularmente de aprovisionarse de comida en el pueblo, incluyendo carne y pescado. La creciente dependencia del mercado tanto en la producción como en el consumo está reestructurando una vez más la complementariedad de los roles de género en la sociedad Napo Quichua y la ideología sobre las mujeres. Pero ellas hacen una clara distinción evaluativa entre los dos tipos de comida, en parte porque la comida del pueblo es también considerada “extraña” o “comida de blancos,” la cual, desprovista del conector trabajo de las mujeres, carece de sentido cultural. Recordando el retorno de un largo viaje a la Costa (un lugar “de gustos extraños” según ella), una de las mujeres relató la escena de su madre esperándole en la casa con una olla de chicha con las siguientes palabras: “Madre, le dije, me habían hecho olvidar el gusto de la chicha. Ahora vuelvo a emborracharme con el amor de tus manos, y mi boca se acuerda.” Este ejemplo, así como el de la viuda que cité anteriormente, apoyan el argumento de Serematakis de que la comensalidad tiene que ser vista como como comprendiendo más que la mera organización del consumo de comida y bebida para incluir “el intercambio de memorias y emociones sensoriales y de sustancias y objetos que encarnan recuerdos y sentimientos” (1994:37).

Las memorias de estas mujeres Napo Quichua están literalmente entrelazadas con los olores y los sabores del trabajo y el amor de otras personas. Como la abuela Griega y su nieto compartiendo comida y cuentos de hadas (Serematakis 1994), las mujeres indígenas crean un mundo alternativo de memorias culturales como un escudo para protegerse de la invasión sensorial de la nueva cultura de la modernidad. Esta generación de mujeres mayores piensa que, al adquirir exclusivamente el gusto por la comida del pueblo, las jovencitas van a devenir cada vez más dependientes de los salarios de sus maridos y van así a perder la autonomía que les permite su propio trabajo productivo. Al rechazar esta forma de conocimiento van a reprimir las memorias que evocan la continuidad cultural.

Especialmente en términos de comensalidad, la auto-identidad de una mujer está atada a

la imagen que otros tienen de ella, pero está también encarnada en los artefactos y prácticas materiales que ella usa para desplegarla. Hacer demasiado uso de la comida del pueblo puede disminuir la reputación pública de la mujer y su autoridad en el hogar, pero también la textura y el color de sus ollas puede denunciar su carácter y habilidad. A diferencia de los estereotipos Occidentales de ollas brillantes como el signo de la pulcritud de una mujer y su virtud como ama de casa, es la negrura de las ollas de una mujer Napo Quichua la que habla por sus virtudes femeninas: significa que sus ollas son usadas continuamente para alimentar a otros, para socializar, para dar generosamente. Cuando parientes u otras visitas vienen a la casa, la cualidad de los objetos domésticos, las texturas y olores de su cocinar, el tono y el ritmo de los sonidos que hace cuando trabaja, la gracia de sus movimientos, todos tienen que dar testimonio de su ser trabajador y generoso. No sólo el presente, sino también el futuro de su reputación están en juego, ya que se cree que aquellos que son mezquinos con la comida van a ser castigados en la vida después de la muerte siendo atracados de comida hasta reventar, una y otra vez.

El término local usado más frecuentemente para describir a la mujer ideal es *pichihuarmi*, una mujer que se parece al pequeño, liviano, y rápido pájaro *pichi*. A esta mujer se la representa como de pies ligeros, viva, y alegre, pero sabia. Canta y sirve chicha con prontitud, es trabajadora, y siempre da de comer a otros. Este pajarito es el símbolo de las dos cualidades fundamentales del ser femenino: el ser una buena trabajadora y su generosidad, cuyos significados están lejos de la ideología Cristiana de una feminidad pasiva y puramente receptiva. Otros dos términos se acercan a la descripción de esta mujer ideal: *allihuarmi* y *sabiruhuarmi*, mujer hermosa y sabia, en la cual conocimiento, habilidad, y belleza física se complementan para expresarse en sus prácticas cotidianas. Por el contrario, se habla de una “mala” mujer principalmente como holgazana. La holgazanería es degradante porque es considerada el comportamiento anti-social por excelencia. No debe sorprendernos que el término usado para caracterizar a tal mujer es *carishina* (como-hombre) ya que, por supuesto, no se espera que los hombres hagan y mucho menos sobresalgan en las tareas propias de las mujeres. El término *carishina* es usado a menudo como una admonición cuando se disciplina a las niñas, pero siempre como un insulto cuando se aplica a una mujer adulta. Ella está no sólo siendo recriminada por incompetencia, sino también siendo avergonzada por su indolencia y falta de

auto-respeto. Como una abuela se quejó:

Ahora las mujeres son buenas sólo para dormir con sus maridos; son sabias para mostrarles las nalgas a los hombres, pero después se preocupan cuando el marido les pega con el pretexto de que ellos pensaban que se habían casado con una mujer trabajadora.

La analogía implícita en el término *carishina* entre una “mala mujer” y la incompetencia de los hombres en realizar tareas femeninas no significa la denigración del trabajo de los hombres. En algunos cantos, y también en el lenguaje cotidiano, las mujeres usan a veces el término *cari-huarmi* (mujer como hombre) para referirse orgullosamente a sí mismas como poseyendo la fuerza necesaria para cazar, pescar, cortar árboles, o acarrear troncos, todas tareas asignadas al hombre en la concepción aceptada de la complementariedad de género en la división del trabajo. Los atributos morales degradantes de la holgazanería también se aplican a los hombres que no son buenos proveedores de cacería, pesca o, más comunmente en la actualidad, de dinero de sus salarios. Sin embargo, no conozco un término positivo o negativo que se refiera a estos hombres como habiendo incorporado las cualidades del trabajo designado como femenino. Este es un aspecto de las relaciones de género que necesita ser más investigado en esta área de la Amazonía, precisamente por su inserción temprana en la sociedad nacional. La evidencia existente, sin embargo, es suficiente para demostrar la necesidad de contextualizar los todavía persistentes discursos dualísticos y jerárquicos de género, para así poder entender sus diferentes significados culturales al ser producidos, reproducidos, y transformados en un tiempo histórico.

### **Los espejos de la sexualidad**

El principal tema de conflicto entre las dos generaciones de mujeres es, por supuesto, cómo representar y expresar la sexualidad. Este problema esencial en la construcción de la identidad es iluminado en narrativas acerca del cuerpo: cómo se viste y se adorna; cómo y hacia dónde mira; cómo se mueve; y cómo se hace oír. La forma del cuerpo de una mujer es considerada un lenguaje por el cual ella comunica, voluntaria o involuntariamente, mensajes significativos acerca de sí misma y de su compañero. Si una mujer es delgada, va a ser vista por otros como alguien que no está bien provista por su marido; y su delgadez puede verse como un

signo de que está siendo abusada por él. En contraste, tener una figura "bien redondeada," sin gordura, es visto como evidencia de una mujer bien alimentada por su marido y teniendo la fuerza muscular adquirida por su árduo trabajo en la chacra y por caminar largas distancias a pié. En general, el cuerpo bien redondeado de una mujer es testimonio de un matrimonio bien llevado y de su satisfacción consigo misma y con su vida. Como Turner ha señalado para los Kayapó, la vestimenta y el adorno del cuerpo constituyen, no sólo uno de los medios culturales más significativos en dar forma y en comunicar la identidad personal y social, sino que son en sí mismos un lenguaje primario de socialización (1980:112-114), como voy a proponer en relación al caso de los Napo Quichua en la siguiente sección de este trabajo.

La blusa de algodón de mangas largas (*maquicutun*) y la pollera hasta los tobillos (*pampanilla*) que se convirtieron en el vestido "tradicional" de las mujeres Napo Quichua de esta área, fueron parte integral del código de género y racialmente explícito de modestia, decencia, y vergüenza corporal establecido por misioneros Católicos y supervisado por religiosas (Muratorio 1994). Hoy en día esa vestimenta es usada sólo para representar la "feminidad India" en fiestas, desfiles escolares, y concursos de reinas de belleza. También puede ser alquilado por no-indígenas para las mismas ocasiones. Como la mayoría de las vestimentas estandarizadas diseñadas por instituciones, ésta careció y sigue careciendo de significados personales. El único artículo de esta vestimenta que retiene un significativo valor simbólico en la memoria de las mujeres adultas es el collar de cuentas (*hualcamuyu*). Estaba hecho de cuentas importadas de muchos colores y el orgullo y belleza de la mujer culminaban cuando el collar le llegaba a la cintura. Los colores de las cuentas evocaban el brillo de las plumas de los pájaros y reflejaban la encarnación femenina de las características de esos pájaros particulares. También señalaba el status de la mujer como casada pero, aún más significativamente, el hecho de que su marido era un buen proveedor ya que las cuentas tenían que ser compradas de los mercaderes y patrones con el arduo trabajo del hombre.

En varias de las conversaciones acerca de la vestimenta de las jóvenes hoy en día, un tema que las abuelas mencionaron varias veces fue el uso de zapatos. En una o dos ocasiones criticaron específicamente a una que otra joven indígena por tratar de parecerse a las blancas usando zapatos de taco alto. Pero lo que me extrañó al comienzo fue el hecho de que las mujeres

parecían insistir en dar una connotación simbólica negativa a todo uso de calzado. Dado el hecho de que todas las mujeres indígenas usan zapatos regularmente, uno debe buscar argumentos que vayan mas allá de una explicación simplista, tal como “rechazo a la modernidad,” para entender el significado de estas objeciones de las mujeres. Hablar de zapatos, como me di cuenta a su tiempo, era sólo un pretexto para expandirse en el tema favorito de “caminar” y “viajar.” Esta es una experiencia de ser, expresada en Quichua por el verbo *purina*, que es vital en definir la identidad de estas mujeres de la floresta tropical (Harrison 1989:159-160). Así me lo explicó una de las mujeres:

Los zapatos hacen los pies suaves, y los pies suaves no sirven para caminar largas distancias y para pararse largas horas en playas de piedras calientes [lavando oro]. Cómo van a aprender estas niñas a caminar si nunca se sacan los zapatos y siempre viajan en bus.

Los pies suaves se convierten en un símbolo de la falta de libertad de movimiento, de sedentarización, del hecho de que las mujeres jóvenes ahora permanecen sentadas por horas , o de otra manera inmovilizadas en los espacios confinados de una escuela, una oficina, o un bus. Lo que las mujeres adultas parecen objetar es que estas formas de transporte (zapatos o buses) son ahora usadas como alternativas excluyentes para colonizar las formas de movilización y comunicación indígenas. Los caminos, u otras nuevas tecnologías de transporte, crean diferentes tiempos y espacios (Boyarin 1994) de los que se abren caminando a pié, y también conforman diferentes lenguajes y paisajes audiovisuales. Por ejemplo, los espacios y tiempos de visiones, sueños, y memorias, tan vitales en el sentido Napo Quichua de plenitud personal y pertenencia social, no pueden ser transitados por las nuevas tecnologías. Como lo expresó una de las mujeres en una canción que cantó a su madre cuando retornó de un largo viaje de un lugar lejano, las memorias de la mente viajan más rápido que los medios modernos de comunicación:

Retorno de este lugar lejano,  
 retorno a tí, mi madre.  
 Tan seguro como la lluvia sigue a la tormenta,  
 mi felicidad llega en el viento.  
 Mi cuerpo está en el bus,  
 pero mi mente retorna a tí en el viento.

Es un hecho reconocido que el cuerpo se desgasta y se vuelve débil con la edad.



Principalmente debido a toda una vida de lavar oro, muchas mujeres en esta área sufren de artritis, la que les afecta particularmente las rodillas, consideradas el eje del “motor del cuerpo,” como una de las mujeres se refirió a las piernas. En cambio, la mente se agudiza cuando la gente envejece. Un *samai* poderoso encarna inteligencia y habilidades sociales, cualidades que se consideran producto del tiempo. Como indiqué anteriormente, el *samai* de una mujer encapsula su experiencia de toda una vida y es expresado en narrativas y prácticas llenas de significado. Las ancianas sobresalen en dar consejos, un lenguaje de socialización que entre los Napo Quichua todavía permanece relativamente ritualizado. Cuando se aconseja a los jóvenes, el tono de voz debe ser bajo y la actitud calma. Educar es un proceso lento que requiere la misma paciencia del trabajo femenino de domesticación de las plantas. Las mujeres consideran que ellas son mejores que los hombres en esta tarea. Se reconoce la complementaridad de género en la tarea de domesticación de las plantas, pero el rol de los hombres está asociado con la fuerza física y con el trabajo “predatorio” de limpiar el bosque para comenzar la chacra. También se considera que los hombres tienen voces más estridentes y una tendencia a gritar, dos características que, en la opinión de las mujeres, hacen que el discurso que los hombres usan para aconsejar sea “menos inteligente y efectivo.” En una ocasión, cuando criticaba a su marido por el “mal” y “gritón” consejo que éste daba a su hija, oí decir a una madre: “No podrás nunca hacer crecer las plantas con violencia, siempre tienes que hablarles despacito.”

La guía y los consejos de los padres continúan aún después de la muerte de éstos a través de sueños, cuando se cree que el alma del que sueña se encuentra y habla con el alma (*aya*) de la persona muerta. Frecuentemente en las conversaciones cotidianas las mujeres cuentan sus sueños, particularmente aquellos en los cuales sus madres o abuelas se les han aparecido para sugerir acciones a tomar, alertar sobre posibles peligros, o simplemente para revivir los recuerdos y sentimientos de pasadas experiencias compartidas. Las mujeres mayores también “actúan” estas memorias de seres queridos <sup>vii</sup> cuando realizan una forma de lamento ritual que puede tener lugar en el curso de una conversación normal. <sup>viii</sup> Esta forma narrativa expresiva vá siempre acompañada de llanto y puede ser provocada inesperadamente al mirar una fotografía, o al evocar un evento en que participaron esos seres queridos. Las mujeres usan este medio expresivo no sólo para revivir sus relaciones con las personas ya fallecidas, sino también para

reflexionar sobre sus propios sentimientos acerca de su soledad ante la ausencia de esos seres tan cercanos. En la ideología Cristiana patriarcal de “sufrimiento,” el llanto es visto como la expresión más apropiada de la redención de la mujeres, mientras que en los hombres señala falta de virilidad. Se considera que el sufrimiento es una virtud necesaria para forjar el carácter moral de las mujeres y para redimir su naturaleza supuestamente “impura” (Moscoso 1996:98-100). En cambio, el llanto tradicional de las mujeres Napo Quichua en realidad invierte este significado Cristiano al convertir ese llanto en una expresión de vida y continuidad, ya que evoca las memorias de experiencias compartidas con parientes cercanos y es una forma de revivir y de reafirmar las relaciones sociales, no de asumir culpa por supuestos pecados femeninos individuales o colectivos.

Los cantos, tales como los ya citados, son otra forma en que las mujeres expresan sus sentimientos de intimidad con otras mujeres que jugaron un papel importante en formar su ser femenino. A través de las memorias, estos seres significativos se encarnan en las canciones. Harrison (1989:147) señala que en las tierras bajas del Ecuador, el término *llackichina*, usado para referirse a las razones que originan el canto y a los estados emocionales expresados al transmitirlos, es sinónimo de “amar y causar amor,” mas que dar el sentido más restringido de “causar dolor o pena “ a otra persona. Las abuelas se lamentan de que ni sus hijas ni sus nietas se interesan ya por aprender estas canciones y prefieren la estridente música contemporánea que se escucha ahora en todos los lugares donde socializan los jóvenes. Pero hay un giro irónico en esta situación. Cuando algunas de sus nietas que trabajan en los programas de ecoturismo quieren que les enseñen las canciones para los turistas, estas abuelas se han negado a enseñarles con este objeto. La gente indígena de esta área ha descubierto no hace mucho cómo usar su propia cultura con fines económicos, pero estas abuelas todavía no están listas a aceptar la comodificación de sus propias memorias e historias personales.

### **El espejo de la pantalla**

Como todos los otros Napo Quichua que conozco, las mujeres cuyas conversaciones estoy analizando, fueron criadas en una cultura oral y en la intimidad y relativa autonomía de sus

grupos de parentesco. Ellas ven a la televisión principalmente como una invasión del Otro blanco en sus propias casas. Aunque para ellas sigue siendo una gramática extranjera, reconocen la imponente fascinación visual de la pantalla de la televisión, y precisamente porque son conscientes de su poder, la consideran como una competencia “desleal” en relación a su propio lenguaje de socialización. La principal objeción de las abuelas a la televisión se origina en su opinión de que las jóvenes de ahora imitan muy de cerca los modelos que ésta presenta, y tratan de moldear toda su personalidad en su imagen. Como ya he señalado, estas mujeres adultas, así como sus madres y abuelas en el pasado, fueron muy capaces de remodelar sus identidades étnicas y de género para acomodarse y resistir los modelos raciales, estéticos, y morales impuestos por las autoridades, las religiosas, o los colonos blancos. Sin embargo estas personas podían ser cuestionadas, sabotadas, o eventualmente emuladas en un proceso de interacción personal diaria. Por el contrario, las imágenes de la televisión no proveen de las pistas culturales para crear significados porque los personajes representados no entran en diálogo con la audiencia, simplemente hablan entre ellos. Son mudos a la interacción social y, por lo tanto, las mujeres consideran que el desafío a su lenguaje es más difícil.

Cuando comentan qué aspectos de su apariencia personal estas jovencitas imitan de los modelos que ven en la televisión, las mujeres mayores con frecuencia se refieren al maquillaje, y casi inevitablemente lo comparan con la pintura facial tradicional que se hacía con tintes vegetales. Ya que hasta donde la gente recuerda, los Napo Quichua siempre han usado algún tipo de vestimenta, su pintura corporal nunca fue tan elaborada como la de otros conocidos grupos Amazónicos. Sin embargo, la pintura facial formó parte integral de las prácticas de socialización, ya que generalmente las mujeres mayores pintaban a las más jóvenes en el proceso de formación de sus identidades sexuales y sociales. A veces las mujeres se pintaban unas a otras cuando iban a la chacra a plantar yuca, y siempre para fiestas rituales cuando iban a bailar. De estas ocasiones, las mujeres más viejas recuerdan particularmente los hermosos diseños rojos y azules que creaban en sus rostros, especialmente para atraer a los hombres; y cómo estos diseños se iluminaban con los movimientos de sus largos y brillantes cabellos negros. La cabellera negra y brillante de una mujer es otro símbolo de su belleza y fuerza. Cuando baila, su cabello se mueve con el ritmo de la música “como un viento fuerte,” y comunica a su compañero el mensaje de

sexualidad y fuerza de su pareja de manera similar como el viento hace volar las hojas de los árboles. Ahora, por supuesto en retrospectiva, las abuelas aseguran que ese lenguaje de sexualidad era de tono “discreto” y “modesto.”

En contraste, ellas consideran que los colores estridentes del maquillaje que las jovencitas usan a diario las hacen aparecer como estando sexualmente disponibles todo el tiempo, lo cual es visto como poco modesto. En este caso se puede invocar la explicación de Berger sobre la función real del espejo en la pintura al óleo Europea de mujeres como “haciendo que la mujer sea cómplice en tratarse a sí misma, primero y principalmente, como una imagen” (1972:51), como un objeto y no como siendo realmente ella misma. El hecho de que para ponerse el maquillaje ahora una joven se mira ella misma *individualmente* al espejo tratando de crear la imagen de la mujer que quiere ser, es otra de las principales razones por la cual las abuelas consideran este tipo de adorno corporal objetable. Su indulgente individualidad desafía las formas tradicionales aceptables de socialidad femenina Napo Quichua y sus presupuestos acerca de la naturaleza de esa misma identidad. Al cortarse el pelo corto y al ponerse maquillaje las jovencitas se defamiliarizan con su propia imagen cultural y llegan aún a rechazarla al tratar de reconstruir sus cuerpos de acuerdo a modelos extranjerizantes. El realismo visual de las imágenes de televisión compite con las narrativas de socialización de sus madres y abuelas y termina por deslegitimarlas. Algunas de estas jóvenes mujeres están realmente reprimiendo, al menos en público, memorias bien recientes de su niñez, como cuando rechazan el gusto de la comida nativa o, aún peor, cuando niegan saber el idioma Quichua y rehusan hablarlo.

Finalmente, existen otros aspectos sociales importantes que las abuelas sienten que están siendo amenazados por las imágenes presentadas en los medios de masa: los mismos lazos de parentesco. Este es un problema muy complejo que no puedo discutir a fondo aquí; pero quiero examinar brevemente su importancia en explicar la última frase en la afirmación de la mujer mayor con la cual comencé este ensayo. Entre los Napo Quichua, la sexualidad y las demostraciones de amor y afecto son extremadamente privadas. Las parejas casadas y los amantes generalmente usan la privacidad de las riberas de los ríos, o el monte para tener relaciones sexuales. Tomarse de las manos, besarse, o abrazarse en público se vé muy raramente, aún entre los jóvenes de hoy día. El despliegue abierto y a veces desvergonzado de todos estos

aspectos de la sexualidad en el espejo de la pantalla de televisión es visto como ofensivo por las mujeres mayores o, por lo menos como avergonzante en frente de otros. Las abuelas se preocupan de que las jovencitas están reflejando de esa pantalla, no sólo apariencias personales afeantes, sino también prácticas sociales altamente objetables. Ellas despliegan una familiaridad y una sexualidad abierta que están peligrosamente rompiendo con todos los códigos tradicionales de etiqueta que mantenían en su lugar a las jerarquías de parentesco. La afirmación más clara de esta preocupación fué hecha por una abuela cuya nieta había huído a Quito después de haber tenido una serie de relaciones sexuales escandalosas en Tena. Al preguntarme si podía yo buscarla cuando regresaba a Quito, la desesperada abuela trató de explicarme la situación de la siguiente manera:

Ahora las mujeres aprenden de la televisión de gente que se abraza y se besa en público; que sólo viven del dinero de sus maridos, o de lo que ganan vendiendo sus cuerpos. Es por esto que las jóvenes están perdiendo el respeto por sus parientes, que se dejan abrazar por los primos y los cuñados. Los llaman por sus nombres de pila! [en vez de usar los términos de parentesco apropiados] como si estuvieran casados con ellos. Tampoco tratan a sus mayores con respeto; piensan que pueden hacerlos callar con la misma facilidad con que apretan ese botoncito de la televisión y “click”...el gringo se desaparece..

Las abuelas están apenadas porque sienten que estas jovencitas están cayendo, si no en el pecado,<sup>ix</sup> en una peligrosa vorágine cultural llena de incertidumbres que contribuye a la inseguridad y la ansiedad que sienten acerca de sí mismas. La razón más convincente que puedo ofrecer para explicar la ansiedad de las mujeres adultas es su certidumbre de que el fracturamiento de los vitales lazos interpersonales de parentesco no permite que estos frágiles seres jóvenes (de otra manera considerados normales en las adolescentes) sean apoyados y ayudados a reestablecerse a través del conocimiento, la intimidad, y el afecto que ofrecen sus mayores. Los seres solitarios e inseguros son vulnerables: como espejos se rompen.

## **Conclusiones**

Estoy muy consciente de que en este ensayo sólo he ofrecido una explicación parcial de un problema complejo al centrarme en la opinión de las abuelas en la controversia que éstas todavía mantienen con sus nietas sobre las imágenes y relaciones de género. Las mujeres adultas hablan de sus memorias y de sus experiencias de identidad como una forma de entender y hacer

su propia historia en el presente. Sus voces revelan a sujetos internamente complejos cuya auto-conciencia y prácticas sociales reflejan a menudo intenciones paradójicas y conflictivas, particularmente porque ahora ellas sienten que están perdiendo la batalla de su reproducción cultural como mujeres. Esta situación es experimentada como un sentido de pérdida y separación; un sentimiento de soledad. Cuando su última hija la dejó para irse a vivir a Tena, una de las mujeres adultas expresó brevemente estos sentimientos con esta pregunta suspirante: “Y ahora...¿quién va a recoger mis pensamientos?” Estas sentidas memorias hablan del carácter intersubjetivo de la identidad y de sus profundas raíces en las relaciones sociales; las mismas que están cambiando rápidamente, como lo sugiere tan elocuentemente la metáfora de las jovencitas de ahora como espejos que se rompen fácilmente. Las narrativas de las mujeres adultas deben entonces interpretarse en el contexto de las estructuras cambiantes de poder que han sido producidas por los nuevos agentes de una economía política y cultural globalizante. Cómo van estas jóvenes mujeres indígenas a incorporar la modernidad a través de los muchos espejos neo-coloniales, y al mismo tiempo reinventar sus identidades indígenas de género, es un problema crucial que enfrentan hoy día en toda América Latina muchas mujeres, y hombres, indígenas.

A través de los ojos de las abuelas he tratado de demostrar cómo las jóvenes mujeres Napo Quichua están caminando a tientas por un lado, por la realidad de su grupo de compañeros adolescentes y la cultura de consumo que les ofrecen los medios de masa, y por otro, por el camino cultural transitado por sus padres y abuelos que muchas de las jóvenes consideran ya anticuado y obsoleto. Unas pocas comprometidas políticamente, se dejan guiar tentativamente por el discurso estereotipado de las organizaciones indígenas. Las jóvenes están usando estos recursos simbólicos para construir un puente entre entre la cultura tradicional de sus mayores, que apenas conocen y que a menudo reprimen, y los discursos dominantes y opositores prestados. Estos intentos de las jóvenes de reformular su identidad étnica pueden ser interpretados como estrategias de adquirir cierto poder en los complejos escenarios de las luchas políticas de sobrevivencia cultural. Pero uno debe también considerar el hecho de que estos mismos intentos las pueden llevar por el desagradable camino de la alienación, la prostitución, y el abuso sexual. Los sufrimientos que se encuentran en este último camino son el centro de las

preocupaciones de las abuelas que no pueden ser confortablemente descartados. Estos reflejan la violencia, frecuentemente pasada por alto, que las mujeres indígenas deben confrontar en su búsqueda de lo que en la literatura reciente sobre la cultura popular Latinoamericana se ha dado en llamar “identidades híbridas.”<sup>x</sup>

No es, por supuesto, mi intención ofrecer aquí al lector una respuesta definitiva de carácter optimista o pesimista a este difícil dilema. Basada en los resultados de una investigación antropológica de orientación histórica sobre la cultura Napo Quichua, sólo puedo concluir que para éstos indígenas particularmente, el desafío no es nuevo. Su historia nos muestra que tanto hombres como mujeres fueron capaces de negociar su propia “autenticidad cultural” dinámica desde la violencia de la dominación blanca que formó siempre parte integral de sus vidas. Las condiciones estructurales e ideológicas de la sociedad contemporánea global y homogeneizante pueden contribuir a que la tarea sea un poco más difícil para los jóvenes indígenas de hoy día, pero ciertamente no imposible: *tal vez*, y después de todo, los espejos no se van a romper.

### **Notas**

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i. El trabajo de campo de más largo alcance en que se basa este trabajo fue llevado a cabo en la zona de Tena-Archidona de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana desde 1981 durante períodos regulares de tres meses, generalmente desde Junio a Agosto. Mi trabajo con mujeres adultas Napo Quichua comenzó más sistemáticamente hace unos tres años y continúa en el presente.

ii. Con base en su trabajo entre mujeres indígenas en el Yukon, Cruikshank (1992, 1995) propone un enfoque analítico que tome en cuenta la confluencia entre la cultura oral y material. Desde la relativamente nueva antropología de los sentidos, Serematakis (1992:vii) enfatiza la necesidad de considerar “la experiencia y la representación históricas [como] insertas en la cultura material.” En la Amazonía ecuatoriana, el penetrante trabajo etnográfico de Dorothea y Norman Whitten (Véase esp., 1985, y Norman Whitten 1993) con mujeres Canelos Quichua, es una notable demostración de la riqueza de este enfoque.

iii. Algunos casamientos inter-étnicos recientes entre hombres y mujeres Napo Quichua con extranjeros están causando gran preocupación, especialmente entre las mujeres. Este problema plantea otros, tales como los cambios en las prácticas matrimoniales, que estoy analizando en otro trabajo.

iv. En el área de Tena-Archidona en la Provincia del Napo, así como en otras provincias Amazónicas, las mujeres que han sido excluidas, o aquellas a quienes les han dado posiciones meramente subordinadas dentro de las organizaciones indígenas han comenzado a formar sus propias organizaciones de mujeres. Además, después de las últimas elecciones presidenciales en 1996, las antiguas diferencias políticas y culturales entre el liderazgo de la CONAIE, la confederación nacional, y la CONFENIAE, que reúne a las federaciones Amazónicas, se han hecho públicas y están en proceso de renegociación.

v. Véase Warren (1992) para una discusión de formas similares de esencialismo cultural en los discursos de etnicidad de líderes Maya contemporáneos. El de Wilson (1988) es uno de los pocos estudios que conozco que trata directamente el problema de la representación de género en el pensamiento indigenista, centrándose en el caso de Bolivia. En el Ecuador, los intelectuales indígenas provienen todavía principalmente de la Sierra, de sociedades agrícolas donde siempre se han reconocido relaciones simbólicas entre las mujeres y la Pachamama, una asociación que no tiene equivalente entre los Napo Quichua. En su estudio del significado de la Pachamama en los Andes, Harris (1988) señala que en las áreas tropicales y sub-tropicales y en las sociedades cazadoras y recolectoras, no se ha puesto énfasis en los aspectos maternos de la tierra. Por

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ejemplo, en la Amazonía Ecuatoriana, entre los Achuar, Descola (1994:215) argumenta que el ser mítico Nunkui representa el espíritu tutelar de las chacras y la madre de las plantas cultivadas, pero es una figura que sólo tiene una semejanza marginal con la Madre Tierra Andina.

vi. Varios estudios antropológicos recientes se han ocupado de los conflictos intergeneracionales sobre las contradicciones entre la tradición y la modernidad, pero pocos se han centrado en los discursos de las mujeres. Una excelente excepción es el trabajo de Abu-Lughod (Véase esp. 1990).

vii. Varios antropólogos que han trabajado en diversas áreas etnográficas han elaborado relaciones entre el parentesco, la muerte, y las memorias en la constitución de la identidad (Véase esp. Gow 1991; Taylor 1993; Serematakis 1994).

viii. Esta forma de llanto tradicional es similar al que se expresa en los velorios, pero este último es también común entre los hombres, mientras que el primero lo he oído sólo entre mujeres. En un artículo reciente, Briggs (1992) ha señalado cómo entre los indígenas Amazónicos Warao, las mujeres usan una forma similar de lamento como una voz crítica frente a la autoridad de los hombres.

ix. A pesar de siglos de misionización, los Napo Quichua nunca aceptaron la idea Cristiana del pecado original. En este caso particular, las relaciones sexuales pre-maritales de las mujeres no son consideradas "pecaminosas," ya que la virginidad no es concebida como un valor por sí mismo (Muratorio 1995a).

x. Al centrarse en el arte y la música popular como experiencias inter-culturales, esta literatura frecuentemente omite las complejidades de los problemas implícitos en las así llamadas "culturas híbridas;" complejidades que de otra manera son tratadas en la discusión más históricamente informada de este concepto en el trabajo de Rowe y Schelling (1991) o García Canclini (1995), por ejemplo.

**DeBoer, Warren R. Traces Behind the Esmeraldas Shore: Prehistory of the Santiago-Cayapas Region, Ecuador. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1996. Maps. Figures. Tables. Illustrations. Appendixes. Bibliography. Index. xvii, 234 pp. Paper. \$29.95.**

A good academic book on the prehistory of Ecuador is rare, but a book that combines archeological, historical, and ethnographic data to produce interesting and challenging interpretations about local polities known as “chiefdoms,” is exceptional. *Traces Behind the Esmeraldas Shore* falls nicely into this second category. With lucidity, sociological imagination, and compelling evidence, DeBoer lays solid ground to establish a chronological cultural sequence for the Santiago-Cayapas area in the coastal Esmeraldas province, dominated by La Tolita (300B.C. to A.D.350), the largest archeological site of the region famous for its earthen mounds, elegant pottery, and delicate goldwork.

The book is based on a decade of archeological work in what DeBoer refers to as “La Tolita’s hinterland,” an area dominated by the Santiago and Cayapas rivers flowing towards a mangrove-fringed Pacific coast, and by densely forested interfluves. This rich physical landscape shows signs everywhere of having been occupied for transportation, agriculture, and general subsistence by both prehistoric and historic populations. The latter include primarily the Native American Chachi who migrated into the region from an Andean homeland to the east at least in the last sixteenth century, and the Afro-Ecuadorian descendants of African slaves.

On the basis of stratigraphy, seriation, and radio carbon dating, DeBoer establishes the cultural sequence for the Santiago-Cayapas basins as comprising a series of phases tentatively spanning three millennia. Analysis of those phases demonstrate external connections of the hinterland with La Tolita during the latter’s apogee through shared ceramic styles, and through riverine trade in obsidian imported from the Highlands, gold, and perishable goods. However,

since the real nature of La Tolita is still largely unknown, the social linkages have to remain conjectural. With the demise of La Tolita, however, the Santiago-Cayapas basin becomes balkanized, interregional trade declines, and ceramic arts become provincial. It is when DeBoer comes to the end of this “Tumbaviro” phase of culture history, which following his Chachi hosts he calls the time of the “barbarians,” that prehistory really excites the intellectual curiosity of ethnohistorians and ethnographers by coming alive in oral and written historical records and in living memory. These “barbarian” folk likely represent the allegedly cannibalistic Indians whom in their oral tradition the Chachi claim to have defeated and replaced. Besides, in explaining this last prehistoric phase that extends into historic times, DeBoer relies primarily on the changing social environment of the period that speaks of new urban developments taking place along the Esmeraldas coast which could have forced the people of the hinterland to take a defensive attitude by retreating to the interfluvial ridge tops. And these “Tumbaviro” folk become just another of the bellicose ethnic interior groups known generically as “Barbacoas” who appear in the early Spanish accounts.

In the last chapter, DeBoer questions some established assumptions that equate large regional sites with monumental architecture such as La Tolita with large populations and complex political hierarchical organization. Based on the contemporary use of Chachi ceremonial centers, he tentatively argues for the general ceremonial character of this prehistoric chiefdom. And finally, using the case example of Jesusito, the late famous Chachi shaman, his well documented travels in search of power and prestige, and his recognized spiritual, political, and material powers, DeBoer speculates on this model of legitimate authority as a plausible one to interpret the still poorly known, but tantalizing facts about La Tolita chiefdom. As a historical anthropologist who works in an area of the Ecuadorean Amazon where this model perfectly fits



some early historic accounts, and who some years ago was cured by the late Jesusito, I have drawn a very special intellectual pleasure from this fascinating book. Its archeological accomplishments have already been praised by others more knowledgeable in that field.

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**Draft for Introduction**

The indigenous people referred to in this chapter are the Napo Quichua, one of the several indigenous nationalities of the Ecuadorian Upper Amazon. They call themselves Napo Runa or just Runa (*human being*). The book covers the culture and history of this area, primarily from 1850 to 1950. It also includes the life history of Grandfather Alonso Andi, a native Quichua from the Tena-Archidona area as he narrated it. The study thus combines two historical traditions, oral and written, to interpret a century of socioeconomic and cultural life in this area of the Upper Amazon. The Jesuit missionaries and the indigenous people discussed in this chapter constitute an important part of that history.

ARE WE THE WORLD? ETHNICITY, CLASS, AND HISTORIES IN THE  
STRUGGLES OVER OIL IN THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON

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Since the 1980s, the Amazonian indigenous peoples have left our comfortable niches in scholarly anthropology to become fashionable icons of the European and North American media and the international environmentalist movement. If not immediately turned into household words, the Yanomami and the Kayapó made front page news, appeared on TV shows, and their individual envoys were turned into instant exotic heroes of the struggles to save the rainforest and their livelihoods, thus contributing to "our" global survival.<sup>1</sup> The latest episode in this ecodrama involves several indigenous groups of the Ecuadorean Amazon, alternatively represented as victims or heroes, and the multinational oil companies as epitomizing the worst evils of Western modernity.

There is no doubt that some of the actions in this struggle have been unprecedented. In 1993, legal representatives of Ecuadorean indigenous peoples filed a suit against the US oil company Texaco in an New York district court seeking \$1.5 billion in damages to cover the costs of the effects of oil spills on their health and the environment.<sup>2</sup> In April 1995, several Huaorani communities organized under ONHAE (Organization of the Huaorani Nation of the Ecuadorean Amazon), occupied an oil platform rig

belonging to Maxus, an independent US oil company, to propose a new agreement between indigenous organizations, several oil companies, and the Ecuadorean government that would guarantee the Huaorani's "autonomous development."<sup>3</sup> All major North American newspapers covered these stories and the Internet was flooded with calls for solidarity with the Ecuadorean indigenous groups.

The Amazonian Indians have entered into what Appadurai<sup>4</sup> calls "mediascapes," these imagined worlds created by the electronic and print media, where a large international public can have instant access to narratives of the Other, even instant access to the voices of the Other. In a globalized cultural economy, this flow of communications works both ways. The new master media narrative guiding this politics of representation is "environmentalism," the now fashionable version of a unilineal view of historical progress. Most of the scripts about these Amazonian imagined lives, however, still carry all the predictable echoes of the nineteenth century anthropological polarities between the "primitive" and the "civilized," although the meaning of the latter has been inverted to become the ecologically correct version of romanticized primitivism. A rather crude example of these dichotomies was recently displayed in a New Yorker article on the same -politically organized- Ecuadorean Huaorani. Its cover title read: "Amazon showdown: A Stone Age tribe fights American oil."<sup>5</sup>

Although among anthropologists and ethnohistorians these essentialist notions of identities have been subjected to extensive

theoretical and ethnographic criticism, they persist and predominate in the popular imagination. Images are contingent historical products and have to be understood in relation to the historical processes that have real economic and political consequences in the struggles indigenous peoples are confronting today.<sup>6</sup> In the Amazon, these Western constructs of primordial identities have been appropriated by many environmental activists, policy-makers, the tourist industry, and even by the eco-friendly corporate world, as epitomized by the Body Shop.<sup>7</sup> The practices these narratives of difference help to motivate, continue to produce and reproduce social subjects as much as the Colonial polarities contributed to create Christian indigenous subjects and XIX century-Liberalism silenced and submerged indigenous subjectivities into a generic conception of citizenship.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, given the complexity and multivocality of the contemporary political scenerio in Ecuador, these representations also become strategies of empowerment and/or accomodation for indigenous peoples in their ongoing process of making history and forging new modern identities.

In the Oriente, as the Amazonian region of Ecuador is known, the paradigm of "enviromentalism" is rapidly becoming the new hegemonic discourse to understand, not only the very real problems of environmental degradation brought about by the oil boom since the 1970's, but also the future social and economic development of this area, and the historical processes of indigenous resistance

and accomodation to the regional contradictions engendered by global capitalism. The aim of this essay is to question some of the a-historical assumptions of this new hegemony to explain the complexities of contemporary indigenous identities and their cultural and political experiences.

This critique to the environmentalist paradigm does not originate from an abstract theoretical apprehension that introducing ecology into the explanation of human historical processes might "naturalize" human history.<sup>9</sup> It is grounded on ethnographic observation of the practices and textual analysis of the writings of European, North American, and local environmentalists concerned with the Ecuadorean Amazon. I will argue that their discourses and corresponding practices imply the naturalization of the histories of indigenous Others. Furthermore, by uncritically appropriating significant aspects of these discourses, some forms of indigenous ethnohistory result in the internal naturalization of different ethnohistories, such as that of the "less acculturated" groups. They also naturalize women's histories, as when native women's ecology of survival is explained in the ethnohistorical rhetoric in terms of an essentialist identification of women with nature or with the local form of the "earth-mother." In the 1990's globalized cultural milieu, the legitimate analytical distinctions between a post-materialist environmentalism of affluence, and a materialist environmentalism of the poor<sup>10</sup> become somewhat blurred.

Through the case study of the Napo Quichua, I wish to explore how an anthropological examination of local contestatory indigenous histories could be a research strategy to better understand the production of new, local modernities and to deconstruct the Western "We" of the hegemonic discourse.

### **Cultural and historical background to the Oriente**

The Amazon region of Ecuador known as the Oriente comprises 48.1 percent of the national territory bordering Colombia and Peru. It is home to seven indigenous nationalities: Quichua, Shuar, Achuar, Huaorani, Siona-Secoya, Cofan, and Shiwiar, with a total population of around 100.000 people. Approximately 300.000 colonists from the Highland and Coastal regions also live in the region. The largest indigenous group are the lowland Quichua speakers whose population is calculated at 70.000 and distributed primarily in the provinces of Napo and Pastaza. The least acculturated group, who has recently been the focus of attention of environmentalists and the media because of the oil boom, are the Huaorani. They number about 1200, but only a small sub-group of 50 people, the Tagaeri, have refused all contact with the outside and continue their hostile warnings against the oil companies that are threatening their traditional territory.<sup>11</sup> Other Huaorani groups created similar problems for the the Shell Oil company exploration project in the 1940s. Ironically, while at that time those

Huaoranis were considered the last obstacle to "progress," now the Tagaeri are regarded as the "last authentic forest Indians."<sup>12</sup> This representation of the Tagaeri and the new interest in

"preserving" and "protecting" them symbolizes the significant change that is taking place in the old paradigm of cultural progress and economic development.

As a people, the Napo Quichua were constituted by their own historical encounter with the first European expansion into the Amazon region in the middle of the sixteenth century. They emerged identifying themselves as "Runa", the Quichua term for "human being." In their myth of origin, the Runa construct that identity with categories borrowed from the colonial discourse: as "salt-eaters" and "baptized" Indians, they culturally separated themselves from the "auca" ("savage" in Quichua); that is from all other peoples who refused those and other "gifts" of civilization. Since then, the Runa have always been masters at playing the role of intermediaries between the "savage" and the "civilized" worlds, between two political systems, two economies, and two cultures. This capacity has allowed the younger generations to continue with that role and to dominate the Lowland Indigenous Federations, along with the Shuar, whose dominant role respond to their own warrior history that contributed to create their past and present image as indomitable "Jívaros" in the national imagination.

After Ecuador became a independent nation in the 1830s, the



Napo Quichua were able to maintain their way of life as hunter-gatherers and swidden agriculturalists despite the fact that they were subjected to an exploitative system of "commodity peonage" by which they worked extracting pita (agave fiber), panning gold, or tapping rubber for local trader-patrons in exchange for manufactured goods whose prices were grossly inflated to keep the Indians in debt. By the 1940s, this system was in decline for reasons I cannot fully explained here.<sup>13</sup> From an indigenous point of view, oil exploration by the foreign multinationals during this decade was a significant factor in its final demise.

In the late 1930s, the Ecuadorian government granted Anglo-Saxon Petroleum, a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell, exclusive rights for five years of oil exploration and forty years of oil exploitation in an area covering 10,000.000 hectares in the Oriente.<sup>14</sup> By the end of the 1940s, however, the discovery of vast quantities of inexpensive petroleum in the Middle East made the continuation of the high-cost Ecuadorian operation unattractive, and Shell (now in its joined venture with Esso Standard Oil) declared the "non-existence" of oil and abandoned its operation in Ecuador.<sup>15</sup>

It was another consortium, Texaco-Gulf, that in the late 1960s definitively put Ecuador on the international oil map as a small producer, a position that it still maintains. The decade of the 1970s, marked by increased exploration and exploitation of oil and

the construction of the Trans Ecuadorian pipeline over the Andes mountains to the Pacific coast, brought about the radical social, economic, and political transformations in the Oriente that indigenous and non-indigenous peoples are confronting today. The road infrastructure, added to the demand for labor and services by the oil sector, provided the main incentives for a massive inflow of colonists into the Nor Oriente, for the growth of frontier towns, and for the increasing incorporation of most indigenous peoples into the market economy.

The state consolidated its presence in the Oriente during this period creating PetroEcuador, the national oil company, and through a series of regional and national institutions geared to promote the integration of indigenous peoples into the modernity created by the oil economy. The oil industry generates 15 percent of the country's GDP and nearly half of its export earnings.<sup>16</sup> Although it has recently ended its 20 years membership in OPEC, Ecuador is expanding its crude-oil operations in the Oriente and planning the expansion of the existing pipeline. New large oil concessions and pumping stations are planned to operate soon in the more populated areas of Napo and Pastaza provinces.<sup>17</sup> These developments are going to directly affect a large number of Quichua communities and colonists who still have remained relatively free from the environmental and social problems of oil exploitation.

In the 1990s, national and international environmental concerns about the Amazon generated a series of legislative measures and the

corresponding institutions to regulate, plan, and manage environmental protection and what is now define as the new model of "ecodevelopment" for the region. The economic and social contradictions of these policies involving the protection of a fragile environment and the respect of indigenous peoples rights to land and cultural integrity, in a country whose export earnings depend so heavily on the petroleum industry, are one of the main causes of the economic and political complexities indigenous peoples and the state confront today in the Oriente.

#### **Indigenous responses: The discourses of Class and Ethnicity**

As in other Amazonian countries which tried to implement an assimilationist model of development, the struggle for cultural identity and autonomy in the Ecuadorean Oriente gave rise to indigenous political organizations.<sup>18</sup> The first, and one of the most powerful ethnic federations is that of the Shuar created in the 1960s. It was soon followed by several Quichua organizations, and later, by those of the smallest nationalities, including the Huaorani. Regionally, these organizations form the CONFENIAE or Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Amazonian Ecuador. Nationally, they belong to CONAIE, the now powerful umbrella organization that also groups numerous indigenous federations from the Highlands and the Coast.

Since the 1930s, the Highland movement acquired a "class

perspective" under the leadership of the Socialist and Communist parties. Ethnicity and cultural identity became subsumed under peasant and proletarian identities and the political struggle was centered on the fight for land and for better working conditions in the traditional haciendas.<sup>19</sup> The Lowland indigenous movement, instead, was born relatively independent of the peasant unions. It created a discourse that, since the beginning, confronted the nationalist ideology of "mestizaje" with the new concept of a "pluricultural nation." As a political project, it rejects the neutralization of the different ethnicities into a generic mestizo identity, to propose their incorporation into the nation-state as "distinct nationalities."<sup>20</sup>

Indigenous demands centered on bilingual education, on the opposition to the acculturation practices of missionaries, and on the defense of "ethnic territories" against the aggressive colonization policies promoted by the state, under military control until 1979. Regionally, at least, the Lowland indigenous organizations were successful in establishing a culturalist language as an empowering discourse. When they joined the other confederations to form CONAIE, they partially incorporated a class perspective and entered into alliances with different political parties. Some Quichua indigenous leaders have achieved political office with different degrees of success.

In June 1990, an important indigenous uprising (*levantamiento*)

confronted the social democratic government (Izquierda Democrática) of President Rodrigo Borja. It was labelled and modelled on past Colonial rebellions against Spanish rule to clearly differentiate it from modern labor strikes and to signify what in their oral tradition is conceived as a collective act of resistance and ethnic reaffirmation against centuries-old domination. For the first time in the Republican period, indigenous peoples were mobilized on a nation-wide scale. The movement effectively paralyzed the country for more than a week by cutting access to the main highways used to transport basic products to provision the cities.<sup>21</sup> This uprising definitely put the ethnic question at the center of the political debate.

The Indians demanded social and political recognition as a differentiated collectivity, as active subjects in Ecuadorean public life, in addition to their individual rights as citizens. The success of the movement and the self-image the Indians presented through their actions and the media, finally established them as a legitimate political actor without intermediaries, with their own independent voice, represented by the organizations.

In confronting the national society, the indigenous movement as a whole, oscillates between a ethnic and a class discourse. The tensions and contradictions created by this ideological dualism is an integral problem of indigenous movements in other Andean countries as well. In Ecuador, religious divisions between Evangelical Protestant indigenous organizations and non-

denominational ones, complicates even more the political panorama. In the Oriente, these internal conflicts have led to the formation of alternative indigenous organizations and to some alliances between indigenous peoples and colonists that CONFENIAE continues to call "ghosts organizations." Besides, despite the current ethnopolitical rethoric about indigenous women's participation, several women's independent organizations have emerged to provide a space for those voices that are actually silenced by the all-male leadership of the Amazonian confederations.

The ideological contradictions in the indigenous movement respond to the fact that on the one hand, they want to build a unitary political identity as Indians to confront the state and civil society. But on the other, what is at stake is a historic system of inter-ethnic relations between the Highland, Lowland and Coastal native populations dating from pre-Colonial times, complicated by the Inca and Spanish conquests.<sup>22</sup> These differences have historical origins and change historically.

It is in the encounter of these different ethnohistories with the legacies of Colonial and Republican histories where heterogeneous identities are created and continue to be transformed. As Liberalism created new subjects in the 1890s, so does neo-liberalism in the 1990s, but also created the possibilities of resistance to that process of subjectification. Heterogeneities are being made but within certain structural constraints, and possibilities. The fact that after the 1990

uprising, the state was forced to recognize the legitimacy of CONAIE as a national political agent, has allowed the Indian intellectuals to adopt a cosmopolitan discourse of generic Indianness. They are committed to presenting an image of the Indians as an homogeneous and distinctive actor, claiming a common history and silencing their internal differences and histories in public. But there are a multiplicity of local contestatory histories which result from the memories of the diverse experiences of each ethnic group with colonialism and its aftermath.

In their everyday lives, most indigenous peoples are confronted with the individual and collective experiences riddled with the conflicts, contradictions, and ironies implicit in the making and appropriation of their own histories.<sup>23</sup> They "argue"<sup>24</sup> about the daily problems of cultural reproduction and the construction of identities usually along the dividing lines of gender and generational differences. They fight over new conceptions of marriage and family life, over which language to speak at home; over conceptions of feminine beauty and work; over their differences with their "less acculturated" neighbors; in sum, over the many social and economic issues involved in a society where cultural reproduction has become a highly politicized process. It is precisely these ambiguities and contradictions between homogeneization and difference that indigenous people confront today.<sup>25</sup> They are caught in what Sider<sup>26</sup> has characterized as the "paradox of inclusion and exclusion," and argue about the

terms in which this incorporation is going to be made. The internal struggles continue because the present generations are the result of these different histories that intersect with other local histories and with that of the dominant society in the present struggle. We have to understand the contemporary memories of these local histories because they provide new theoretical insights into the process of ethnic empowerment and into the cultural and political compromises indigenous peoples are forced to make in the new global cultural economy. As Turner<sup>27</sup> has argued in connection to Northwest Amazonian societies:

the structures of these societies have been shown to be directly related to the ways in which they shaped their respective situations of contact through forms of direct resistance. In all of these cases historical action, mode of social consciousness, and the social relations of the native society to the contact situation and to itself through its internal processes of reproduction have to be understood in relation to one another as parts of a single process. This process is at once social and cultural, historical and ethnohistorical: at this level of totalization, an anthropological conception of history becomes indistinguishable from a historically conceived anthropology.

#### **Divergencies and convergencies between the environmentalists and the indigenous movement**

In the highlands, the 1990 uprising led to a series of direct negotiations between CONAIE and high state officials regarding unresolved agrarian questions and the terms of a new agrarian law.<sup>28</sup> In the Lowlands, the discourse of ethnicity led to a



for example, both the environmentalists and the intellectuals of the indigenous federations have silenced the fact that most indigenous people in the Oriente, including the Huaorani, regularly work for the oil companies.<sup>41</sup> The Quichua have done so since the oil companies started exploration in the Oriente in the 1940s. The labor process, working for The Company (any oil contracting firm), has become an integral part of Napo Runa's livelihood. It is an experience that, although it isolates them for periods of around three to four months from their families and communities, is intimately related to those social relations and their reproduction. Napo Runa men go to work for the companies in order to earn some cash to pay for their children's schooling, to buy manufactured goods and, always nowadays, to be able to afford the "traditional" Napo Quichua wedding ceremony, still considered the most important ritual that reproduces their culture. The networks of kin, friends, and neighbors are strengthened in the labor process, since small groups of men thus related go together to work in the same work gang, to hunt game, or just to be able to cope with the isolation and the harsh conditions prevalent in the oil camps.

It is precisely as Smith<sup>42</sup> argues for the peasants he studied in Peru, because working for the oil companies has become so tightly linked to their cultural reproduction, that in the Napo Runa's everyday struggle against the oil companies' degradation of their sources of livelihood, the oppositional discourse of culture

and ethnicity also becomes an emergent class discourse, even if this latter discourse has strategically disappeared from the public rethoric of the indigenous leaders. To uncover the local historical legacy of cultural experiences that may be hidden under that public discourse of this generation of young leaders, I want to evoke the memory of a Napo Quichua elder, locally known as "Rucuyaya Alonso," who worked for the Shell Oil company fifty years ago.

### Memories and Histories

The Shell story was one of the old man's favorites. He made it a whole chapter of his life history as he told it to his eldest son,<sup>43</sup> but he narrated shorter, longer, or slightly different versions of it on several occasions. Here, I will only retell his own postscript to that story the last time he told it to a group of young kin just before he died in 1990.

When we worked for Shell, the *gringos* were dumb. They were scared stiff of the Aucas [Huaorani] and their spear attacks. Just a few of them came, accompanied by the equally dumb *evangélicos* [North American Protestant missionaries]. In those times we did a lot of good fishing and hunting in those far-away places and with the real money we earned we got rid of the old patrons and came back as Runa. Now you shouldn't be fooled; there are too many *gringos* everywhere. They are destroying the forest and the rivers with their vampire-like machines. Even the Aucas work for the Company now although the *gringos* are invading their land. What is going to be left of all of us *Sacha Runa* [people of the forest] if this continues?

Rucuyaya Alonso's memories reflect individually constructed images out of his own experiences in dialogue with internal and external powerful Others. It goes back and forth between historical

times and grows out of similar experiences of other Napo Runa of his generation, reaching out to provide a strong portrait of indigenous cultural identity. It is history making from within that defies unilinear Histories of proletarianization and acculturation, as well as romantic primitivism and homogeneous reified notions of the past of native peoples and the different hegemonies they had to confront.

The Huaorani, who in the not so distant past had been the Runa's most feared and hated internal Other, are given recognition as "human beings" and as enjoying the same rights of the Runa to defend their land against this new white invasion into the tropical forest. But furthermore, like the Runa, they have been partially incorporated as wage laborers into the political, economic, and cultural forms of the capitalist world order and, as such, they now share that incipient class identity with the Runa. The past is selectively remembered to deal with the future by delineating a common indigenous identity rooted in the ancestral right to a territory in the tropical forest. This is a historical claim that in the present time of the narrative -and still today- profoundly challenges the dominant society's attempts at reshaping the indigenous natural, social, and cultural landscapes.

By incorporating the Huaorani into a common predicament with the Runa, Rucuyaya Alonso begins to create for his listeners a shared ethnic and incipient class discourse, but he also provides them with a vivid portrait of the main interlocutor in this new

dialogue of domination: the portrait of the "dumb gringos." In any prevailing system of power relations, the consciousness of alterity is hierarchically structured, and the humorous portrait of the white gringos has to be appreciated as dramatizing, by inversion, a moral concept of the Self.<sup>44</sup> And because stories are intended to teach the younger generations the ways of the culture,<sup>45</sup> Rucuyaya's story is also a moral warning to the younger listeners who, according to him, are too dazzled by modern technology and the ways of the white people. Turner<sup>46</sup> has pointed out that "tales of the dumb gringo" are common both in the Amazon and the Andes, and that they serve to affirm the separation of Indian and Westerner in contact situations. By showing the gringos' ineptitude in utilizing some aspect of Indian knowledge, these stories actually assert the limits of the members of the dominant society to exploit the Indians, or to encroach upon their social or cultural sphere. They reveal the satirical irreverent side of counterhegemonic appropriations of history by many indigenous peoples of the Americas.

As a whole, the old man's narrative exhibits an engagement with modernity that is at the same time critical and humorous, as experienced in those old days when the Napo Runa had to negotiate their identities in the larger structural context shaped by XX century capitalism, and the remnants of XIX century forms of local colonialisms. Thus, it illustrates that constant process of "self-modernization" that Platt<sup>47</sup> argues has also been the mark of Andean

indigenous peoples to defy, in their own terms, an alleged linear process of ethnic homogenization.

The same liberating forces of capitalism that helped a generation of Napo Quichua to shake the old order, have also provided the Ecuadorian state and private interests with more efficient economic and cultural means to acculturate and integrate all indigenous populations. However, the Napo Quichua along with other Ecuadorian Indians are creating their own imagined communities with a renewed cultural text written by younger authors.

In a recent article dealing with Australian Aborigines' identities, Myers<sup>48</sup> has set a number of challenging questions that should be asked by anthropologists and historians keen on understanding what he calls the "contemporary quandaries" about the politics of difference. The fact that these questions become equally relevant for those trying to understand the plight of indigenous peoples in the Amazon just show the extent to which a globalized cultural milieu is having similar effects on indigenous cultures all over the world. Refrasing Myers' questions in light of the narrative of the Napo Quichua elder I just quoted, the questions to ask for future research should be: what place do these historical memories have in the construction of new identities?; How have these identities been transformed in relation to new powerful Others and their discourses?; how are those cultural and political identities being forged of old memories and new

appropriations, borrowings and transformations of oppositional and dominant discourses? I will claim that the cultural imprint of the Napo Quichua elder's story is implicit in contemporary narratives of difference with other and the same powerful Others, even when translated in the increasingly complex cultural practices the younger generations confront in their present struggles.

### **Conclusions**

The main thrust of this article has been to analyze the structural and experiential contexts within which we might provide some preliminary answers to the above posed questions for the indigenous peoples of the Amazon, from the perspective of a historical anthropology. Through a critical analysis of the new hegemony of "environmentalism" as presently practiced in the Ecuadorean Amazon, it was my objective to emphasize the importance of listening to indigenous local -and gendered- histories as they intersect with the Others' Histories. Now, I would like to go back to that underlined "We" in the title of this paper. It is intended to symbolize the dominant pole in the dichotomous vision of the environmentalists; one of the many Eurocentric imageries that have engulfed Third World peoples throughout their histories.

In different forms, these characterizations of cultural difference and othering are also too familiar in the history of anthropology. But it is also from anthropology that the most

recent critiques of these polar paradigms have originated.<sup>49</sup> As a way out of these dichotomous traps we so easily fall in, several anthropologists from different theoretical persuasions<sup>50</sup> seem to agree on the need to de-essentialize this Western "We" by anthropologizing it beyond self-reflection. It is in this research process that anthropologists should turn to the professional historians who are better trained in the analysis of the West, although not always innocent of essentializing it.<sup>51</sup> More specifically, however, I would like to suggest here for both disciplines to engage the expertise of indigenous, oral historians, who for more than 500 hundred years now have been forced to engage in interpretations and reinterpretations of the Western "We."

In his interesting study of "comparative xenologies," Harbsmeier<sup>52</sup> argues that indigenous social "cosmologies" are ways of establishing identity by contrast with otherness. As the traditional high civilizations analyzed by Harbesmeir, the indigenous peoples also have very complex visions of the multiplicity of "barbarians" with whom they have to relate in their daily lives and they use different cosmological strategies to situate themselves and these internal and external dimensions of otherness in some kind of intellectual order. That is, images are not merely texts, but patterns for social consciousness and action, and often used in defensive and offensive strategies against total acculturation. Turner<sup>53</sup> has suggested that this exercise of seeing ourselves as the others' Others, can also become a potent context

for reflecting on the fundamental theoretical categories of Western anthropological and historical perspectives. It would hopefully foster a truly dialogic theory out of the ethnographic texts and into a more politically engaged anthropology.



## NOTES

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4. Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Public Culture*, 2:2 (1990), 1-23.

5. *The New Yorker*, (September 27, 1993). Front cover announcement of an article on the Huaorani by Joe Kane, in the same issue, entitled "With spears from all sides," 54-79.
6. For a discussion of this issue in relation to several indigenous groups in different periods of Ecuadorean history, see Blanca Muratorio, ed., *Imágenes e Imagineros. Representaciones de los Indígenas Ecuatorianos, Siglos XIX y XX* (Quito: FLACSO Ecuador, 1994).
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19. See Roberto Santana, *Campesinado Indígena y el desafío de la Modernidad* (Quito: CAAP, 1984).

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21. For a thorough discussion of the 1990 indigenous uprising, see Jorge León, *De Campesinos a Ciudadanos. El Levantamiento Indígena* (Quito: CEDIME, 1994).

22. Anne Christine Taylor, "Equateur: les Indiens de l'Amazonie et la question ethnique," *Problèmes d'Amérique latine*, 3 (1991), 118.

23. For a discussion of the complexities and ambiguities involved in the processes by which people "construct their own histories" see David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).

24. Gavin Smith has noted that in rethinking their conceptual frameworks, both anthropologists and historians should recognize the internal differences within cultures and the fact that the people we study (in his case, rebellious peasants in Peru) often "argue" about crucial issues that affect them in their everyday

lives. See his article "The Production of Culture in Local Rebellion," in Jay O'Brian and William Roseberry, eds., *Golden Ages, Dark Ages. Imagining the Past in Anthropology and History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 180-207.

25. Arjun Appadurai considers that this contradiction is the central problem of contemporary global interactions, in "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," 5.

26. Gerald Sider, "When Parrots Learn to Talk, and Why they Can't: Domination, Deception, and Self-Deception in Indian-White Relations," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 29:1 (1987), 3-23.

27. Terence Turner, "Ethno-Ethnohistory: Myth and History in Native South American Representations Of Contact with Western Societies" in Jonathan D. Hill, ed., *Rethinking History and Myth. Indigenous South American Perspectives on the Past*, 281.

28. See Jorge León, *De campesinos a Ciudadanos. El Levantamiento Indígena*, 142-145.

29. See Joan Martinez Alier, "The Merchandizing of Biodiversity," *Etnoecologica*, 3 ( Mexico, 1994); and Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development. The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 203-211.

30. Arturo Escobar, *Ibid.*, 192-194.

31. Douglas G. Ferguson " Importancia de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana. El Conocimiento Indígena y las Actividades del Rainforest

Information Centre en el Territorio Huaorani," in Giovanna Tassi, ed., *Náufragos del Mar Verde, La Resistencia de los Huaorani a una Integración Impuesta* (Quito: Abya-Yala/ CONFENIAE, 1992), 47-49.

32. Quoted in *Abya-Yala News* 9:1 (1995), South and Meso American Indian Rights Center (SAIIC).

33. Cf., Gerald Sider's argument, that it was precisely the forward- looking character of the Ghost Dance, which threatened White society and led to the massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890, in "When Parrots Learn to Talk and Why they Can't: Domination, Deception, and Self-Deception in Indian-White Society," 18-19.

34. Some of the most well known North American NGOs involved in the recent oil crisis are: The Natural Resources Defense Council (Robert Kennedy Jr., staff attorney); Boston based Cultural Survival; the Sierra Club; and The Rainforest Action Network. The US Agency for International Development, and several European embassies are involved in sustainable development projects. At least three Ecuadorean environmental groups disputed the actions of the foreign ones: Acción Ecológica, Cordaví, an environmental law firm, and Fundación Natura. For a discussion of the different ideologies and type of activism of the Northern environmentalists working in the Amazon Basin, see Margaret E. Keck, "Parks, People and Power. The Shifting Terrain of Environmentalism" *NACLA. Report on the Americas*, 28:5, (1995), 36-41.

35. Terence Turner, "Defiant Images. The Kayapó appropriation of

video," *Anthropology Today*, 8:6 (1992), 5-16.

36. Cf., Gerald Sider, "House and History at the Margins of Life: Domination, Domesticity, Ethnicity, and the Construction of Ethnohistories in "The Land God Gave to Cain," in Jay O'Brian and William Roseberry, eds., *Golden Ages, Dark Ages. Imagining the Past in Anthropology and History*, 208-233.

37. Alcida Ramos, "A Hall of Mirrors: The rethoric of indigenism in Brazil," *Critique of Anthropology*, 11:2 (1991), 161.

38. Laura Rival, "Sacred Words and Wild People: Human Rights, Development, Oil and the Huaorani of Amazonian Ecuador," Working Paper, May 1991, 16.

39. Quoted in Jorge León, *De Campesinos a Ciudadanos. El Levantamiento Indígena*, 29.

40. Recently, these assumptions about the "pristine wilderness" of Amazonian forests and their original inhabitants have been called into question by biologists and ethnohistorians. See William Balée, "Indigenous Transformation of Amazonian Forests: An example from Maranhao, Brazil," *L'Homme*, 126-128 (1993), 231-254; and Neil L. Whitehead, "Ethnic Transformation and Historical Discontinuity in Native Amazonia and Guyana, 1500-1900," *L'Homme*, 126-128 (1993), 285-305.

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Development, Oil and the Huaorani of Amazonian Ecuador."

42. Gavin Smith, *Livelihood and Resistance. Peasants and the Politics of Land in Peru* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 14-15.

43. See Blanca Muratorio, *The Life and Times of Grandfather Alonso. Culture and History in the Upper Amazon*, 133-140.

44. Cf., Keith Basso, *Portraits of "the Whiteman." Linguistic Play and Cultural Symbols among the Western Apache* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 76.

45. For comparable examples of indigenous stories as moral tales for the young, see Julie Cruikshank (in collaboration with A. Sidney, K. Smith, and A. Ned), *Life Lived Like a Story* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990).

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47. Tristan Platt, "Writing, Shamanism and Identity, or Voices from Abya-Yala," *History Workshop Journal*, 34 (1992), 132-147.

48. Fred R. Myers, "Culture-making: Performing Aboriginality at the Asia Society Gallery," *American Ethnologist*, 21:4 (1994), 679-699.

49. See William Roseberry and Jay O'Brian, "Introduction," in Jay O' Brian and William Roseberry, eds., *Golden Ages, Dark Ages. Imagining the Past in Anthropology and History*, 1-18. See also John



and Jean Comaroff, "Ethnography and the Historical Imagination," in *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 3-48.

50. See Paul Rabinow, "Representations are Social Facts: Modernity and Post-Modernity in Anthropology," in James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 234-261; Olivia Harris, "Time and Difference in Anthropological Writing," in Lorraine Nencel and Peter Pels, eds., *Constructing Knowledge. Authority and Critique in the Social Sciences* (London: Sage, 1991), 145-161; John and Jean Comaroff, in "Ethnography and the Historical Imagination;" and James G. Carrier, "Occidentalism: The world turned upside-down," *American Ethnologist*, 19:2 (1992), 195-211.

51. On a critique of the reification of agency, class, culture, and experience by both historians and anthropologists, and on the need to "historicize difference," see Hermann Rebel, "Cultural hegemony and class experience: a critical reading of recent ethnological-historical approaches (part one)," *American Ethnologist*, 16:1 (1989), 117-136. See also Joan W. Scott, "Experience," in Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott, eds., *Feminists Theorize the Political* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 22-40.

52. Michael Harbsmeier, "On Travel Accounts and Cosmological Strategies: Some models in Comparative Xenology," *Ethnos*, 50:3-4

(1985), 273-310.

53. Terence Turner, in "Ethno-Ethnohistory: Myth and History in Native South American Representations of Contact with Western Society," 281.

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## **Historia y memorias sociales: Un coleccionista de presencias y evocaciones populares**

**Texto:** Blanca Muratorio

**Coleccionista entrevistado:** Iván Cruz Cevallos

**Cuadros:** Autores Anónimos

**Fotografías:** Soledad Cruz

**Bajo la historia, memoria y olvido.  
Bajo la memoria y el olvido, vida.  
Pero escribir una vida es otra historia.  
Incompleta.  
(Paul Ricoeur, 2004)**

### **Introducción**

Este es en realidad un trabajo de colaboración entre una antropóloga, un coleccionista apasionado llamado Iván Cruz y sus intrigantes cuadros de niños y niñas, cuya presencia podemos evocar aquí gracias a la sensibilidad de la fotógrafa Soledad Cruz.

No puedo alegar que mi mirada es desapasionada y totalmente objetiva (nadie puede): soy también un amante del arte popular y, como antropóloga, una coleccionista empecinada de memorias de vida y de los objetos que las evocan. Mi memoria también es selectiva y narra desde un presente, sólo puede ofrecer un residuo de lo que posiblemente fueron experiencias intensas. Pero como señala Lowenthal (1985:192-93), la historia es tan residual como la memoria.

Lo que me propongo es explorar algunos aspectos de las ~~intimadas~~ relaciones entre memorias –individuales y sociales– ~~historias orales y escritas~~, a través de estos objetos de arte popular y vida cotidiana que nos ofrecen un rastro de la historia del Ecuador de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX, principalmente los sentimientos y actitudes culturales hacia la vida y muerte de los niños prevaecientes en esa época en una determinada clase social. Las imágenes de los cuadros son de tres tipos: primero retratos conmemorativos póstumos de duelo de niños ~~que~~ muertos que aparecen como vivos. Segundo, milagros o ex-votos, cuadros de acción de gracia por la vida de niños rescatados ~~a la vida luego de haber sufrido~~ una enfermedad considerada mortal en esa

época. Y, por último, retratos de niñas poco antes de entrar a un convento, es decir de niñas que morían a la vida civil para revivir en la vida religiosa.



Este es un conjunto muy pequeño de la inmensa y variada colección de Iván. Pero una parte que, según sus propias palabras, viene a formar parte de su identidad como cronista de su ciudad, Quito. Los cuadros están desplegados en una parte importante de la casa, donde podemos visitarlos todos juntos, algunos más íntimamente como si fueran de nuevo altares familiares. En esta colección, los cuadros vuelven así a ser espacios de memoria, memorias sociales de alegría por el rescate del niño de la muerte, nostalgias por la ausencia familiar y social de las niñas y congoja y duelo por las muertes infantiles siempre inesperadas.

La memoria y la historia se nutren de los objetos como rastros o vestigios tangibles de un pasado que fue vivido por otros pero que de distintas formas tratamos de recuperar o revivir. El mundo material constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Si embargo, los objetos no son inmediatamente transparentes, necesitan de análisis e interpretación desde un presente para revelar sus distintos y cambiantes significados. Como otras expresiones artísticas, los cuadros nos proveen de un escenario donde se producen y se disputan diferentes identidades sociales, sentimientos y valores. Queremos explorar cómo estas representaciones materiales dan forma y están conformadas por la memoria. Pero este acceso a los objetos es posible porque el coleccionista los ha rescatado del olvido de la trastienda para enriquecerlos de significados con sus propias experiencias personales y memorias. Por eso, como señala Portelli (1997:65), en la historia oral las interpretaciones y explicaciones del que escribe coexisten con las interpretaciones implícitas en las palabras citadas por nuestras fuentes, así como con las interpretaciones de nuestros oyentes o lectores.

En resumen, los objetos que aquí queremos considerar constituyen entradas a la investigación y son motivo de análisis porque siempre están provistos de “guiones” culturales y sociales que cambian con el tiempo como resultado de ciertas relaciones sociales

### El coleccionista y sus cuadros

“El gusto por coleccionar, sugiere Maurice Rheims, es como un juego jugado con absoluta pasión.” (Elsner y Cardinal 1994)

Entonces el trabajo es esta obsesión que digo casi “perversa” de ir coleccionando más y más retratos de niños. Que este es el juego del coleccionista. No? (Iván Quez 2008)

Como ha señalado Appadurai (1996: 76), los objetos deben ser mantenidos y manejados semióticamente, deben ser guardados, restaurados y desplegados en contextos “apropiados”. Los espacios pueden ser privados como distintas habitaciones dentro de una casa o públicos como exhibiciones y museos. Pero siempre esta categoría de “lugares, espacios y formas apropiadas” es social e históricamente construida. En este caso, entramos a la casa antigua del coleccionista en el Centro Histórico, casa que ya viene cargada de sentido histórico, como veremos más adelante. Al prestarle “atención” y “manipular” a ciertos objetos y “olvidar” a otros, el coleccionista ayuda a cambiar sus significados. Redemptive qualities of collecting

Nos dice Iván:

Luz, mi ex mujer decía que había que comprar la pieza porque era única, pero luego aparecía la segunda y había que comprar el par y luego venía la tercera y se iniciaba la colección. Y así un niño me impresiona y empiezan a juntarse niños y luego comienzo a indagar: Y porqué los niños y Quienes son esos niños, quienes los pintaron, cómo y porqué los niños. Y van juntándose más niños, y ellos van a adquirir una función en mi vida y en la vida de mi entorno. Yo empiezo a coleccionar estos retratos y me vienen a contactar los vendedores de cosas viejas que me empiezan a traer niños para vender. Primero porque son vendedores, pero después porque se encariñan con los niños y los

traen para cuidarlos y hablan de los niños y de sus flores y de sus caritas de desolación. Como Cevallos que me dice: "le conseguí una niña preciosa para su colección y es la niña vestida de azul"

De esta forma, las relaciones de mercado se transforman en sentimientos y memorias compartidas por la muerte de los niños desconocidos. Y son <sup>su calidad</sup> los vendedores, los miembros de las clases populares, los primeros que contribuyen a rescatar los trazos de memorias sociales.

En las nostálgicas palabras del coleccionista:

"Lamentablemente estos cuadros son objetos que ya se van perdiendo. Si los dueños no tuvieron hijos, ni sobrinos, ni otros herederos, entonces van quedando en las trastiendas y se van deteriorando. Y actualmente son muy escasos. Son muy difíciles de conseguir esos ejemplos de niños muertos.

El patrimonio artístico Ecuatoriano, como otros patrimonios nacionales guardados en museos y en archivos, pretende ser un paradigma de la memoria social, la inclusión de lo valioso y lo bello sobre lo feo y descartable, el triunfo del recuerdo sobre el olvido, la verdad incontrovertible (Elsner y Cardinal (1994) Pero sabemos que los patrimonios, como las naciones, son construcciones sociales que dejan nichos para memorias e imágenes a veces críticas, a veces subversivamente alternativas. Este es el caso de la colección de estos cuadros de niños. Porque coleccionar lo popular es otra forma de salvar del olvido expresiones de arte que todavía no están aceptadas y establecidas como las colecciones monumentales de arte pre-colombino o colonial.

El gusto del coleccionista es un espejo de su ser. Como señala Baudrillard (1994), los objetos en nuestras vidas representan algo profundamente relacionado a la subjetividad, porque cuando éstos han perdido su función originaria, dan de cierta manera al coleccionista, la capacidad de gobernar el significado de sus objetos. Este usa los objetos para ~~contribuir~~ construir su identidad. Son objetos de su colección y de su pasión. Pero como todas las actividades humanas esta forma de dar sentido a los objetos, no es unilateralmente individual. Las narrativas de memoria del coleccionista están como veremos, calibradas en el espejo de las relaciones sociales, desde los vendedores de sus cuadros hasta sus otros amigos, los arqueólogos, los poetas y los novelistas. El individuo

se relaciona a la sociedad para dar forma a las narrativas de los sucesos, sentimientos y memorias escondidos en los cuadros y así contribuye a crear una memoria social, un documento oral que es el que trato de transcribir y analizar sobre un momento en la historia social de las concepciones del duelo y de la muerte en el Ecuador.

### **Los niños, la muerte y los duelos**

El coleccionista explica así la aparición de los retratos:

“En el siglo XIX hay un cambio en la concepción estética. Aparece el paisaje y aparece el retrato. El retrato ya no sólo del noble o de linaje sino también de una burguesía incipiente. El retrato que aparece más frecuentemente es el del padre de familia y su esposa, el retrato del gran señor. Pero hay una serie de retratos que son muy atípicos y son el retrato del niño. Dado que no funda un linaje, dado que no es la culminación de un trabajo, tenemos que preguntarnos porqué aparece. Y porqué aparece en una sociedad donde la mortalidad infantil era altísima y había innumerables muertos. Entonces la explicación que encontramos es compleja”

Según Ariès (1962), en el siglo XV la iconografía del niño comienza a secularizarse, pero todavía no aparecen como retratos de sujetos independientes sino como parte de pinturas anecdóticas o en las tumbas de sus maestros o de sus padres. Recién a fines del siglo XIX en el Occidente se comienza a separar el mundo de los niños del de los adultos y surge una concepción de la niñez. Esto ayuda a explicar la aparición de los retratos funerarios de niños en esa época. Antes no se pensaba en guardar un retrato o imagen del niño porque la niñez se consideraba como una fase de la vida muy poco importante de la cual no era necesario guardar registros o recuerdos. La gente no podía darse el lujo de apegarse muy profundamente a alguien que con frecuencia podía ser una pérdida. Demasiados niños morían.

En Ecuador en 1908 de 1161 niños 104 morían antes de los 12 meses y en 1923 todavía la mortalidad infantil era del 30.67 % . (comunicación personal de Eduardo Kingman 2009) La indiferencia podía ser muy bien, como señala Aries (1963), una consecuencia inevitable y directa de la demografía del período. Al mismo tiempo, debía respetarse la creencia cristiana de que los niños tenían un almita inmortal que había sido bautizada.

Cuando aparecen retratos de niños como sujetos es una evidencia de que su muerte ya no se consideraba una pérdida inevitable. Pero las dos actitudes coexisten en el siglo xviii ojo! Arreglar Según Ariès, la aparición del retrato del niño muerto marca un momento muy importante en la historia de los sentimientos. P.40

En Ecuador, el retrato del niño muerto o recobrado de la muerte como forma de duelo y conmemoración es un reconocimiento de este fenómeno social de la niñez, por un lado, pero por otro, estos sentimientos también están entañados en las ideas cristianas de la inmortalidad del alma bautizada y en la creencia en los poderes curativos milagrosos de las imágenes populares como la Virgen del Quinche. Pero este es todavía un duelo y una conmemoración privada y de las clases sociales altas o burguesías prósperas. Es recién con la fotografía que tenemos una posible democratización de la imagen del niño muerto y del duelo. Las más populares fueron las

fotografías de los velorios del angelito.

En el ámbito público, es distinto porque los indígenas y las clases populares urbanas ~~en~~ siempre celebraron la muerte para el Día de



pueblos  
Ecuador  
los



Muertos, por ejemplo aunque no tenemos todavía evidencia de cuando comienzan los rituales o placas funerarias especialmente dedicadas a los niños y con motivos infantiles que ahora son comunes en todos los cementerios de Ecuador.



El interesante libro de fotografías de Biede Pedersen(2008) sobre la cultura funeraria popular ecuatoriana da evidencia de esas formas de duelos públicos contemporáneos. En el prólogo, Gutiérrez Viñuales señala que predomina con notoria fuerza lo vinculado al culto de los niños muertos, sobre todo en términos celebratorios ya que esa muerte no debe ser llorada por los familiares porque se cree que los angelitos van directo al cielo.

Por un lado están los retratos póstumos de duelo o conmemorativos

recién  
Introducción



A diferencia de los retratos funerarios donde el muerto es pintado en su féretro o en la cama donde falleció, el retrato póstumo de duelo pinta a los muertos como si estuvieran vivos. Este es el caso de los cuadros de nuestra colección. Los retratos póstumos de duelo eran encargados por las familias y sobreviven porque un heredero decidió venderlos o donarlos a un museo. Pero tanto en el siglo XVIII como en el XIX, la costumbre de estos retratos estaba confinada a las clases altas. (arreglar poquito aquí)

Dice Iván:

El niño que muere pero a lo mejor era el primogénito, o el más mimado de su mamá o su papá o cualquier cosa. Y entonces empieza esa serie de celebraciones. Se celebra el quinto o el sexto año de la muerte del fulanita. En ese momento se le manda pintar un retrato. El niño ya no existe más, se murió hace 8 años o hace 5 años. Entonces el artista tiene que ingeniarse para descubrir el parecido con el papá o con la mamá e imaginar cómo sería o como hubiera sido el niño y así el resultado final es de un realismo maravilloso porque son adultos. Los pintores no son académicos, pero pintores de taller.



Este está como flotando, con piernas que no le corresponden, y con cara de adulto.



Y a veces no podemos estar seguros si son niños o niñas ya que en esa época no se habían establecido las convenciones del tipo de ropa y colores que diferencian a los niños por género más adelante en el siglo XX.

El niño muerto está pintado como si fuera vivo, con símbolos de muerte disimulados tales como un sauce llorón o con flores en la mano, la inocencia o por la muerte si las flores están marchitas. Según Goody (1993) en Europa, por ejemplo, el crisantemo estaba vinculado a los ritos otoñales por los muertos y al Día de Todos los Santos. Jack Goody (The culture of Flowers 1993) A veces las nubes significan ascensión al cielo del alma

pura. Este retrato en el Museo de Folk Art de Nueva York muestra otros símbolos como el barco que parte, los árboles truncados y a veces un juguete para indicar el género. En este caso, una niña.



1) Cu P 7

Aunque a veces sucede que el retrato no contiene ninguna indicación de que fue pintado póstumamente.

No es la belleza, la perfección lo que cuenta. Es un retrato de pintor de taller.

Entonces cuando tu ves esos retratos no guardan las proporciones. Las proporciones entonces son cabezas grandes, y cuerpos chiquitos. Tenemos unos señores chiquitos con cabezas de niño- Algunos son rarísimos, parecen enanitos.



Algunos niños parece que flotan en el espacio, no están asentados o son muy etéreos. Otros parece que vuelan. También hay niños jugando, pero siempre son misteriosos, cargados de extrañas energías porque son niños muertos, niños imaginados, niños recreados, hechos a la satisfacción del padre o de la madre y con la torpeza propia del oficio. Y son expresiones de arte popular absolutamente excepcionales, y maravillosas.

Son niños recreados de las memorias de sus padres, ~~Son cuadros pintados de memorias~~ para mantenerlas vivas y para evitar la finalidad de la muerte. Para conmemorar al ausente y ahuyentar el olvido. \*~~la vida como dialéctica entre memoria y olvido.~~ (arreglar aquí con lo de abajo) *Cumplía añ, dice Ruby (1995: 37 o 38) una función terapéutica*

In the daguerrotype article see autor. Ben Mattison (ensayo en Internet) ~~www.americandaguerrotypes.com The American Daguerrotype Portrait.~~ *Como apunta Makua, retratos se consideraba* El retrato de un niño solo, era un memorial una conmemoración. El daguerrotipo se ~~consideraba~~ en el siglo XIX como un retrato fiel del alma, como la sombra del sujeto. algunas pinturas producidas por la memoria de los padres o de dibujos previos Se sabía que los pintores cobraban doble si los sujetos estaban muertos porque tenían que trabajar rápido. Y las clases bajas pudieron tener sus retratos con el daguerrotipo o mas adelante también con las fotografías pintadas. Y ahora también hacen hacer fotografías pintadas.

Segun Ruby ( 1995) en Estados Unidos, los retratos funerarios se hicieron comunes en el comienzo del siglo xix después que se debilita la amonestación puritana contra estas imágenes consideradas ídolos o fetiches, y especialmente con el surgimiento de la sentimentalización de la muerte a finales del siglo XIX. (Mattison). Según Ruby (1999?) los retratos funerarios de duelo, que yo llamo conmemorativos, eran reconocidos públicamente y una práctica social aceptada. Se colgaban en la sala los lugares más públicos de las casa y los artistas ponían avisos en los periódicos locales. P.37

En el siglo XIX en los Estados Unidos florecieron pintores itinerantes que pintaban estos retratos ahora específicamente llamado " Folk Art " 41 (ver ejemplos del internet aunque es difícil decir si son de niños muertos pero siguen las mismas convenciones de los retratos de quito) Eran encargados por las familias y usados en rituales de duelo y en conmemoraciones como dice el Iván. ~~Usaban las imágenes de los cuadros para mitigar la pérdida para tratar de evitar la finalidad de la muerte.~~ Eran a la vez terapéuticos para ayudar a la familia a soportar el dolor de la muerte prematura. Redemptive character Es evidente que aunque los pintores son anónimos y de taller, como los llama Iván, comparten con sus clientes y con otros pintores del "folk art" norteamericano una cultura de significados europeos en términos de las vestimentas aceptadas, las poses de las distintas clases sociales, y el lenguaje y simbología de la muerte, en este caso de la muerte infantil.

*power A + adelante*

*esto puede haber estado basado en documentos que*

*gogo ya sido*

*Ver cuando se habla de pintura + arte*



Halttunen argumenta que la sentimental clase media de mediados del siglo xix incluía un culto del duelo. Este se veía como una de las emociones más puras y profundas. Y largas meditaciones sobre las alegrías y las tristezas del duelo se veían como un signo de dignidad y buenas maneras. gentility. Y se convirtió en un despliegue (ostentación) público, produciendo desde formas de vestimenta hasta cartas de condolencia. Las imágenes de duelo confirmaban esos sentimientos. Es obvio que, en Ecuador a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX, estas clases aristocráticas y burguesas, y aún los pintores de taller que les servían, habían absorbido las costumbres europeas de decoro y buenas maneras no sólo con respecto a la vida sino también con respecto a la muerte.

### **Memoria y ficción: El coleccionista y sus relaciones sociales**

Un aspecto interesante para la antropóloga es como, a través del tiempo, estos objetos van adquiriendo nuevos significados y memorias a través de las relaciones sociales en la vida del coleccionista. Dos ejemplos de estos retratos de niños de la colección son relevantes para entender estos hechos sociales. Oigamos a Iván:



Yo tengo aquí una niña azul, muy linda, con una flor[un crisantemo]. Un queridísimo amigo mío, Olaf Holm la vio y me dijo: “Yo tengo el marido de tu niña que me compré en Cuenca así que te lo voy a mandar”. En 10 días llegó un paquetito bien cerrado con el

cuadro. “Aquí va la pareja de los niños y ahora sí somos parientes” El inventó la pareja para que la niña no esté sola y para nosotros ser parientes.

Otra forma en que los cuadros se van recargando de sentido es a través de la literatura y porque en este mundo pequeño que es Quito, todos los intelectuales se conocen o están emparentados, las memorias del coleccionista se entrelazan con la imaginación de sus amigos novelistas y así conocemos a Natalio Mieleles.



Este niño era un personaje anónimo en un cuadro que aparece como un objeto en el mercado pero ahora se llama Natalio Mieleles.

Es un niño muy misterioso-dice Iván- muy triste, todo vestido de blanco. Yo soy muy amigo hace mucho tiempo de Javier Ponce, que estaba escribiendo una novela sobre los caucheros. Y en ella había una imagen de un niño hijo del dueño de la casa, de la familia, que estaba siempre muy bien vestido, muy limpio, muy cuidadito, mirando con una enorme tristeza y pena a los “longuitos”, los hijos de los inquilinos del piso bajo que se divertían enormemente en el patio y jugaban a las bolas o al chiche? Y desde la baranda de su casa este niño solo con su cara de susto y asombro miraba, siempre con una inmensa tristeza y pena el juego en el cual él no podía participar. Porque él era un niño bien....Javier recrea en su novela este retrato y ahora se llama Natalio Mieleles. Adquiere un nuevo nombre y una nueva identidad y se va integrando en otra narrativa para adquirir nueva vida.

Igualmente, mi otro amigo literato, el Javier Vásconez a veces entraba en mi antigua casa y se aterrorizaba ante todos esos niños muertos que estaban colocados en una pared..

Cuando escribe su novela “Los invitados de Honor”, usa mi nombre como el cronista de la ciudad que anuncia la llegada de esos personajes que van a venir a visitar la ciudad para dar conferencias. Y el informante tiene esa extraña colección de niños muertos.

Entonces voy a aparecer en la literatura en estos niños. Y así se va enriqueciendo el mito de los niños y van volviendo a tener vida. Vuelven a adquirir una posición en la historia

y en la vida de su ciudad. Vuelven a adquirir vida, son personajes que tienen acciones y mediante el arte vuelven a ser depositarios de los viejos recuerdos que todos estos artistas tienen. Esto es lo fantástico y enternecedor?? Son vivos, están vivos.

ojo ver } Memoria ficción en Ricouer y en Lowenthal p. 226 o tal vez esto va después de lo de Ivan y Ponce)

El novelista J. Vásquez dice en una entrevista (Internet on marquesitas) "No me interesa la ciudad como historia sino como personajes". Por el contrario, a la antropóloga, como al historiador, le interesan las memorias del personaje como actor de la vida cotidiana y situado en la realidad histórica de su ciudad.

**Por otro lado están los cuadros que son celebración del milagro .**



El niño adquiere una enfermedad cualquiera, una enfermedad infecciosa como sarampión, viruela, hepatitis, que eran enfermedades mortales en esa época. Entonces la madre de la familia hace un voto: "Si es que me sanas al niño, lo vestiré de Dominico o lo consagro a San Roque? Y el niño se sana e inmediatamente se manda hacer el retrato que certifica el milagro. Y aparece el retrato de un niño enfermo, desnutrido, pelado que recién ha salido de una terrible enfermedad. O se hace un retrato del niño vestido de Dominico como el que tengo y sabemos quien es: Don Manuel Venancio Serialta Mendieta que está pálido, y se acaba de levantar de la cama ayer.



O este otro milagro o ex voto en que el niño está disfrazado de hombre con las mejillas ya rosaditas y está dedicado a la Virgen del Quinche, costumbre que todavía se practica hoy en día en el Ecuador. 1

Estos dos milagros son evidencia de devociones privadas, familiares y marcadas por clase. Es un tipo de retrato en el estilo del linaje que se continúa casi triunfante. Y son muy diferentes de los otros ejemplos de milagros encargados por las clases populares que se encontraron y se encuentran todavía en algunas iglesias y santuarios populares del Ecuador como el del Cristo del Árbol. *(aplican + aquí)*



Y aquí esta última historia que por fin sí se va a relacionar más directamente con la celebración del bicentenario

**La última causa de estos retratos pintados es cuando una niña se muere a la vida civil y renace en la vida religiosa.** Hay incluso un cambio de nombre, un rito de iniciación, hay una muerte y entierro de lo civil y el renacer a la vida religiosa. Entonces como la niña muere y la casa se queda en cierta manera abandonada de esa presencia, los padres hacen pintar un retrato para que la niña se quede y viva en la casa, en forma de retrato mientras ella entra en la nueva vida. Y a veces ese retrato entra en la herencia y vuelve al convento.



Pero, desde la historia oral, Iván también recuenta un importante evento en la historia de la independencia de Ecuador: la muerte y exhumación de los restos del Mariscal Sucre. No es la absoluta exactitud de la memoria oral la que está en juego aquí sino como la memoria oral se incorpora a la memoria histórica o viceversa ya que como señala Lowenthal (210) las fuentes históricas también están saturadas de subjetividad e incluso de chismes.

Así escuchamos a Iván: Resumir un poco esta historia

El retrato que yo tengo es de la Marquesita de Solanda, una señorita Valdivieso que entró al Convento del Carmen Bajo y va a ser priora allí y ha de tener una enorme influencia en la vida de la ciudad porque es una mujer muy fuerte y de mucha fuerza y energía. Ella deja sus títulos a su sobrina, Mariana Carcelén quien se casa con el Mariscal Sucre. La Mariana es la que acoge los restos del Mariscal Sucre en el Carmen Bajo. Con el pretexto de ir a visitar a su tía, monja de clausura, no despertaba ninguna sospecha de que iba también a visitar y a rezar por los restos de su marido. Entonces esto era una muy buena cosa, voy a ver a la tía y de paso voy a verlo al Mariscal. Y ella es la responsable, la encargada de guardar el secreto de donde estaban enterrados los restos.

Ya que, por esas razones del siglo XIX estaban escondidos los restos de Sucre, así como también los restos de García Moreno, para evitar la profanación. (la muerte pública que en este caso debe mantenerse en secreto para evitar la profanación hasta que se constata como "hecho histórico" con una serie de notables (see artículo de exhumación de restos=) como testigos. Son éstos mas reliable que la marquesita desde el cuadro? Relación historia oral historia escrita Portelli y Ricoeur. (lo de la muerte pública versus la muerte privada y el duelo público) costumbres sobre muertes públicas y personajes famosos.

*aplicar*



Resumir lo que viene

Y este secreto aparece en 1920, con los notables, cuando un grupo de venezolanos viene a Ecuador a buscar los restos para llevarlos a Venezuela, y levantan todas las piedras de los conventos, arman un relajo histórico pero no los encuentran. Y los mandan sacando porque habían hecho ya muchos destrozos. Quien los encuentra es el dueño de esta casa (de Iván Cruz ahora), un Dr. Melo. (otra reliquia restaurada pero llena de memorias históricas) Había una bulla en la ciudad por los restos de Sucre : que estaban por ahí, que estaban en tal parte, que estaban en otra parte. Pero una enferma, una señora pobre, vieja se acerca al Dr. Melo y le dice: "Quiero que me trate que estoy enferma de no sé que cosa. Pero mire Dr que no tengo plata para pagarle y en vez le voy a pagar con un secreto. Yo sé donde está enterrado el Mariscal Sucre." El Dr la atiende, le hace una curación y ella le da el secreto. Esta en el convento del Carmen Bajo en tal sitio. El Dr hace una venta, un negocio con el gobierno Ecuatoriano para dar el secreto y pide creo que la cantidad de 10000 sucres. Estamos en 1910-1911 y se hace una investigación y efectivamente aparecen los restos de Sucre y hay abundante material fotográfico y hay las fotos del Fondo Jijón, con el cráneo y con los notables y los restos y dicen que el Dr Melo era el reconocido y el primer radiólogo ecuatoriano y poseedor del secreto. Según entiendo, el Dr Melo se pasó 25 años en juicio con el gobierno ecuatoriano que nunca le pagó. Y a propósito de la Sra. que está ahí es la que cuida el secreto.

Y la vida social del cuadro nos sigue contando **la historia social de la vida de la ciudad, en este caso sobre las mujeres de los conventos**, sus vidas, sus vicisitudes, y los gobiernos que las abandonan "a la buena de Dios" como ellas dirían.

Por herencia -dice Iván - el cuadro de la Marquesita de Solanda vuelve al convento del Carmen Bajo donde las monjitas lo guardan celosamente hasta que, cuando va a suceder un gran evento en el convento, las monjitas deciden, con toda razón, hacer una venta de algunas cosas, entre ellas su querida Marquesita. Esto será hace unos doce o trece años. Había unas 18 monjitas y 6 u 8 estaban enfermas, algunas con cáncer y había un solo servicio higiénico en todo el convento. Y el Alcalde y el Presidente le habían prometido:

“Vamos a hacer, vamos a comprar, vamos a dar”, pero la verdad era que las pobres monjitas no tenían ni para los remedios de día a día. Y una de estas monjitas que no era noble ni nada parecido pero que era la priora y que probablemente recién había llegado del campo, decidió vender. Bueno, que no eligen a las monjitas como cuidadoras de museos sino para que recen por todos. Y abren la casa para la venta, al comienzo tímidamente y luego que empieza a llegar mucha gente, entonces abiertamente le ponían precios a las cosas.

Y obviamente nuestro coleccionista no pudo resistir la tentación. Pero es el conjunto de estas tentaciones objetivadas en los cuadros el que nos permiten esta visión enriquecida de un aspecto importante de la historia social de la ciudad y su gente.

El coleccionista explica el significado que para el tienen finalmente estos cuadros:

Estos personajes de los cuadros salen de lo popular y luego regresan transformados, mutados en otro lenguaje, en otra situación, pero vuelven a la vida, vuelven a su ciudad, y son lo que verdaderamente son, una pieza absolutamente clave para entender una realidad pasada Y siguen viviendo en la memoria, en la herencia, en los recuerdos y en los miedos de sus creadores y de sus custodios.

Como analistas podemos hacernos estas últimas preguntas: cuál será el destino futuro de estos cuadros. Pasarán a ser parte del patrimonio de los museos y perderán allí todos estos significados para recomenzar otras vidas, otras historias y otras memorias? O se transformarán de nuevo en objetos mercancías mudas en un nuevo mercado. La historia de sus vidas y de su custodio es definitivamente, incompleta.

Aquí final, Ricouer, Berger, etc psara conclusiones teóricas pero tambien conclusiones sobre datos actitudes clase, sentimientos por muerte y niñez etc.

#### Notas

(nota en la exposición las madres ponían angelitos de la guarda hechos por los niños en frente a la imagen de la Virgen del Quinche aunque ésta estaba en el Museo de La Ciudad (ver picture). (un poquito más de explicación aquí sobre milagros etc ver aries, ruby:??



Nota aquí sobre exhibición y que ponían los angelitos hechos por los niños como ofrendas a la Virgen del Quiche, aun dentro del Museo.

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Feb 25

2010

## **Historia y memorias sociales: Un coleccionista de presencias y evocaciones populares**

**Texto:** Blanca Muratorio

**Coleccionista entrevistado:** Iván Cruz Cevallos

**Cuadros:** Autores Anónimos

**Fotografías:** Soledad Cruz

**Bajo la historia, memoria y olvido.  
Bajo la memoria y el olvido, vida.  
Pero escribir una vida es otra historia.  
Incompleta.  
(Paul Ricoeur, 2004)**

### **Introducción**

Este es en realidad un trabajo de colaboración entre una antropóloga y un apasionado coleccionista llamado Iván Cruz creado a través de las historias y memorias evocadas por su intrigante colección de retratos de niños y niñas, cuya presencia podemos evocar aquí gracias a la sensibilidad de la fotógrafa Soledad Cruz. No puedo alegar que mi mirada es desapasionada y totalmente objetiva -nadie puede. Soy también una amante del arte popular y, como antropóloga, una coleccionista empecinada de memorias de vida y de los objetos que las evocan. Mi memoria, que también es selectiva y narra desde un presente, sólo puede ofrecer un residuo de lo que posiblemente fueron experiencias muy intensas hacia los sujetos representados en los cuadros. Pero como señala Lowenthal (1985:192-93), la historia es tan residual como la memoria.

Lo que me propongo es explorar algunos aspectos de las relación entre memorias – individuales y sociales a través de estas pinturas de arte popular y vida cotidiana que nos ofrecen un rastro de la historia del Ecuador de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX. Me concentraré principalmente en los sentimientos y actitudes culturales hacia la vida y muerte de los niños prevalecientes en esa época en una determinada clase social. Las imágenes de los cuadros son de tres tipos: primero retratos conmemorativos póstumos de duelo de niños muertos que aparecen como vivos. Segundo, milagros o ex-votos, cuadros de acción de gracia por la vida de niños rescatados de una enfermedad considerada mortal

en esa época. Y por último, retratos de niñas poco antes de entrar a un convento, es decir de niñas que morían a la vida civil para revivir en la vida religiosa.<sup>1</sup>



Niña con banda azul (colección Iván Cruz)



Milagro de la Virgen del Quinche (colección Iván Cruz)



La Marquesita de Solanda (detalle) (colección Iván Cruz)

Estos cuadros constituyen un conjunto muy pequeño de la inmensa y variada colección de Iván Cruz pero con el tiempo, según sus propias palabras, vienen a formar parte de su identidad como cronista de su ciudad, Quito. Vuelven así a ser espacios de memoria social, memorias de alegría por el rescate del niño de la muerte, nostalgias por la ausencia familiar y social de las niñas y congoja y duelo por las muertes infantiles siempre inesperadas.

La memoria y la historia se nutren de los objetos como rastros o vestigios tangibles de un pasado que fue vivido por otros pero que de distintas formas tratamos de recuperar o revivir. El mundo material constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Si embargo los objetos no son inmediatamente transparentes, necesitan de análisis e interpretación desde un presente para revelar sus distintos y cambiantes significados. Como otras expresiones artísticas, los cuadros nos proveen de un escenario donde se producen y se disputan diferentes identidades sociales, sentimientos y valores. A través de ellos intentaré explorar cómo estas representaciones materiales dan forma y están conformadas por la memoria. Pero este acceso a los objetos es posible porque el coleccionista los ha rescatado del olvido de la trastienda para enriquecerlos de significados con sus propias experiencias personales y memorias. Por eso, como señala Portelli (1997:65), en la historia oral las interpretaciones y explicaciones del que escribe coexisten con las interpretaciones implícitas en las palabras citadas por sus fuentes, así como con las interpretaciones de sus oyentes o lectores.

## El coleccionista y sus cuadros

“El gusto por coleccionar -sugiere Maurice Rheims- es como un juego jugado con absoluta pasión.” (citado en Elsner y Cardinal 1994)

“Entonces el trabajo es esta obsesión que digo casi perversa de ir coleccionando más y más retratos de niños. Que este es el juego del coleccionista. No?” (Iván Cruz 2008)

Como ha señalado Appadurai (1996: 76), los objetos deben ser mantenidos y manejados semióticamente, deben ser guardados, restaurados y desplegados en contextos “apropiados”. Los espacios pueden ser privados como distintas habitaciones dentro de una casa o públicos como exhibiciones y museo, pero esta categoría de “lugares, espacios y formas apropiadas” siempre es social e históricamente construida. En este caso, entramos a la casa antigua del coleccionista en el Centro Histórico de Quito, casa que ya viene cargada de sentido histórico, como veremos más adelante. Los cuadros están desplegados en habitaciones importantes de la casa, donde podemos visitarlos todos juntos o algunos más íntimamente como si fueran de nuevo altares familiares. Al prestarle “atención” y “manipular” ciertos objetos y “olvidar” a otros, el coleccionista ayuda a cambiar sus significados. El coleccionar tiene a veces cualidades redentoras de los rastros del pasado inmersos en los objetos.

Nos dice Iván:

Y así un niño me impresiona y empiezan a juntarse niños y luego comienzo a indagar: Quienes son esos niños, quienes los pintaron, cómo y porqué los niños. Y van juntándose más niños y ellos van a adquirir una función en mi vida y en la vida de mi entorno. Yo empiezo a coleccionar estos retratos y los vendedores de cosas viejas me empiezan a traer cuadros de niños para vender. Al principio porque son comerciantes, pero después porque se encariñan con los niños y los traen para cuidarlos y hablan de los niños y de sus flores y de sus caritas de desolación. Como Cevallos que me dice: “le conseguí una niña preciosa para su colección” y es la niña vestida de azul.



Niña vestida de azul con crisantemo  
(Colección Iván Cruz)

De esta forma, las relaciones mercantiles se transforman en sentimientos compartidos por la muerte de los niños desconocidos. Y son así los vendedores, los miembros de las clases populares, los primeros que en realidad contribuyen a rescatar los trazos de esas memorias sociales.

Como otros patrimonios nacionales guardados en museos y en archivos, el patrimonio artístico Ecuatoriano pretende ser un paradigma de la memoria social, la inclusión de lo valioso y lo bello sobre lo feo y descartable, el triunfo del recuerdo sobre el olvido, la verdad incontrovertible (Elsner y Cardinal 1994). Pero sabemos que tanto los patrimonios como las naciones son construcciones sociales que siempre dejan espacios para memorias e imágenes a veces críticas, a veces subversivamente alternativas. Este es el caso de la colección de estos retratos de niños. Porque coleccionar lo popular es otra forma de salvar del olvido expresiones de arte que en el Ecuador todavía no están tan aceptadas y establecidas como las colecciones monumentales de arte Pre-colombino o Colonial.

El gusto del coleccionista es un espejo de su ser. Como señala Baudrillard (1994), en nuestras vidas los objetos representan algo profundamente relacionado a la subjetividad, porque cuando éstos han perdido su función originaria, ofrecen al coleccionista la capacidad de gobernar sus significados. Se convierten en objetos de su colección y de su pasión. Pero como todas las actividades humanas esta forma de dar sentido a los objetos no es unilateralmente individual. Las narrativas de memoria del coleccionista están, como veremos, calibradas en el espejo de las relaciones sociales, tanto con los vendedores de sus cuadros como con sus amigos arqueólogos, poetas y novelistas. A través de estas

relaciones el coleccionista da forma a las narrativas de los sucesos, sentimientos y memorias escondidos en los cuadros y así contribuye a crear una memoria social.

### **Los niños, la muerte y los duelos**

El coleccionista explica así la aparición de los retratos de niños:

En el siglo XIX hay un cambio en la concepción estética. Aparece el paisaje y aparece el retrato. El retrato ya no sólo del noble o de linaje sino también de una burguesía incipiente. El retrato que aparece más frecuentemente es el del padre de familia y su esposa, el retrato del gran señor. Pero hay una serie de retratos que son muy atípicos y son el retrato del niño. Dado que no funda un linaje, dado que no es la culminación de un trabajo, tenemos que preguntarnos porqué aparece. Y porqué aparece en una sociedad donde la mortalidad infantil era altísima y había innumerables muertos. Entonces la explicación que encontramos es compleja.

Según Ariès (1962), en Occidente la iconografía del niño comienza a secularizarse en el Siglo XV, pero es recién a fines del siglo XIX cuando se comienza a separar el mundo de los niños del de los adultos y surge una concepción de la niñez. Esto ayuda a explicar la aparición de los retratos funerarios de niños en esa época. Antes no se pensaba en guardar un retrato o imagen del niño porque la niñez se consideraba como una fase de la vida muy poco importante de la cual no era necesario guardar registros o recuerdos. La gente no podía darse el lujo de apegarse muy profundamente a alguien que con frecuencia podía significar una pérdida. Demasiados niños morían. La indiferencia podía ser muy bien, como señala Aries (1963), una consecuencia inevitable y directa de la demografía del período. En 1908 en Ecuador, de 3161 niños 1104 morían antes de los 12 meses y en 1923 todavía la mortalidad infantil era del 30.67 % (Kingman: 2006). Por supuesto estas estadísticas no nos dan todo el panorama ya que no discriminan claramente por clase social y son mudas a los sentimientos de duelo por esos niños. En ese sentido, las pinturas son más elocuentes. Según Aries (1962:40), la aparición de retratos de niños muertos es una evidencia de que su muerte ya no se consideraba una pérdida inevitable y marca un momento muy importante en la historia de los sentimientos.



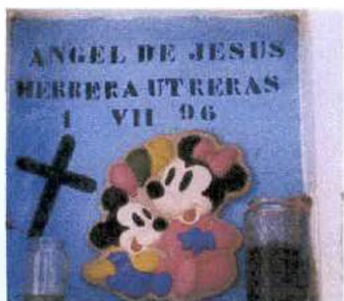
Como en muchos países de América Latina, en Ecuador el retrato del niño muerto o recobrado de la muerte como forma de duelo y conmemoración es por un lado, un reconocimiento de la aparición de este fenómeno social de “la niñez” pero por otro, estos sentimientos también están entrañados en las ideas cristianas de la inmortalidad del “almita” bautizada y en la creencia religiosa en los poderes curativos milagrosos de las imágenes populares como la Virgen del Quinche.



Velorio del angelito ( foto cortesía de Soledad Cruz)

Pero este es todavía un duelo y una conmemoración privada y de las clases sociales altas o de las burguesías prósperas. Es recién con la fotografía que tenemos una posible democratización de la representación del niño muerto y del duelo. Las primeras imágenes más populares fueron tomadas con motivo de la celebración de los “velorios del angelito”. La fotografía permitió así a las clases medias y populares tener sus propios retratos especialmente cuando ésta empezó a colorearse, costumbre que parece haber resurgido recientemente en los pueblos como una forma de distinción de la masiva fotografía digital (comunicación personal de Santiago Rosero).

La situación es diferente en el ámbito del duelo público porque los pueblos indígenas y las clases populares urbanas en Ecuador siempre celebraron a sus antepasados y a otros seres queridos en lugares sagrados, cementerios/ o iglesias para el Día de los Muertos, por ejemplo. Sin embargo, todavía carecemos de evidencia para datar la aparición de las placas funerarias especialmente dedicadas a los niños y con motivos infantiles que ahora son comunes en todos los cementerios de Ecuador,<sup>2</sup> tales como ésta en el cementerio de San Diego.



Placa funeraria en el cementerio de San Diego (foto de Francisco Jiménez)

### **Retratos póstumos de duelo o conmemoratorios.**

A diferencia de los retratos funerarios donde el muerto es pintado en su féretro o en la cama donde falleció, los retratos póstumos de duelo representan a los muertos como si estuvieran vivos.



Niña/o con moño rosa (colección Iván Cruz)



Niña/o con moño rosa (detalle)

El coleccionista nos explica:

El niño que murió a lo mejor era el primogénito, o el más mimado de su mamá o su papá o cualquier otra cosa semejante. Y entonces empieza esa serie de celebraciones. Se celebra el quinto o el sexto aniversario de la muerte del fulanito y en ese momento se le

manda pintar un retrato. El niño ya no existe más y entonces el artista, que no es académico sino de taller, tiene que ingeniarse para descubrir el parecido con el papá o con la mamá e imaginar cómo era o como hubiera sido el niño y así el resultado final es de un realismo maravilloso porque parecen adultos. Este está como flotando, con piernas que no le corresponden y con cara de adulto. Entonces cuando tú ves esos retratos no guardan las proporciones. Son cabezas grandes y cuerpos chiquitos o unos señores con cabezas de niño.



Niño/a con banda azul (colección Iván Cruz)



Niño/a con banda azul (detalle)



Niño/a con banda azul (detalle)

Si bien el niño muerto está pintado como si fuera vivo, la mayoría de este tipo de retratos contiene símbolos de muerte disimulados, tales como un sauce llorón o flores que en la mano del niño significan inocencia, o muerte si las flores están marchitas. Según Goody (1993) en Europa el crisantemo, por ejemplo, estaba vinculado a los ritos otoñales por los muertos y al Día de Todos los Santos.



Niña con una muñeca. Retrato póstumo.  
New York Museum of Folk Art  
([www.folkartmuseum.org](http://www.folkartmuseum.org)).

Esta pintura de niña muerta en el Museo de Folk Art de Nueva York muestra otros símbolos que indican que éste es un retrato póstumo, tales como el barco que parte, los árboles truncados y tal vez un juguete específico para indicar género, en este caso una muñeca. Sin embargo, a veces no podemos estar seguros si son niños o niñas, ya que en esa época no se habían establecido todavía las convenciones del tipo de ropa y colores que comienzan a diferenciar a los niños por género más adelante en el siglo XX.

Estos niños muertos de los retratos son niños recreados de las memorias de sus padres, pintados de memorias para mantenerlas vivas y así evitar la finalidad de la muerte, para conmemorar al ausente y ahuyentar el olvido. Cumplían, como dice Ruby (1995:37-38) con referencia a retratos similares en Estados Unidos, una función terapéutica.

En el siglo XIX en los Estados Unidos florecieron pintores itinerantes que pintaban estos retratos ahora específicamente llamados "Folk Art" y se sabía que cobraban el doble si los sujetos estaban muertos, ya que debían trabajar rápido antes del sepelio. Es evidente que los pintores ecuatorianos, aunque anónimos y de taller como los llama Iván, comparten con sus clientes y con otros pintores del "folk art" norteamericano una cultura de significados europeos en términos de las vestimentas aceptadas, las poses de las distintas clases sociales, y el lenguaje y simbología de la muerte, en este caso de la muerte infantil, como podemos comprobar en la comparación de las pinturas ya analizadas con estos retratos de niños norteamericanos del siglo XIX, cuyas reproducciones están a la venta en el Internet.

*(http://store.encore-editions.com/artists/folkartportraits.htm)*



Portrait by Susan Walters-N. Catlin  
1852

*(web site)*



Girl in balcony  
Artist unknown  
1840

*(web site)*



Portrait by Ammi Philips et al.  
1834

*(web site)*

*✓*

Halttunen (citado por Mattison 1995) argumenta que la cultura sentimental de la clase media de mediados del siglo XIX en Estados Unidos incluía un culto del duelo. Este se consideraba como una de las emociones más puras y profundas y las prolongadas meditaciones sobre las alegrías y las tristezas del duelo se veían como un signo de dignidad y buenas maneras [gentility]. Para esta clase, tener un duelo apropiado se convirtió en un despliegue público produciendo desde formas de vestimenta hasta cartas de condolencia. Las imágenes de duelo confirmaban esos sentimientos. Es obvio que en Ecuador a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX estas clases aristocráticas y burguesas, y aún los pintores de taller que les servían, habían absorbido las costumbres norteamericanas y europeas de decoro y buenas maneras no sólo con respecto a la vida sino también con respecto a la muerte.

### **Memoria y ficción: El coleccionista y sus relaciones sociales**

Un aspecto interesante para la antropología de los objetos es cómo, a lo largo del tiempo, éstos van adquiriendo nuevos significados y memorias a través de *las relaciones sociales* en la vida del coleccionista. Dos ejemplos de estos retratos de niños de la colección son relevantes para entender estos hechos sociales. Oigamos a Iván:



Niña de azul con  
crisantemo  
(colección Iván Cruz)



Niño con sombrero. "marido"  
de Niña de azul  
(colección Iván Cruz)

Yo tengo aquí una niña azul, muy linda, con una flor [un crisantemo]. Un queridísimo amigo mío, Olaf Holm la vio y me dijo: “Yo tengo el marido de tu niña que me compré en Cuenca así que te lo voy a mandar”. En 10 días llegó un paquetito bien cerrado con el cuadro y un mensaje de Olaf: “Aquí va la pareja de los niños y ahora sí somos parientes”. El inventó la pareja para que la niña no esté sola y para que nosotros fuéramos parientes.

Otra forma en que los retratos de niños se van recargando de sentido *es a través de la literatura* y, porque en el pequeño mundo social que es Quito todos los intelectuales se conocen o están emparentados, las memorias del coleccionista se entrelazan con la imaginación de sus amigos novelistas y así conocemos a “Natalio Mieles”.



Niño de blanco “Natalio Mieles” (colección Iván Cruz)



Niño de blanco (detalle)

Este niño era un personaje anónimo en un cuadro que en un momento apareció como un objeto en el mercado y vino a formar parte de la colección pero ahora, varios años después, se llama Natalio Mieles. Dice Iván:

Es un niño muy misterioso, muy triste, todo vestido de blanco. Yo soy muy amigo hace mucho tiempo de Javier Ponce que ~~estaba escribiendo~~ una novela sobre los caucheros. Y en ésta había una imagen de un niño hijo del dueño de la casa, ~~de la familia~~, que estaba siempre muy bien vestido, muy limpio, muy cuidadito, mirando con una enorme tristeza y pena a los “longuitos”, los hijos de los inquilinos del piso bajo que se divertían enormemente en el patio y jugaban a las bolas. Y desde la baranda de su casa este niño solo con su cara de susto y asombro miraba, siempre con una inmensa tristeza y pena, el juego en el cual él no podía participar. Porque él era un niño bien... En su novela Javier recrea este retrato y ahora el niño de blanco se llama Natalio Mieles. Adquiere un nuevo nombre y una nueva identidad y se va integrando en otra narrativa para adquirir nueva

*estaba escribiendo*  
✓

vida. Igualmente, mi otro amigo literato, el Javier Vásconez a veces entraba en mi antigua casa y se aterrorizaba ante todos esos niños muertos que estaban colocados en una pared. Cuando escribe su novela "Los invitados de Honor" usa mi nombre como el cronista de la ciudad que anuncia la llegada de esos personajes que van a venir a la ciudad para dar conferencias. Y ese informante tiene esa extraña colección de niños muertos. Entonces voy a aparecer en la literatura en estos niños. Y así se va enriqueciendo el mito de los niños y van volviendo a tener vida. Vuelven a adquirir una posición en la historia y en la vida de su ciudad. Vuelven a adquirir vida, son personajes que tienen acciones y mediante el arte vuelven a ser depositarios de los viejos recuerdos que todos estos artistas tienen. Esto es lo fantástico. Son vivos, están vivos.

Ricoeur (2004) se pregunta en qué sentido la experiencia de la memoria representando cosas del pasado difiere de las experiencias de la imaginación representando mundos ficticios. No hay nada en la imagen visual del niño de este cuadro de "Natalio Mieles", por ejemplo, que nos diga si es una fiel representación de su persona o un recuerdo en la memoria de los padres o el personaje creado por el novelista. Según Ricoeur (2004), la diferencia está en el hecho de que con la memoria tratamos de conseguir fidelidad mientras que en la ficción, al crear mundos alternativos, enfatizamos lo lúdico. Por otra parte, en Ecuador, los caucheros fueron una realidad histórica a principios del siglo XX, tiempo desde donde parece mirarnos este niño con su almidonado traje blanco. Y los personajes de caucheros que encontré en mi trabajo en los archivos del Napo (Muratorio 1991) bien pueden haber sido los padres de este niño. La historia de archivo se acerca así también a la memoria y a la ficción. Pero a mi entender, a diferencia de la ficción, la antropología y la historia tratan de entender este mundo, no el alternativo de la imaginación. Como señala Portelli (1997:64) los historiadores orales tendemos a tomar seriamente tanto las inciertas historias orales como los registros verosímiles de los archivos y los espacios entre medio.

El novelista J. Vásconez dice en una entrevista (citado en Barrionuevo 2005): "No me interesa la ciudad como historia. Ni como retrato de costumbres, sino como escenario de unos cuantos personajes. Me interesa *inventar* (mi énfasis) la naturaleza de esta ciudad". Es aquí donde la ficción tal vez se acerca más a la memoria pero se separa de la antropología y de la historia y aún de la ficción histórica. A la antropóloga, como al historiador, le interesan las memorias del personaje como *actor de la vida cotidiana* y situado en *la realidad histórica* de su ciudad.

### Los milagros del privilegio

El segundo tipo de cuadros que encontramos en la colección son aquellos que representan la celebración de un “milagro” y/o la consagración de un niño a una imagen sagrada específica. Tal como se entienden en el ámbito del arte religioso en Ecuador, los “milagros”<sup>3</sup> son pinturas votivas encargadas a artistas populares para pedir o agradecer la intervención de un agente sobrenatural- generalmente una virgen o un santo- en la resolución de desastres naturales, epidemias o enfermedades personales. La iconografía de las pinturas se ofrece como una “prueba” de la posibilidad de esa intervención sobrenatural en el mundo cotidiano.



Don Manuel Venancio Serialta y Mendieta vestido de monje Dominicano (colección Iván Cruz)

El coleccionista los explica así:

El niño adquiere una enfermedad cualquiera, una enfermedad infecciosa como sarampión, viruela, hepatitis, que eran enfermedades mortales en esa época. Entonces la madre de la familia hace un voto: “Si es que me sanas al niño lo vestiré de Dominico o lo consagro a [tal o cual] santo”. Y el niño se sana, e inmediatamente se manda hacer el retrato que certifica el milagro. Y aparece el retrato de un niño enfermo, desnutrido, pelado que recién ha salido de una terrible enfermedad. O se hace un retrato del niño vestido de Dominico como el que tengo y sabemos quien es: Don Manuel Venancio Serialta y Mendieta que está pálido y se acaba de levantar de la cama- ayer.



O este otro milagro o ex-voto en que el niño aparece vestido de adulto y con las mejillas rosadas de salud. En su retrato el niño ya curado está dedicado a la Virgen del Quinche, costumbre que todavía se practica hoy en día en el Ecuador.<sup>4</sup>



Niño de negro. Milagro a la Virgen del Quinche (colección Iván Cruz)

Estos dos milagros son evidencia de devociones privadas, familiares y evidentemente marcadas por clase social. Es un tipo de retrato en el estilo del privilegio, del linaje que se continúa, casi triunfante. Y son muy diferentes de los otros ejemplos de milagros encargados por las clases populares que se encontraron (Goetschel: 1980s) y se encuentran todavía en algunas iglesias y santuarios populares del Ecuador. A diferencia de los dos milagros “de privilegio” en la colección que analizamos, los milagros populares son generalmente de un realismo literal y de una modestia agradecida y enternecedora. Son memorias de una tragedia evitada, como vemos en este milagro del Cristo del Árbol en Pomasqui. ✓



Milagro del Cristo del Árbol Milagro del Cristo del Árbol (Detalle) de Pomasqui (fotografía R. Muratorio)

## La muerte social y pública

Por último pasamos a examinar un ejemplo del tercer tipo de retratos que seleccionamos de esta colección, la Marquesita de Solanda antes de entrar al Convento del Carmen Bajo. Estos retratos, usualmente encargados por la familia de la joven que ~~era~~ <sup>era</sup> de una forma u otra "elegida" para entrar a un convento, existieron desde el comienzo de la época colonial en Latinoamérica.<sup>5</sup> Por un lado documentaban la "muerte" de la niña a la vida civil, es decir el hecho de que ella ya no estaba disponible para el matrimonio y la procreación. Pero, por otro, también celebraban el futuro "renacer" de la joven a la vida religiosa, considerado un honor para su familia. Por esta misma razón los retratos de monjas ya adultas y con cargos de autoridad en los conventos parecen haber sido más comunes.<sup>6</sup> Por el momento, ~~A~~ <sup>A</sup> mi entender, carecemos de una investigación comparativa específica sobre la posible existencia de este tipo de retratos en conventos, museos <sup>y en</sup> colecciones privadas del Ecuador. Por consiguiente, aquí sólo me concentraré en las historias y memorias del coleccionista acerca de este cuadro de la "Marquesita de Solanda" tan cargado de significado histórico. En las palabras de Iván:



La Marquesita de Solanda  
(colección Iván Cruz)

Cuando una niña entra al convento hay un rito de iniciación y un cambio de nombre. Hay una muerte y entierro de lo civil y un renacer a la vida religiosa. Entonces como la niña muere y la casa se queda en cierta manera abandonada de esa presencia, los padres hacen

pintar un retrato para que la niña se quede y viva en la casa, mientras ella se inicia en la nueva vida. Y a veces ese retrato entra en la herencia y vuelve al convento.

Pero desde la historia oral, Iván también recuenta un importante evento en la historia de la independencia de Ecuador: la muerte y exhumación de los restos del Mariscal Sucre. No es la absoluta "exactitud" de esta memoria oral la que está en juego aquí sino como ésta se incorpora a la memoria histórica - o viceversa- ya que como señala Lowenthal (1985:210), las fuentes históricas también están saturadas de subjetividad e incluso de chismes. El que sigue es un resumen de una larga historia que contó el coleccionista sobre este retrato:

El retrato que yo tengo es de la Marquesita de Solanda, una señorita Valdivieso que entró al Convento del Carmen Bajo, fue priora y tuvo una enorme influencia en la vida de la ciudad porque fue mujer de mucha fuerza y energía. Ella deja sus títulos a su sobrina, Mariana Carcelén quien se casa con el Mariscal Sucre. La Mariana es la que acoge los restos de Sucre en el Carmen Bajo. Con el pretexto de ir a visitar a su tía, monja de clausura, la Mariana no despertaba ninguna sospecha de que iba también a visitar y a rezar por los restos de su marido. Y ella es la responsable, la encargada de guardar el secreto de donde estaban enterrados los restos. Ya que por esas razones del siglo XIX éstos estaban escondidos para evitar la profanación, como pasó con los restos de García Moreno. Hasta que quien revela el secreto es el dueño de esta casa [de Iván Cruz ahora], un Dr. Melo a quien le dio el secreto una paciente que no tenía otra forma de pagarle la curación. Estamos en 1900 y se hace una investigación y efectivamente aparecen los restos de Sucre y hay abundantes pruebas con documentos y material fotográfico del Manuel Jijón y de los otros notables. Pero la Marquesita era la responsable de guardar el secreto.

Lo más interesante para el tema principal de este trabajo es que a través de estas memorias sobre el cuadro de la Marquesita comenzamos a entender otras actitudes hacia la muerte a finales del siglo XIX principios del XX. Es el caso de la muerte pública del personaje político famoso que debe mantenerse en secreto para evitar la profanación hasta que se constata como "hecho histórico" con el testimonio de una serie de notables y la fotografía funeraria como evidencia (ver Luna Orozco 1999). Los retratos y monumentos de estos héroes vendrán después, pero también serán reconstruidos de memorias.

Finalmente, en la narrativa del coleccionista la vida social del cuadro nos va a dar un vislumbre de la vida cotidiana de otras mujeres olvidadas en la historia de la ciudad: las

monjas de los conventos de clausura, en este caso las monjas del Carmen Bajo, sus vicisitudes y sus lamentaciones por los gobiernos que las abandonaron “a la buena de Dios” como ellas dirían.

Por herencia –continúa Iván - el cuadro de la Marquesita de Solanda vuelve al convento del Carmen Bajo donde las monjitas lo guardan celosamente hasta que hace unos 12 o 13 años deciden con toda razón hacer una venta de algunas cosas, entre ellas su querida Marquesita. Había unas 18 monjitas y 6 u 8 estaban enfermas, algunas con cáncer y había un solo servicio higiénico en todo el convento. Y el Alcalde y el Presidente le habían prometido: “Vamos a hacer, vamos a comprar, vamos a dar”, pero la verdad era que las pobres monjitas no tenían ni para los remedios de día a día. Y una de estas monjitas que no era noble ni nada parecido pero que era la priora y que probablemente recién había llegado del campo, decidió vender. Bueno, que no eligen a las monjitas como cuidadoras de museos sino para que recen por todos. Y abren la casa para la venta, al comienzo tímidamente y luego que empieza a llegar mucha gente, entonces abiertamente le ponían precios a las cosas.

Y obviamente nuestro coleccionista no pudo resistir la tentación y compró el cuadro de la Marquesita. Pero es el conjunto de estas tentaciones objetivadas en los cuadros el que nos ha permitido tener una experiencia sensorial de un momento histórico, una visión enriquecida de los sentimientos hacia la niñez y de la cultura de la muerte y del duelo en el Ecuador urbano de fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX. El coleccionista explica así el significado que para él tienen finalmente estos cuadros:

Estos personajes de los cuadros salen de lo popular y luego regresan transformados, mutados en otro lenguaje, en otra situación, pero vuelven a la vida, vuelven a su ciudad y son lo que verdaderamente son, una pieza absolutamente clave para entender una realidad pasada Y siguen viviendo en la memoria, en la herencia, en los recuerdos y en los miedos de sus creadores y de sus custodios.

Como amante del arte popular tiendo a estar de acuerdo con la poesía de las conclusiones del coleccionista. Sin embargo, en mi rol de antropóloga de los objetos me quedan varias preguntas por contestar, cada una de las cuales puede ser el objeto de futuras investigaciones: cuál será el destino futuro de estas pinturas? Pasarán a ser parte del patrimonio de los museos y perderán allí todos estos significados que hemos tratado de analizar para recomenzar otras vidas, otras historias y otras memorias? O se

transformarán de nuevo en objetos, en mercancías mudas en un nuevo mercado? Mi historia de sus vidas y de su presente custodio es definitivamente, incompleta.

## Notas

1. Todos los cuadros de la colección de Iván Cruz que analizamos aquí son anónimos y no tienen título. Datan de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX. Las fotografías fueron tomadas por Soledad Cruz en el 2008. Los pies de fotos son puestos por la autora en relación con el texto.

2. El libro de Biede Pedersen (2008) sobre la cultura funeraria popular ecuatoriana da evidencia de esas formas de duelos populares públicos contemporáneos. En el prólogo, Gutiérrez Viñuales señala que en los cementerios examinados predomina la imaginería celebratoria vinculada al culto de los niños muertos.

3. Uso el término “milagros” para este tipo de pinturas votivas porque así se conocen en Ecuador. En México son identificadas como “retablos” o “ex-votos”. “Retablos” es también un término que se usa para pinturas votivas en latón que se despliegan en lugares privados y no en las iglesias o santuarios.

4. En un altar a la Virgen del Quinche construido en el 2003 en el Museo de la Ciudad con motivo de una exposición sobre religiosidad popular, muchas madres ofrecieron espontáneamente a la Virgen los angelitos de la guarda hechos por sus hijos/as como actividad educativa después de visitar la exposición. En esta fotografía se notan también las reproducciones de los milagros populares que se encontraron en el santuario del Quinche (Goetschel:1980s).



Retablo de la Virgen del Quinche  
(foto Francisco Jiménez)

5. Un ejemplo de 1772 de Nueva España es un retrato anónimo de una “Dama indígena. Hija de Cacique”. Representa a una joven de 16 años de una familia de la nobleza indígena adinerada que encargó la pintura antes de que ella entrara a un convento especial para mujeres indígenas ([www.fm.coe.uh.edu/exhibition-span/portrait](http://www.fm.coe.uh.edu/exhibition-span/portrait)).

6. Los “retratos de monjas coronadas”, como se los llamaba en la época Colonial, se conservaban en las casas de familia como objetos de orgullo y ostentación. Uno de los más famosos de estos retratos <sup>por Sigüenza,</sup> es el de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz pintado por Manuel Cabrera (Gabriela de la O, [www.arts-history.mx](http://www.arts-history.mx)).

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Paula  
para las fotos  
y Carlitos de  
fotografías

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FLACSO- Ecuador Noviembre 2009

### Historia y memorias sociales: Un coleccionista de presencias y evocaciones populares

**Texto:** Blanca Muratorio  
**Coleccionista entrevistado:** Iván Cruz Cevallos  
**Cuadros:** Autores Anónimos  
**Fotografías:** Soledad Cruz

**Bajo la historia, memoria y olvido.  
Bajo la memoria y el olvido, vida.  
Pero escribir una vida es otra historia.  
Incompleta.  
(Paul Ricoeur, 2004)**

#### Introducción

Este es en realidad un trabajo de colaboración entre una antropóloga, un coleccionista apasionado llamado Iván Cruz y sus intrigantes cuadros de niños y niñas, cuya presencia podemos evocar aquí gracias a la sensibilidad de la fotógrafa Soledad Cruz.

a través de las historias y recuerdos sobre  
I los historias y recuerdos de  
rebueltos recuerdos

(ver  
cuadros  
aquí)

No puedo alegar que mi mirada es desapasionada y totalmente objetiva (nadie puede): soy también una amante del arte popular y, como antropóloga, una coleccionista empecinada de memorias de vida y de los objetos que las evocan. Mi memoria, que es también es selectiva y narra desde un presente, sólo puede ofrecer un residuo de lo que posiblemente fueron experiencias intensas. Pero como señala Lowenthal (1985:192-93), la historia es tan residual como la memoria.

ahora  
de la relación  
de los sujetos  
re-presentados  
en los cuadros

Lo que me propongo es explorar algunos aspectos de las relación entre memorias – individuales y sociales a través de estos <sup>objetos</sup> de arte popular y vida cotidiana que nos ofrecen un rastro de la historia del Ecuador de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX, principalmente los sentimientos y actitudes culturales hacia la vida y muerte de los niños prevaecientes en esa época en una determinada clase social. Las imágenes de los cuadros son de tres tipos: primero retratos conmemorativos póstumos de duelo de niños muertos que aparecen como vivos. Segundo, milagros o ex-votos, cuadros de acción de gracia por la vida de niños rescatados de una enfermedad considerada mortal en esa

se concuerda en

nota de  
además  
de lo  
de nuevo



época. Y, por último, retratos de niñas poco antes de entrar a un convento, es decir de niñas que morían a la vida civil para revivir en la vida religiosa. **A**



Pie. de fotos (detalle)

Estos cuadros constituyen un conjunto muy pequeño de la inmensa y variada colección de Iván pero, según sus propias palabras, vienen con el tiempo a formar parte de su identidad como cronista de su ciudad, Quito. Vuelven así a ser espacios de memoria sociales, memorias de alegría por el rescate del niño de la muerte, nostalgias por la ausencia familiar y social de las niñas y congoja y duelo por las muertes infantiles siempre inesperadas.

La memoria y la historia se nutren de los objetos como rastros o vestigios tangibles de un pasado que fue vivido por otros pero que de distintas formas tratamos de recuperar o revivir. El mundo material constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Si embargo, los objetos no son inmediatamente transparentes, necesitan de análisis e interpretación desde un presente para revelar sus distintos y cambiantes significados. Como otras expresiones artísticas, los cuadros nos proveen de un escenario donde se producen y se disputan diferentes identidades sociales, sentimientos y valores. <sup>pero</sup> Queremos explorar cómo estas representaciones materiales dan forma y están conformadas por la memoria. Pero este acceso a los objetos es posible porque el coleccionista los ha rescatado del olvido de la trastienda para enriquecerlos de significados con sus propias experiencias personales y memorias. Por eso, como señala Portelli (1997:65), en la historia oral las interpretaciones y explicaciones del que escribe coexisten con las interpretaciones implícitas en las palabras citadas por <sup>sus</sup> ~~nuestras~~ fuentes, así como con las interpretaciones de <sup>sus</sup> ~~nuestros~~ oyentes o lectores. <sup>- en este caso el coleccionista -</sup>

→ En resumen, los objetos que aquí queremos considerar constituyen entradas a la investigación y son motivo de análisis porque siempre están provistos de "guiones"



culturales y sociales que cambian con el tiempo como resultado de ciertas relaciones sociales

### El coleccionista y sus cuadros

“El gusto por coleccionar, sugiere Maurice Rheims, es como un juego jugado con absoluta pasión.” (Elsner y Cardinal 1994)

Entonces el trabajo es esta obsesión que digo casi “perversa” de ir coleccionando más y más retratos de niños. Que este es el juego del coleccionista. No? (Iván Cruz 2008)

Como ha señalado Appadurai (1996: 76), los objetos deben ser mantenidos y manejados semióticamente, deben ser guardados, restaurados y desplegados en contextos “apropiados”. Los espacios pueden ser privados como distintas habitaciones dentro de una casa o públicos como exhibiciones y museos. Pero siempre esta categoría de “lugares, espacios y formas apropiadas” es social e históricamente construida. En este caso, entramos a la casa antigua del coleccionista en el Centro Histórico, <sup>de Quetzaltenango</sup> casa que ya viene cargada de sentido histórico, como veremos más adelante. Los cuadros están desplegados en habitaciones importantes de la casa, donde podemos visitarlos todos juntos, algunos más íntimamente como si fueran de nuevo altares familiares. Al prestarle “atención” y “manipular” ciertos objetos y “olvidar” a otros, el coleccionista ayuda a cambiar sus significados. El coleccionar tiene, a veces, cualidades redentoras de los rastros del pasado inmersos en los objetos. ✓

Nos dice Iván:

✓  
Mi ex-mujer decía que había que comprar la pieza porque era única, pero luego aparecía la segunda y había que comprar el par y luego venía la tercera y se iniciaba la colección.

Suele space.  
✓  
Y así un niño me impresiona y empiezan a juntarse niños y luego comienzo a indagar: Y porqué los niños y Quienes son esos niños, quienes los pintaron, cómo y porqué los niños. Y van juntándose más niños, y ellos van a adquirir una función en mi vida y en la vida de mi entorno. Yo empiezo a coleccionar estos retratos y ✓

*Cuadros de*

*Sueño  
Sueño*

vendedores de cosas viejas ~~que~~ me empiezan a traer niños para vender. Primero porque son ~~vendedores~~ <sup>comerciales</sup>, pero después porque se encariñan con los niños y los traen para cuidarlos y hablan de los niños y de sus flores y de sus caritas de desolación. Como Cevallos que me dice: "le conseguí una niña preciosa para su colección y es la niña vestida de azul"

*efo  
pau.  
D  
nia  
de  
azul*

De esta forma, las ~~utilitarias~~ relaciones mercantiles se transforman en sentimientos ~~y~~ memorias compartidas por la muerte de los niños desconocidos. Y son en realidad los vendedores, los miembros de las clases populares, los primeros que contribuyen a rescatar los trazos de esas memorias sociales.

*repite*

El patrimonio artístico Ecuatoriano, como otros patrimonios nacionales guardados en museos y en archivos, pretende ser un paradigma de la memoria social, la inclusión de lo valioso y lo bello sobre lo feo y descartable, el triunfo del recuerdo sobre el olvido, la verdad incontrovertible (Elsner y Cardinal 1994) Pero sabemos que los patrimonios, como las naciones, son construcciones sociales que dejan nichos para memorias e imágenes a veces críticas, a veces subversivamente alternativas. Este es el caso de la colección de estos cuadros de niños. Porque coleccionar lo popular es otra forma de salvar del olvido expresiones de arte que <sup>en el Ecuador son</sup> todavía no están aceptadas y establecidas como las colecciones monumentales de arte <sup>P</sup>pre-colombino o <sup>P</sup>colonial.

El gusto del coleccionista es un espejo de su ser. Como señala Baudrillard (1994), los objetos en nuestras vidas representan algo profundamente relacionado a la subjetividad, porque cuando éstos han perdido su función originaria, <sup>ofrecen</sup> dan de cierta manera al coleccionista, la capacidad de <sup>sup.</sup> gobernar <sup>se concertan</sup> el significado <sup>de</sup> de sus objetos. Son objetos de su colección y de su pasión. Pero como todas las actividades humanas esta forma de dar sentido a los objetos, no es unilateralmente individual. Las narrativas de memoria del coleccionista están, como veremos, calibradas en el espejo de las relaciones sociales, <sup>trato con</sup> desde los vendedores de sus cuadros hasta sus otros <sup>como con sus amigos</sup> amigos, los arqueólogos, los poetas y los novelistas. <sup>Algunas de estas relaciones, el coleccionista da forma a</sup> El individuo se relaciona a la sociedad para dar forma a las narrativas de los sucesos, sentimientos y memorias escondidos en los cuadros y así contribuye a crear una memoria social.

✓  
✓  
✓  
✓  
✓



ver →

### Los niños, la muerte y los duelos

El coleccionista explica así la aparición de los retratos:

“En el siglo XIX hay un cambio en la concepción estética. Aparece el paisaje y aparece el retrato. El retrato ya no sólo del noble o de linaje sino también de una burguesía incipiente. El retrato que aparece más frecuentemente es el del padre de familia y su esposa, el retrato del gran señor. Pero hay una serie de retratos que son muy atípicos y son el retrato del niño. Dado que no funda un linaje, dado que no es la culminación de un trabajo, tenemos que preguntarnos porqué aparece. Y porqué aparece en una sociedad donde la mortalidad infantil era altísima y había innumerables muertos. <sup>^</sup>Entonces la explicación que encontramos es compleja”

siglo space -

Según Ariès (1962), <sup>en Occidente,</sup> ~~en~~ la iconografía del niño comienza a secularizarse, <sup>en el siglo XV,</sup> pero todavía no aparecen como retratos de sujetos independientes sino como parte de pinturas anecdóticas o en las tumbas de sus maestros o de sus padres. <sup>es</sup> Recién a fines del siglo XIX <sup>cuando</sup> en el Occidente se comienza a separar el mundo de los niños del de los adultos y surge una concepción de la niñez. Esto ayuda a explicar la aparición de los retratos funerarios de niños en esa época. Antes no se pensaba en guardar un retrato o imagen del niño porque <sup>es</sup> la ~~muerte~~ se consideraba como una fase de la vida muy poco importante de la cual no era necesario guardar registros o recuerdos. La gente no podía darse el lujo de apegarse muy profundamente a alguien que con frecuencia podía <sup>significar</sup> ser una pérdida. Demasiados niños morían. La indiferencia podía ser muy bien, como señala Aries (1963), una consecuencia inevitable y directa de la demografía del periodo.

✓

En Ecuador <sup>3</sup> en 1908 <sup>1104</sup> de 1161 niños <sup>1047</sup> morían antes de los 12 meses y en 1923 todavía la mortalidad infantil era del 30.67%. (Comunicación personal de Eduardo Kingman 2009) Por supuesto estas estadísticas no nos dan todo el panorama ya que no discriminan por clase social y son mudas a los sentimientos de duelo por esos niños. En ese sentido, <sup>as pinturas</sup> los cuadros son más elocuentes. Según Aries (1962:40), la aparición de retratos de niños muertos es una evidencia de que su muerte ya no se consideraba una pérdida inevitable y marca un momento muy importante en la historia de los sentimientos.

✗

pie de foto



En Ecuador, el retrato del niño muerto o recobrado de la muerte como forma de duelo y conmemoración es un reconocimiento de este fenómeno social de la niñez, por un lado, pero por otro, estos sentimientos también están entrañados en las ideas cristianas de la inmortalidad del "álmita"



pie de foto (suy)

bautizada y en la creencia religiosa en los poderes curativos milagrosos de las imágenes populares como la Virgen del Quinche.

Pero este es todavía un duelo y una conmemoración privada y de las clases sociales altas o de las burguesías prósperas. Es recién con la fotografía que tenemos una posible democratización de la imagen del niño muerto y del duelo. Las más populares fueron tomadas con motivo de la celebración de los velorios del angelito. La fotografía permitió así a las clases medias y populares tener sus propios retratos, especialmente cuando ésta empezó a colorearse, costumbre que parece haber resurgido recientemente en los pueblos como una forma de distinción de la masiva fotografía digital (comunicación personal <sup>de Santiago Rosero</sup> ~~de~~ <sup>del duelo</sup> ~~de~~?)

Es distinto en el ámbito público, porque los pueblos indígenas y las clases populares urbanas en Ecuador siempre celebraron a sus antepasados y otros seres queridos en lugares sagrados, cementerios o iglesias para el Día de los Muertos, por ejemplo, aunque no tenemos todavía evidencia de cuando comienzan los rituales o placas funerarias especialmente dedicadas a los niños y con motivos infantiles, que ahora son comunes en todos los cementerios de Ecuador, tales como ésta en el cementerio de San Diego. (1)



(pie de foto)

poner cita (citas)

El interesante libro de fotografías de Biede Pedersen (2008) sobre la cultura funeraria popular ecuatoriana da evidencia de esas formas de duelos populares públicos contemporáneos. En el prólogo, Gutiérrez Viñuales señala que predomina con notoria fuerza lo vinculado al culto de los niños muertos, sobre todo en términos celebratorios, ya

que esa muerte no debe ser llorada por los familiares porque se cree que los angelitos van directo al cielo.

*hacer el título ✓*

~~Los primeros cuadros de la colección que paso a analizar ahora son los retratos póstumos de duelo o conmemoratorios.~~ A diferencia de los retratos funerarios donde el muerto es pintado en su féretro o en la cama donde falleció, los retratos póstumos de duelo representa a los muertos como si estuvieran vivos, ~~eran encargados por las familias y en la época que consideramos, la costumbre parece haber estado confinada a las clases altas.~~

*✓*

Nos explica Iván:

*no era*  
"El niño que muere ~~pero~~ a lo mejor ~~era~~ el primogénito, o el más mimado de su mamá o su papá o cualquier ~~cosa~~ *de un papale ambrosaccio*. Y entonces empieza esa serie de celebraciones. Se celebra el quinto o el sexto año de la muerte del fulanita. En ese momento se le manda pintar un retrato. El niño ya no existe más, ~~se murió hace 8 años o hace 5 años~~. Entonces el artista tiene que ingeniarse para descubrir el parecido con el papá o con la mamá e imaginar cómo sería o como hubiera sido el niño y así el resultado final es de un realismo maravilloso porque ~~son~~ *parecen* adultos. Este está como flotando, con piernas que no le corresponden, y con cara de adulto. Los pintores no son académicos, sino pintores de taller. No es la belleza, la perfección lo que cuenta. Entonces cuando tú ves esos retratos ~~no guardan las proporciones. Son cabezas grandes, y cuerpos chiquitos o unos señores con cabezas de niño.~~"

*si ✓*  
*single spec*

*que no es oculto en su de falla*



*ojo*

*✓*





(pie de foto)

~~Otros parece que vuelan. También hay niños jugando, pero siempre son misteriosos, cargados de extrañas energías porque son niños muertos, niños imaginados, niños recreados, hechos a la satisfacción del padre o de la madre y con la torpeza propia del oficio. Y son expresiones de arte popular absolutamente excepcionales, y maravillosas.~~

suele  
opae

Si bien el niño muerto está pintado como si fuera vivo, la mayoría de este tipo de retratos contiene símbolos de muerte disimulados, tales como un sauce llorón o flores, que en la mano del niño significan inocencia o muerte, si las flores están marchitas. Según Goody (1993) en Europa, por ejemplo, el crisantemo estaba vinculado a los ritos otoñales por los muertos y al Día de Todos los Santos. ~~A veces las nubes están pintadas para simbolizar la ascensión al cielo del alma pura.~~



(pie de foto)

Este retrato en el Museo de Folk Art de Nueva York muestra otros símbolos como el barco que parte, los árboles truncados y tal vez un juguete <sup>especifico</sup> para indicar género. En este caso, una niña, <sup>con una muñeca</sup> aunque a veces no podemos estar seguros si son niños o niñas, ya que en esa época no se habían establecido todavía las convenciones del tipo de ropa y colores que comienzan a diferenciar a los niños por género, más adelante en el siglo XX

(ver si  
ra  
nota o no)

*de los retratos*

Estos ~~retratos de~~ niños muertos <sup>a</sup> son niños recreados de las memorias de sus padres, pintados de memorias para mantenerlas vivas y así evitar la finalidad de la muerte, para conmemorar al ausente y ahuyentar el olvido. Cumplían, como dice Ruby (1995:37-38) con referencia a retratos similares en Estados Unidos, una función terapéutica.

En el siglo XIX en los Estados Unidos florecieron pintores itinerantes que pintaban estos retratos ahora específicamente llamados "Folk Art" y se sabía que cobraban el doble si los sujetos estaban muertos, ya que debían trabajar rápido antes del sepelio. Es evidente que los pintores ecuatorianos, aunque anónimos y de taller como los llama Iván, comparten con sus clientes y con otros pintores del "folk art" norteamericano una cultura de significados europeos en términos de las vestimentas aceptadas, las poses de las distintas clases sociales, y el lenguaje y simbología de la muerte, en este caso de la muerte infantil, como podemos comprobar en la comparación <sup>de los pintores ya analizados</sup> con estos retratos de niños norteamericanos del siglo XIX, cuyas reproducciones están a la venta en el Internet.



*Poses  
símbolos  
del  
duelo*

Halttunen (citado por Mattison (1995)) argumenta que la cultura sentimental de la clase media de mediados del siglo XIX en Estados Unidos incluía un culto del duelo. Este se consideraba como una de las emociones más puras y profundas, y las prolongadas meditaciones sobre las alegrías y las tristezas del duelo se veían como un signo de dignidad y buenas maneras [gentility]. Para esta clase, tener un duelo apropiado se convirtió en un despliegue público, produciendo desde formas de vestimenta hasta cartas de condolencia. Las imágenes de duelo confirmaban esos sentimientos. Es obvio que, en Ecuador a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX, estas clases aristocráticas y burguesas, y aún los pintores de taller que les servían, habían absorbido las costumbres norteamericanas y europeas de decoro y buenas maneras no sólo con respecto a la vida sino también con respecto a la muerte.

*X*

### Memoria y ficción: El coleccionista y sus relaciones sociales

Un aspecto interesante para la antropología de los objetos es cómo, a través del tiempo, éstos van adquiriendo nuevos significados y memorias a través de las relaciones sociales en la vida del coleccionista. Dos ejemplos de estos retratos de niños de la colección son relevantes para entender estos hechos sociales. Oigamos a Iván:



(pie de foto)



Yo tengo aquí una niña azul, muy linda, con una flor [un crisantemo]. Un queridísimo amigo mío, Olaf Holm la vio y me dijo: “Yo tengo el marido de tu niña que me compré en Cuenca así que te lo voy a mandar”. En 10 días llegó un paquetito bien cerrado con el cuadro. “Aquí va la pareja de los niños y ahora sí somos parientes” El inventó la pareja para que la niña no esté sola y para nosotros <sup>que</sup> ser parientes.”

✓  
sugle  
space  
✓  
✓

Otra forma en que los cuadros se van recargando de sentido es a través de la literatura y, porque en este mundo pequeño que es Quito, todos los intelectuales se conocen o están emparentados, las memorias del coleccionista se entrelazan con la imaginación de sus amigos novelistas y así conocemos a Natalio Miele.



) (pie de foto)

Este niño era un personaje anónimo en un cuadro que en un momento apareció como un objeto en el mercado, pero ahora se llama Natalio Mieles.

“Es un niño muy misterioso-dice Iván- muy triste, todo vestido de blanco. Yo soy muy amigo hace mucho tiempo de Javier Ponce, que estaba escribiendo una novela sobre los caucheros. Y en ella había una imagen de un niño hijo del dueño de la casa, de la familia, que estaba siempre muy bien vestido, muy limpio, muy cuidadito, mirando con una enorme tristeza y pena a los “longuitos”, los hijos de los inquilinos del piso bajo que se divertían enormemente en el patio y jugaban a las bolas o al chiche? Y desde la baranda de su casa este niño solo con su cara de susto y asombro miraba, siempre con una inmensa tristeza y pena el juego en el cual él no podía participar. Porque él era un niño bien. Javier recrea en su novela este retrato y ahora se llama Natalio Mieles. Adquiere un nuevo nombre y una nueva identidad y se va integrando en otra narrativa para adquirir nueva vida.

Igualmente, mi otro amigo literato, el Javier Vásconez a veces entraba en mi antigua casa y se aterrorizaba ante todos esos niños muertos que estaban colocados en una pared. ✓

Cuando escribe su novela “Los invitados de Honor” usa mi nombre como el cronista de la ciudad que anuncia la llegada de esos personajes que van a venir a <sup>de turista</sup> ~~visitar la ciudad~~ <sub>a</sub> dar conferencias. Y <sup>ese</sup> ~~el~~ informante tiene esa extraña colección de niños muertos.

Entonces voy a aparecer en la literatura en estos niños. Y así se va enriqueciendo el mito de los niños y van volviendo a tener vida. Vuelven a adquirir una posición en la historia y en la vida de su ciudad. Vuelven a adquirir vida, son personajes que tienen acciones y mediante el arte vuelven a ser depositarios de los viejos recuerdos que todos estos artistas tienen. Esto es lo fantástico. Son vivos, están vivos.”

Ricoeur (2004) se pregunta en qué sentido la experiencia de la memoria representando cosas del pasado difiere de las experiencias de la imaginación representando mundos ficticios. No hay nada en la imagen visual del niño de este cuadro, por ejemplo, que nos diga si es una fiel representación de su persona, o un recuerdo en la memoria de los padres o el personaje creado por el novelista. Según Ricoeur (2004), la diferencia está en ✓ el hecho de que con la memoria tratamos de conseguir fidelidad mientras que ~~en la~~

¿Duele  
Space  
Maybe  
Slow Tea  
see.

en la

cuando  
aquí  
Pero  
Además

aunque las  
fronteras  
12  
son más  
difíciles  
como  
peligros

ficción, enfatizamos lo lúdico al crear mundos alternativos. Por otra parte, en Ecuador los caucheros fueron una realidad histórica a principios del siglo XX, tiempo desde donde parece miramos este niño con su almidonado traje blanco. Y los personajes de caucheros que encontré en los archivos del Napo (Muratorio 1991) bien pueden haber sido los padres de este niño. La historia de archivo se acerca así también a la memoria y la ficción. Pero, a mi entender, a diferencia de esta última, la antropología y la historia tratan de entender este mundo, no el alternativo de la imaginación. Como señala Portelli (1997:64) como historiadores orales tendemos a tomar seriamente tanto las inciertas historias orales como los registros verosímiles de los archivos y los espacios entre medio. El novelista J. Vásquez dice en una entrevista (citado en Barrionuevo /): "No me interesa la ciudad como historia. Ni como retrato de costumbres, sino como escenario de unos cuantos personajes. Me interesa *inventar* (mi énfasis) la naturaleza de esta ciudad". Es aquí donde la ficción tal vez se acerca más a la memoria pero se separa de la antropología y de la historia, aún de la ficción histórica. A la antropóloga, como al historiador, le interesan las memorias del personaje como actor de la vida cotidiana y situado en la realidad histórica de su ciudad.

### El milagro del privilegio

Volviendo a la colección, encontramos el segundo tipo de cuadros que representan la celebración del milagro.

ver C  
cuadros  
etc



de en la  
próxima  
pp.

pie de  
foto

Iván los explica así:

el milagro  
de un  
santo  
Yamaguchi  
1964

los milagros tal c' se entienda desde  
 del o'culo del arte popular  
 religioso e fundado con primera  
 votivos encargados a un punto  
 popular x los devotos se  
 una mesa sagrada e.pecifica  
 \ dar gracias x un favor o  
 Milagros recibidos. Estos milagros  
 son general" pintados en tela  
 y ocasional" e. latón.

Intención  
 de los poderes  
 Colmados  
 la voluntad de  
 vez se crean  
 superior. derechos  
 santos milagros  
 into the  
 of the world

Prove in the  
 iconography  
 of the votive  
 paintings

~~Peter A. Stearns~~  
 Helena  
 Waddy  
 Kopyov  
 Journal of Social  
 History  
 Vol. 23, No. 4  
 1990

en México  
 las pinturas  
 religiosas en latón  
 son conocidas as  
 retablos o ex-votos  
 y milagros = ex-votos  
 etc

"El niño adquiere una enfermedad cualquiera, una enfermedad infecciosa como sarampión, viruela, hepatitis, que eran enfermedades mortales en esa época. Entonces la madre de la familia hace un voto: "Si es que me sanas al niño, lo vestiré de Dominico o lo consagro a tal o cual santo. Y el niño se sana, e inmediatamente se manda hacer el retrato que certifica el milagro. Y aparece el retrato de un niño enfermo, desnutrido, pelado que recién ha salido de una terrible enfermedad. O se hace un retrato del niño vestido de Dominico como el que tengo y sabemos quien es: Don Manuel Venancio Serialta y Mendieta " que está pálido, y se acaba de levantar de la cama ayer." . .

Suele  
space



pie de foto

algún de p.  
anterior

O este otro milagro o ex-voto en que el niño ~~era~~ <sup>aparece</sup> disfrazado de hombre con las mejillas rosaditas y ~~esta~~ <sup>una</sup> dedicado a la Virgen del Quinche, <sup>n</sup> costumbre que todavía se practica hoy en día en el Ecuador. <sup>pero ya curado 3</sup>

añade  
Suele  
space

Estos dos milagros son evidencia de devociones privadas, familiares y evidentemente marcadas por clase social. Es un tipo de retrato en el estilo del privilegio, del linaje que se continúa, casi triunfante. Y son muy diferentes de los otros ejemplos de milagros encargados por las clases populares que se encontraron (Goetschel <sup>manuscrito. fecha?</sup> <sup>¿??</sup>) y se encuentran todavía en algunas iglesias y santuarios populares del Ecuador como el del Cristo del Árbol en Pomasqui. A diferencia de los dos milagros en la colección que analizamos, los más populares son generalmente de un realismo literal y de una modestia agradecida y enternecedora. Son memorias de una tragedia evitada. <sup>como ocurre en este</sup>

Monja coronada.  
San Mateo de Guadalupe  
San Juan de los Rios  
Luz Casal  
Virgen de Luján  
Santísima Virgen de Guadalupe  
Candelaria  
Virgen de la Candelaria



milagro de Pomasqui o salvamento de un niño del árbol (see next graphic)

pie de foto

www.bellasartes.gov.mx →  
Fusilato Nacional  
de Bellas Artes

Platina Colonial  
Mexicana

Relato de una danza  
Mesa de un cacique

Retratos funerarios

Mexico ante  
periodo Inocencial

Refuerzo ideas  
de la V. de  
ultramar.

1805. un estudio de semejanza de  
caracteres S. Miguel.  
(relacion palabras, letras)

http://www.relatos.org

El retrato dice  
y el retrato representa  
a Sebastien  
Joseph de San Agustín  
la hija de 16 años  
de Matías Roxo Matiz  
y Thomas de Guis y  
Amendia. Los  
dos, reverencia a sa  
papel era el gobernador  
y ella pertenecia a  
un convento especial

Relato de  
Don Juan José L. Cruz  
Arce de los 1772  
buenos de América  
Madrid

Relato de una dama indígena  
de Oaxaca  
de Nueva España 1757

Retrato Pastora Colonial  
"Monja coronada"  
San Macquid. L. Simco Seno es  
Religiosa del convento L. Platan  
Conceptos. Otro relato  
www.relatos-history.mx

Relato de  
San Juan José  
de la Cruz de  
Manuel Calme

See text  
Se conservaban  
estas caras de familia  
- se observaban y  
congelaban  
papel  
Museo del  
Vicerreino

www.fm.co.uk.edu/exhibition-span/parietal-painting-indian

El museo  
de los

Esta es  
"Señora" vestida  
es de una familia  
indígena de  
América norte.  
Familias admiradas  
pueden ir a los  
puntos de vista de  
antes de ellas  
entran en un

San Juan



### La muerte social y pública

[Y aquí esta última historia que por fin sí se va a relacionar más directamente con la celebración del bicentenario]

Como señalamos al comienzo, la tercera causa de estos retratos pintados es cuando una niña se muere a la vida civil y renace en la vida religiosa.



(puedo ser foto)

“Hay incluso un cambio de nombre -dice Iván- un rito de iniciación, hay una muerte y entierro de lo civil y el renacer a la vida religiosa. Entonces como la niña muere y la casa se queda en cierta manera abandonada de esa presencia, los padres hacen pintar un retrato para que la niña se quede y viva en la casa, ~~en forma de retrato~~ mientras ella ~~entra en la~~ nueva vida. Y a veces ese retrato entra en la herencia y vuelve al convento.”

Single space

Pero, desde la historia oral, Iván también recuenta un importante evento en la historia de la independencia de Ecuador: la muerte y exhumación de los restos del Mariscal Sucre.

No es la absoluta exactitud de la memoria oral la que está en juego aquí sino ésta se incorpora a la memoria histórica o viceversa ya que como señala Lowenthal (1985:210) las fuentes históricas también están saturadas de subjetividad e incluso de chismes.

Así trataré de resumir una larga historia de Iván sobre este retrato:

“El retrato que yo tengo es de la Marquesita de Solanda, una señorita Valdivieso que entró al Convento del Carmen Bajo y ~~va a ser~~ priora allí ~~y ha de tener~~ una enorme

aquí cambia un poco el método de otra manera

tal vez estos errores van de toda la quote.

Single space

influencia en la vida de la ciudad porque <sup>es una</sup> ~~es una~~ mujer de mucha fuerza y energía. Ella deja sus títulos a su sobrina, Mariana Carcelén quien se casa con el Mariscal Sucre. La Mariana es la que acoge los restos de Sucre en el Carmen Bajo. Con el pretexto de ir a visitar a su tía, monja de clausura, <sup>para</sup> ~~no~~ despertaba ninguna sospecha de que iba también a visitar y a rezar por los restos de su marido. Y ella es la responsable, la encargada de guardar el secreto de donde estaban enterrados los restos. Ya que, por esas razones del siglo XIX éstos estaban escondidos, así como también lo estaban los restos de García Moreno, para evitar la profanación. Hasta que quien revela el secreto es el dueño de esta casa (de Iván Cruz ahora), un Dr. Melo a quien le dio secreto una paciente que no tenía otra forma de pagarle la curación. Estamos en 1900 y se hace una investigación y efectivamente aparecen los restos de Sucre y hay abundantes pruebas con documentos y material fotográfico del Manuel Jijón ~~con el crimen~~ y los otros notables. Pero la Marquesita era la responsable de guardar el secreto”

Siglo  
XIX  
✓

A través de este relato sobre el cuadro de la Marquesita, comenzamos a entender otras actitudes hacia la muerte a principios del siglo XX. Es el caso de la muerte pública del personaje político famoso que debe mantenerse en secreto para evitar la profanación hasta que se constata como “hecho histórico” con el testimonio de una serie de notables y la fotografía funeraria como evidencia (ver Luna Orozco 1999). Los retratos y monumentos de estos héroes vendrán después, pero también reconstruidos de memorias.

en la narrativa del coleccionista, la vida social del cuadro nos sigue contando la historia de gente de la ciudad, nos da un ~~ejemplo~~ <sup>ejemplo</sup> de la vida cotidiana contemporánea de las hermanas en Cristo de la Marquesita, las monjas del mismo convento del Carmen Bajo, sus vicisitudes, y el lamento por los gobiernos que las abandonaron “a la buena de Dios” como ellas dirían.

“Por herencia –continúa Iván - el cuadro de la Marquesita de Solanda vuelve al convento del Carmen Bajo donde las monjitas lo guardan celosamente hasta que, cuando va a suceder un gran evento en el convento, las monjitas deciden, con toda razón, hacer una venta de algunas cosas, entre ellas su querida Marquesita. Esto ~~era~~ <sup>hace</sup> unos doce o trece años. Había unas 18 monjitas y 6 u 8 estaban enfermas, algunas con cáncer y había

va a dar un volumen  
Secar  
sold  
Cas monjas  
de los  
conventos  
de clausura,  
en este caso las  
Sigue  
space

? Finalmente  
del

12 o 13 años

deben hacer una venta de algunas cosas, con

un solo servicio higiénico en todo el convento. Y el Alcalde y el Presidente le habían prometido: “Vamos a hacer, vamos a comprar, vamos a dar”, pero la verdad era que las pobres monjitas no tenían ni para los remedios de día a día. Y una de estas monjitas que no era noble ni nada parecido pero que era la priora y que probablemente recién había llegado del campo, decidió vender. Bueno, que no eligen a las monjitas como cuidadoras de museos sino para que recen por todos. Y abren la casa para la venta, al comienzo tímidamente y luego que empieza a llegar mucha gente, entonces abiertamente le ponían precios a las cosas.”

suek  
space

veo  
mis  
notas  
aquí  
quote

Y obviamente nuestro coleccionista no pudo resistir la tentación. Pero es el conjunto de estas tentaciones objetivadas en los cuadros el que nos permite tener una experiencia sensorial de un momento histórico, una visión enriquecida de los sentimientos hacia la niñez y de la cultura de la muerte y del duelo en el Ecuador urbano de fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX.

El coleccionista explica así el significado que para él tienen finalmente estos cuadros:

“Estos personajes de los cuadros salen de lo popular y luego regresan transformados, mutados en otro lenguaje, en otra situación, pero vuelven a la vida, vuelven a su ciudad, y son lo que verdaderamente son, una pieza absolutamente clave para entender una realidad pasada. Y siguen viviendo en la memoria, en la herencia, en los recuerdos y en los miedos de sus creadores y de sus custodios.”

Suek  
Space

Como antropóloga —o mejor digamos como abogada del diablo— me quedan, sin embargo, estas preguntas para terminar: cuál será el destino futuro de estos cuadros? Pasarán a ser parte del patrimonio de los museos y perderán allí todos estos significados para recomenzar otras vidas, otras historias y otras memorias? O se transformarán de nuevo en objetos, en mercancías mudas en un nuevo mercado? Mi historia de sus vidas y de su custodio es definitivamente, incompleta.

aviso  
final  
+  
académico

Todavía queda mucho trabajo x hacer !! ?

reflexiona  
sobre este  
incidente?

1 en retratos cuadrados p. 2

2

Poner nota sobre elmo de p. 7

Notas

1 Nota sobre los Cuadros de la Colección de los Cuadros, presentados aquí son cuadros y no tiene título y no tiene datos que todos mandaban de finales del XIX a principios del XX. Las fotografías fueron dadas a Soledad Grey en 2008

1. Aunque a veces sucede que el retrato no contiene ninguna indicación de que fue pintado póstumamente.
2. En un altar a la Virgen del Quinche construido en el 2003 en el Museo de la Ciudad con motivo de una exposición sobre religiosidad popular, muchas madres ofrecieron espontáneamente a la Virgen los angelitos de la guarda hechos por sus hijos como actividad educativa después de visitar la exposición. En esta fotografía se notan también las reproducciones de los milagros populares que se encontraron en el santuario del Quinche (Goetschel????)



los pies de fotos q aparecen el dibujo son puestos a la altura que el bello pueda distinguirse.

1805 | (manuscrito-date?)

\* 1 en p 2

\* 2. en p. 6

3 en p 13  
4 en p 14

Nota sobre milagros - en lugares "retratos" ex votos etc

Nota sobre retratos de Monjes. Ver algunos de internet en p 15

El día famoso el 6 de febrero del 1805 en p. 15

4

Handwritten scribbles and marks.

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□

SHORTEN VERSION FOR PRESENTATION  
~~FLACSO-Ecuador~~  
Noviembre 2009

## **Historia y memorias sociales: Un coleccionista de presencias y evocaciones populares**

**Texto:** Blanca Muratorio

**Coleccionista entrevistado:** Iván Cruz Cevallos

**Cuadros:** Autores Anónimos

**Fotografías:** Soledad Cruz

Agradezco a todos aquellos que hicieron posible un nuevo reencuentro con mi familia intelectual en FLACSO

Voy a comenzar con una cita de Paul Ricoeur que resume, mucho mejor de lo que yo podría hacer aquí, mi intención en este trabajo. Dice Ricoeur:

**Bajo la historia, memoria y olvido.  
Bajo la memoria y el olvido, vida.  
Pero escribir una vida es otra historia.  
Incompleta.  
(Paul Ricoeur, 2004)**

### **Introducción**

*Charles*  
Este es en realidad un trabajo de colaboración entre una antropóloga, un coleccionista apasionado llamado Iván Cruz y sus intrigantes cuadros de niños y niñas, cuya presencia podemos evocar aquí gracias a la sensibilidad de la fotógrafa Soledad Cruz.

Lo que me propongo es explorar algunos aspectos de las relación entre historia oral y escrita, entre memorias –individuales y sociales a través de estos objetos de arte popular y vida cotidiana que nos ofrecen un rastro de la historia del Ecuador de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX, principalmente los sentimientos y actitudes culturales hacia la vida y muerte de los niños prevalecientes en esa época en una determinada clase social.



Las imágenes de los cuadros son de tres tipos: primero retratos conmemorativos póstumos de duelo de niños muertos que aparecen como vivos. Segundo, milagros o ex-votos, cuadros de acción de gracia por la vida de niños rescatados de una enfermedad considerada mortal en esa época. Y, por último, retratos de niñas poco antes de entrar a un convento, es decir de niñas que morían a la vida civil para revivir en la vida religiosa.

Estos cuadros constituyen un conjunto muy pequeño de la inmensa y variada colección de Iván pero, según sus propias palabras, vienen con el tiempo a formar parte de su identidad como cronista de su ciudad. Vuelven así a ser espacios de memoria sociales, memorias de alegría por el rescate del niño de la muerte, nostalgias por la ausencia familiar y social de las niñas y congoja y duelo por las muertes infantiles siempre inesperadas.

La memoria y la historia se nutren de los objetos como rastros o vestigios tangibles de un pasado que fue vivido por otros pero que de distintas formas tratamos de recuperar o revivir. Si embargo, los objetos no son inmediatamente transparentes, necesitan de análisis e interpretación desde un presente para revelar sus distintos y cambiantes significados. Quiero explorar cómo estas representaciones materiales dan forma y están conformadas por la memoria. Pero este acceso a los objetos es posible porque el coleccionista los ha rescatado del olvido de la trastienda para enriquecerlos de significados con sus propias experiencias personales y memorias. Por eso, como señala Portelli (1997:65), en la historia oral las interpretaciones y explicaciones del que escribe coexisten con las interpretaciones implícitas en las palabras citadas por nuestras fuentes, así como con las interpretaciones de ustedes, los oyentes.



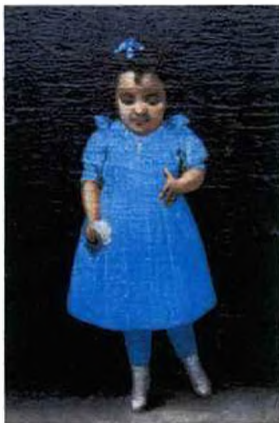


## El coleccionista y sus cuadros

Los objetos deben ser mantenidos y manejados semióticamente, deben ser guardados, restaurados y desplegados en lugares y espacios “apropiados” que están siempre social e históricamente contruidos. En este caso, entramos a la casa antigua del coleccionista en el Centro Histórico, Los cuadros están desplegados en habitaciones importantes de la casa, donde podemos visitarlos todos juntos, algunos más íntimamente como si fueran de nuevo altares familiares.

Nos dice Iván:

Y así un niño me impresiona y empiezan a juntarse niños y luego comienzo a indagar: Y porqué los niños y Quienes son esos niños, cómo y porqué los niños. Y van juntándose más niños, y ellos van a adquirir una función en mi vida y en la vida de mi entorno.



Y me vienen a contactar los vendedores de cosas viejas que me empiezan a traer cuadros de niños para vender. Primero porque son comerciantes, pero después porque se encariñan con los niños y los traen para cuidarlos y hablan de los niños y de sus flores y de sus caritas de desolación. Como Cevallos que me dice: “le conseguí una niña preciosa para su colección y es la niña vestida de azul”

De esta forma, las relaciones mercantiles se transforman en sentimientos compartidos por la muerte de los niños

desconocidos. Y son en realidad los vendedores, los miembros de las clases populares, los primeros que contribuyen a rescatar los trazos de esas memorias sociales.

El patrimonio artístico Ecuatoriano, como otros patrimonios nacionales guardados en museos y en archivos, pretende ser un paradigma de la memoria social, la inclusión de lo valioso y lo bello sobre lo feo y descartable, el triunfo del recuerdo sobre el olvido, la verdad incontrovertible ( Elsner y Cardinal 1994) Pero sabemos que los patrimonios, como las naciones, son construcciones sociales que dejan nichos para memorias e imágenes a veces críticas, a veces subversivamente alternativas. Este es el caso de la colección de estos cuadros de niños.

Los objetos en nuestras vidas están profundamente relacionados a la subjetividad, porque cuando éstos han perdido su función originaria, dan de cierta manera al coleccionista, la capacidad de gobernar el significado de sus objetos. Son objetos de su colección y de su pasión. Pero como todas las actividades humanas esta forma de dar sentido a los objetos, no es unilateralmente individual. Las narrativas de memoria del coleccionista están como veremos, calibradas en el espejo de las relaciones sociales, desde los vendedores de sus cuadros hasta sus otros amigos, los arqueólogos, los poetas y los novelistas.

### **Los niños, la muerte y los duelos**

El coleccionista explica así la aparición de los retratos:

“En el siglo XIX aparece el paisaje y el retrato ya no sólo del noble o de linaje sino también de una burguesía incipiente.. Pero hay una serie de retratos que son muy atípicos y tenemos que preguntarnos porqué aparece. Y porqué aparece en una sociedad donde la mortalidad infantil era altísima

Según Ariès, en el mundo Occidental, la iconografía del niño comienza a secularizarse en el siglo XV, pero es recién a fines del siglo XIX cuando se comienza a separar el mundo de los niños del de los adultos y surge una concepción de la niñez. Esto ayuda a explicar la aparición de los retratos funerarios de niños en esa época. Antes no se pensaba en guardar un retrato o imagen de la niñez porque ésta se consideraba como una fase de la vida muy poco importante de la cual no era necesario guardar registros o recuerdos. La gente no podía darse el lujo de apegarse muy profundamente a alguien que con frecuencia podía ser una pérdida. Demasiados niños morían. La indiferencia podía ser muy bien, como señala Aries (1963), una consecuencia inevitable y directa de la demografía del período.

En 1908 en Ecuador, de 3161 niños 1104 morían antes de los 12 meses y en 1923 todavía la mortalidad infantil era del 30.67 %. (Comunicación personal de Eduardo Kingman 2009) Por supuesto estas estadísticas no nos dan todo el panorama ya que no discriminan por clase social y son mudas a los sentimientos de duelo por esos niños. En ese sentido, los cuadros son más elocuentes. Según Aries (1962:40), la aparición de retratos de niños

muertos es una evidencia de que su muerte ya no se consideraba una pérdida inevitable y marca un momento muy importante en la historia de los sentimientos.



En Ecuador, el retrato del niño muerto o recobrado de la muerte como forma de duelo y conmemoración es un reconocimiento de este fenómeno social de la niñez, por un lado, pero por otro, estos sentimientos también están entañados en las ideas cristianas de la inmortalidad del alma



bautizada y en la creencia religiosa en los poderes curativos milagrosos de las imágenes populares como la Virgen del Quinche.

Pero este es todavía un duelo y una conmemoración privada y de las clases sociales altas o de las burguesías prósperas. Es recién con la fotografía que tenemos una posible democratización de la imagen del niño muerto y del duelo. Las fotografías más populares fueron tomadas con motivo de la celebración de los velorios del angelito. La fotografía permitió así a las clases medias y populares tener sus propios retratos, especialmente cuando ésta empezó a colorearse, costumbre que parece haber resurgido recientemente en los pueblos como una forma de distinción de la masiva fotografía digital (comunicación personal Santiago Rosero)

Es distinto en el ámbito del duelo público, porque los pueblos indígenas y las clases populares urbanas en Ecuador siempre celebraron a sus antepasados y otros seres queridos en lugares sagrados, cementerios o iglesias para el Día de los Muertos, por ejemplo, aunque en el momento no tengo evidencia de cuando comienzan los rituales o placas funerarias especialmente dedicadas a los niños y con motivos infantiles, que ahora son comunes en todos los cementerios de Ecuador. Tales como ésta en el cementerio de San Diego.



Los primeros cuadros de la colección que paso a analizar ahora son los retratos póstumos de duelo o conmemoratorios. A diferencia de los retratos funerarios donde el muerto es pintado en su féretro o en la cama donde falleció, los retratos póstumos de duelo representa a los muertos como si estuvieran vivos.



Nos explica Iván:

“El niño que muere era a lo mejor era el primogénito, o el más mimado de su mamá o su papá o cualquier cosa. Y entonces empieza esa serie de celebraciones. Se celebra el quinto o el sexto año de la muerte del fulanito. En ese momento se le manda pintar un retrato t entonces el artista, no académico pero de taller, tiene que ingeniarse para descubrir el parecido con el papá o con la mamá e imaginar cómo sería o como hubiera sido el niño.



Si bien el niño muerto está pintado como si fuera vivo, la mayoría de este tipo de retratos contiene símbolos de muerte disimulados, tales como un sauce llorón o flores, que en la mano del niño significan inocencia, o muerte si las flores están marchitas. Según Goody (1993) en Europa, por ejemplo, el crisantemo estaba vinculado a los ritos otoñales por los muertos y al Día de Todos los Santos.



Este retrato en el Museo de Folk Art de Nueva York muestra otros símbolos como el barco que parte, los árboles truncados y tal vez un juguete específico para indicar género. En este caso, una niña con una muñeca, aunque a veces no podemos estar seguros si son niños o niñas, ya que en esa época no se habían establecido todavía las convenciones del tipo de ropa y colores que comienzan a diferenciar a los niños por género, más adelante en el siglo XX<sup>1</sup>

Estos niños muertos de los retratos son niños recreados de las memorias de sus padres, pintados de memorias para mantenerlas vivas y así evitar la finalidad de la muerte, para conmemorar al ausente y ahuyentar el olvido. Cumplían, de cierta manera, una función terapéutica.

En el siglo XIX en los Estados Unidos florecieron pintores itinerantes que pintaban estos retratos ahora específicamente llamados "Folk Art". Es evidente que los pintores ecuatorianos, aunque anónimos y de taller como los llama Iván, comparten con sus clientes y con otros pintores del "folk art" norteamericano una cultura de significados europeos en términos de las vestimentas aceptadas, las poses de las distintas clases sociales, y el lenguaje y simbología de la muerte, en este caso de la muerte infantil, como podemos comprobar en la comparación con estos retratos de niños norteamericanos del siglo XIX, cuyas reproducciones están a la venta en el Internet.



La cultura sentimental de la clase media de mediados del siglo XIX incluía un culto del duelo. Este se consideraba como una de las emociones más puras y profundas, y las prolongadas meditaciones sobre las alegrías y las tristezas del duelo se veían como un signo de dignidad y buenas maneras. Para esta clase, tener un duelo apropiado se convirtió en un despliegue público, produciendo desde formas de vestimenta hasta tarjetas especiales de condolencia. Las imágenes de duelo confirmaban esos sentimientos. Es obvio que, en Ecuador a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX, estas clases aristocráticas y burguesas, y aún los pintores de taller que les servían, habían absorbido las costumbres europeas de decoro y buenas maneras no sólo con respecto a la vida sino también con respecto a la muerte.

### **Memoria y ficción: El coleccionista y sus relaciones sociales**

Un aspecto interesante para la antropología de los objetos es cómo, a través del tiempo, éstos van adquiriendo nuevos significados y memorias a través de las relaciones sociales en la vida del coleccionista.

Aquí sólo tengo tiempo para referirme a un retrato de un niño muerto que se va recargando de sentido **es a través de la literatura** y, porque en este mundo pequeño que es Quito, todos los intelectuales se conocen o están emparentados, las memorias del coleccionista se entrelazan con la imaginación de sus amigos novelistas y así conocemos a Natalio Míeles.



Este niño era un personaje anónimo en un cuadro que en un momento apareció como un objeto en el mercado, pero ahora se llama Natalio Mieles.

“Es un niño muy misterioso-dice Iván- muy triste, todo vestido de blanco. Yo soy muy amigo hace mucho tiempo de Javier Ponce, que estaba escribiendo una novela sobre los caucheros. Y en ella había una imagen de un niño hijo del dueño de la casa, de la familia, que estaba siempre muy bien vestido, muy limpio, muy cuidadito, mirando con una enorme tristeza y pena a los “longuitos”, los hijos de los inquilinos del piso bajo que se divertían enormemente en el patio y jugaban a las bolas o al biche? Y desde la baranda de su casa este niño solo con su cara de susto y asombro miraba, siempre con una inmensa tristeza el juego en el cual él no podía participar. Porque él era un niño bien.... En su novela Javier recrea este retrato y ahora el niño se llama Natalio Mieles. Adquiere un nuevo nombre y una nueva identidad.

Ricoeur (2004) se pregunta en qué sentido la experiencia de la memoria representando cosas del pasado difiere de las experiencias de la imaginación representando mundos ficticios. No hay nada en la imagen visual del niño de este cuadro, por ejemplo, que nos diga si es una fiel representación de su persona, o un recuerdo en la memoria de los padres o el personaje creado por el novelista. Según Ricoeur (2004), la diferencia está en el hecho de que con la memoria tratamos de conseguir fidelidad mientras que en la ficción, al crear mundos alternativos enfatizamos lo lúdico. Pero además, en Ecuador, los caucheros fueron una realidad histórica a principios del siglo XX, tiempo desde donde parece mirarnos este niño con su almidonado traje blanco. Y los personajes de caucheros que encontré en mi trabajo en los archivos del Napo (Muratorio 1991) bien pueden haber sido los padres de este niño. La historia de archivo se acerca así también a la memoria y

a la ficción. Pero, a mi criteri, a diferencia de esta última, la antropología y la historia tratan de entender este mundo, no el alternativo de la imaginación aunque las fronteras son tan sutiles como peligrosas. Como señala Portelli (1997:64) como historiadores orales tendemos a tomar seriamente tanto las inciertas historias orales como los registros verosímiles de los archivos y los espacios entre medio.

### **El milagro del privilegio**

**Volviendo a la colección, encontramos el segundo tipo de cuadros que representan la celebración del milagro.**



Iván los explica así:

“El niño adquiere una enfermedad cualquiera, una enfermedad infecciosa como sarampión, viruela, hepatitis, que eran enfermedades mortales en esa época. Entonces la madre de la familia hace un voto: “Si es que me sanas al niño, lo vestiré de Dominico o lo consagro a tal o cual santo. Y el niño se sana, e inmediatamente se manda hacer el retrato que certifica el milagro. Y aparece el retrato de un niño enfermo, desnutrido, pelado que recién ha salido de una terrible enfermedad. O se hace un retrato del niño vestido de Dominico como el que tengo y sabemos quien es: Don Manuel Venancio Serialta y Mendieta que está pálido, y se acaba de levantar de la cama ayer.”

O el niño dedicado a la virgen del Quinche.





Estos milagros son evidencia de devociones privadas, familiares y evidentemente marcadas por clase social. Es un tipo de retrato en el estilo del privilegio, del linaje que se continúa, casi triunfante. Y son muy diferentes de los otros ejemplos de milagros encargados por las clases populares que se encontraron (Goetschel ¿??) y se encuentran todavía en algunas iglesias y santuarios populares del Ecuador como el del Cristo del Árbol en Pomasqui. A diferencia de los dos milagros en la colección que analizamos, los más populares son generalmente de un realismo literal y de una modestia agradecida y enternecedora. Son memorias de una tragedia evitada.



### La muerte social y pública



Como señalamos al comienzo, la tercera causa de estos retratos pintados es cuando una niña se muere a la vida civil y renace en la vida religiosa.

“Hay incluso un cambio de nombre -dice Iván- un rito de iniciación, hay una muerte y entierro de lo civil y el renacer a la vida religiosa. Entonces como la niña muere y la casa se queda en cierta manera abandonada de esa presencia, los padres hacen pintar un retrato para que la niña se quede y viva en la casa, mientras ella se inicia en la nueva vida. Y a veces ese retrato entra en la herencia y vuelve al convento.”

Pero, desde la historia oral, Iván también recuenta un importante evento en la historia de la independencia de Ecuador: la muerte y exhumación de los restos del Mariscal Sucre. No es la absoluta exactitud de la memoria oral la que está en juego aquí sino ésta se incorpora a la memoria histórica o viceversa ya que como señala Lowenthal (1985:210) las fuentes históricas también están saturadas de subjetividad e incluso de chismes. Trataré aquí de resumir una larga historia de Iván sobre este retrato:

“El retrato que yo tengo es de la Marquesita de Solanda, una señorita Valdivieso que entró al Convento del Carmen Bajo Ella deja sus títulos a su sobrina, Mariana Carcelén quien se casa con el Mariscal Sucre. La Mariana es la que acoge los restos de Sucre en el Carmen Bajo. Con el pretexto de ir a visitar a su tía, monja de clausura, no despertaba ninguna sospecha de que iba también a visitar y a rezar por los restos de su marido. Ya que, por esas razones del siglo XIX éstos estaban escondidos, así como también lo estaban los restos de García Moreno, para evitar la profanación. Hasta que quien revela el secreto es el dueño de esta casa (de Iván Cruz ahora), un Dr. Melo a quien le dio <sup>el</sup> secreto una paciente que no tenía otra forma de pagarle la curación. Estamos en 1900 y se hace una investigación y efectivamente aparecen los restos de Sucre y hay abundantes pruebas con documentos y material fotográfico del Manuel Jijón con el cráneo y de los otros notables. Pero la Marquesita era la responsable de guardar el secreto”

A quién creemos, a la marquesita o a los notables o a ambos?

A través de este relato sobre el cuadro de la Marquesita, comenzamos a entender también otras actitudes hacia la muerte a principios del siglo XX. Es el caso de la muerte pública del personaje político famoso que debe mantenerse en secreto para evitar la profanación hasta que se constata como “hecho histórico” con el testimonio de una serie de notables y la fotografía funeraria como evidencia (ver Luna Orozco 1999). Los retratos y monumentos de estos héroes vendrán después, pero también reconstruidos de memorias.

Finalmente, en la narrativa del coleccionista, la vida social del cuadro nos va a dar un vislumbre de la vida cotidiana contemporánea de otras mujeres olvidadas en la historia de la ciudad: las monjitas de los Conventos de Clausura, en este caso las del Carmen

Bajo, sus vicisitudes, y el lamento por los gobiernos que las abandonaron "a la buena de Dios" como ellas dirían.

"Por herencia —dice Iván— el cuadro de la Marquesita de Solanda vuelve al convento del Carmen Bajo donde las monjitas lo guardan celosamente hasta que, hace unos doce o trece años, deciden hacer una venta de algunas cosas, entre ellas su querida Marquesita. Había unas 18 monjitas y 6 u 8 estaban enfermas, algunas con cáncer y había un solo servicio higiénico en todo el convento. Y el Alcalde y el Presidente le habían prometido: "Vamos a hacer, vamos a comprar, vamos a dar", pero la verdad era que las pobres monjitas no tenían ni para los remedios de día a día. Y una de estas monjitas que no era noble ni nada parecido pero que era la priora y que probablemente recién había llegado del campo, decidió vender. Bueno, que no eligen a las monjitas como cuidadoras de museos sino para que recen por todos. Y abren la casa para la venta, al comienzo tímidamente y luego que empieza a llegar mucha gente, entonces abiertamente le ponían precios a las cosas."

Y obviamente nuestro coleccionista no pudo resistir la tentación. Pero es el conjunto de estas tentaciones objetivadas en los cuadros el que nos ha permitido tener una experiencia sensorial de un momento histórico, una visión enriquecida de los sentimientos hacia la niñez y de la cultura de la muerte y del duelo en el Ecuador urbano de fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX.

El coleccionista explica así el significado que para él tienen finalmente estos cuadros:

"Estos personajes de los cuadros salen de lo popular y luego regresan transformados, mutados en otro lenguaje, en otra situación, pero vuelven a la vida, vuelven a su ciudad, y son lo que verdaderamente son, una pieza absolutamente clave para entender una realidad pasada Y siguen viviendo en la memoria, en la herencia, en los recuerdos y en los miedos de sus creadores y de sus custodios."

Como antropóloga —o mejor digamos como abogada del diablo— me quedan, sin embargo, estas preguntas para terminar: cuál será el destino futuro de estos cuadros?

Pasarán a ser parte del patrimonio de los museos y perderán allí todos estos significados para recomenzar otras vidas, otras historias y otras memorias? O se transformarán de nuevo en objetos, en mercancías mudas en un nuevo mercado? Mi historia de sus vidas y de su custodio es definitivamente, incompleta.

#### Notas

1. Aunque a veces sucede que el retrato no contiene ninguna indicación de que fue pintado póstumamente.

2. En un altar a la Virgen del Quinche construido en el 2003 en el Museo de la Ciudad con motivo de una exposición sobre religiosidad popular, muchas madres ofrecieron espontáneamente a la Virgen los angelitos de la guarda hechos por sus hijos como actividad educativa después de visitar la exposición. En esta fotografía se notan también las reproducciones de los milagros populares que se encontraron en el santuario del Quinche (Goetschel????)



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Cristina

EVANGELIZATION, PROTEST, AND ETHNIC IDENTITY:  
MISSIONARIES AND INDIANS IN NORTHERN AMAZONIAN ECUADOR  
1538 - 1898.

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March 1982.



## INTRODUCTION

This paper will deal with the problem of ethnic identity and inter-ethnic and class relations among the Napo Quichua Indians of the Ecuadorian Amazon. Since the sixteenth century, missionaries, encomiendas, and various forms of capitalism penetrated this area of the Upper Napo, attempting the ideological incorporation of the Indians into Christian civilization, and the transformation of their subsistence mode of production based on hunting, fishing gathering and swidden horticulture. Throughout this history, indigenous resistance also took different forms, from open rebellion, ideological confrontation, avoidance, and accomodation. All these responses allowed the Napo Quichuas to retain certain degree of control over the material productive basis of their cultural identity. For centuries, the Amazonian tropical forest has evoked for many, images of forbidding mysteries and dangers. Native peoples have always regarded it as a secure refuge, and as a place of deep spiritual fulfillment and freedom from oppression.

The more decisive process of socio-economic transformation in this area can be traced back to the 1960's. It is in this decade when oil production, massive colonization, and the consolidation of state domination finally managed to turn a large number of Napo Quichuas into peasants, part-time proletarians and salaried service workers. But also in this decade, Amazonian groups started to organize politically into Indigenous Federations (the Shuar in 1964, the Napo Quichuas in 1969),

under the defiant banner of ethnic solidarity based on the re-affirmation of their specific cultural patrimonies. Trying to resist their full proletarianization, the indigenous peoples have followed two main strategies: to oppose the indiscriminate expansion of colonization, and to consolidate the legal titles to their traditional territories. Ironically, because of State Laws (Ley de Tierras Baldias), these same strategies have forced them to utilize that land for cash cropping and cattle raising, thus sharing in the destruction of the tropical forest ecology that constitutes the very basis of their ethnic identity. In this particular historical moment, culture seems to be linked to class in a very complex and contradictory manner. On the one hand, the history of this area of Amazonia calls into question those anthropological approaches that look at cultures as pristine autonomous and bounded systems. On the other hand, present day struggles also challenge those economists' <sup>is</sup> orthodoxies which assume that class identity and solidarity can be based exclusively on the automatic, structurally determined, cultural homogeneity of the dominated classes.

In order to start unravelling this complex problem of the historically specific relations between ethnicity and class, I have chosen to examine some social situations in Napo Quichuas' history mainly using examples from the life experiences of a rucuyaya (meaning grandfather, in Quichua), a man now probably in his late 80's to whom I will refer here as Yaya Alonso.<sup>1</sup> Through his life history, which I collected during a period of three years, and through oral histories obtained in shorter interviews with other rucuyayas, members of his same generation, one can begin to elucidate the changing relations between dominant structures and symbolic meanings, and how Napo Quichua ethnic

identity emerges and is transformed in a process of cultural interdependency and class opposition with other groups, more specifically, I refer here to white or "blanco" dominant groups, highland Indians, and other tropical forest etnias, such as the Huaoranis.

After a summary presentation of the history of contact in this area primarily since the end of the nineteenth century, I will discuss the bases and dynamics of Napo Quichuas' ethnic identity focussing on two periods in Yaya Alonso's life history: the era of patrons from the early 1900's to the 1960's, and the period of oil exploration by the Shell company in the 1940's. Although in historical time these two periods overlap, they are quite distinct in Yaya Alonso's memory.

#### HISTORY OF THE UPPER AMAZON

Napo Quichua speakers, live in the Napo province of the Ecuadorian Oriente and extend eastward down the Napo river to Iquitos in Peru (Mercier 1979). Because of their montaña hearth, located between the area of present-day Quijos valley and Archidona, the group I am referring to is also known as Quijos Quichua (Oberem ). There is very little evidence of their original language which became extinct early in the Colonial period. Along with other tropical forest Indians, they were pushed eastward running away from diseases and enslavement, and, in the process, assimilated other groups such as Záparos (a group of Zaparoans) (Whitten ,139), highland Quichuas and Huaoranis (Yost). To the south, in Pastaza province, some Napo Quichuas blended into Canelos Quichua culture, when their area became a refuge for many other

groups (Whitten ,129). Multiculturalism is present in almost all the Amazonian groups we now know as "distinct" cultures (Naranjo ). They are the result of the terrible traumas and disruptions unleashed by Spanish expansion into Amazonia. It should be clarified that, the fact of their origin as Quijos does not form part of everyday ethnic consciousness among the Napo Quichuas. They use that form, or Runa (in Quichua "people") to refer to themselves, and I will use these terms throughout my presentation. I am concerned with those Runas living in and around the towns of Tena, (capital of Napo province) Archidona, Pano, Cotundo, Puerto Napo and Puerto Misahuallí. The total population of this area (abbreviated here as Tena-Archidona) was estimated at 17,000 in 1976, of which 13,000 or 76% are Napo Quichuas. Runas also make distinctions among themselves, according to their different riverine settlements, such as Panos, Tenas, Talags, etc. Most rucuyayas claim that, at one time or another, they all scattered from Archidona in search of better hunting grounds, although in their consciousness, this history tends to blend with the mythical origin of the first Runas, known as Naupa Runa (Mercier ). These riverine settlements were populated by a residence-based stem kindred known as muntun whose members got access to demarcated territories (known as Ilactas) to fish and hunt, and usufruct rights for horticulture. Originally, these muntuns were organized around a powerful shaman, but this is not the case anymore in the Tena-Archidona area.

By the middle of the sixteenth century, Spaniards looking for the Land of Cinnamon, brought Christianity and encomiendas into the Tena-Archidona area. The Jesuits dominated it from the seventeenth to the end of the nineteenth century, when they were expelled from Ecuador

by the liberal government of Eloy Alfaro. The image of the Napo Quichuas as the "civilized" Indians, "passive" and "submissive" probably emerges at this time. In the dominant ideology, they become the "Alli Runa", the perfect white man's Christian subject. Like many other ideologies of domination, this one masks a long history of conflict and resistance by the Runas, of which the full scale rebellion of 1578, organized by shamans and led by a powerful cacique by the name of Jumandi, is the most well known.

Yaya Alonso was probably born around 1896, because he remembers being told he was baptized by the Jesuits, the last of whom left Tena in 1898 (Jouanen 225-27), so our story begins in the first decades of this century, when debt-peonage under white patrons became the main form of exploitation of native labor. In 1906 the Ecuadorian Liberal Constitution declared the separation of Church and State and, until the early 1920's, there were no missionaries in the Upper Napo. Tena and Archidona were tiny hamlets, inhabited by a small number of government officials and by a few but powerful patrons, ex-soldiers and rubber merchants who established haciendas devoted to cattle raising and the cultivation of rice and cotton. (See traveller's accounts .)

Unlike other Amazonian Indians, the Runas from the Tena-Archidona area did not experience directly the same abuses and enslavement perpetrated by the barons of the rubber boom, who never reached as far up the Napo river as Puerto Napo, Tena and Archidona (Macdonald 205). Many Runas travelled far in search of rubber, but they were either accompanying a patron or on their own, commissioned by patrons. They collected rubber and panned gold in exchange for cloth, machetes, shotguns, ammunition and beads for women's necklaces. This system kept

them in debt for years. Runas do not distinguish between the early rubber boom that ended in 1913, and the other minor rubber boom connected with the Second World War. A series of decrees and laws (such as the Ley de Oriente 1899), enacted by the Liberal government helped to curtail some of the previous abuses against the Indians, such as the obligatory purchase of goods sold by government officials but, in general, some forms of obligatory labor for the construction of roads, bridges and houses, and the enforced transport of goods and people from Tena to Quito and back, continued under the orders of patrons, at least until better mule trails and roads were opened. Free from the competition of government officials, patrons became the sole suppliers of manufactured goods, easily dictating the terms of exchange, and isolating Indians from other agents of the wider market economy. Although few Runas actually became permanent resident peons in haciendas, (Macdonald , Spiller ), their ties to the debt-system contributed to reaffirm the dominant image of the Napo Quichuas as fully subordinated Indians, incapable of escaping their oppressive situation (Beghin 1963, Spiller ). However, from foreign travellers' accounts and from the rucuyayas' own stories, other aspects of the patron system emerge that help us to qualify that image. British and American explorers into this area report the strong competition among patrons to secure Runas labor. This allowed Runas certain freedom to choose the less exploitative ones, and they did it through a captain (capitan) who was the leader for a whole muntun, so that the kinship nature of the labour group was kept intact. Whereas debts were incurred individually, in their payment, Runas were able to pan gold and gather rubber in their traditional territories, and to accommodate gardening,

fishing and hunting, since land was still available and game still plentiful. When additional labor was required of them, Runas made themselves scarce by hiding in the jungle. Travellers tell of their difficulties in getting Runas' labor as paddlers, cargo bearers or guides, and often, of being left stranded for days with cargo for which they had paid the Indians in advance. Both Catholic Josephine and Evangelical Protestant missionaries, who entered this area in the early 1920's, like to claim the virtues of having liberated Runas from the patrons' oppression. Runas have a different assessment of the situation. I have time here only to discuss some aspects of the Josephine Mission. When they arrived in Ecuador in 1922, they were assigned a Vicariate in the Oriente that covered an area of 70,000 square kilometers. Their strategy of evangelization towards the Runas can be defined as guided "paternalistic integration". They regarded Runas as lazy, innocent savages to be liberated from the terror of their own "sorcerers" (as they called Runa shamans) and from white patrons through productive work. The Josephines saw themselves as representing the twentieth century conception of "progress", based on technological change, formal schooling, technical training and modern medicine. As early as 1924, they put the Runas to work building a meteorological station, a hydroelectric power plant, schools, churches and convents, plus a radio station, "La Voz del Napo," still today the most powerful in the province. But, most importantly, the Josephines established agricultural stations in every missionary outpost for subsistence and cash crops as well as for cattle raising on a large scale. They obtained land through donations from Catholic patrons, and through occupation of Runas' traditional territories. When Runas offered the

missionaries a small plot for a school and a chapel, the latter expanded their own chacras and pasture for cattle. Soon enough, the Runas were encircled by the mission, they saw the game and fish partially depleted, and their gardens reduced. They were then forced to search for food farther and farther away into the forest. According to their own published records (see Spiller ), in 1973 the Josephines had more than 1,000 hectares of land devoted to cattle, pasture, and commercial agriculture. Still today, the Josephines, not really touched by the redeeming qualities of Liberation Theology, control a mini-empire in the Tena-Archidona area, including all levels of education, health services, communications and agribusiness. A significant number of Runas are the product of these schools, or work for the mission, as laborers and teachers.

The Leonard Exploration Company, a subsidiary of Standard began exploration for oil in the Oriente in the 1920's, followed by Shell in the early 1940's, and finally by several other companies in the 1960's and 1970's. The relationship between the oil companies, the missionaries and the State, in all these three phases was one of close and harmonious collaboration. They shared roads, maps, transportation, shelter and native labor (Spiller ). Jointly, they provided the necessary infrastructure of roads, Christian civilization, and legal administration that facilitated colonization into the Oriente. Slowly starting in the 1920's several waves of colonos reached the Tena-Archidona area. They received land grants of 40 to 50 hectares from the then Government Agency of Colonization, presently known as IERAC or Ecuadorian Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization, which they devoted mainly to pasture and cattle raising. Colonization



increased dramatically during the 1960's, and still continues as part of larger State policies of opening up the Oriente for national development, and to secure their frontiers against threats from Peru.

Encircled by haciendas, missions and colonos, and occasionally driven away by epidemics, many Runas were forced to leave the Tena-Archidona area, which continues to be the main center of out migration to the "oil region" between Lago Agrio and Coca. It has been estimated (see Orstrom ) that by the late 1970's, around 4,500 Runas had migrated permanently to that region, and around 1,000 to populate other areas along the Napo down to Coca. Since the early 1980's, the area between Coca and Rocafuerte is becoming the new center of immigration, due to the renewed efforts of the Ecuadorian government to colonize their frontiers after the last armed conflict with Peru in 1981. Despite all this out migration, the Tena-Archidona area is the second most densely populated area of the province after the "oil region," 43 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. For those Runas who stay, the pressure for land is mounting. Their average land holdings measure 14 hectares, while those of colonos 40, and those of haciendas around Tena, 93 hectares. In the past, Runas approached IERAC for the consolidation of their land titles, and to protest abuses. In 1981, they also confronted the Josephines on the land question. Most of their demands are now channeled through FOIN, the Federation of Napo Indigenous Organizations, founded in 1969, where the new oppositional ideology based on a militant ethnic identity is being developed.

#### RUNA IDENTITY DURING THE ERA OF PATRONS

Runas' ethnic identity is developed and maintained through a series of material and symbolic practices dominated by a process that can be described as power acquisition. According to my present understanding of Runa culture, "power" means a proper balanced combination of knowledge, verbal and other technical skills, courage and physical strength. In turn, each one of these components has to be qualified according to specific situational contexts. Courage could mean the power to be brave and dreadless when meeting spirits in the forest darkness, or the power to be unbending and unbowing when confronting white patrons.

Power thus understood may be acquired from a variety of different sources: other Runas, highland Indians (Hahuallactas) other tropical forest groups, whites, and from a great number of supais or spirit people, who live in the forest and rivers. Each of these groups are said to control unique sources of power which they exercise over their own domains and territories. Power acquisition then implies social interaction between people, or between people and spirits, involving different degrees of intimacy and affection, accommodation, negotiation and conflict. Consequently, the formation and transformation of Runas' ethnic identity, inter-ethnic and class relations have to be understood in the different historical contexts where these "power encounters" take place.

The basis of Runa's cultural identity has always been, and continues to be, control over a forest territory for hunting, fishing and shifting agriculture. Acquiring and maintaining power over that territory has meant, as far as Runas can remember, two main forms of

social relations. One, already discussed, involves Runas in class confrontations with white patrons, missionaries, colonists, and state bureaucracies, over access to resources and labor. I will argue that in this context of confrontation, Napo Quichuas' ethnic identity - as defined here - has constituted a source of resistance against their total incorporation into a pre-capitalist or fully capitalist white-dominated world. The second form of social relations, involve Runas in positive and negative interactions with the numerous spirit beings who are the masters of the different species of wild game, fish, and cultivated plants over demarcated territories. Acting on nature to satisfy material needs is conceived as a permanent negotiation with a world dominated by the hierarchy of spirits that have to be seduced, restrained or propitiated through the appropriate techniques. If Runas follow the correct technical and symbolic observances, involving fasting, sexual abstinence and other forms of purification, male and female supais provide with a continuous source of knowledge and power. A man's productivity as a hunter, or a woman's capacity to culturally transform nature through horticulture depend on those relationships. It is this knowledge then that allows Runas to act intelligently over their natural environment and gives them a sense of control over the productive process. In the words of Yaya Alonso: "One walks through the forest for so long that the body becomes accustomed to it. The body acquires the smell of the forest. The man becomes the forest, and then the animals do not run away. That is the life of the hunter".

The proper socialization of both male and female children involves the ritual transfer of part of that power by older, more experienced Runas who are acknowledged to be "strong and powerful". During this

transfer, a portion of the donor's inner strength referred to as samai is forced into the child's body. The donor puts his hands on top of the child's head, and forcefully blows into them. This part of the ritual is often preceded by the donor rubbing the child's eyes with aji (or chili, capsicum), a very painful experience that is regarded more as a test of the child's inner strength than as a punishment for bad behaviour. Finally, the donor gives the child verbal advice that might be general in nature, or quite specific, depending on the donor's particular strength and skills. According to the rucuyayas, knowledge and strength are not seen as separate, and they enter primarily through the head. Samai transfer is to breathe life, to fortify another person's inner self, to "animate", in the literal sense of transferring part of another person's powerful soul.

Strong souls can make other people dream about them. This power is known as muscui (from the Quicha muscuna, to dream). As Yaya Alonso explains: "One night I dreamt of a large and difficult river that I crossed successfully on my own. The first person who came to visit me that morning was my daughter Juanita who has a strong muscui. She is going to live a long life. Strength secures the soul and makes it grow."

Special strong affective and practical bonds develop between donor and recipient <sup>in</sup> and the samai transfer ritual, and these ties serve to establish lifelong relations between Runas, often strengthened later through compadrazgo or ritual friendship (amigu). According to old Runas then, this double process of gaining control over territory through intimate relations with spirits, and socialization into meaningful social relations provided them with a self and cultural identity. It was the core of what being a Runa meant.

This approach to social relations also affected Runas' contacts with other ethnic groups, specially when these were not mediated by class relationships with whites. Other Indians were considered to have particular powers and skills which could be transferred to Runas. Some highland Indians from Papallacta were known to be good and strong to carry cargo and if they came for a visit, they were asked to give part of their samai to young Runas. Many Rucuyayas remembered to have had similar relations with Huaoranis - who were admired for their hunting skills - in the old days before the whites entered their territory.

In the context of Runas' relationships with white patrons, this power of the inner self meant courage to confront them verbally, and sometimes even physically. As Yaya Alonso explains "My tongue was never tied when time came to confront the white authorities (apus) whether sober or drunk".

As it was already discussed, patron's competition for scarce Runa labor gave the latter certain independence. What we learn from Yaya Alonso is that they were aware of the fact, and could manipulate certain situations. Since the authorities who put them in jail were, at the same time, the merchants who wanted their labor, Yaya Alonso says: "I would be punished one day for talking back to them, and the next day I would be back home satisfied". Knowledge about how the white debt-system worked was acquired through the captains of the muntuns. It allowed them to defend the members of their own labor group in face of patrons' abuses. The way Yaya Alonso refers to those abuses reveals his conception of knowledge as power. He says: "Those abusive patrons were thieves of poor people's minds".

Among older Runas, the power to give verbal advice, of being invincible in ritual conversations was a sign of intelligence, of their capacity to communicate knowledge to others. Those were the men and women whose souls could turn into jaguars after death. The shaman-jaguar complex has been discussed for other Amazonian groups, specially by Richeil-Dolmatoff (1975) but, among Runas, this transformation was not considered the exclusive privilege of shamans. Ordinary but powerful people (like Yaya Alonso's grandmother) could turn into jaguars and the strength of their souls continued to support their relatives and to defend them from attacks by other forest jaguars.

Like in other hunting-gathering and horticultural societies, shamans play a crucial role among the Napo Quichuas. They can best establish contact with the supernatural world, and acquire the necessary knowledge to be used in their role as mediators between the spirit world and native society. Shamans may cure illnesses, obtain game animals and fish from their supernatural masters, and defend or avenge other Runas when necessary. Shamans obtain their power from a hierarchy of spirits, contacted through the use of hallucinogenic drugs, primarily ayahuasca (Banisteriopsis) and huanduj (a Datura). Accordingly, shamans are also ranked in relation to their knowledge and experience. Only those powerful ones, who can call in spirits at will and make them work for them, are known as sinchi yachaj (in Quichua, strong and knowledgeable man), the ideal type of Runa. The strongest among this group is known as bancu, and there are few of those left among the Runa at the present time. This is not the place to discuss at length the characteristics of shamanism in Napo Quichuas' culture, but it is important to examine the role it has played - and in some ways still does - in Runas' ethnic

identity, and inter-ethnic and class relations. Because of their privileged position of power in the spirit world, shamans are often approached by other Runas to transfer their samai. The next best thing to being a shaman is to be able to establish a relationship of respect and friendship with a powerful one. It is regarded as a fulfilling intellectual and emotional experience that contributes to the affirmation of Runa identity. This relationship may be explained by using Yaya Alonso's own life history. He had a life-long "ritual friendship" (amigu) with a bancu whom I will call Quisha. Once Yaya Alonso was feeling weak, Quisha decided to take his soul away for a cure. Quisha called in a powerful spirit by the name of Papatoa, who carried the soul to a spirit town known as Docemundoi. Through Quisha's intercession, Papatoa explained to Yaya Alonso the purpose of this trip: "Just as the government teaches our children in the schools, in Docemundoi, your soul will learn and become strong." He also explained that this supai town is the center of the world, a place of gold and light, bright as the very sunny days, so that nothing can escape the eye of the student souls. The job of spirits living there is to re-socialize Runa souls. When Quisha died, Yaya Alonso's soul was left in the care of Quisha's son, Pedro, himself now a bancu. Alonso talks about him as "a sun who is just beginning to rise." Shamans are associated with light because they are a source of knowledge, which is obtained only in the course of long training and experience throughout their entire life. (This relation between shamans and the sun's light and fertilizing energy is specifically mentioned by Reichel-Dolmatoff among the Tukanos of the Vaupes region of Colombia [1975: 77-78].) After three years, Alonso asked to have his soul back because, in his

own words, "it is difficult to die in peace without a strong Runa soul, I would have had to search for it in the crowd of common souls", and also -- as he whispered to me specially -- "because I did not trust the scattered brain women to be back in time with my soul in case I had an accident."

Shamanism is also involved in several ways in inter-ethnic contacts and class relations. First, Runa shamans themselves acquire knowledge and power from other shamans. Especially sought after are the Tsachela shamans, living in the area of Santo Domingo de los Colorados to the southwest of Quito, the Canelos Quichua just to the south of Napo Runa territory, and some Highland shamans although, in general, the Oriente shamans enjoy a reputation of being more powerful than Highland ones. This professional exchange which might involve money paid for services, or trade in hallucinogenic visions, songs, and powerful artifacts, is reported from the last century, as well as this one (see Oberem 1974: 351, Langdon 1981 ). It was part of a larger trade Napo Runas had with other Amazonian and Highland groups (at least since the XVI century when we have records) which included items such as coca leaves, gold dust, pita (or twine), salt, cloth, cotton, cinnamon, tropical fruits, feathers, and dart poison (Oberem 1974).

Second, because of the prestigious reputation of Oriente shamans, Highlanders (Serranos) come to the Tena-Archidona area to consult them for curing. Ordinary shamans living in Tena, receive regular visits from these Highlanders known in the area as "Hahuallactas", a term used with derogatory connotations, similar to those implied by the term "auca", when used by Highlanders to refer to Oriente natives. An interesting example of the relationship between ethnicity and class can



be observed in Tena, between Runas and a group of Colta Indians from Chimborazo, who settled in Tena as merchants, migrating out of a situation of poverty in their own area. They often consult ordinary Runa shamans for curing and divination purposes. In this situation their attitude is a supplicant one, acknowledging the superior symbolic power of the shamans. However, just a few paces away, in the market place, and as merchants, Colta Indians assume a "white" identity and often exploit Napo Runas in commercial transactions. Although still dressed in their unmistakable Colta Indian clothing, they become "white merchants" and behave towards Napo Runas in the same way Chimborazo white merchants behave towards them in the Riobamba markets.

Third, in the relationships of Napo Runas with whites, particularly with both Catholic and Protestant missionaries, shamanism has always been a source of conflict. Missionaries consider shamanism, along with many other aspects of Runas' world view, as an oppressive system that maintains them in a state of constant fear, and as one of the principal causes of their alleged backwardness. Seen from the Runas' point of view, however, other interesting aspects come to light. For instance, as leaders of their muntuns, often shamans were chosen by patrons to be aptains of a labor group. Macdonald, who worked among Arajuno Runas, points out how this fact helped in reinforcing the power and status of those shamans, and allowed them to use the frequent trips to far away places to study with other shamans and to establish marriage arrangements for members of their own muntuns (Macdonald 228). I have not found any evidence, however, that white patrons were considered powerful shamans. The reference to them, in rucuyaya stories is that they were powerful in the sense of possessing brute blind force (they

could inflict physical punishment, or they were literally physically heavy to be carried). These characteristics evoke funny or derogatory connotations among Runas, and are contrasted with their own lightness and strength that allowed them to make those difficult trips to Quito on foot; crossing freezing plateaus (paramos), carrying heavy cargoes, including white patrons and missionaries. All missionaries who worked in this area have always battled against shamanism, trying to eradicate it, (see Muratorio ). They are still trying. From the rucuyayas' point of view, only the Jesuits seem to have commanded some respect, and this fact is in itself interesting. Although in general, the Jesuits are remembered as having been more abusive than present-day Josephines, they were considered to have some powers similar to those of shamans. Several older Runas reported the Jesuits' capacity to kill Runas who did not attend religious services through a ritual that consisted on mentioning the culprit's name when the church candles started to drip. This power, equated to the shaman's magical darts also used to kill enemies, it was supposed to cause the culprit vomiting, diarrhea and finally, death. The Josephines, on the contrary, are considered weak, a fact which may, in part, explain the relative success of Protestantism in this area. Furthermore, these different Runa reactions to whites have to be seen in the context of class conflict and alliances in the region during the corresponding time periods. The Josephines entered when Runas were already under debt peonage. On the contrary, during the conservative government of Garcia Moreno (1869-1875), the Jesuits were made - for all practical purposes - the representatives of the State in the Napo. Their mandate was "to keep order and good civic and ecclesiastical government" (Jouanen 1977: 33-34). These powers, plus

their protectionist non-integrationist evangelization policies, put the Jesuits into direct conflict with merchants and officials who wanted to exploit the Indians' labor. Besides, those policies, plus their insistence on permanent settlement and regular work discipline, was considered by the Runas as a direct attack against their subsistence mode of production. Although as merchants the resident whites exploited Runas' labor, in their capacity as officials they granted Runas licencias, or permits that legally excused them from attending religious services, for periods of 2 to 3 months, to go into the forest to pan gold or to scrape twine (pita). Runas used that freedom to hunt and cultivate their chacras. It is then understandable why, in the Indian organized uprising against the Jesuits in Loreto in 1892, the Runas allied themselves with white merchants against the white priests (Lopez San Vicente 1894: 65-75). Although the rebellion was defeated, Oberem reports that, as late as 1955, the Indians from Loreto remembered it as a success (1980: 116). On their part, rucuyayas say that the Jesuits' expulsion from Tena in 1891 was the direct result of Runas' complaints to the Quito authorities. Myth and history blend here to create a culture of resistance that becomes incorporated into Runa's ethnic identity.

#### RUCUYAYAS AS OIL WORKERS

The period which concerns us here is the early 1940's, when the Shell Oil company started the second period of oil exploration in a large area of the Oriente. North Americans, known as "gringos", along with some Ecuadorian technical personnel and soldiers from the highlands, had to go into areas never before penetrated by whites. Most

importantly, in this case, they were conducting their explorations deep into Huaorani territory, in Napo and Pastaza provinces. The Huaoranis, were then the least acculturated and least well known group in all of Amazonian Ecuador, and therefore, the most feared. They were referred to as "Aucas," meaning "savage" in Quichua. Only the Shuar (or Jivaros) enjoyed that reputation but, by this time, they had already been "tamed" by the Salesian Mission.

Runas not only went to work voluntarily for Shell but they were even encouraged to do so, especially by the Josephines. And so they went into the forest as they had previously gone to gather rubber and pan gold. The main difference was that now they were paid real wages for their labor. At that time, they started earning 5 sucres for much more than 8 hours of work. What effect did the commodification of labor have in Runas' way of life, and Runa society as a whole? What was the impact of this new class relationship in their ethnic identity and in the inter-ethnic relations in the area? I will attempt to answer some of these questions in what rests of this paper.

I have not been able to conduct research to properly understand the technology used nor the organization and administration of Shell exploring operations at that time. From rucuyayas' accounts it seems clear that, in many ways, they were quite precarious and certainly different from the productive technology and organization used in the 1960's and 1970's, so my analysis has to be seen in this context. We know Shell used helicopters and some equipment for drilling and to open up trails. Runas entered into three month contracts with the Company, and were hired to carry heavy equipment, open up trails, build helicopter pads, to provide some food in the form of wild game and fish,

and last, but not least, because of their knowledge of Huaorani attack tactics. The danger of Huaorani raids was very real, since they had already a long history of unpleasant experiences with whites dating from the rubber boom period (see Yost ). According to Yaya Alonso, very often along a trail they would find Huaorani spears crossed as a warning signal; and they could also listen to the whistling voice of the spears at night. In the camps, they would sleep with lighted candles inside and guards outside. The Runas were there to refrain Highlanders from provoking Huaoranis, with their "ignorant and foolish bravery."

According to Yaya Alonso, they also prevented pilots from throwing burning objects down from the helicopters to burn Huaorani hamlets. After brief encounters with Huaoranis in which people died on both sides, many soldiers and other serranos would cry asking to be returned home. Considering these working conditions, how did the Runas look at this period of their lives? What were they selling to the Company? If I am correct, in Rucuyayas' understanding they were selling their strength to carry loads, their profound knowledge of the forest, their skills as hunters and fishermen and their courage to confront Huaoranis, and especially their cunning to detect their silent attack tactics in time to avoid the confrontations. Their success in all these tasks re-affirmed all the positive aspects of Runas' ethnic identity as they understood it then. It also confirmed Runas on their previous assessment of Hahuallactas -- whether soldiers or engineers -- as clumsy to survive in the forest. Both their fear and their foolish courage turned them into the laughing stock of Runa labor crews. Gringo engineers suffered the same fate or even worse. Yaya Alonso, who was made captain of a group of workers from his own Pano muntun, remembers

how the gringo engineer begged to be accompanied by him to the camp bathroom every morning. Probably I could summarize Yaya Alonso's experience of the period with an anecdote having to do with his own understanding of the medical examination given to Runas by the gringo doctors at Shell headquarters in the jungle. With his engaging humour, Yaya Alonso says: "They asked me to remove my pants, but the first thing they did was to weigh my testicles, and they approved. We had to go into Auca hunting grounds, and they said that all those who had good testicles could go. Many others were quite healthy, but they were not chosen. All the members of my muntun were accepted. That's how we bought our first airplane flight." Not only did air travelling allow Runas to "know" the jungle in all its extension for the first time, but it took them to even better hunting and fishing grounds. Many of them went back home with the game needed to offer to their future wives' families for the marriage ceremonies.

Since that time, Runa relations with the Huaorani were modified by the latter's own integration into a market economy and, more fully, into "white civilization" through Evangelical Protestant missionaries and formal schooling. It is now a relation that fluctuates between open conflict and the establishment of affinal or fictive kinship ties. Pressed for land, Napo Quichuas enter into Huaorani territory to hunt, and have also become teachers in Huaorani schools. Huaoranis enter into compadrazgo and marriage arrangements with young Runas as a more secure entrance into the "white" world, but the reciprocities involved in terms of access to land, are straining those relationships to the limit (see Yost 692, 699, 700, 701). Rucuyayas who cannot walk that far any more in search of game, still respect the Huaoranis' right to kill in order to defend themselves against those who invade their lands.

What were then the consequences of the partial proletarianization of the Runas' during the Shell Oil Company period? A fuller introduction into the money economy started to create some social differentiation between "rich" and "poor" Runas. Yaya Alonso points out that at that time, the term "pugri" (probably an adaptation of the Spanish "pobre", or poor) began to be used to refer to some Runas. In Quichua, the equivalent term for poor is "huajcha", meaning orphan, or without kin. It evokes the idea that when this happens, people become sad and lazy turning soon from "huajcha" into "tzontzo", meaning somebody who is miserable, or totally destitute. Runas had somehow always been involved in a money economy, but working for the company allowed a few a relative degree of capital accumulation in the form of cattle. The fact that later some of their food became a market commodity, certainly transformed their conception of work. The majority of Runa oil workers in that period bought consumer items with their money, such as clothing, watches, blankets and shotguns. Yaya Alonso used his money to send his eldest son to school and bought one cow that he never wanted to sell. By the time the period of the rucuyayas is over, there is already a new generation of educated Runas, now in their 40's and 50's, for whom ethnic and class identity are played under other forms of the penetration of capitalism into their territory. But their situation is outside of the scope of my present analysis, so I would finish with Yaya Alonso's own understanding of the implications of some of these transformations. His comprehension of class relations is quite profound and, if Marx would have understood peasants, he could have written what I regard as Yaya Alonso's own definition of capitalist social relations of production. He says: "The Indian works the land

slowly, little by little, he becomes the land. The colono works the land until he finishes it, until it dies. If we go to work for colonos, our work also dies, it is lost. The colono makes the Indian work for him, puts the money in the bank and there it grows and grows, but we never see it again." His assessment of the impact of recent changes on ethnic identity is equally revealing. He regards education and political organization as great assets for young people, but, because they are allowing the whites to undermine their territories, they have lost real knowledge and courage. They know Spanish, but they don't know how to talk back. In his own words: "Men now are like chickens, they have wings, but they cannot fly." The leaders of the Indigenous Organizations would certainly not be very happy with his judgement, but they are redefining their own identity as Runas, and forging a new culture of resistance. Rucuyayas' more than 80 years of resistance should become part of that new cultural history.

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1989.

OUR LAND, OUR CULTURE, OURSELVES: THE FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AMONG  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN LATIN AMERICA

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"The word 'Indian' (is) to be something of which indigenous peoples should be proud" (report from CISA, Indian Congress for South America, quoted in IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40:95)).

Guatemala is the only remaining country in Latin America where the Indians still constitute the majority of the population. At the present time, the Guatemalan government's record of genocide and ethnocide against Indian peoples is the worst in Latin America. Many reasons can be found for this situation in the past and present history of Guatemala. The Indians interpret it as a direct result of their attempts to organize themselves, along with poor Ladinos, to struggle for their rights and to initiate a process of deep social change in their own country. The role Indian culture plays in this struggle is best explained in this statement given by a Guatemalan Indian woman in Geneva:

"The military seeks to destroy and shatter our cultural identity because the regime knows that our identity constitutes a part of our strength to resist and organize" (IWGIA Newsletter 1983 (35-36):118).

Francisca, like her compatriot Rigoberta Menchú (see Elisabeth Burgos-Debray 1984), value their culture not as a dead tradition to be shown in museums or in tourist markets, but as a contemporary tradition that questions the hegemonic process and threatens its dominance.

The Western commercial media, with their built-in bias to depict the Latin American Indians in stereotypes either as "terrorists" or as "victims", has almost ignored the Guatemalan case. There is evidence, of course, that in situations of internal wars Indian people and sometimes whole villages become

the victims of both sides in the controversy. But, it is also the case that nowadays thousands of Indian men and women in Latin America have made clear political decisions to actively participate in those struggles.

In this paper I have chosen to analyze some of the many other less violent, but not less significant struggles Indian peoples are presently fighting in the defense of their rights. Rather than going through a detailed description of specific cases, the paper concentrates on the examination of different human rights, how indigenous people interpret them, how are they being defended or violated, and on the structural and ideological contexts in which they are being discussed. Consequently, whenever possible, I have used published and unpublished materials produced by the native organizations, mainly from the Andean and Amazonian regions. The decision over the specific rights selected for discussion originates from my reading of that literature, as well as from my own work with native organizations in Ecuador, but does not intend to be exhaustive.

#### The right to land

"To take an indigenous person from his or her land is an act of violence. It attacks the very roots of his or her identity. It is a condemnation to extinction." (The Auxiliary Bishop of Sao Paulo, Dom Luciano Mendes de Almeida. Quoted in Survival International News 1983 (1)).

If there is one issue that unites all the Indigenous Nationalities of the Americas is the recognition that their most fundamental human right is the right to land. For Indian peoples, land is more than an economic resource for biological reproduction, it is indissolubly linked to their culture and history. The commodification and privatization of land tends to brake down indigenous forms of communal solidarity and control, erode the meaning of the fiesta complex, and hamper communal labor exchanges and reciprocity arrangements. The Indians' right to land, and the respect for their culture cannot be considered separately because they are the two main components of social relations within indigenous societies. But in Latin America today there are thousands of Indians forced to live as marginals in their own territories and in urban centers; others whose lives have been disrupted by persecution and repression; and still thousands of others who live in involuntary exile. All these Indians have lost their culture as a "whole social process in which men define and shape their whole lives" (Williams 1977:108). What they share, is the lack of a material basis for that culture to be fully realized as social practice. The denial to Indians of their full status as "citizens", or even as "persons" in the bourgeois sense, continues to be part of the

White dominant ideology as justifications to deprive them of their land. The awareness Indians have of this process is obvious in this quote from a Venezuelan, Piara Indian:

"The conquerors and colonizers who wish to snatch away our lands have to convince themselves that Indians are not real people. It is for this reason that the Piara say: You cannot defend the right to land without defending the right to culture and life. But there is no right to life and culture without lands. And so it is for this reason that land is so important - because in it rests life, and from it alone has risen our culture, our own civilization, our rights to language and our exchanges with other peoples and different cultures" (IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):68, emphasis in the original).

One of the main objectives of Colonial policies - which did not change substantially under Republican regimes - was to break down this indigenous bond between territory and social organization in order to dissolve the native groups, and to turn their members into an available labor force. Lands inhabited by native peoples were declared "no-man's lands" (tierras de nadie) or "public lands" (tierras baldias) and sovereignty was assigned over those territories according to the interests of the rulers. This form of expropriation continues into the present: the discovery of mineral wealth, the expansion of communications, the development of industrial technology, in sum, the expansion of monopoly capitalism are the new factors in the policies responsible for depriving the indigenous communities of the autonomy they once enjoyed. Nowadays, governments can manipulate population statistics to "prove" that a particular region is "underpopulated", without undertaking the more difficult task of calculating how much land is actually needed by the present and future native populations of those regions if they are to continue to have viable productive and cultural organizations of their own. This is a particularly urgent need in Amazonia, where colonization laws now allow the national States to grant alleged "public lands" to White and Mestizo colonists without much consideration for the native peoples' right to their aboriginal lands.

Throughout the history of Latin America, the right to re-occupy their original territories has been won by the native peoples through rebellions, warfare and land invasions. Certainly, some native groups have not abandoned this form of struggle. However, both the successful consolidation of State domination into the previously marginal areas of most Latin American countries, and the increasing presence of multinational corporate entities in those same regions, impel Indian people to confront these powers in the legal arena. Property titles, for

instance, become essential in the increasingly frequent legal battles native organizations have to fight against powerful multinational corporations. Juan Carlos Morales, a native of Costa Rica and ex-president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples recently made the point at the United Nations in Geneva, that the lack of appropriate documentation to certify legal ownership of tribal lands invites invasions, displacement, and even the destruction of native populations. According to Morales, because the respective Constitutions of the Latin American States are based on Roman law, and in the French and North American Constitutions, they ignore the rights of the legitimate owners of the territory before the conquerors arrived (Kipu 1984 (15):9).

In the Ecuadorean body of law, for example, there are no specific provisions dealing with the situation of native populations. The Constitution, the Law of National Security, the Penal Code, and even the Law of Agrarian Reform and Colonization ignore the reality of the multi-ethnic composition of Ecuador (Comisión Económica de Derechos Humanos 1984: pp.104-105). Abstract equality before the law is guaranteed in the Constitution, but that form of equality does not ensure the rights of the Indian groups to be different nor does it protect their specific ethnic identities under the law.

Even in cases when specific laws are enacted to secure land and land titles for indigenous communities, politicians, landowners and State bureaucracies often connive to deny the Indians rightful protection under those laws. This point can be illustrated with the case of Paraguay. In the 1970's, national and international organizations denounced the abuses being committed against the Paraguayan Indians (genocide against the Aché was the most well known case). To appease the international scandal, in 1981, the State passed Law #904/81 the "Estatuto de las Comunidades Indígenas" to provide land and land titles to more than 200 Indian communities (with a total population of around 100,000). In the two years since this law was enacted, only two indigenous groups have received land, and no communities have received titles (Cultural Survival Quarterly 1983 (7) 4:56). Bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of funds, and the power of large ranchers and plantation owners who resent any form of expropriation by the State, seem to be responsible for this situation. The enactment of laws is no guarantee that the Indians' rights are going to be respected, because in Paraguay - as in other Latin American countries - they are not considered legally responsible persons by their own governments. The Instituto Paraguayo del Indígena (IPI) created also in 1981, within the Ministry of Defense, has not published the law in any of the Indian languages. Furthermore, despite repeated attempts

by Guaraní and Aché communities to get land titles, the IPI has decided "for their own good" that it will not title land to Indians because, "it might exacerbate factional disputes within communities" (Ibid.:57). The implementation of the law by the IPI, and the paternalistic arrogance of their excuses, not only ignores the Indians' desire for land, but also their right to autonomy and self-determination. Some Indian groups, intimidated by an unfriendly government bureaucracy conveniently located in the Ministry of Defense have abandoned title claims because they are perceived as politically dangerous, or have resorted to buying land. Therefore - as Holland notes - "Indians (are) forced to compete in the market place for land that was effectively stolen from them in the recent past" (Holland 1984:38).

Often, non-government groups working among the Indians equally disregard their traditional relationship with the land. Also in Paraguay, for instance, the South American Missionary Society has designed a settlement project for the Chaco Indians which could provide some economic security for their families. However, the emphasis is on individual titles and, if implemented as planned, this programme would ultimately destroy the communal basis of Indian society (Holland 1984:37). The ideological background of this project, designed by U.S. missionaries "for" the Indians, is the belief that the only possible incentive the Indians will have to work, would be that of "securing their own private homestead". In fact, most Latin American States have promoted the expansion of forms of production based on small or medium size individually owned plots, underestimating or disregarding as "non-productive" or "irrational" the communal forms of property and labor which are an integral part of the cultural patrimony of indigenous peoples. Consequently, these State and private policies undermine not only the Indians' right of subsistence from their own land, but they also violate deep philosophical principles of the Indians' world view, as it is evident from this quote referring to the Paĩ Tavyterá, one of the seventeen distinct indigenous groups which still exist in Paraguay:

"Land is held in common, and is the principal means of production granted by the Creator-God, to be used according to divine laws. The Paĩ Tavyterá Indians refuse even to consider the purchase of water or land, since neither can be privately owned... To purchase land therefore, would be the equivalent to buying a man... The land and the human body are one and the same thing, since once the Soul leaves the body it converts into soil. Thus 'we are at once the land, our ancestors, and our children'" (quoted in Holland 1980:204).

Indian people have been willing to sell their labor power whenever necessary and, especially, if cash wages could be used to

secure land and thus reproduce their way of life. However, in all the Americas, indigenous groups are strongly resisting the commodification of their land precisely because land is the basis of a dialectical relationship between production of resources and production of cultural meaning. One of the general resolutions in the last World Congress of Indigenous Peoples (Sept. 22-30, 1984) states that separating indigenous people from the land is "a form of repression" because "for many (of them) land is the seat of spirituality... the historical record of a people, the provider of food, clothing and shelter (and the) hope of the generations to follow" (IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):125).

At the present time, the demands of the Andean Highland groups over land rights concentrate on the effective implementation of the Agrarian Reform laws with the participation of the Indigenous Peasant Organizations in the appropriate decision making bodies. After 20 years or more of the enactment of Agrarian Reform Laws that have been partially implemented or not at all, the Andean Indians demand the right of self-determination by electing their own representatives to those bodies (Mesias Tatamuez, Ecuadoran peasant leader, Kipu 1984 (15):2). The exercise of this political right is perceived as the only guarantee of equity in the distribution of land, and of obtaining access to credit and technical assistance.

In Chile, the proud and independent Mapuches, who successfully resisted the Inca Empire and the Spanish expansion into their territory until the end of the XIX century, are at present seriously threatened by Pinochet's military dictatorship. The small gains that the Mapuches made during Allende's Popular Unity government in terms of recovering land and confirming their communal landholdings have all been reversed. In 1979, the Pinochet regime enacted the openly ethnocidal Decree law 2568 "for the division of the Reserves and the liquidation of the Indian communities" (quoted in Survival International News 1984 (7)). In an attempt to fight against the division of the Reserves, the leaders of AD-MAPU - the organization representing the majority of Mapuches - have made their demands public and have joined other groups in opposing Pinochet's regime. This resistance has been met with a systematic policy of government harassment and repression against Mapuche leaders and their organizations.

The right of Amazonian groups to land, already trampled by badly planned national colonization and development, is being increasingly threatened by foreign investment and exploitation of primary resources. The Indians oppose an "open door" policy of foreign investment because it frequently leads to the progressive expulsion of native groups from their territory, and it brings in diseases, alcoholism and prostitution. Indigenous organizations are concerned that, in responding to pressures of the

International Monetary Fund and other international organizations to pay their onerous foreign debts, the Latin American governments are going to embark in a hasty exploitation of their natural resources - particularly lumber and gold in Amazonia - with little consideration for the ecology, or the native peoples bound to be affected. Thus, the president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuadorean Amazon, recently denounced a multinationally funded project for the production of African palm which will negatively affect more than 40 indigenous communities in the North Amazonian region of Ecuador. In Peru, Evaristo Nuqukuaq, the president of the Aguarunas, criticized Belaunde's government for repealing the law that guaranteed land titles to Amazonian Indians in order to "make exploitation of this region more attractive for foreign capital" (Kipu 1984 (15): 24). Both Venezuela and Brazil are confronted with massive foreign debts which have already led to an intensified search for primary resources. The new gold rush in the Brazilian Amazon is due, in part, to the increasing unemployment and social problems prevalent in the cities, which drive more and more poor people into Amazonia. Gold mines presently endanger the Cinta Larga Indians in Aripuna Park (Survival International News 1983 (1)). Recently, a decree by the Brazilian president has allowed mining on Indian lands and the use of Indians as labor (Schwartzman 1984: 81). The Waimiri and Atriori tribes of Northern Brazil are being threatened with extinction by another government decree which denies them sovereignty over their territory and supports tin mining by a powerful Brazilian corporate group. This is being done with the collaboration of FUNAI, the government organization whose official mandate is to defend indigenous rights (see Survival International News 1983 (3)). These same conditions apply to many other indigenous groups, the only difference among them is the particular resource being exploited in their respective areas. In Venezuela, the end of the oil bonanza has stimulated a number of rich city dwellers and corporations to invest in mining adventures in the interior (Colchester 1984:85). A similar situation is developing in Ecuador. In all the Amazonian Basin, hydroelectric projects, cattle ranching, logging, and giant commercial agricultural projects are equally threatening to even larger numbers of native inhabitants.

Government authorities are slow and reluctant in protecting Indian communities against any corporate interests involved in the development of Amazonia. However, when Indians organize to defend their rights against this type of "progress", they are regarded as "savages", "wild", and "fierce", by both the government and the media (Testimony by an Amarakaeri Indian from the Peruvian

Department of Madre de Dios. Survival International News 1983

(3)). All these accusations, of course, help to feed the national negative stereotype about Amazonian Indians which, in turn, contributes to the denial of their rights as citizens.

Furthermore, foreign investment in the development of Amazonia is often accompanied by the militarization of the region, imposing more restrictions on the natives' rights to the free use of their own territory. It is a well known fact that today, the militarization of international borders means internal divisions and harassment for indigenous groups (i.e. the case of the Miskitos between Nicaragua and Honduras, and the Shuars between Peru and Ecuador). Besides, open discrimination against Indians is a frequent practice in "strategic colonization" projects developed by the army in border militarized zones, where land is offered to White and Mestizo colonists and where indigenous peoples are systematically excluded.

In countries such as Venezuela, Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, presently governed by Western-style democracies, the military ideology suspects Indian people of being a "security risk" or "a threat to national sovereignty". The apparent rationalizations for these views are, with regard to the first, the fact that Indian groups maintain kinship ties across arbitrarily imposed international borders. With respect to the second, the governments' misapprehensions that the Indians' demands for self-management and self-determination would mean the establishment of some kind of independent republics in the native territories. There is little evidence to sustain the military's suspicion that in case of international wars the Indians will put kinship ties above national interests or that they will betray their country. Principle 16, in the "Declaration of Principles of Indigenous Rights" (enacted in the 4th General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples), makes the Indians' point of view on this matter quite clear:

"Indigenous peoples have the right, in accordance with their traditions, to move freely and conduct traditional activities and maintain kinship relationships across international boundaries" (IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):130).

The Indians find at least "curious" that, in the national ideology, they are at the same time rhetorically defined as "the first and most legitimate inhabitants of the Nation" and the first to be suspected of "selling their interests to foreign invaders", or of "becoming violent because there are Communists behind us". The Indians' own understanding is that for over the last five hundred years they have been the first to oppose foreign



invaders to their territories (see Venezuelan, Flora Indian statement in IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):70-72).

In Guatemala, a country dominated by successive military dictatorships obsessed with "world Communist conspiracies", the situation for the indigenous people is even more critical, as it was mentioned in the introduction. Every Indian is almost automatically considered a "subversive" and, therefore, a legitimate target for elimination by the army. In Guatemala, - as Holland (1984: 105-106) and others have noted - their distinctive costumes turns them into easily identifiable targets. Through a training program which, judging by the final results, one can describe as "destructive ethnography", the army was teaching its conscripts to identify Indian villages by the distinctive costumes of their inhabitants. Consequently, like in El Salvador after the peasant massacre of 1932, the Guatemalan Indians are abandoning their traditional dress, another precious source of their ethnic identity. It is a sad paradox that in some Andean countries such as Ecuador, many urban Indian leaders and intellectuals are again wearing their native costumes as a defiant expression of pride in their origins, and as a political affirmation of hope in a new dignified life, while in Guatemala the Indians have to abandon it to escape identification and death.

Even when parks, reserves, or Protectorate Zones are set aside for Indian people, no security is guaranteed to them, since the State's goals of development at all costs prevail over native rights. The case of the Xingu national Park in Brazil, criss-crossed by the Trans-Amazonian highway is the most well known example, but the same is happening in other places as well. Stephen Corry of Survival International has stated in relation to the Waorani of Ecuador: "It has been suggested that the real purpose of these 'conservation zones' is to prevent settlers from entering areas so that, when extractive industries (such as oil companies) wish to exploit them, they do not have to face the complicated task of removing the settlers first. Are they zones for conserving nature or oil company profits?" (Survival International News 1983 (1)). Schwartzman makes a similar argument for the case of Indian lands in Brazil. There, powerful federal government agencies, backed by the local police and the military, seem to be using the demarcation of Indian lands as an excuse to settle conflicting commercial claims among state, federal and private interests (Cultural Survival Quarterly 1984 (8)1: 80-81). Several analysts have recently pointed out that many reserves have had their original purposes distorted by turning native peoples into tourist attractions (see Cultural survival Quarterly (8) 3).

## The right to cultural identity and self-dignity

### 1. The "noble savage" image

I have already examined some aspects of the way in which the dominant ideology about the Indians help in undermining their rights. Tourism has contributed to highlight some of these negative consequences. Tourism to the last frontiers, which until recently had been left as refuges for the native peoples, is becoming a multimillion dollar industry. Pushed out from their lands, enclosed in 'reserves', deprived of their traditional subsistence, some Indian groups have become dependent on the tourists' handouts, and are being subjected to grievous indignities. The last 617 members of the Maka tribe of Paraguay, for example, live in 335 hectare reserve, ironically in front of Asuncion's Botanical Gardens. A daily newspaper advertise them as "an extraordinary tourist attraction" (Quoted in Holland 1980: 18). As Holland noted in his diary, in order that the tourist "can confirm on film that he has tamed and touched the noble savage", "the Maka teenage girls strip off their T-shirts and pose, together with their parents, wearing the gaudiest of feather head-dresses, their faces daubed with lipstick warpaint" (Ibid.). The Indians are packaged in attractive ways by the new "ethnotourist" industry. They have become commodities, and picture tours continuously violate their right to privacy and the sacredness and secrecy of their religious and shamanic ceremonies. The frustrated and, often enraged, face of an Indian woman turning away from the camera is a common sight in the peasant markets of Latin America. The tourists alternate between their contempt or uninformed pity for the reality of the Indians, and a fascination for a close look at an idealized noble savage. What the tourists really get are fake hollow masks, because the material basis for those Indian cultures to flourish have already been destroyed.

In Brazil, postcards of happy looking Indians in the Xingu Park, painted and traditionally ornamented, decorate the tourist shops. For almost five years now, the Xingu Indians have violently objected to that image of themselves, and have denounced the allegedly "idyllic" nature of their reservation. In June 1983, they confiscated a plane that had landed illegally in their park, and demanded improved health care, competent management by FUNAI, and the resolution of long standing land claims (Cultural Survival Quarterly 1983 (8) 4:58).

How dangerous and misleading can these distorted images of the noble (or ignoble) savage become in real everyday life? The most recent example that can be cited is the report by the Vargas Llosa Commission of inquiry set up to investigate the death of eight journalists in the Indian community of Uchuraccay in the

Huanta province of Ayacucho. In his article for The New York Times Magazine (1983), Vargas Llosa characterizes the Iquichano people allegedly guilty of the deaths, as "isolated from the rest of Peru", "violent in temperament", "defenders of their customs and haters of outsiders", while the killings of the journalists were described as having "magical and religious overtones" with the wounds on the corpses being "ritualistic". Certainly, this kind of stereotyped reporting - presenting the Iquichano as a group of "ignorant and therefore less responsible savages" - coming from a famous White novelist legitimized by the government, does not help to understand a very complex situation of Andean Indian peasants caught in a guerrilla war. The Amnesty International report was critical of the Vargas Llosa Commission's results, and intended to set the record straight by drawing attention to the "savagery" of the security forces who set up and encouraged the Indian community patrols to kill all strangers arriving by road (Amnesty International report, quoted in IWGIA Newsletter 1983 (35-36):172-173). In Peru, the controversy over this case still continues. The army has been responsible for thousands of deaths and disappearances; some indigenous organizations continue to condemn the Shining Path guerrillas for their destructive actions in the Indian communities; and tourism to "isolated" Highland and Amazonian villages is still thriving.

## 2. Missionaries and the Indians' rights

The images through which the Indians see themselves as depicted by others for outside consumption, is not an exclusive problem of the Amazonian groups. In the Highlands of Ecuador, for instance, missionary organizations such as World Vision have been the object of recent complaints and denunciations by the Indigenous Peasant Federations. Why an agency which claims to be non-evangelical and concerned with the Indians' welfare and community development projects, can be the object of criticism and rejection by the alleged beneficiaries? How and why do these agencies violate the Indians' human rights? Blanca Chancoso, coordinator of the Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador comments on World Vision's foster parent plan by which Indian children get "adopted" by foster parents in North America. "In order to qualify you have to prove you are poor, you have to show off your poverty, this in itself is humiliating" ... "They (World Vision) are interested in pictures of misery, of dejected people with their faces covered with flies. They exhibit the misery of our countries spending 30% of their budget on television advertisements, just as if they were selling shampoo" (Quoted in IWGIA 1983 (34): 57). The commodity being sold here is not exoticism but poverty.

Even if some of these missionaries and foreign aid agencies were interested in dealing with the real causes of poverty, these would be difficult to photograph. Television, or the instant camera are not well suited to portray complex structural factors. What appeals to the donor or potential foster parent is the "cute" picture of an individual child, or the "instant" and the "dramatic", not a long history of everyday life drudgery and oppression. The result is misery pornography. From the receiver's point of view - in this case the Indians - the outcome is degrading and false. It de-contextualizes the problem of their poverty, whose causes lie with unjust landtenure structures, and hundreds of years of discrimination and neglect by the national States. These types of "band-aid" projects, which incorporate the North American notion of solving social problems by distributing money to individuals, help to create a "hand-out mentality" among the Indians, and to maintain the White dominant ideology by implicitly portraying the Indians as irresponsible parents or, at least, as helpless victims.

The Indigenous federations see World vision's presence and other similar projects by fundamentalist North American Missionary agencies, as an attack on their own cultural identity. In order to better understand these clashes between the indigenous peoples' rights and what the missionaries regard as their duties one has to probe a bit further into the specific ideologies behind the missionaries' policies, and their incompatibility with some fundamental principles of the Indians' world view, their social organization and vision of their own progress and development. Most North American Evangelical missions take with them, wherever they go, their own values of individualism, a Protestant ethic of work, and a clear separation between religion and politics. Their unreflected ideological premises of self-help and self-improvement permeate their aid and development policies. The stress on individualism is regarded by the Indigenous Federations as a direct attack on the rank and file communal organizations. The missions usually ignore them, and work with smaller groups of converts. This reinforces the already existing divisions between Catholics and Protestants, and creates an atmosphere of submission and apathy which, of course, the organizations see as dampening the development of indigenous protest movements. World Vision for instance, disregards these political implications; the Indians on their part demand their rights to political self-determination to be respected (Kipu 1984 (10): 19; IWGIA Newsletter 1983 (34):58, 66). Because fundamentalist missionaries tend to dismiss most aspects of indigenous cultures, they believe that the Indians' traditional production patterns do not make them "useful" or

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"productive" citizens of the national society. The Indians cannot but notice the contradiction of adhering to the values and habits of a hard working proletariat in a society which destroys their resources and does not offer them significant employment opportunities. As Colchester notes in relation to the New Tribes Mission's work among indigenous groups in Venezuela: "The notion of self-determination held by the missionaries for the Indians implies nothing more than rigid conformity to a narrow system of values of fundamentalist criollo life-style. Self-development is synonymous with total acculturation and integration" (Colchester 1984: 129). Specific accusations against the negative impact of certain missions or development agencies on the Indian communities are important for the people involved, but can sometimes be too easily dismissed by the agencies claiming that they do not accurately reflect their general objectives or performance. The real problem is that the two sides represent two fundamentally different concepts about how society can be organized and how it should be changed.

3. The right to cultural autonomy and self-determination

The oppositional ideology being developed by the Indigenous organizations centers in the newly coined concept of "ethnodevelopment." Ethnodevelopment is defined as "the exercise of the social capabilities of an ethnic group to build a future, making use of the teachings of their own historical experience, and of the actual and potential resources of their own culture, in agreement with a project defined according to their own values and aspirations" (Quoted in Kipu 1983 (4):8). Indigenous culture is not considered static but, on the contrary, capable of generating autonomous innovations and creativity as well as being flexible enough to integrate positive values from other cultures. "Innovation and tradition are not contradictory tendencies in the reality of the indigenous nationalities" (Ibid.). Ethnodevelopment seems to constitute the dynamic core of the concept of "indigenous nationalities." According to recent statements by two Ecuadorean Indian leaders, "indigenous nationality" is not an anti-patriotic concept, nor a separatist one in political terms. All the Indians of Ecuador recognize themselves as citizens with the same rights and duties as any other Ecuadorean, but they fight for a multi-ethnic, multicultural State. As Indian citizens they demand equality, but reject cultural homogeneity under White domination. "Any form of integration must be a mutual one, the Whites and Mestizos should also learn to respect our culture, religion, and history, as we have come to learn theirs. Otherwise, integration is unilateral" (A. Viteri, Canelos Quichua

from Ecuador quoted in Kipu 1983 (4):5). Up to now, integration has always been unilateral because the dominant ideology has carefully chosen certain symbols, meanings, values, and practices from indigenous cultures to be incorporated into the national culture, and has discarded others. It has also deliberately dismissed, neglected, or selected for inclusion into the national historical heritage those aspects of Indian histories which confirmed whichever happened to be the current hegemonic structure.

The right to ethno-development is closely tied to the right to a cultural identity. However, the question is being asked: which one is the indigenous culture that should be respected (see Bonfil Batalla 1984). After almost 500 years of domination there are no pristine indigenous cultures and, furthermore, indigenous societies are not homogenous. Internally, different individuals and groups represent different religions and political ideologies. The work of formulating a counter-hegemonic discourse is therefore a complex one, subject to contemporary power structures, political pressures, internal limitations, and diverse outside influences. It implies a historical examination of the traditions and the changes experienced by the different Indian groups. Obviously, some meanings and practices are reclaimed, others discarded. This process is not devoid of conflict, but it seems to be moving towards the recovery of an autonomous culture, free of imposed and alienating cultural forms. To develop this culture, the Indians demand a degree of independent decision making power, the material base to be able to carry through these decisions, and a forum for their effective political participation. Only when the State allows native peoples those conditions, they consider it will respect their human rights to a meaningful way of life.

#### The right to "be ourselves"

"I cannot defend myself in front of a judge in my own language. Then, what rights do I really have? (Anpam Karakras, Shuar leader from Ecuador, quoted in Kipu 1983 (4): 5).

Bilingualism in the courts and at all levels of the educational system, is a long way off in the Latin American countries. The native peoples are still defending a more basic right "to be themselves." One important symbol of the denial by the State of indigenous cultural identity is the proscription to use Indian names for their children. The fact that they have to choose from a list of Spanish names is a continuous reminder of their colonial past (Kipu 1984 (8):2). In South American countries such as Chile and Argentina, with predominantly White populations, the issue of human rights is usually discussed in

terms of individual rights. When Indians speak of human rights, they refer to their rights as specific cultural groups with their own languages and histories (Kipu 1983 (4): 1). Some States do not acknowledge these rights, neither in practice, nor in law. The most blatant case that can be mentioned in this respect is that of Brazil. Recently, the government has presented for congressional approval a new civil code that proposes to downgrade the status of Indians from "relatively incapable" (i.e., requiring an Indian agency to assist them), to "absolutely incapable." This new status will deny the Indians the possibility to be assisted by the Indian agency, and they would be deemed incapable of formulating their own views on their own interests. The State would be legally entitled to speak for the Indians on all matters. At the same time, the government has another project before congress which, in contradiction with the previous one, proposes the compulsory "emancipation" of the Indians from their status as wards of the State. As has been indicated by Robin Wright, with this law, the State intends to relinquish all responsibility vis à vis the Indians (Wright 1984: 78). In the words of a Brazilian Indian leader: "It (this law) would take away from us all possibilities and every weapon we have to protest the infringement of our rights" (quoted in Wright Ibid.). The dilemma of the Brazilian Indians symbolizes for all other Latin American Indians the difficult struggle still to be fought: the recognition of their right to be a people. For some of them, the main issue debated in the controversy between Las Casas and Sepúlveda is not a thing of the past.

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DOMINANT AND SUBORDINATE IDEOLOGIES IN SOUTH AMERICA:  
OLD TRADITIONS AND NEW FAITHS

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DOMINANT AND SUBORDINATE IDEOLOGIES IN SOUTH AMERICA:

OLD TRADITIONS AND NEW FAITHS

The Indians of South America are currently engaged in a struggle to challenge what has been until now the dominant ideological interpretation of their identity and of their role in the formation of the different nation states. The Indians defy the policies which attempt to acculturate them into a homogeneous blend, trying to reevaluate their own traditions in order to defend the right to subsist as unique cultures. From within indigenous organizations, ethnicity is being reformulated as an oppositional ideology, that is, as a critique of present and past systems of domination.

In an attempt to write "history from below" for Mexico and Peru, Portilla (1972) and Wachtel (1977) discussed the "visions of the vanquished" to understand the Spanish conquest from the Indians' point of view. At the present time, the Indians confront the contradictions of a process of de-colonization, and their forms of consciousness can be regarded as the "new visions of the vanquished"; "new" because for the first time the Indians are speaking with their own voice.

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The main argument of this paper is that dominant and subordinate ideologies should be studied as interrelated, and that different forms of social relations have conditioned (i.e., set limits, modified, subdued, assimilated or coopted) the Indians' ideological practices in Colonial, post-Colonial and contemporary South America.

Throughout history, Indian consciousness has taken different forms, expressed in oral traditions, messianic and nativistic rebellions, class movements, festivals, rituals, and in many other forms of individual and collective behavior. But, as this consciousness is rarely, if ever, conveyed through written texts, its history is not easy to write. In the first part, this paper attempts to explore it through an analysis of the historical changes in the dominant ideologies about the Indians. Among many possible strategies to deal with this issue, this one has been chosen because the analysis of dominant ideologies often reveals some important aspects of the subordinate ones, although the image presented may be blurred or fragmentary (see Duby 1978:164, 166). The second part deals with the present social, economic and ideological contexts where new forms of Indian consciousness are emerging.

To introduce the topic we propose an interpretation of an episode in One hundred years of solitude, one of the best ethnographic novels about Latin America by the Colombian writer Gabriel García Marquez. The day the insomnia plague struck the town of Macondo, the first to be alarmed were the Indians. They were the only ones who could understand its meaning and its inescapable consequences. What worried them about the plague was not the impossibility of sleeping but its inexorable

evolution towards the loss of memory. As Visitación, the Indian woman explains: "... when the sick person became used to his state of vigil, the recollection of his childhood began to be erased from his memory, then the name and notions of things, and finally the identity of people and even the awareness of his being, until he sank into a kind of idiocy that had no past" (1970:50). Furthermore, although the plague overtakes the whole population of Macondo, it is a sickness peculiar to the Indians. It had already attacked them once before, forcing Visitación and her brother to exile themselves forever from an age-old kingdom where they were princess and prince.

Several characters in the novel suggested different cures for the insomnia plague. For instance, Aureliano - who represented the scientific mind - proposed to label every object in town with its name and an explanation of its use, so that by reading the labels people would not forget them. But Aureliano's solution was as futile as what museums actually do with Indian culture. The real and definite cure was brought to Macondo by Melquíades, the old gypsy who, as García Marquez says "... in spite of his immense wisdom and his mysterious breath, (he) had a human burden, an earthly condition that kept him involved in the small problems of daily life" (Ibid.:15). Melquíades combined a knowledge of the ultimate secrets of the magical vision of the world with the capacity to introduce the people of Macondo to new ideas, to technological inventions and to marvelous objects from the outside world.

The insomnia plague, and the consequent loss of memory, are

rich metaphors for the process of socio-economic coercion that forced the Indians out of their lands and clearly symbolize the ideological forms of colonialism that during the last 450 years have attempted to deprive the different Indian groups of South America of their cultural memory and collective identity.

This forced acculturation has been perceptively characterized by Darcy Ribeiro as a process through which the different Indian groups, after being deprived of the rich specificities and peculiarities of their cultural traditions, found themselves in the condition of being "generic Indians" rather than actually assimilated into an alleged "national society." However, after a careful analysis of all the factors which contributed to the systematic cultural disintegration and even physical extermination of a great number of the Brazilian tribal groups, Ribeiro argues that these groups still maintain a source of strength. It lies in an element of continuity which fights back to maintain the singularity of each group, despite powerful outside pressures towards homogeneity. This continuity is based on a predisposition of each particular group to develop forms of communal social relations that intensify its solidarity, combined with the Indians' capacity to affirm their self-dignity vis-à-vis strangers through the restoration of old myths, or through the elaboration of new visions of the world (1973:28, 331).

In One hundred years of solitude, Melquíades liberates the people of Macondo from the insomnia plague because he bridges the gap between the precapitalist and the capitalist worlds, between community

and nation, between the magical world view and the social and economic realities of every-day life. He symbolizes the process by which many of the Indian groups in South America today are trying to recover their cultural memory and their self-identity, not by simply going back to an elusive pre-capitalist past, but by becoming engaged - voluntarily or involuntarily - in the complex realities of modern society. Like all of us, the Indians of the highlands, the tropical forest, and the marginal urban areas are immersed in the hegemonic world of industrial capitalism, embodied in - but certainly not bound - by the political limits of the particular nation-states. Consequently, the new visions of the vanquished, their present ideological practices, emerge from the actual social relations generated in this specific historical context. These visions express, at the level of consciousness, the contradictions which originate in the articulation of different modes of production which characterizes South American social formations today.

The ideological conflicts are fought out within the legal, political, economic and religious institutions where people live those contradictions. This process involves ideological accommodation, as well as conflict, by which all sides transform their traditions and their definitions of themselves and of others. When these redefinitions take place in ethnically divided societies, the issue of "ethnicity" and "ethnic tradition" becomes a crucial analytical variable. The concept of "ethnicity" is complex, and has been used with different meanings in South American ethnography. Frequently, a study of ethnicity meant an "objective" description of a given social group based on certain cultural

characteristics such as language, dress, forms of kinship, and the like, all of which defined an alleged "form of life" for that group. However, in the practice of inter-ethnic relations, each group may interpret and modify the meaning of those characteristics in order to construct an identity which would enable it to confront a specific situation of interaction. For the purpose of this paper, "ethnicity" is then analyzed as any other ideological practice, which is socially organized and manipulated by different groups - both Indian and non-Indian - according to the dynamics of class relations in concrete historical contexts. In each specific case it is necessary to examine how the dominant classes use their control over economic, political, and cultural practices in trying to impose or co-opt the subordinate classes into accepting the dominant definition of "ethnicity."

In more general terms, Raymond Williams has argued that hegemony, or the social practices by which the dominant classes establish ideological supremacy, involves a dialectic. In order to reproduce itself, hegemony has to be continuously renewed, defended, and modified, and in this process, it will attempt to neutralize, change or incorporate the oppositional ideologies generated by the subordinate groups (1977:113-4).

When examining this phenomenon in the South America context, it is necessary to consider an additional factor. There, successive colonialism (Inca, Spanish or Portuguese, and North American) have generated different layers of ideological practices based on quite contradictory principles and meanings. Consequently, both dominant

and subordinate classes have, in the course of time, selectively used these different ideological contents to inform the practices that Williams sees as constituting the dynamic interrelationship between hegemony and counterhegemony.

In the study of the conversion to Protestantism among highland Indian peasants in Ecuador (Muratorio 1980) the concept of "ideological articulation" was used in an attempt to avoid at least three pitfalls found in the anthropological literature on South America. First, the static character of concepts such as "survivals" and "persistence of tradition" prevalent in theories of modernization, and the idea of a "pre-hispanic Andean world view" so dear to the structuralists. Second, the assumption implicit in many theories of change, that retention or redefinition of tradition is a practice exclusive to the subordinate allegedly "traditional" groups. Third, the oversimplified Marxist perspective that regards as almost inevitable the success of capitalism in eliminating or effectively incorporating all pre-capitalist ideological practices into its own rationality.

Although the concept of ideological articulation may be useful in describing a particular situation, it does not explain the actual social processes by which a particular group deals with diverse and competing ideological contents to make sense of a specific experience and to be able to act on the basis of an informed consciousness. Theories of acculturation, modernization, cultural ecology, different versions of structuralism, or economistic Marxism seem to provide partial or no answers at all to this problem, at least when applied to the South



American ethnographic area. These approaches overlook the relation between theory and practice and ignore the complexities of the social experience by forgetting the subject, the realities of history, or both.

For the Amazonian basin, the work of Darcy Ribeiro (1973) provides an interesting analytical strategy. Trying to deal with the general issue of the confrontation of all the different Amazonian tribal groups of Brasil with a homogeneous "civilizing" front, presented to them by the white national society, Ribeiro makes a pioneer attempt to examine the main socio-economic, legal, political and ideological aspects of the articulation of two, or more, modes of production in that particular social formation.

Recently, and for the Andean area, June Nash's study of the Bolivian miners (1979) deals, more specifically, with the problem of ideological articulation as presented here. The miners are able to handle, without apparent contradictions, ideological beliefs and practices generated in the context of pre-hispanic, colonial, and capitalist systems of social relations. Furthermore, Nash provides a solution to the puzzle. She argues that the miners solve the apparent contradictions in their own belief system neither by uncritically accepting the unifying ideologies offered to them by the church, the politicians, and the union leaders, nor by falling into an easy syncretism, but by compartmentalizing their beliefs in time and space. If the Virgin of the mineshaft is revered at level zero, the Devil reigns undisputed deep down in the mine, while the Marxist-Leninist

ideologies are quite alive inside the unions. Some working days in the week are set aside for recognizing the pagan forces, while Sundays and Saints' Days are devoted to the Christian deities (1979:6-7).

Nash's study represents a systematic attempt to undertake an analysis of complex ideological practices in the context of changing social relations of production. Mainly because of its depth, it poses at least as many problems as it solves. For example, is this compartmentalization in time and space peculiar to the miners or can it be generalized to other groups? What happens if the subordinate groups are forced to choose between these different ideologies because agents of the state and of the capitalist economy try to impose upon them their own conceptions of time and space? Are not "time" and "space" also ideological constructions which vary with changes in the social relations of production?

In order to start examining some of the complex issues posed by these questions and by the general problem of the possible mechanisms of ideological articulation in South America, two analytical strategies are suggested here. First, in-depth studies of the changing historical versions of the dominant ideological practices in the specific socio-economic context where they are generated. Second, to study the visions of the vanquished in their close interrelation with these different versions of the dominant ideologies. What follows in this paper is a preliminary attempt to reflect, in these terms, on a selective sample of such complex situations.

Among the many possible ideological contents, the analysis

concentrates on the "image of the Indian," or "ethnicity as ideology," as it is developed in selected historical periods by the Indians, by the State and the dominant classes it represents, by the missionaries, and by the anthropologists. The assumption is that when these images become active elements in ideological practices, they play a significant role in guiding the behavior of social groups and classes. Consequently at different time periods the images have to be examined in their specific organizational contexts. Through this analysis of the changing conceptions about the Indians in the practices of all these groups, it might be possible to penetrate the meaning of social relations between Indians and non-Indians and to reveal more clearly the intentions behind the policies directed at the Indians and their responses to those policies. Finally, it will hopefully permit an interpretation of the context in which some anthropological approaches to the South American Indians have been generated.

#### The Savage and the Innocent

As has already been mentioned, the Spanish colonial system dominated by merchant capital, represented an attempt to destroy or to incorporate native modes of production in order to appropriate the Indians' lands, and their labor. Thus, it is obvious that in the minds of the colonizers, "Indian" meant "colonized," and this concept was used to place all native populations into an undifferentiated category of generalized inferiority. Marx (1975:254) has argued that one of the forms in which ideology operates is by representing particular interests

as universal interests. In Spanish America, the particular interests of the colonizers were legitimized by presenting them as the universal interests of "civilization." According to Rowe, the term "civilization" did not become current before the end of the seventeenth century, but its sixteenth century equivalent was "civility." This latter term, taken from the Greek and Roman political theory, referred to the existence of organized government and the qualities of good citizenship (1964:6-7). This definition of "civility" allowed the Spanish administration to categorize the colonized as "savages," or people without law, government, or religion who could then be legitimately incorporated into the empire.

This idea of the savage nature of the Indians, illustrated in Europe with "live specimens" taken as captives (Rowe 1964:3; Hemming 1978:11-13) did much to influence European political philosophy. However, in the Americas it could be maintained only while the Spaniards had contacts with the Arawaks and Caribs, or the Portuguese with the Tupi tribes of Brasil. It was soon shattered by the Spaniards' confrontation with organized political empires, such as the Aztec and the Inca.

In order to deny this contradiction in the dominant ideology, the colonizers effectively used a mechanism which Williams (1977:108-114) has described as the neutralization or absorption of possible ideological contents into the hegemonic ideology. They legitimized the incorporation of the native aristocracy into the colonial system of domination, by introducing a European tradition of dichotomizing the social order

into nobles and commoners. They were thus able to justify the privileges granted to the Inca nobility, until the end of the eighteenth century. However, as Spalding has argued for Perú, the body of Colonial legislation was based on the premise of the natural inferiority of the Indians. Colonial laws defined the Indians as "miserable," declared them "minors," and put them under the guardianship of the corregidor, or protector of the Indians (1974:155-57).

In relation to the discussion of this last ideological mechanism, Giddens has noted that making social relations appear as natural law is a common recourse used by dominant classes to maintain the status quo (1979:195). More specifically, Barnett and Silverman have argued that in pre-capitalist societies, the incorporation of an ideological element such as "race" allows the hegemonic ideology to represent the dominated as incomplete or defective individuals (1979:42).

Once the colony became established, the routine tasks of a centralized bureaucratic state demanded more accurate knowledge about the colonized than the impressionistic accounts provided by the early conquistadors, and this was the task of the Crown officials. Rowe notes that a large part of the ethnographies written in the sixteenth century represented a form of applied anthropology carried out by those officials or by missionaries. However, due to the secrecy surrounding Spanish policy, most of these reports remained as "classified" documents, and were not published until modern times (1964:3). Recently, they have become one of the best sources for Latin-American ethnohistory.

The missionaries were clearly assigned the ideological function of changing the Indians' world views. In order to extirpate idolatry, they became not only some of the best ethnographers of native cultures, but significantly influenced state policies. Furthermore, it has been suggested that Bartolomé de las Casas may be considered the father of the tradition of "politically engaged" anthropology (Sevilla Casas, 1977:15-29). Las Casas was not only a philosopher but also a clever politician. He used his massive first hand ethnographic descriptions of the Indians' condition to actually change Spanish official policy and, in his old age, radically called into question the legitimacy of Spanish domination in the Americas (Ibid.:21). The philosophic basis of his debate with Sepúlveda was about whether or not the Indian was a rational being. By having the Indians recognized as human his victory put an end to the image of the Indian as wild man, at least in the official Spanish view (Robe 1972:47) if not in its colonial practice.

While these intricate intellectual debates were taking place at the higher levels of imperial bureaucracy, it is clear that in the everyday practice of colonial life, the first colonizers which included common immigrants, artisans, lawyers, sailors and some women, in addition to the soldiers of good fortune, were not concerned with philosophical speculations about the human or non-human nature of the Indians. For instance, in many of the letters they wrote from Perú (see Lockhart and Otte 1976) they mentioned only those characteristics of the Indians that were most relevant for their personal colonizing objectives. The

Indians are depicted as a source of wealth, of labor, or of prestige; an obstacle or an asset according to the military and economic strategies of the moment.

In sum, one can argue that the first images about the Indians were probably influenced by a long oral tradition about wild men and women that had been popular in Spain and in the rest of Europe since the middle ages (Robe 1972:40-1). These images contained the ever-present internal contradiction between, on the one hand, wild men as incarnation of the devil, as chaos, and as heresy and, on the other hand, as a noble creature living in perfect harmony with nature (Husband 1980:12-13). However, as it happens to most myths, the myth of the wild men changed in content and meaning as the society that created it transformed its structure and world views (White 1972:5). The gentle nature of the Arawaks, contrasted with the fierceness and cannibalism of the Caribs and the Tupinambas, confirmed for the colonizers that mythical duality of the wildman's image.

Which one of these contrasting images the European chose to stress in America depended very closely on the changes in the social relations of production. For example, Hemming has shown how the image of the "peaceful," "innocent," "generous," "beautiful," and "noble" Brazilian Indians (so common in the French and Portuguese early accounts), soon turned into the picture of "the fearful savage," once the original trading relations between Indians and Portuguese were transformed into institutionalized slavery in the profitable sugar plantations (1978:1-44). Then the warrior Tupi tribes became the archetype of the "ignoble

savage" (Rowe 1964:5).

By contrast, the side of this dual conception about the Indians which was stressed in Europe, reflected the specific socio-economic developments of that society. In the hands of the social and political philosophers of the Enlightenment, the Indian of the Americas was turned into the noble savage, and was primarily used as a form of social criticism for the evils of European civilization. From there, it influenced the anthropological tradition if, as Diamond (1974:220) and others have observed, we can consider it to be the natural heir of the Enlightenment.

This discussion has tried to demonstrate that the homogeneity of the colonial ideology of domination was only apparent. The actual practice of Spanish administration was also plagued with ambiguities. The constant conflicts among the Crown officials, the conquistadors, and the missionaries hindered the consolidation of their hegemonic power, and left enough room for the existence of some culturally autonomous, self-contained indigenous communities, (especially in the Amazon basin), as well as for the class divisions internal to Indian society in the Highlands. The Inca nobility, the curacas (or local chiefs), and the ordinary peasants were differently located in the social hierarchy of the colonial system. The images they formed about themselves, the different ways in which they restored or redefined their traditions, and the ideologies that guided their continuous rebellions against the colonial system reflected those social divisions under the constraints imposed by the Spanish domination.



The most articulate responses to the colonizers' legitimation of the conquest were formulated at the beginning of the seventeenth century by two Peruvian chroniclers, Garcilaso de la Vega and Guamán Poma de Ayala. The writings of these two men who could claim descent from the Inca nobility, represent the first intellectual challenge to those Spanish historiographers who justified the conquest as a spiritual and political liberation of the Indians from their previous "idolatrous" and "tyrannical" forms of government. Through recent work done by structural anthropologists and ethnohistorians (Ossio:1977; Wachtel:1977), we have a better understanding of their contrasting reconstruction of the Indian tradition.

Garcilaso was a mestizo, the child of a marriage between the Inca and the Spanish aristocracies, who spent most of his life in Europe. There, he was influenced by neo-Platonic philosophy and by sixteenth century humanism (Wachtel 1977:160-61). Caught in the ambiguities of his own mestizo socialization, Garcilaso tried to resolve them by presenting a total idealization of his Inca past. In his phantasy, the Incas were the first to bring civilization into a pre-Inca world populated by wild men thus laying the ground for true Christian civilization. In his vision, the Inca empire becomes an archetype of harmony and rationality, a lost paradise or, as Wachtel argues, a "nostalgic utopia" (Ibid.:162). Garcilaso reconstructs his own version of the Indian tradition to glorify it, but it contains a tragedy from which the Indians cannot be liberated. His solution leads into the trap of mestizaje as total assimilation of the Indians into the

dominant culture.

On the contrary, both Ossio and Wachtel argue that Guaman Poma's chronicle represents the true structure of the native world view. Although obviously influenced by Spanish culture, Guaman Poma was a pure Indian who refused to recognize any legitimacy to the Spanish conquest. In order to preserve what he considered to be truly Indian, he proposed a total separation between the Spanish and Indian worlds. In his eyes, all mestizos were despicable creatures whose main sin consisted in disturbing the ideal endogamic order of the Andean world (Ossio, 1977:70). Ossio explains that Guaman Poma did not see the conquest as a historical event but as a cataclysm, a total chaos. His image of the Indian is not the outcome of ethnographic observations but of the logic of mythical thinking, where the Inca stands for a metaphysical principle capable of restoring order. His solution to the Indian tragedy is a messianic one.

These contrasting Indian images show that there can be at least two different reconstructions of the same Indian tradition, one leading to reformism and acculturation and the other to a form of millenarian liberation. In fact, one or the other of these visions inspired the Indian rebellions throughout the whole period of Spanish domination.

According to the now extensive literature on these rebellions, it can be tentatively argued that millenarian movements seemed to have started at the grass-roots level among the highland peasants (e.g. Taqui Ongoy rebellion, see Wachtel 1973, 1977; Millones 1973) and among the tribal groups of the Amazonian tropical forest (e.g. Campa rebellion,

see Varese 1973; Quijos rebellion, see Oberem 1980). They were led by native priests and shamans, who the Indians consider to be professionally qualified to deal with myth and tradition and who can translate new situations into mythical categories thus giving meaning to reality. What Varese - following Eliade - maintains about the role of a mythical world view in the Campa rebellion applies to all these millenarian movements. Myth explains reality and provides hope because it offers a way to "endure" the evil presence of white men. Liberation comes in the person of the shaman who can always recover the cultural continuity given by mythic time, in which rebellion becomes a sacred war (Varese 1973:303-304).

By contrast, the established Indian merchants and landowners of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were basically reformist and the rebellions they led were "colonial rebellions" (Spalding, 1974:190). Some of them might actually have been influenced by Garcilaso's romantic vision of an idyllic Inca past using it as a banner to unify the Indians and attempting to create a common identity. This recreation of tradition obscured the real class differences and other social divisions existing among the Indians by presenting the particular interests of a privileged few as universal. However, because this vision was staged as an oppositional ideology expressing a clear antagonism between Indians and whites, it had a successful appeal for a large majority of the Indian population.

The Spanish administration recognized its subversive character and reacted not only by brutally suppressing the rebellions but, after

the 1780's revolt of Tupac Amaru II, by actually depriving the Indian nobility of all its privileges. By 1825, this class had been legally abolished (Spalding, *Ibid.*:185-192). The ground was then prepared for the gradual transformation of all Indians into a generalized category of "despicable poor."

The Nation-State: The Indian rediscovered

Independence from Spain favored a creole landowning and commercial oligarchy, altering and actually worsening the socio-economic situation of the majority of the Indian population. The leaders of the independence movements, inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and liberal economics tried to change the conditions of the Indians through legislation, which they did not have the power to enforce. The abolition of legal inequalities and the Indians' communal land tenure system, were tried in order to turn the Indians into "citizens" and into "independent farmers." But because equality proved unenforceable, and the system of private property rights was an alien institution both policies further deprived the Indians of their lands, allowing the expansion and consolidation of the haciendas. Paradoxically, in the new liberal republics, the church replaced the corregidor by assuming the legal guardianship of the Indians, thus legitimizing the hacienda system as natural and sacred. The many Indian uprisings of the nineteenth century were then atomized and circumscribed within the closed limits of the haciendas, in the economic and social spaces defined by the landowning class as its own "feudal" domains.

Meanwhile, during this period the Amazonian Indians continued to suffer under missionaries, colonizers, and extractors of raw materials, all of whom greatly affected the Indians' way of life. The Amazonian tropical forest also became the stage where a large number of European explorers, scientists, ethnographers and artists fought their way fascinated by the exuberance of tropical landscapes, plant and animal species. Their well-illustrated books brought the hothouse darkness of the jungle into the European living room (Honour 1975:175). These books also conveyed an image of the Indians as romantic exotica, or alternatively as representatives of a barbaric stage in the evolution of mankind.

The massacre of Indians during the Amazonia rubber boom and the scandals it revealed to the British public in the early twentieth century, finally brought to the European consciousness the reality of Indians as human beings. The Antislavery Society then started a battle for the defense of the Amerindian peoples which continues to this day through several organizations. The anthropological work that they inspire and support follows quite closely the tradition of Las Casas.

It is in the first half of the twentieth century, with the emergence and consolidation of the Indigenista movement that a significant change took place in the perception of the Indian and in the "ideology of ethnicity" in South America. It is impossible to present here all the different aspects of this complex movement. The analysis will focus on the images of the Indian reflected in three of the better known forms of Indigenismo: the romantic, the reformist, and the revolutionary.

In the Andean world, the first Indigenista ideas are expressed in a form of romantic literature which brings back the image of the Indian as a noble, pastoral savage. As in the romantic movement in Europe, this is not a savage who reasons but one who feels (White 1972:282). In the early Indigenista novels, the main opposition is one between two archetypes: the hypocritical and civilized urban priests and mestizos, against the uncivilized but innocent pure Indian peasants, the true children of nature and God (Klaiber 1977:77).

A second form of Indigenismo, which considers the Indian as an "object of political and social reform" (Klaiber Ibid.:71) is espoused by a rising group of intellectuals and politicians. They are the representatives of a new bourgeoisie who emerges out of the commercial prosperity stimulated by the increased involvement of the Andean countries in the exports of raw materials in the aftermath of World War I (Chevalier 1970:189-90). This image of the Indian as an object of social reform is caught up in the actual conflict between that rising bourgeoisie and the old landed oligarchy and is used in legislation to undermine the power of the "feudal" structures regarded as an obstacle to the penetration of national and foreign capital. However, it is interesting to note that the rhetoric generated by some of these intellectuals has close similarities with that ideology which Barrington Moore has labelled "catonism" and sees as prevalent among a landowning nobility threatened by commercialism. In "catonism," the peasant is seen as the backbone of society, and the peasant way of life as an organic whole connected to the soil and morally superior to the disintegrated

world of urban civilization (1966:490-92).

Some of the Peruvian Indigenistas, for instance Valcarcel, espoused "Andeanism" under a political banner and as a doctrine of spiritual revivification. According to Valcarcel, the Andes had created a new race of Indians, that "rejuvenated by contact with the earth will demand the right to act," (quoted in Klaiber 1977:82). But, as in the cases discussed by Barrington Moore, the "peasants alleged attachment to the soil becomes the subject of much praise and little action" (Ibid.:492). Actually, the new economic forces contributed to the deterioration of the situation of the Indians. The growing demand for highland products such as wool, leather and cattle, increased the commercial value of the land, and encouraged landowners and entrepreneurs to further expropriations against the Indians (Chevalier 1970:193). These offensives led to several Indian uprisings which mostly took the form of land invasions, and legal reclamations of communal lands. These were not nativistic Indian insurrections, but peasant attempts to confront the increasing attacks of the hacendados through legal channels. However, as Hobsbawm has noted, we must not underestimate the potential revolutionary character of the "entrenched legalism of the peasants" in the Andean context. "For one thing, they are inclined to reject as morally invalid and 'unnatural' law, however constitutionally correct, which takes away common lands" (1974:124). In the most famous of these insurrections, the Atushparia uprising of 1885 in Perú, only a mestizo intellectual attempted to revive the Inca Empire as a nativistic ideology to inspire the Indians (see Stein 1976:179)

but he found no followers among them.

These uprisings and the denunciation of injustices against the Indians by the Indigenista writers finally inspired some studies of the socio-economic conditions of the Indians and legislation to ameliorate them. Most of this legislation remained on the books or its application was delayed, as Davies (1970) has demonstrated in his extensive study of Indian legislation in Peru during this period.

Mariátegui is the most forceful proponent of the third form of Indigenismo. This radical version transforms the image of the Indian from an "object" of social reform into the "subject" of socialist revolution. During his stay in Europe, Mariátegui became converted to Marxist ideas stimulated by the success of the Russian and Mexican revolutions, but was also influenced by the voluntarism of Bergson, Sorel, and Labriola (Klaiber 1977:100-108). He saw the roots of the Indian problem in the economic structure of land tenure, and considered the Indians as the carriers of what he called the "myth" of the revolution. In this conceptualization of the Indian problem and its solution, there is a renewed idealization of the Inca Empire, this time emphasizing its alleged socialism. The ideas of the Russian populists led Mariátegui and many of his followers to an idealization of the Indian Ayllu or community, which they regarded as the basis of a new socialist agrarian structure, and small-scale egalitarianism.

All Indigenistas coincided in their characterization of the oppressive role that the parish priests and the institutionalized Catholic church played vis-à-vis the Indians. But they had different



views about the Indians' own religion. . Some Indigenistas viewed the Indian "pagan" religion as an obstacle to their spirit of rebellion, others looked nostalgically to what they considered to be the pragmatic this-worldly emphasis of Inca religion. They were also divided in their assessment of Protestantism. Some saw it as a way out for the Indians' backwardness (Klaiber 1977:87-88). Mariátegui discarded Protestantism for its obvious ties with capitalism (Ibid.:113). The same polemics are going on today.

In the 1950's and 1960's, not the revolutionary, but the reformist ideas of Indigenismo guided the practices of the applied anthropologists who worked in several projects in collaboration with the state governments, of which the Peru-Cornell project in Vicos-Ancash is perhaps the best known example. The underlying reformist assumption of the modernization approaches used in applied anthropology, at that time, was that the Indians "lacked" many characteristics of civilization. Once they had acquired them, they would be integrated into national life, also defined mostly in culturalist terms. The Indian problem became one of substitution of good habits for bad ones. In those approaches one can still detect traces of the nineteenth century conception of primitive men who came to be regarded as an example of arrested humanity, as those who had failed to raise themselves to the levels achieved by civilized man through science and technology (White 1972:34). By the 1950's, the racial deficiencies which in nineteenth century Social Darwinism were seen as the primary explanation for the conditions of the Indians, had been transformed into cultural deficiencies.

As applied in the Andean area, the theory of modernization introduced the ideas of the Indians' "attachment to tradition" and "resistance to change." Many of the anthropologists working in this area were inspired by Redfield's paradigm of the relation between little and great tradition and by his conceptualization of peasant or folk.

There are some striking similarities between some of the ideas of Indigenismo examined before, and Redfield's definition of "folk society and culture"; specifically, with reference to his characterization of the peasant community as "homogeneous and egalitarian," the peasants' almost mystical "attachment to the soil," and his "sober, earthly ethic" (1969:78). Totally removed from the specific relations of production, Redfield's peasant becomes an "arrangement of humanity" (1969:17). As Silverman argues, Redfield defines "culture" and "peasant-elite relations" almost exclusively in ideological terms (1979:54-57). Redfield does not question the role tradition often plays in reproducing the status quo, and in keeping little tradition, little.

However, I would argue that Redfield's distinction between little and great tradition, and his analysis of the interaction between the two, at least poses the problem of ideological articulation which is pertinent to this discussion. His solution to this problem and that of some of his collaborators and disciples (see Wolf 1974:17), leans too heavily towards an unidirectional interaction where "folk" ideologies become mere parochial versions of a great tradition enacted

in ritual and performances. These solutions still disregard the social relations in which those rituals and performances are imbedded, and the problems of power and ideological hegemony.

#### The State-incorporated Indian

The character of the economic and political penetration of capitalism into the rural areas and the tropical forest of South America is complex and changes rapidly. The search for land as a source of raw material rather than labor, the forceful introduction of consumer goods, and the increasing presence of the enlarged bureaucracies of consolidated nation-states, have brought into these areas new fronts of conflicts, new advocates of policies, new salesmen of civilization. For the effective penetration of capitalism, the dominant classes and their auxiliary groups will attempt to establish those political, legal, and ideological practices required for the stable operation of the new mode of production.

At first sight, the groups who articulate the dominant ideologies defining what the "Indians are" and what "they ought to be" seem to be the same ones who performed that function in colonial times: the bureaucrats and the missionaries. However, a closer look shows a more complex picture. The new bureaucrats represent several economic, social and political agencies of the state whose objectives are sometimes in competition with each other; the Protestant missionaries belong to different sects of more or less fundamentalist orientations; and the Catholic missionaries are divided between radicals and conservatives.

In addition, political groups and union officials, school teachers, foreign volunteers, and community developers compete for the Indians' minds, while local merchants and foreign or national representatives of multinational corporations compete for the Indians' money, lands or labor power. All the areas where these encounters take place are now interconnected by modern communication systems which provide the means of ideological production and distribution, putting a transistor radio even in the most isolated village, and a television set in the smallest town.

The ideological practices and the policies of all these agencies vis-à-vis the Indians cannot be regarded as a homogeneous front. They often represent the interests of different class fractions within the state, whose economic and political strategies may not always coincide. In dependent capitalist countries, the ideological interests of imperialism are channeled through different agents whose influence varies, within or outside the state, according to national and international circumstances. Furthermore, in these countries, the ideological practices prevalent in previous social formations, such as paternalism, racism, patronage, and various forms of magical thinking are still maintained, and not only among the Indians. Whites and Mestizos belonging to the ruling groups may use these ideological practices, sometimes in subtle articulations with capitalist ideologies, in order to consolidate their power (see Muratorio 1980). All these factors contribute to explain the difficulties and ambiguities involved in the process by which the dominant classes try to establish their hegemony in late capitalist-dependent countries.

In order to consolidate its dominance and legitimize its power in the modern South American states, the bourgeoisies require a certain degree of unification of the country, political centralization, and cultural homogeneity. These three goals are intimately connected and their implementation involves ideological practices which affect the Indian population.

Economic integration is needed in order to incorporate the majority of the population into a national market for the commodities now being produced by foreign and national industries. As a result of the new division of labor created by the restricted and dependent development of the South American countries, the industrial bourgeoisie, unlike the traditional landowning class, does not need to incorporate the majority of the Indians into the labor force. For these bourgeoisies, the Indian, like the rest of the population, is visualized as a potential consumer.

Given the fact that at the present time, South America, and specially Amazonia, has become a preferred region for the extraction of minerals and other raw materials, economic integration also means state policies to incorporate previous areas of the country into capitalist production. Some of the consequences of these developments are very familiar: the spreading of old and new diseases, ecological disasters, forced expropriation of land, genocide and ethnocide. As during the conquest and from then on, the Indians are the main characters in this drama. They are the ones who are being transformed from hunters and gatherers or peasants into reluctant farmers, petty merchants,

proletarians, and seasonally unemployed marginals in the urban centers.

Several anthropologists have documented the impacts of these socio-economic policies, especially on Amazonian Indian populations (e.g. Davis 1977; Varese 1973; Ribeiro 1973; Whitten 1976). The ideological practices underlying these policies are less well documented.

With reference to the specific strategies of colonization of the Amazon, it is interesting to reflect, for instance, on the ideological construction of a category such as "space" made by the state and other agencies. They define their Amazonian regions as "empty spaces," thus ignoring their long and effective occupation by indigenous groups. These groups have reacted with strong statements about their "ancestral rights" to those spaces, and with even stronger determination against their "illegal occupation" by outsiders. The actual social conflicts which are going on in Amazonia today are evidence of how these ideological practices are grounded on social relations of economic and political power. For instance, experts from state agencies and private companies are now trying to define for the Indians what constitutes an "adequate management" of their ecological space. Anthropologists (see Ribeiro 1973:202-203; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972:1141-42), have already demonstrated how, in different regions of the Amazon, the missionaries' conceptions of the space of the Indians' communal houses (malocas) as "sinful" and "promiscuous," contributed to destroy not only a whole symbolic system but the intricate net of social and economic relations in which those symbols were embedded. Thus, the Indians were left

defenseless and ready to be integrated into a capitalist system of social relations.

The states try to establish political centralization in order to consolidate their control over the newly-incorporated areas, and to safeguard their national borders. Past and present wars over resources (especially oil) found in these frontier regions testify to this need. Political centralization implies the extension of a repressive state apparatus and a legal system over the entire territory, and also the establishment of political institutions, such as universal suffrage, by which the still great number of illiterate Indian men and women can participate in the political process. Defined now as citizens, the Indians owe allegiance to a national state where, according to bourgeois ideology, all private interests converge. Due to development programs, the state increasingly becomes an active participant in the process of political socialization of the Indians population. Different state agencies, often in collaboration with foreign and national missionaries, control education, the training of bilingual teachers, and the election of leaders of indigenous communities. More recently, states have started hiring Indians to work directly inside state agencies.

Through education, the media, and the socialization of the Indians in the armed forces, the state displays and manipulates symbols and rituals of patriotism to legitimize an official version of the national tradition, in which a carefully selected vision of the Indian past has been incorporated.

The third goal of the state, cultural homogeneity, is the most

explicitly ideological because it requires the elaboration, maintenance, and exhibition of symbols and values to create a "national identity." The integration of different cultural and ethnic groups into a "culturally homogeneous state" becomes a national problem. In those South American countries with large indigenous populations, the need to achieve cultural homogeneity may be explained by the fact that the official ideology of ethnicity is "mestizaje." In ethnic terms, the state defines all members of the national society as mestizos. By assuming that all citizens have equal rights in a homogeneous national society, the ideology of mestizaje negates the existence of factual differences of class and ethnicity. Through policies of assimilation and often direct ethnocide, the state attempts to neutralize all possible oppositional Indian ideologies of ethnicity (Muratorio 1981). Only very recently, the political pressures from indigenous organizations have forced some South American governments to question the legitimacy of "mestizaje" as national policy. This problem is far from being solved.

The paradox is that after destroying the Indians as unique social and cultural groups, the state tries to recover them as cultural objects for tourism and to feed the myth of the national heritage. Ironically, this is the other face of ethnocide. The state tries to impose upon the Indians its own definition of what their identity should be. This is done through diverse policies to preserve Indians cultures, now empty of their material and social bases. When folklorists and tourists deplore the "deterioration of the fiestas," or the "decline of folk crafts," the state hires international experts to improve and promote



native folklore. A new clean image of the Indian is depicted on T.V. and on tourist brochures, promoting visits to different Indian groups and "typical" Indian markets. The noble savage has been turned into a commodity.

Throughout the history of the Americas, there have been several different controversies about the moral and political implications of the missionaries' work among the Indians. Presently, in Latin America, the positions vis-à-vis this issue are quite polarized - often in very simplistic terms - between the missionaries' propaganda to justify their work, and their opponents' propaganda which often portrays all missionaries as part of a large imperialist conspiracy. However, it is important to examine the ideological assumptions about the Indians made by both sides in this controversy because they inform their evangelical and political practices. It can be argued that both positions coincide in treating the Indians as cultural dupes, or as half-persons who can either be conned into self-destruction, or immediately turned from "primitive half-humans" into "civilized persons" by the preaching of the Bible. These assumptions pose some interesting theoretical questions about how missionaries and Indians conceptualize and incorporate into practices issues, such as "person," "property," "labor," "time," "space," and "progress." However, it is impossible to generalize about the different ideologies of the missionaries without further empirical research. As Burrige has noted, missionaries represent a wide range of nationalities and cultures, although in South America the Protestant missionaries seem to be mostly North American, and Catholic missionaries, Italian and

Spaniards. However, as Burridge argues, all coincide in their main objective: "that those who are addressed should say 'no' to the past, change their minds, and enter into new ways with a positive 'yes'" (1979:209).

The important difference between radical and conservative Catholic missionaries, as well as the difference among the diverse Protestant sects, seem to be the "methods adopted to bring about this transformation," "what particular traditional ways should be rejected," "how a change of mind may be authenticated," and "how the entry into new ways may be expressed," (Burridge Ibid.). These different methods clearly reflect not only the ethical and moral components of the two Christian religions but also their images of what the Indians are and should become. They reflect the difference between the idea of a transformation brought about through the "integral development of the individual," removed from historical reality, as exemplified in the Summer Institute of Linguistics ideology (see Wise, Loos and Davis 1976) or through a change in the existing structures of domination, as exemplified by the new liberation theology espoused by the progressive new Catholic priests (see Klaiber 1977:114; Centro Regional Salesiano 1981).

The Indians, as they have always done, reassert their creative capacity adapting and confronting these different official and evangelical definitions of their own reality. For instance, an analysis of the behavior of Protestant highland Indians of Ecuador indicates that the role of Protestantism among peasants is an ambiguous one. On the

one hand it seems to have had the effect of "secularizing the world," paving the way for establishing capitalist social relations in the countryside. On the other hand, through the ideological and ritual forms of their own version of Protestantism, the Indian peasants in the highlands have been able to maintain and even to revive many of their traditional relations of reciprocity. In the process, this version of Protestantism seems to have lost the emphasis on individualism and competition which characterized its urban European version (Muratorio 1980, 1981). This is an example of how the Indians incorporate, transform or reject aspects of the ideologies presented to or imposed upon them by those who want to civilize, integrate or convert them. But, as has been already mentioned, their ideological practices are now grounded on indigenous political organizations such as unions, associations, federations, national and international councils, and congresses through which the Indians are proposing a re-evaluation and re-affirmation of their heritage. Precisely when each particular nation-state tries to incorporate them, some Indian groups are developing new organizational strategies to internationalize their opposition. Like Melquíades in Macondo, these organizations and their leaders come to play a concrete role in the articulation of pre-capitalist and capitalist social relations and world views. To borrow an expression from E.P. Thomson, they become important actors in the "dialogue between being and consciousness" (1979:200). The realities of exploitation prompt the indigenous organizations to develop strategies for the recovery of their lands, for the control and development of their

resources, and for their political representation. These strategies include different forms of oppositional consciousness, which in the past were often expressed in rebellions, and now result in subtle transformations of native social and ideological practices, where ethnic, religious and class interests articulate in new and creative ways. However, the Indians' voice is not necessarily a unified one. The complexities of these competing influences translate into actual conflicts internal to the Indian groups and organizations, as well as into different forms of confrontations between them and the dominant classes or other influential social groups.

Some Indian groups see their liberation from what they regard as a white-dominated society first as Aymaras, Quechuas, or Shuaras i.e., as Indians rather than as peasants or proletarians. For other groups, Protestantism has become an alternative ideology expressing a form of spiritual and ethnic liberation. For others still, their struggle is part of a joint class venture with other workers and peasants.

The formation of an oppositional ideology and a liberating consciousness is an arduous process. It involves combating and demystifying the present bourgeois ideology, which in close articulation with residual forms of colonial consciousness, functions to reproduce the present class relations. The final outcome is not certain. Since colonial times, different forms of hegemonic domination have produced not only Indian rebellions, but also cultural fragmentation, assimilation, passivity and very specific forms of alienated consciousness among the Indians.

Throughout this paper a number of critical points have been made about anthropological approaches as they apply to the study of South American Indians specifying some of their flaws in explaining the complexities of the situations the Indians confront today, without pretending to provide a final answer. The main strategy followed has been to deal with the problem of ideological articulation, by examining the visions of the vanquished in their intricate and changing relations with the dominant ideological practices in specific socio-economic formations. The historical analysis made attempted to show that anthropology should not be regarded as a mere reflection of colonialism or imperialism. However, it is possible to say that too often anthropological approaches to South American Indians have suffered from "a complicated exercise in cultural narcissism," the feature that Diamond rightly attributes to all forms of imperialism (1974:26). In studying the Indians anthropologists have repeatedly mirrored their own images of the primitive. Maybe it is time to turn away from the mirror for a while, and let the Indians reflect their own images, unless one wants to risk one hundred years of solitude.

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### Notes

1. The data on traditional violence are from my fieldwork with adult Napo Quichua women, which I started in the early 1990s, and from my earlier fieldwork on the life history of a Napo Quichua elder and his wife in the Tena-Archidona area of the Napo province, particularly along the Pano river. The late Dolores Intriago, my long-time research collaborator, worked locally with abused indigenous women for many years and was the President of an indigenous women's organization. We worked together in documenting life histories of abused women and in establishing an indigenous women's shelter. The narratives on traditional arranged marriage practices were obtained by Napo Quichua interviewers in 1983 further down the Napo river (Palacio 1992). In the cases I discuss of contemporary women, their individual names have been changed. The violence against women I am examining here is the commonplace, everyday violence that takes place within power-laden domestic gender relations. It is not the ritual violence that has been found in other Amazonian societies (see e.g. Murphy and Murphy 1974; Gregor 1985; Jackson 1992), but that does not exist among the Napo Quichua.
2. In her work on gender and violence in Highland Ecuador, Stølen (1991) found that wife-beating was not limited to exploited, poor peasants venting frustrations on their wives, although this was a common interpretation of wife-beating in Ecuador.

- 3 Taylor (1979) discusses this socialization of young brides through violence among the Achuar in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Among the Napo Runa, the mother-in-law also plays a leading role in that socialization process.
- 4 I have discussed elsewhere (Muratorio 1998) the importance of symbolic gender complementarity and other significant aspects of gender identities in this area of the Amazon.
- 5 Reprimands to children, for instance, should not be given out of anger. Parents should ask elders with a reputation for being “wise and calm,” to give advice. This is seen as a domestic ritual occasion in which chili is rubbed in children’s eyes and, once the sting has subsided, the elders calmly talk to them. Traditionally, punishment for wife-beaters by elders was much more violent and involved making them swallow a strong mixture prepared with raw tobacco.
- 6 In the women’s shelter, women curers started training other women in some of those practices. From them I learned some of the different “powers” or *pajus* that women claim to have in order to deal with the aftermath of physical violence. All of the curers emphasized the fact that these remedies should be accompanied by the culturally appropriate advice that abused women need.

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## IDENTIDADES DE MUJERES INDIGENAS Y POLITICA DE REPRODUCCION CULTURAL EN LA AMAZONIA ECUATORIANA

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*Estas niñas se miran en la pantalla de la  
televisión, pero sólo reflejan a los blancos.  
Y luego... como espejos se rompen.*  
- Francisca, abuela Napo Quichua

Estas metáforas sobre identidades sociales de género y sobre cambio social y cultural en el área del Alto Napo de la Amazonía Ecuatoriana, fueron expresadas en 1990 por una mujer Napo Quichua como un penetrante comentario sobre las auto-imágenes y el comportamiento sexual de jovencitas, muchas de las cuales son de la edad de sus propias nietas adolescentes. Este trabajo es un intento de comenzar a descifrar los problemas sociales y culturales que encierran estas metáforas a través de una interpretación de las narrativas y de las experiencias contemporáneas de las mujeres adultas.

Por algún tiempo ya, durante mis visitas periódicas a la ciudad de Tena y a las comunidades cercanas, he estado inmersa en la vida diaria de las mujeres y más específicamente en recoger las historias de vida de un pequeño grupo de mujeres a quienes he logrado conocer a fondo.<sup>1</sup> Durante las últimas dos temporadas de mi estadía, el problema del enamoramiento y los enredos sexuales indiscriminados y sin control de niñas adolescentes con jóvenes, así como los consiguientes embarazos no previstos, han complicado la vida de estas mujeres adultas, ya abuelas, y han sido el tema dominante de sus conversaciones. Ellas están muy preocupadas por la situación de estas adolescentes que están "fuera de control," y que frecuentemente se escapan a otras ciudades de la región o a Quito. Un número cada vez mayor de niñas de poblados lejanos ahora se trasladan a Tena buscando no sólo las normales atracciones de la ciudad, tales como la

televisión y discotecas, sino también la posibilidad de asistir a los colegios secundarios donde pueden socializar con otras jóvenes de su propia edad. Este centro urbano relativamente pequeño se está convirtiendo rápidamente en un espacio conflictivo de identidades emergentes donde convergen prácticas culturales locales y globales.

Lo que especialmente preocupa a sus mayores es que este grupo de adolescentes incluye jóvenes no indígenas y algunos extranjeros, y que las relaciones sexuales son muchas veces iniciadas por las mismas jovencitas. A estas adolescentes se las conoce localmente como "carachamas," el nombre de un pez nativo muy abundante y fácil de pescar. El "período difícil" de la sexualidad femenina adolescente, en el pasado controlado dentro de las restricciones y la intimidad del grupo de parentesco, se ha convertido en un asunto de escándalo público y a menudo expone a esta jóvenes a serias amenazas a su seguridad y bienestar. Este es el centro de preocupación de sus abuelas y no el posible embarazo en sí, porque en la mayoría de los casos tanto la joven madre como su niña/o son aceptadas en la familia de su madre o abuela. El problema crítico más amplio que subyace en las narrativas de estas mujeres no es solamente la calidad y el ritmo del cambio social moderno, sino también la verdadera esencia de la reproducción social y cultural y el rol que ellas van a jugar en ese proceso.

La elección de concentrarme en el conflicto inter-generacional sobre las imágenes y prácticas de las identidades de género se originó en otras inquietudes analíticas que merecen ser consideradas brevemente. Primero, en dos recientes análisis de los estudios antropológicos sobre las relaciones de género en la Amazonía, las autoras señalan que las explicaciones teóricas más aceptadas sobre este problema se han basado principalmente en teorías generales de estructura social, mitología, o perfiles psicoanalíticos (Bellier 1993; Seymour-Smith 1991). El tema del contenido real de las experiencias cotidianas de las mujeres, situado en el contexto más amplio de los cambios económicos, sociales, y políticos que experimentan las sociedades Amazónicas no ha sido todavía objeto del interés de los estudiosos de esta área. Mi principal objetivo aquí es explorar estos temas a través del estudio de las diferencias de género en la construcción del sentido de ser, de la identidad de las mujeres tal como es experimentada en un proceso de cambio social particular. Voy a examinar cómo las mujeres Napo Quichua recuerdan, relatan, y

negocian en la vida cotidiana contemporánea, los múltiples significados de ser una mujer indígena en una sociedad inter-étnica cada vez más compleja.

Mi segundo objetivo analítico es explorar cómo las *luchas intra-culturales* (Sider 1991; Smith 1991) nos permiten revelar las historias de mujeres mientras éstas se producen en el presente. Lo que importa al considerar estas narrativas no es tanto el origen histórico de los distintos elementos culturales con los cuales las mujeres construyen sus identidades sino cómo, a través de sus memorias del pasado, ellas logran remodelar y reinterpretar los significados sociales de esos elementos para enfrentar situaciones contemporáneas que ellas sienten como fuera de su control. Yo sostengo que estas abuelas indígenas crean sus propias etnohistorias a través de agudas y emocionales narrativas acerca de la esfera doméstica de sus vidas (ver Sider 1991). Este espacio cotidiano ofrece a las mujeres formas de ver el pasado que vinculan lo personal y familiar con su continua y activa participación en un mundo más amplio.

Finalmente, aunque existen excelentes estudios acerca de las complejidades contemporáneas de la reproducción cultural en otras sociedades Amazónicas (ver esp., Jackson 1995; Turner 1991), éstos no han tratado directamente el problema de género. Mi argumento es que el conflicto intergeneracional tratado en este trabajo como una disputa entre mujeres sobre las prácticas e imágenes de la feminidad, ofrece un escenario privilegiado para tener una mejor comprensión de los discursos verbales dominantes sobre el proceso de reproducción cultural indígena que están siendo pronunciados, principalmente por hombres, en los escenarios públicos nacionales e internacionales. Las narrativas de las mujeres Napo Quichua requieren una lectura sutil y procesual sin las anteojeras Occidentales que, como Strathern (1984) ha argumentado, relegan la domesticidad a una forma inferior de confinamiento, o imponen nociones de identidad e individualidad que sólo se alcanzan a través de una dolorosa separación de relaciones sociales culturalmente significativas.

### **El contexto más amplio de los argumentos de las mujeres**

Los Napo-Quichua del área de Tena-Archidona comparten con miles de otros Quichua-hablantes de las Tierras Bajas una cultura tradicional de floresta tropical basada en la cacería, la

pesca, la recolección, y la agricultura de roza. Sin embargo, a diferencia de otros grupos indígenas, muy temprano en el período Colonial, los Napo Quichua se vieron obligados a adaptar sus estrategias de supervivencia primero a las demandas económicas, políticas, y culturales de los conquistadores Españoles, y más tarde a los esfuerzos del Estado y los gobiernos locales de incorporarlos a la sociedad nacional. El imponer una política de sedentarización fue la clave de ese intento de tomar un supuesto "salvajismo" en "civilización." Aunque los Napo Quichua resistieron esta política de varias formas, a largo plazo, ésta fue decisiva en erosionar su acceso a la tierra y en su habilidad de practicar en pleno sus actividades de subsistencia (Muratorio 1991).

En términos de sexualidad y relaciones de género, los misioneros Católicos percibían los cuerpos de los indígenas Amazónicos como particularmente "incivilizados." Consideraban que los Napo Quichua carecían de todo sentido de moralidad y que estaban afectados de urgencias sexuales "poco naturales" que debían ser controladas dentro del matrimonio. El abogar matrimonios tempranos para las mujeres, o su confinamiento en conventos fueron las dos políticas más consistentes que los misioneros Católicos trataron de imponer en esta área para regular y controlar la esfera doméstica indígena. Temprano en este siglo, el estado Liberal también intervino directamente en la vida privada y familiar indígena, particularmente con legislación acerca del matrimonio civil, el divorcio, y la escolaridad universal (Goetschel 1996; Moscoso 1996). Desde entonces, la regulación y disciplina estatal de la sexualidad y las prácticas de socialización, además de las transformaciones económicas, han contribuido a los cambios en autoridad y poder que las familias y los grupos de parentesco indígenas están experimentando actualmente. Por varios siglos entonces en esta sociedad Amazónica particular, las subjetividades de género han sido diálogos conflictivos, no sólo entre hombres y mujeres indígenas, sino también entre ellos y el mundo no-indígena más amplio. Sin embargo, con el tiempo, tanto mujeres como hombres indígenas lograron negociar identidades de género que no fueron meros reflejos de las construcciones hegemónicas del Estado y de la Iglesia, sino que las incorporaron o las subvirtieron para acomodarlas a sus propios proyectos culturales (Muratorio 1995a).

Pero en los últimos veinte años el ritmo de cambio se ha acelerado considerablemente en la Amazonía Ecuatoriana, principalmente debido a la explotación de las considerables reservas de petróleo de esta región. La nueva infraestructura de caminos, unida a la demanda de trabajo y servicios de la industria petrolera, proveyeron los principales incentivos para el influjo masivo de colonos, para el crecimiento urbano, y para la creciente incorporación de la población indígena a la economía de mercado. Estas transformaciones económicas, además de los periódicos conflictos fronterizos entre Ecuador y Perú, han contribuido a consolidar la presencia del estado y de los militares en esta región. Como en muchas otras partes del mundo, las nuevas tecnologías de comunicación, especialmente la radio y la televisión, han sido decisivas en la incorporación de los jóvenes Napo Quichua de ambos sexos a una modernidad globalizante. Más aún, en la década de 1990, la preocupación internacional por la degradación ambiental de la floresta Amazónica ha atraído un gran número de ambientalistas extranjeros con diferentes versiones de proyectos de desarrollo sostenible, particularmente de ecoturismo. Muchos de estos proyectos de ecoturismo están siendo manejados por gente indígena y prometen no sólo bosques vírgenes, sino también interesantes experiencias inter-culturales (Muratorio 1995b).

Sin embargo, el factor más importante en conformar las políticas de diferencias étnicas ha sido la ya autónoma voz de los diferentes pueblos indígenas a través de sus organizaciones. Tanto a nivel nacional como localmente en la región Amazónica, estas organizaciones han sido lideradas por hombres. Los intelectuales y profesionales indígenas han construido un discurso genérico de Indianidad que reclama una historia común de reivindicación étnica. Como otros discursos indígenas similares desde la época Colonial, este discurso de las organizaciones usa categorías históricas y modernas Occidentales (Brown 1993:319-320; Jackson 1995) y ha tenido un éxito incuestionable en abrir espacios políticos significativos para los pueblos indígenas frente al estado. Sin embargo, el carácter homogeneizante de la identidad étnica proyectada por las federaciones indígenas silencia las complejidades de los distintos grupos étnicos y las diferencias de género internas a las sociedades locales; un problema que recién comienza a surgir públicamente. Culturalmente este discurso propone una forma de esencialismo conservador que naturaliza las identidades de las mujeres, más comúnmente propiciando una

identificación estereotípica de la mujer con la Madre Tierra, mientras que al mismo tiempo marginaliza sus voces al no proveer espacios reales para su efectiva participación política. Mientras que proclama a las mujeres como las portadoras esenciales de la tradición cultural, el discurso de las federaciones todavía no ha encarado abiertamente los conflictos y contradicciones que tanto mujeres jóvenes como adultas enfrentan en las prácticas cotidianas de vivir esa tradición.<sup>2</sup>

En general, las mujeres indígenas ya mayores simplemente ignoran, o bromean a los líderes hombres acerca de los límites precisos de esta disyuntiva entre la modernidad y la tradición. La ironía y el cuestionamiento burlón -o a veces simplemente los silencios preñados de significado- que las mujeres dirigen a esos líderes, se convierten en las formas en que las mujeres desafían el presunto monopolio de las federaciones sobre las memorias culturales y la redefinición de la historia indígena. Sin embargo, algunos jóvenes de ambos sexos están tentativamente tratando de recobrar una cultura supuestamente "original y pristina," mientras que otros están afanosamente empeñados en una amnesia cultural. Cuáles son o deben ser los contenidos de la tradición étnica, y quién ejerce control sobre las memorias culturales selectivas e interpreta su significado, en suma, los problemas diarios de la reproducción cultural y la construcción de identidades, son motivo de interminables discusiones y una de las bases de los conflictos intergeneracionales. Estos argumentos internos sobre qué idioma se habla y qué comida se come en la casa, sobre los modelos de roles ofrecidos por las telenovelas, sobre las concepciones de la belleza y la sexualidad femenina expresan los significados culturales específicos que se pierden en las categorías políticas objetivizantes que generalmente usan las organizaciones indígenas. Los argumentos de las mujeres Napo Quichua representan las manifestaciones locales de los procesos globales de modernización que han transformado todas las cuestiones de reproducción cultural en procesos altamente politizados.<sup>3</sup>

Como otra gente indígena en el Ecuador y en otras partes del mundo, las jóvenes mujeres Napo Quichua están experimentando los problemas de crecimiento para convertirse en personas sexuales y sociales adultas. Al desarrollar su conciencia cultural individual y de grupo, ellas se ven involucradas en un complejo proceso de formación de identidad donde viejos y nuevos

modelos de feminidad y modernidad son parcialmente resistidos, incorporados o descartados. Al confrontarse con las experiencias de su propia identidad, estas jóvenes deben transitar los inciertos y cambiantes linderos de por lo menos tres sendas de identidad: la controvertida, pero ya transitada por sus mayores, la más atrayente representada en los medios de masa y reforzada por su grupo de edad, y la de más fuerza política ofrecida por las organizaciones indígenas. Aquí sólo dispongo de espacio para examinar en detalle la primera de estas sendas. Me concentraré en el conflicto sobre las ideologías y las prácticas de género desde el punto de vista de la generación de mujeres adultas. Este surgió en la serie de conversaciones ya mencionadas y en los cantos y otros recuerdos que este pequeño grupo de abuelas compartió entre ellas y conmigo cuando los problemas de sus nietas entraron en crisis. Para proveer un contexto más amplio de estas conversaciones, es necesario señalar que la relativamente nueva Ley Contra la Violencia a la Mujer y la Familia provee ahora a las mujeres con un recurso legal efectivo en casos de violencia doméstica y abuso sexual. Este nuevo encuentro de las mujeres con las instancias del estado todavía está lleno de ambigüedades y plantea complejas contradicciones personales y culturales que las mujeres indígenas recién están comenzando a abordar. Las abuelas tienen una relación muy cercana y tierna con sus nietas; juntas trabajan, viajan y hacen vida social. Después que sus hijas se han casado y se han ido a vivir a otro lado, casi siempre una abuela les pide una nieta para que venga a vivir con ella. De esta forma las abuelas se sienten particularmente responsables por la crianza y educación de esas niñas y se preocupan de los problemas que éstas están experimentando en la actualidad.

No quiero dar la idea de que estas mujeres adultas están entregándose a un mero recuerdo romántico de su pasado, o tratando de recrear una versión "auténtica" de la cultura femenina para contrarrestar una supuesta "falsa conciencia cultural" por parte de la joven generación. Están usando sus memorias de identidad para enfrentar lo que en el presente sienten que es una seria crisis en sus familias. Del rico acervo de memorias que estos diálogos usualmente evoca, las abuelas seleccionaron los temas, eventos, cantos y reminiscencias que les permitieron construir un sentido coherente del ser, retratándose a sí mismas como agentes de su propia historia más que como víctimas (Linde 1993). En estas conversaciones las mujeres reviven y



reactúan los acontecimientos que están relatando. De esta manera, las representaciones de feminidad que comunican no se agotan en palabras sino que además incorporan la riqueza de la imaginaria visual y de otras experiencias sensoriales de olores, gustos, y sonidos.<sup>4</sup>

Si estas narrativas de identidad parecen ser abiertamente auto-celebratorias, es porque contienen muchos silencios. Se refieren tanto al recordar como al olvidar y a la represión de dolorosas memorias que les he escuchado evocar en muchas otras ocasiones. Incluyen voces de otras mujeres y las voces pasadas y presentes de la sociedad blanca dominante, ahora también mediadas por la tecnología moderna de comunicación. En este contexto, el sentido de auto-afirmación contenido en estas historias puede considerarse como una estrategia de resistencia contra lo que las abuelas ven como nuevas formas de dominación, que afectan sobre todo a las mujeres jóvenes. La intención de las narrativas puede así leerse como una guía moral para que las jovencitas reflexionen sobre cómo esas experiencias y significados pueden afectar sus propias vidas.

Pero estas mujeres también comunican un casi inevitable sentido de pérdida, la conciencia de que les va a ser casi imposible reproducir adecuadamente para las nuevas generaciones los códigos culturales que las formaron a ellas como mujeres. Dan la particular impresión de experimentar un sentimiento de *nostalgia*, en el sentido Griego del término que evoca todas las dimensiones sensoriales de la memoria relacionando memorias corporales y espirituales con sentimientos de envejecer y separación (Serematakis 1994<sup>a</sup>: 4). Finalmente, es necesario señalar que, como otros escritores de historias orales, introduzco aquí mi propia versión de las narrativas de las abuelas con la familiar precaución acerca de las complejidades que supone el traducir la palabra oral en la palabra escrita (e.g. Patai 1988).

### **Las imágenes de feminidad de las abuelas**

Las mujeres mayores hablan acerca de los ideales de feminidad, no sólo para criticar el comportamiento de sus nietas, sino también porque están preocupadas de si sus futuras nueras van a poder encarnar estos ideales. La primera cosa que se enfatiza para que una mujer particular alcance a ser esta mujer ideal, no es su calidad de madre, sino su estricta adhesión a un

elaborado código ético y estético de trabajo considerado esencial para la completa realización del ser personal y social femenino. El cariño y el cuidado de los niños es uno de esos supuestos que las mujeres comparten y dan por sentados, pero no consideran el espacio doméstico principalmente en términos de sus roles reproductivos y su maternidad. En cambio, el trabajo de las mujeres es un asunto de continua contestación. Aquí se reconocen grandes diferencias entre distintas mujeres en términos de conocimiento, habilidades, y actitudes sociales, principalmente en cuanto a la producción, preparación, y consumo de la comida. Las sutilezas de los significados simbólicos de cada tarea son siempre elaborados interminablemente en las conversaciones. Pero más aún lo son las complejidades de las habilidades y gracias sociales que las mujeres deben desplegar cuando realizan estas tareas, así como el daño físico y síquico que pueden sufrir si fallan en realizarlas bien. Con la excepción de los celos, la mera percepción por parte de su marido de que una mujer no ha cumplido con esas tareas domésticas de acuerdo a sus deseos, aún si éstos son arbitrarios, es la excusa más común usada por el hombre para abusarla físicamente. Esta es una situación que hace que las mujeres estén siempre alertas a los potenciales conflictos dentro del espacio doméstico.

La reputación de una mujer como una buena trabajadora comienza a ser formada cuando es muy pequeña y florece cuando ya es madura. Para entonces, al menos otras mujeres reconocen esa reputación. La ceremonia de la transferencia del "paju" es sólo una de las más abiertas manifestaciones de este reconocimiento. En este ritual muy doméstico, una mujer más joven o menos competente compra los poderes o "pajus" de una reconocida experta en cultivar yuca, en preparar buena chicha, o en curar una enfermedad específica. El pedido ceremonial y el consiguiente pago de esta transacción forman parte del reconocimiento del status del donante. La reputación de una mujer madura también sirve para acrecentar el valor de sus hijas como futuras cónyuges, una razón importante por la cual estas reputaciones son también celebradas en cantos autobiográficos o en aquellos cantados por las mismas hijas de una mujer prestigiosa. Estos cantos son altamente personalizados y por lo general incluyen el nombre de la mujer que los canta y una referencia a su grupo de parentesco o *ayllu*, como en el siguiente canto:

Mi Mariaquito,  
mujer Cerda,

se mueve como un colibrí  
de flor en flor.  
Sabe como trabajar la chacra.  
Todas las mujeres la admiran,  
nunca compró comida en el pueblo.

Es el aspecto social del trabajo de la mujer el que es esencial para su identidad, primero como hija, y luego como esposa y nuera. La hija desde muy pequeña debe levantarse mucho antes del alba para preparar la huayusa que debe ofrecer a todos los hombres y mujeres de su casa, para ayudar a su madre a preparar la chicha y acompañarla a la chacra, así como para cuidar de sus hermanitos más pequeños. Cuando se casa, preferentemente muy joven, sus tareas inmediatas como nuera son muy similares aunque, alejada del amor materno, emocionalmente más difíciles. Su autonomía como esposa está simbolizada por su derecho a su propia chacra, lo cual le permite entrar en el proceso de producción y circulación de alimentos, pero se espera que su suegra y su esposo van a completar su socialización como mujer adulta, la cual se considera alcanzada cuando ella ha tenido su segundo hijo y la pareja puede mudarse a una vivienda separada. Además, el desempeño de la nueva nuera en la casa de sus suegros es considerada también una prueba de las aptitudes de su madre y su abuela en formar su personalidad a una edad temprana. La reputación de las mujeres es continuamente puesta a prueba públicamente, y es precisamente porque lo que está en juego es tan valioso, que las abuelas se sienten tan preocupadas porque las jovencitas de ahora no quieren hacer las tareas domésticas o las realizan a medias y protestando. Como otras mujeres de su generación, Francisca, la más elocuente de las abuelas, logró resistir el vivir con sus suegros después de una boda arreglada por sus padres cuando era muy pequeña pero pagó un alto precio por su desafío a las normas tradicionales de entonces (Muratorio 1997). Aunque en la actualidad esta forma de matrimonio no es común, las abuelas están conscientes del control que las suegras y otros parientes por parte del marido pueden todavía tener en la reputación de una recién casada. Narradas desde la distancia que da la madurez, estos comentarios de las abuelas pueden leerse más como una advertencia a las jóvenes sobre posibles experiencias dolorosas en el futuro que como severas críticas a su comprensible y familiar rebeldía en el presente.

Tanto el carácter construido del "espacio doméstico" como su diversidad etnográfica han sido tratadas exhaustivamente en la literatura feminista. También se ha señalado que en algunas sociedades la línea divisoria entre el trabajo y el ocio es menos rígida que la que requiere el capitalismo Occidental y que, en consecuencia, las categorías evaluativas usadas frecuentemente para caracterizar el trabajo de la mujer tales como "esclavizante" u "opresivo" también son históricamente contingentes y pueden ser, si no siempre etnocéntricas, al menos controvertidas (e.g. Harris 1981; Moore 1988). Las mujeres Napo Quichua generalmente no se quejan de su trabajo diciendo que es aburrido o repetitivo, ni tampoco de que el cuidado de los niños interfiere con su movilidad o con su capacidad de participar en actividades sociales, ya que llevan a sus bebés a todas partes, o pueden dejar a sus otros niños al cuidado de otras mujeres. El espacio doméstico no es considerado como un confinamiento, ya que no está limitado por las cuatro paredes de la casa ni por la concepción Occidental del hogar como una unidad limitada y socialmente aislada. Por supuesto, las mujeres no creen que un trabajo repetitivo y extenuante como el limpiar la hierba es "entretenido," pero no se quejan de este trabajo en los términos Cristianos de "redención" por el pecado original. Más bien las mujeres Napo Quichua prefieren enfatizar la posesión de la fuerza física que les permite hacer esas tareas de horticultura, y hablar de la belleza de una chacra bien cultivada- y productiva- como un atributo de su propia identidad, como una metáfora de su propio ser.

La chacra y el hogar son primariamente dominios femeninos; ciertamente sitios del arduo trabajo de las mujeres, pero también espacios donde se hace tiempo para la transmisión de conocimientos, para el intercambio de comadreos, o para la narración de historias y sueños, compartidos con las hijas, nietas, y nueras. Para realizar las tareas domésticas más importantes que, excepto por el cuidado de los niños por supuesto, consisten en la preparación de la comida, la mujer tiene que aventurarse fuera de la casa. Aún áreas del bosque limpiadas alrededor de la casa para las actividades diarias pueden estar pobladas de *supais* o espíritus con quienes las mujeres pueden tener interesantes encuentros, a menudo de carácter erótico. Este hecho es también particularmente verdad cuando las mujeres van a pescar, a lavar oro, o más adentro al monte donde estos seres pueden materializarse con más facilidad. A través de estos encuentros

con los espíritus las mujeres adquieren poderes específicos para curar, pescar, lavar oro, o atraer a los hombres. En sus cantos, por ejemplo, una mujer a menudo habla de incorporar, no sólo el poder de los *supais*, sino también las características estéticas y de comportamiento de otros seres vivientes como pájaros, por ejemplo, algunos de los cuales son a su vez los que anuncian la presencia de los espíritus. De esta manera la mujer “se convierte en pájaro” al referirse a sí misma como “mujer tucán” o “mujer picaflor.” Estos poderes son altamente personalizados y objeto de reflexión por la mujer que los posee o los busca. Son importantes en dotar y forjar su propio *samai* ( poder espiritual, sabiduría) y forman una parte integral de su identidad. Sin embargo, si bien estos poderes la distinguen a ella como individuo, sólo se hacen realidad cuando se socializan entre seres humanos: cuando son usados para curar y dar alivio a otros, o cuando los productos de esos encuentros espirituales son compartidos con parientes y visitantes. Porque la transmisión de estos poderes a las futuras generaciones constituye un elemento esencial en su socialización, en sus narrativas, las abuelas comunican un penoso sentido de su propia incapacidad de transmitir esas experiencias para crear un vínculo duradero con las adolescentes a su cuidado.

No hay ni que mencionar, por supuesto, que una mujer que es una buena proveedora de pescado, o de dinero, no sólo complementa las actividades productivas de su marido, sino que también obtiene una considerable autonomía de su autoridad. Además, los productos que las mujeres recogen en el monte, tales como hongos y garabato yuyo, o los pecesitos que pesca, envueltos y cocinados en hoja, son usados para preparar el *huarmi uchu* ( aji de la mujer). Este es un tipo de comida que la mujer puede preparar por sí misma, “independientemente” de la contribución de su marido a la economía del hogar. Como todas las comidas incluyen yuca, cuya producción requiere del trabajo masculino, y el *huarmi uchu* no es considerado una comida con la cual se pueda alimentar regularmente a una familia, esta independencia es principalmente simbólica. Las mujeres preparan el *huarmi uchu* para calmar el hambre por el día, pero también lo usan explícitamente para hacer avergonzar al marido que no es un “buen proveedor” de comida.

Las mujeres también expanden su dominio doméstico viajando en búsqueda de ciertos

tipos particulares de alimentos. Esto generalmente significa visitar a parientes o a comadres en otras áreas de la selva donde la cacería o la pesca son más abundantes. Parte de la comida obtenida en esa forma siempre se trae de vuelta a la casa para su consumo o circulación. La mujer ha reciprocado por ella con su trabajo en la chacra de la mujer que visitó, o la va a reciprocarse con regalos de otro tipo de comida en el futuro. Como Gow (1989:572-74) ha argumentado en relación a la gente de la floresta tropical del Bajo Urubamba en Perú, esta forma de circulación de alimentos es principalmente llevada a cabo por mujeres e implica relaciones sociales de respeto con aquellos que "aman, piensan, y recuerdan" a otra persona. Entre los Napo Quichua, este tipo de circulación de "memoria cariñosa" (Gow 1989:574), así como la ahora más frecuente participación de las mujeres en la feria semanal de Tena para vender productos de sus chacras y aún de recolección, son consideradas por las mujeres como una expresión de su autonomía frente al control de los hombres. Ellas se quejan de que, principalmente por celos, sus maridos tratan "injusta e irracionalmente" de cortarles esa libertad con la excusa de que las mujeres van a esos lugares a "reírse" con otros hombres. Cuando las abuelas estaban comparando sus experiencias en una de nuestras conversaciones, no debe sorprendernos de que fue Juanita, una viuda la que alegremente observó cómo ella podía gozar de su libertad de viajar a cualquier lugar y a cualquier hora sin ser controlada por un hombre:

Así es como yo busco comida, viajando a distintos lugares. Ningún hombre se atreve a molestarme. Yo viajo para recordar y para tener de qué hablar cuando sea vieja; para recordar todas las buenas cosas que la gente me ha dado de comer.

Desde hace ya muchos años los Napo Quichua no viven exclusivamente de la cacería o de los productos que ellos mismos cultivan. Necesitan regularmente de aprovisionarse de comida en el pueblo, incluyendo carne y pescado. La creciente dependencia del mercado tanto en la producción como en el consumo está reestructurando una vez más la complementaridad de los roles de género en la sociedad Napo Quichua. Pero todos hacen una clara distinción evaluativa entre los dos tipos de comida, en parte porque la comida del pueblo es también considerada "extraña" o "comida de blancos," la cual, desprovista del conocedor trabajo de las mujeres, carece de sentido cultural. Recordando el retorno de un largo viaje a la Costa (según ella un

lugar “de gustos extraños”), Francisca relató la escena de su madre esperándole en la casa con una olla de chicha con las siguientes palabras: “Madre, le dije, me habían hecho olvidar el gusto de la chicha. Ahora vuelvo a emborracharme con el amor de tus manos, y mi boca se acuerda.” Este ejemplo, así como el de la viuda que cité anteriormente, apoyan el argumento de Serematakis de que la comensalidad tiene que ser vista como algo más que la mera organización del consumo de comida y bebida para incluir “el intercambio de memorias y emociones sensoriales y de substancias y objetos que encarnan recuerdos y sentimientos” (1994:37). Las memorias de estas mujeres Napo Quichua están literalmente entrelazadas con los olores y los sabores del trabajo y el amor de otras personas. Como la abuela Griega y su nieto compartiendo comida y cuentos de hadas (Serematakis 1994), las mujeres indígenas crean un mundo alternativo de memorias culturales como un escudo para protegerse de la invasión sensorial de la nueva cultura de la modernidad. Esta generación de mujeres mayores piensa que, al adquirir exclusivamente el gusto por la comida del pueblo, las jovencitas van a ser cada vez más dependientes de los salarios de sus maridos y van así a perder la autonomía que les permite su propio trabajo productivo. Al rechazar esta forma de conocimiento van a reprimir las memorias que evocan la continuidad cultural.

Especialmente en términos de comensalidad, el sentido de identidad de una mujer está ligada a la imagen que otros tienen de ella, pero está también encarnada en los artefactos y prácticas materiales que ella usa para desplegarla. Hacer demasiado uso de la comida del pueblo puede disminuir la reputación pública de la mujer y su autoridad en el hogar, pero también la textura y el color de sus ollas pueden denunciar su carácter y habilidad. A diferencia de los estereotipos Occidentales de ollas brillantes como el signo de la pulcritud de una mujer y su virtud como ama de casa, es la negrura de las ollas de una mujer Napo Quichua la que habla por sus virtudes femeninas: significa que sus ollas son usadas continuamente para alimentar a otros, para socializar, para dar generosamente. Cuando parientes u otras visitas vienen a la casa, la cualidad de los objetos domésticos, las texturas y olores de su cocinar, el tono y el ritmo de los sonidos que hace cuando trabaja, la gracia de sus movimientos, todos tienen que dar testimonio de su ser trabajador y generoso. No sólo el presente, sino también el futuro de su reputación

están en juego, ya que se cree que aquellos que son mezquinos con la comida van a ser castigados en la vida después de la muerte siendo atacados de comida hasta reventar, una y otra vez.

El término local usado más frecuentemente para describir a la mujer ideal es *pichihuarmi*, una mujer que se parece al pequeño, liviano, y rápido pájaro *pichi*. A esta mujer se la representa como de pies ligeros, viva, y alegre, pero sabia. Canta y sirve chicha con prontitud, es trabajadora, y siempre da de comer a otros. Este pajarito es el símbolo de las dos cualidades fundamentales de la identidad femenina: el ser una buena trabajadora y su generosidad, cuyos significados están lejos de la ideología Cristiana de una feminidad pasiva y puramente receptiva, ideología que fue usada por las monjas locales en su intento de disciplinar a las mujeres indígenas. Otros dos términos se acercan a la descripción de esta mujer ideal: *allihuarmi* y *sabiruhuarmi*, mujer hermosa y sabia, en la cual conocimiento, habilidad, y belleza física se complementan para expresarse en sus prácticas cotidianas. Por el contrario, se habla de una “mala” mujer principalmente como holgazana. La holgazanería es degradante porque es considerada el comportamiento anti-social por excelencia. No debe sorprendernos que el término usado para caracterizar a tal mujer es *carishina* (como-hombre) ya que, por supuesto, no se espera que los hombres hagan y mucho menos sobresalgan en las tareas propias de las mujeres. El término *carishina* es usado a menudo como una admonición cuando se disciplina a las niñas, pero siempre como un insulto cuando se aplica a una mujer adulta. Ella está no sólo siendo recriminada por incompetencia, sino también siendo avergonzada por su indolencia y falta de auto-respeto. Como una abuela se quejó:

Ahora las mujeres son buenas sólo para dormir con sus maridos; son sabias para mostrarles las nalgas a los hombres, pero después se preocupan cuando el marido les pega con el pretexto de que ellos pensaban que se habían casado con una mujer trabajadora.

La analogía implícita en el término *carishina* entre una “mala mujer” y la incompetencia de los hombres en realizar tareas femeninas no significa la denigración del trabajo de los hombres. En algunos cantos, y también en el lenguaje cotidiano, las mujeres usan a veces el



término *cari-huarmi* (mujer como hombre) para referirse orgullosamente a sí mismas como poseyendo la fuerza necesaria para cazar, pescar, cortar árboles, o acarrear troncos, todas tareas asignadas al hombre en la concepción aceptada de la complementariedad de género en la división del trabajo.

### Los espejos de la sexualidad

El principal tema de conflicto entre las dos generaciones de mujeres es, por supuesto, cómo representar y expresar la sexualidad. Este problema esencial en la construcción de la identidad es iluminado en narrativas acerca del cuerpo: cómo se viste y se adorna; cómo y hacia adonde mira; cómo se mueve; y cómo se hace oír. La forma del cuerpo de una mujer es considerada un lenguaje por el cual ella comunica, voluntaria o involuntariamente, mensajes significativos acerca de sí misma y de su compañero. Si una mujer es delgada, va a ser vista por otros como alguien que no está bien provista por su marido, y su delgadez puede verse como un signo de que está siendo abusada por él. En contraste, tener una figura "bien redondeada," sin gordura, es visto como evidencia de una mujer bien alimentada por su marido y teniendo la fuerza muscular adquirida por su arduo trabajo en la chacra y por caminar largas distancias a pie. En general, el cuerpo bien redondeado de una mujer es testimonio de un matrimonio bien llevado y de su satisfacción consigo misma y con su vida. Como Turner ha señalado para los Kayapó, la vestimenta y el adorno del cuerpo constituyen, no sólo uno de los medios culturales más significativos en dar forma y en comunicar la identidad personal y social, sino que son en sí mismos un lenguaje primario de socialización (1980:112-114), como voy a proponer en relación al caso de los Napo Quichua en la siguiente sección de este trabajo.

La blusa de algodón de mangas largas (*maquicutun*) y la pollera hasta los tobillos (*pampanilla*) que se convirtieron en el vestido "tradicional" de las mujeres Napo Quichua de esta área, fueron parte integral del código de género y racialmente explícito de modestia, decencia, y vergüenza corporal establecido por misioneros Católicos y supervisado por religiosas (Muratorio 1994). Hoy en día esa vestimenta es usada solamente para representar la "feminidad India" en fiestas, desfiles escolares, y concursos de reinas de belleza. También puede ser alquilado por no-indígenas para las mismas ocasiones. Como la mayoría de las vestimentas estandarizadas diseñadas por instituciones, ésta careció y sigue careciendo de significados personales. El único artículo de esta vestimenta que retiene un significativo valor simbólico en la memoria de las mujeres adultas es el collar de cuentas (*huallcamuyu*). Estaba hecho de cuentas importadas de muchos colores y el orgullo y belleza de la mujer culminaban cuando el collar le llegaba a la cintura. Los colores de las cuentas evocaban el brillo de las plumas de los pájaros y reflejaban la encarnación femenina de las características de esos pájaros particulares. También señalaba el status de la mujer como casada pero, aún mas significativamente, el hecho de que su marido era un buen proveedor ya que las cuentas tenían que ser compradas de los mercaderes y patronos con el arduo trabajo del hombre.

En varias de las conversaciones acerca de la vestimenta de las jóvenes hoy en día, un tema que las abuelas mencionaron varias veces fue el uso de zapatos. En una o dos ocasiones criticaron específicamente a una que otra joven indígena por tratar de parecerse a las blancas usando zapatos de taco alto. Pero lo que me extrañó al comienzo fue el hecho de que las mujeres parecían insistir en dar una connotación simbólica negativa a todo uso de calzado. Dado el hecho de que todas las mujeres indígenas usan zapatos regularmente, uno debe buscar argumentos que vayan mas allá de una explicación simplista, tal como "rechazo a la modernidad," para entender el significado de estas objeciones de las mujeres. Hablar de zapatos, como me di cuenta a su tiempo, era sólo un pretexto para expandirse en el tema favorito de "caminar" y "viajar." Esta es una experiencia de ser, expresada en Quichua por el verbo *purina*, que es vital en definir la identidad de estas mujeres de la floresta tropical (Harrison 1989:159-160). Así me lo explicó una de las mujeres:

Los zapatos hacen los pies suaves, y los pies suaves no sirven para caminar largas distancias y para pararse largas horas en playas de piedras calientes [lavando oro]. Cómo van a aprender estas niñas a caminar si nunca se sacan los zapatos y siempre viajan en bus.

Los pies suaves se convierten en un símbolo de la falta de libertad de movimiento, de sedentarización, del hecho de que las mujeres jóvenes ahora permanecen sentadas por horas, o de otra manera inmovilizadas en los espacios confinados de una escuela, una oficina, o un bus. Lo que las mujeres adultas parecen objetar es que estas formas de transporte (zapatos o buses) son ahora usadas como alternativas excluyentes para colonizar las formas de movilización y comunicación indígenas. Los caminos, u otras nuevas tecnologías de transporte, crean diferentes tiempos y espacios (Boyarin 1994) de los que se abren caminando a pié, y también conforman diferentes lenguajes y paisajes audiovisuales. Por ejemplo, los espacios y tiempos de visiones, sueños, y memorias, tan vitales en el sentido Napo Quichua de plenitud personal y pertenencia social, no pueden ser transitados por las nuevas tecnologías. Como lo expresó una de las mujeres en una canción que cantó a su madre cuando retornó de un largo viaje de un lugar lejano, las memorias de la mente viajan más rápido que los medios modernos de comunicación:

Retorno de este lugar lejano,  
 retorno a ti, mi madre.  
 Tan seguro como la lluvia sigue a la tormenta,  
 mi felicidad llega en el viento.  
 Mi cuerpo está en el bus,  
 pero mi mente retorna a ti en el viento.

Es un hecho reconocido que el cuerpo se desgasta y se vuelve débil con la edad. Principalmente debido a toda una vida de lavar oro, muchas mujeres en esta área sufren de artritis, la que les afecta particularmente las rodillas, consideradas el eje del "motor del cuerpo," como una de las mujeres se refirió a las piernas. En cambio, la mente se agudiza cuando la gente envejece. Un *samai* poderoso encarna inteligencia y habilidades sociales, cualidades que se consideran producto del tiempo. Como indiqué anteriormente, el *samai* de una mujer encapsula su experiencia de toda una vida y es expresado en narrativas y prácticas llenas de significado.

Las ancianas sobresalen en dar consejos, un lenguaje de socialización que entre los Napo Quichua todavía permanece relativamente ritualizado. Cuando se aconseja a los jóvenes, el tono de voz debe ser bajo y la actitud calma. Educar es un proceso lento que requiere la misma paciencia del trabajo femenino de domesticación de las plantas. Las mujeres consideran que ellas son mejores que los hombres en esta tarea. Se reconoce la complementariedad de género en la tarea de domesticación de las plantas, pero el rol de los hombres está asociado con la fuerza física y con el trabajo "predatorio" de limpiar el bosque para comenzar la chacra. También se considera que los hombres tienen voces más estridentes y una tendencia a gritar, dos características que, en la opinión de las mujeres, hacen que el discurso que los hombres usan para aconsejar sea "menos inteligente y efectivo." En una ocasión, cuando criticaba a su marido por el "mal" y "gritón" consejo que éste daba a su hija, oí decir a Catalina, una de las abuelas más jóvenes: "No podrás nunca hacer crecer las plantas con violencia, siempre tienes que hablarles despacito."

La guía y los consejos de los padres continúan aún después de la muerte de éstos a través de sueños, cuando se cree que el alma (*aya*) del que sueña se encuentra y habla con el alma de la persona muerta. Frecuentemente en las conversaciones cotidianas las mujeres cuentan sus sueños, particularmente aquellos en los cuales sus madres o abuelas se les han aparecido para sugerir acciones a tomar, alertar sobre posibles peligros, o simplemente para revivir los recuerdos y sentimientos de pasadas experiencias compartidas. Las mujeres mayores también "actúan" estas memorias de seres queridos cuando realizan una forma de lamento ritual que puede tener lugar en el curso de una conversación normal.<sup>5</sup> Esta forma narrativa expresiva va siempre acompañada de llanto y puede ser provocada inesperadamente al mirar una fotografía, o al evocar un evento en que participaron esos seres queridos. Las mujeres usan este medio expresivo no sólo para revivir sus relaciones con las personas ya fallecidas, sino también para reflexionar sobre sus propios sentimientos acerca de su soledad ante la ausencia de esos seres tan cercanos. En la ideología Cristiana patriarcal se considera que el sufrimiento es una virtud necesaria para forjar el carácter moral de las mujeres y para redimir su naturaleza supuestamente "impura" (Moscoso 1996:98-100). Como una demostración del sufrimiento, el llanto es visto

como la expresión más apropiada de la redención de las mujeres, mientras que en los hombres señala falta de virilidad. En cambio, el llanto tradicional de las mujeres Napo Quichua en realidad invierte este significado Cristiano al convertir ese llanto en una expresión de vida y continuidad, ya que evoca las memorias de experiencias compartidas con parientes cercanos y es una forma de revivir y de reafirmar las relaciones sociales, no de asumir culpa por supuestos pecados femeninos individuales o colectivos. Los cantos son otra forma en que las mujeres expresan sus sentimientos de intimidad con otras mujeres que jugaron un papel importante en formar su ser femenino. A través de las memorias, estos seres significativos se encarnan en las canciones. Harrison (1989:147) señala que en las tierras bajas del Ecuador, el término *llackichina*, usado para referirse a las razones que originan el canto y a los estados emocionales expresados al transmitirlos, es sinónimo de “amar y causar amor,” mas que del sentido más restringido de “causar dolor o pena “ a otra persona. Las abuelas se lamentan de que ni sus hijas ni sus nietas se interesan ya por aprender estas canciones y prefieren la estridente música contemporánea que se escucha ahora en todos los lugares donde socializan los jóvenes. Pero hay un giro irónico en esta situación. Cuando algunas de sus nietas que trabajan en los programas de ecoturismo quieren que les enseñen las canciones para los turistas, muchas de estas abuelas se han negado. La gente indígena de esta área ha descubierto no hace mucho tiempo cómo usar su propia cultura con fines económicos e inevitablemente se ven atrapados en las ambigüedades y contradicciones del mercado cultural. Por un lado, estas abuelas todavía no están listas a aceptar la comercialización de sus propias memorias e historias personales y, por el otro, las jovencitas tienen la posibilidad de recibir dinero de extranjeros para representar los mismos elementos de la cultura de sus mayores contra los cuales ellas se rebelan en la vida cotidiana.

### **El espejo de la pantalla**

Como todos los otros Napo Quichua que conozco, las mujeres cuyas conversaciones estoy analizando, fueron criadas en una cultura oral y en la intimidad y relativa autonomía de sus grupos de parentesco. Ellas ven a la televisión principalmente como una invasión del Otro blanco en sus propias casas. Aunque para ellas sigue siendo una gramática extranjera, reconocen

la imponente fascinación visual de la pantalla de la televisión, y precisamente porque son conscientes de su poder, la consideran como una competencia “desleal” en relación a su propio lenguaje de socialización. La principal objeción de las abuelas a la televisión se origina en su opinión de que las jóvenes de ahora imitan muy de cerca los modelos que ésta presenta, y tratan de moldear toda su personalidad en su imagen. Como ya he señalado, estas mujeres adultas, así como sus madres y abuelas en el pasado, fueron muy capaces de remodelar sus identidades étnicas y de género para acomodarse y resistir los modelos raciales, estéticos, y morales impuestos por las autoridades, las religiosas, o los colonos blancos. Sin embargo estas personas podían ser cuestionadas, saboteadas, o eventualmente emuladas en un proceso de interacción personal diaria. Por el contrario, las imágenes de la televisión no proveen de las pistas culturales para crear significados porque los personajes representados no entran en diálogo con la audiencia, simplemente hablan entre ellos. Son mudos a la interacción social y, por lo tanto, las mujeres consideran que el desafío a su lenguaje es más difícil.

En Tena la elección de programas de televisión ha sido bastante limitada y, como otros países Latinoamericanos, el Ecuador importa programas extranjeros. En la televisión nacional los indígenas son usualmente representados en eventos folklóricos o en levantamientos y marchas de protesta. La mayoría de las imágenes de televisión internalizadas por las jovencitas están marcadas racialmente para representar la “superioridad” estética y social de los blancos. Por ejemplo, hace unos años, el programa más popular entre las adolescentes de Tena era el de la brasilera Xuxa, una rubia de ojos azules que comercializaba imágenes cuidadosamente construidas de provocativa sexualidad mezcladas con otras de sumisa domesticidad, y una cultura de modernidad basada en un consumerismo de lujo (Simpson 1993). Este programa, como muchos otros, proyecta ideales que están más allá del alcance de estas adolescentes indígenas cuya agencia cultural está sujeta a condicionamientos estructurales que limitan sus posibilidades de elección. En una economía global, los estilos adolescentes ideales en vestimenta, maquillaje, música y comida son más rápidamente accesibles a través de los límites nacionales que las condiciones estructurales que hacen posible ese consumo. Algunas adolescentes en Tena a veces se “venden” por el precio de una hamburguesa y una cola, pero si

quedan embarazadas, se van a ver forzadas a convertirse en personas adultas a una edad más temprana que la mayoría de las adolescentes que aparecen en los avisos de la televisión. Cuando comentan qué aspectos de su apariencia personal estas jovencitas imitan de los modelos que ven en la televisión, las mujeres mayores con frecuencia se refieren al uso del maquillaje, y casi inevitablemente lo comparan con la pintura facial tradicional que se hacía con tintes vegetales. Ya que hasta donde la gente recuerda, los Napo Quichua siempre han usado algún tipo de vestimenta, su pintura corporal nunca fue tan elaborada como la de otros conocidos grupos Amazónicos. Sin embargo, la pintura facial formó parte integral de las prácticas de socialización, ya que generalmente las mujeres mayores pintaban a las más jóvenes en el proceso de formación de sus identidades sexuales y sociales. A veces las mujeres se pintaban unas a otras cuando iban a la chacra a plantar yuca, y siempre para fiestas rituales cuando iban a bailar. De estas ocasiones, las mujeres más viejas recuerdan particularmente los hermosos diseños rojos y azules que creaban en sus rostros, especialmente para atraer a los hombres; y cómo estos diseños se iluminaban con los movimientos de sus largos y brillantes cabellos negros. La cabellera negra y brillante de una mujer es otro símbolo de su belleza y fuerza personal. Cuando baila, su cabello se mueve con el ritmo de la música “como un viento fuerte,” y comunica a su compañero el mensaje de sexualidad y fuerza de su pareja de manera similar como el viento hace volar las hojas de los árboles. Ahora, por supuesto en retrospectiva, las abuelas aseguran que ese lenguaje de sexualidad era de tono “discreto” y “modesto.”

En contraste, ellas consideran que los colores estridentes del maquillaje que las jovencitas usan a diario las hacen aparecer como estando sexualmente disponibles todo el tiempo, lo cual es visto como poco modesto. En este caso se puede invocar la explicación de Berger sobre la función real del espejo en la pintura al óleo Europea de mujeres como “haciendo que la mujer sea cómplice en tratarse a sí misma, primero y principalmente, como una imagen” (1972:51), como un objeto y no como siendo realmente ella misma. El hecho de que para ponerse el maquillaje ahora una joven se mira ella misma *individualmente* al espejo tratando de crear la imagen de la mujer que quiere ser, es otra de las principales razones por la cual las abuelas consideran este tipo de adorno corporal objetable. Su indulgente individualidad desafía

las formas tradicionales aceptables de socialidad femenina Napo Quichua y sus presupuestos acerca de la naturaleza de esa misma identidad. Al cortarse el pelo corto y al ponerse maquillaje las jovencitas se defamiliarizan con su propia imagen cultural y llegan aún a rechazarla al tratar de reconstruir sus cuerpos de acuerdo a modelos extranjerizantes. El realismo visual de las imágenes de televisión, reforzado por la presión social del grupo de edad, compite con las narrativas de socialización de sus madres y abuelas y termina por delegitimarlas. Algunas de estas jóvenes mujeres están realmente reprimiendo, al menos en público, memorias bien recientes de su niñez, como cuando rechazan el gusto de la comida nativa o, peor aún, cuando niegan saber el idioma Quichua y rehusan hablarlo.

Finalmente, existen otros aspectos sociales importantes que las abuelas sienten que están siendo amenazados por las imágenes presentadas en los medios de masa: los mismos lazos de parentesco. Entre los Napo Quichua, la sexualidad y las demostraciones de amor y afecto son extremadamente privadas. Las parejas casadas y los amantes generalmente usan la privacidad de las riberas de los ríos, o el monte para tener relaciones sexuales. Tomarse de las manos, besarse, o abrazarse en público se ve muy raramente, aún entre los jóvenes de hoy día. El despliegue abierto y a veces desvergonzado de todos estos aspectos de la sexualidad en el espejo de la pantalla de televisión es visto como ofensivo por las mujeres mayores o, por lo menos como avergonzante en frente a otros. Las abuelas se preocupan de que las jovencitas están reflejando de esa pantalla, no sólo apariencias personales estéticamente poco aceptables, sino también prácticas sociales altamente objetables. Ellas despliegan una familiaridad y una sexualidad abierta que están peligrosamente rompiendo con todos los códigos tradicionales de etiqueta que mantenían en su lugar a las jerarquías de parentesco. La afirmación más clara de esta preocupación fue hecha por una abuela cuya nieta había huido a Quito después de haber tenido una serie de relaciones sexuales escandalosas en Tena. Al preguntarme si podía yo buscarla cuando regresaba a Quito, la desesperada abuela trató de explicarme la situación de la siguiente manera:

Ahora las mujeres aprenden de la televisión de gente que se abraza y se besa en público; que sólo viven del dinero de sus maridos, o de lo que ganan vendiendo sus cuerpos. Es por esto que las jóvenes están perdiendo el respeto por sus parientes, que se dejan abrazar



por los primos y los cuñados. Los llaman por sus nombres de pila! [en vez de usar los términos de parentesco apropiados] como si estuvieran casados con ellos. Tampoco tratan a sus mayores con respeto; piensan que pueden hacerlos callar con la misma facilidad con que apretan ese botoncito de la televisión y “click”...el gringo se desaparece..

Las abuelas están apenadas porque sienten que estas jovencitas están cayendo, si no en el pecado, en una peligrosa vorágine cultural llena de incertidumbres que contribuye a la inseguridad y la ansiedad que sienten acerca de sí mismas.<sup>6</sup> La razón más convincente que puedo ofrecer para explicar la ansiedad de las mujeres adultas es su certidumbre de que el resquebrajamiento de los vitales lazos interpersonales de parentesco no permite que estos frágiles seres jóvenes (de otra manera considerados normales en las adolescentes) sean apoyados y ayudados a reestablecerse a través del conocimiento, la intimidad, y el afecto que ofrecen sus mayores. Los seres solitarios e inseguros son vulnerables: como espejos se rompen.

### Conclusiones

Estoy muy consciente de que en este ensayo sólo he ofrecido una explicación parcial de un problema complejo al centrarme en la opinión de las abuelas en la controversia que éstas todavía mantienen con sus nietas sobre las imágenes y relaciones de género. Las mujeres adultas hablan de sus memorias y de sus experiencias de identidad como una forma de entender y hacer su propia historia en el presente. Sus voces revelan a sujetos internamente complejos cuya autoconciencia y prácticas sociales reflejan a menudo intenciones paradójicas y conflictivas, particularmente porque ahora ellas sienten que están perdiendo la batalla de su reproducción cultural como mujeres. Esta situación es experimentada como un sentido de pérdida y separación; un sentimiento de soledad. Cuando su última hija la dejó para irse a vivir a Tena, una de las mujeres adultas expresó brevemente estos sentimientos con esta pregunta suspirante: “Y ahora...¿quién va a recoger mis pensamientos?” Estas sentidas memorias hablan del carácter intersubjetivo de la identidad y de sus profundas raíces en las relaciones sociales; las mismas que están cambiando rápidamente, como lo sugiere tan elocuentemente la metáfora de las jovencitas

de ahora como espejos que se rompen fácilmente. Las narrativas de las mujeres adultas deben entonces interpretarse en el contexto de las estructuras cambiantes de poder que han sido producidas por los nuevos agentes de una economía política y cultural globalizante. Cómo van estas jóvenes mujeres indígenas a incorporar la modernidad a través de los muchos espejos neo-coloniales, y al mismo tiempo reinventar sus identidades indígenas de género, es un problema crucial que enfrentan hoy día en toda América Latina muchas mujeres, y hombres, indígenas.

A través de los ojos de las abuelas he tratado de demostrar cómo las jóvenes mujeres Napo Quichua están caminando a tientas por un lado, por la realidad de su grupo de compañeros adolescentes y la cultura de consumo que les ofrecen los medios de masa, y por otro, por el camino cultural transitado por sus padres y abuelos que muchas de las jóvenes consideran ya anticuado y obsoleto. Unas pocas comprometidas políticamente, se dejan guiar tentativamente por el discurso estereotipado de las organizaciones indígenas. Las jóvenes están usando estos recursos simbólicos para construir un puente entre la cultura tradicional de sus mayores, que apenas conocen y que a menudo reprimen, y los discursos dominantes y oposicionales prestados. Estos intentos de las jóvenes de reformular su identidad étnica pueden ser interpretados como estrategias de adquirir cierto poder en los complejos escenarios de las luchas políticas de sobrevivencia cultural. Pero uno debe también considerar el hecho de que estos mismos intentos las pueden llevar por el desagradable camino de la alienación, la prostitución, y el abuso sexual. Los sufrimientos que se encuentran en este último camino son el centro de las preocupaciones de las abuelas que no pueden ser confortablemente descartados. Estos reflejan la violencia, frecuentemente pasada por alto, que las mujeres indígenas deben confrontar en su búsqueda de lo que en la literatura reciente sobre la cultura popular Latinoamericana se ha dado en llamar "identidades híbridas."<sup>7</sup> Cuando se centra principalmente en objetos culturales, esta conceptualización de identidades a veces deja de lado los conflictos internos que experimentan los sujetos que los producen. Las así llamadas "culturas tradicionales" nunca han sido estáticas ni han desaparecido, si bien están siendo reformuladas. La "hibridación" tiene una larga trayectoria en las Américas y como Platt ha señalado, los indígenas siempre han estado envueltos en un penoso proceso de "auto-modernización" (1992:144).

No es, por supuesto, mi intención ofrecer aquí al lector una respuesta definitiva de carácter optimista o pesimista a este difícil dilema. Basada en los resultados de una investigación antropológica de orientación histórica sobre la cultura Napo Quichua, sólo puedo concluir que para éstos indígenas particularmente, el desafío no es nuevo. Su historia nos muestra que tanto hombres como mujeres fueron capaces de negociar su propia "autenticidad" cultural dinámica desde la violencia de la dominación blanca que formó siempre parte integral de sus vidas. Las condiciones estructurales e ideológicas de la sociedad contemporánea global y homogeneizante pueden contribuir a que la tarea sea un poco más difícil para los jóvenes indígenas de hoy día, pero ciertamente no imposible: *tal vez*, y después de todo, los espejos no se van a romper.

### Notas

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1. En estas conversaciones participaron tres y a veces cuatro mujeres adultas quienes vinieron frecuentemente acompañadas de sus nietas. Todas son del área de los ríos Pano y Tena. Desde 1994 he colaborado con Dolores Intriago en establecer una oficina de la mujer y un centro de refugio para mujeres abusadas. En este proceso hemos recogido información y documentado las historias de vida de más de 50 mujeres.
2. Por ejemplo, aún cuando son confrontados con casos irrefutables de violencia doméstica en sus propias comunidades, varios líderes indígenas han desoído las quejas de las mujeres o las han descartado con argumentos "tradicionales" acerca de las relaciones de género. Esta actitud ha motivado a muchas mujeres de Napo y de otras provincias Amazónicas a formar sus propias organizaciones de mujeres. Ver Warren (1992) para una forma similar de esencialismo cultural en los discursos de etnicidad de líderes Maya contemporáneos. Wilson (1988) analiza explícitamente el problema de la representación de género en el pensamiento indigenista en Bolivia. Las relaciones simbólicas entre las mujeres y la *Pachamama* (Madre Tierra), reconocida por las mujeres indígenas de la Sierra, no se traduce fácilmente en la relación de las mujeres Amazónicas con la chacra (cf., Descola 1992:215; Harris 1988).
3. Varios estudios antropológicos recientes se han ocupado de los conflictos inter-generacionales sobre las contradicciones entre la tradición y la modernidad, pero pocos se han centrado en los discursos de las mujeres. Una excelente excepción es el trabajo de Abu-Lughod, esp. 1990.
4. Cruikshank (1992, 1995) propone un enfoque analítico que tome en cuenta la confluencia entre la cultura oral y material. Desde la perspectiva de la antropología de los sentidos, Serematakis (1994a) sugiere que la representación y la experiencia histórica deben ser consideradas en su incorporación a la cultura material. En la Amazonia Ecuatoriana, el trabajo de Dorotea y Norman Whitten (ver e.g., Whitten y Whitten 1993 y Whitten 1985) con las mujeres indígenas ceramistas de Canelos, demuestra la riqueza de este enfoque.
5. Varios antropólogos que han trabajado en diversas áreas etnográficas han elaborado las relaciones entre el parentesco, la muerte, y las memorias en la constitución de la identidad (ver Gow 1991; Serematakis 1994b; Taylor 1993). Esta forma de llanto tradicional es similar al que tiene lugar en los velorios, pero este último es también común entre los hombres, mientras que el primero lo he oído sólo entre mujeres. Briggs (1992) ha señalado que entre los indígenas Warao, las mujeres usan una forma similar de lamento como una voz crítica frente a la autoridad de los hombres.
6. A pesar de siglos de misionización, los Napo Quichua nunca aceptaron la idea Cristiana del pecado original. En este caso particular, las relaciones sexuales pre-maritales de las mujeres no son consideradas "pecaminosas" ya que la virginidad no es concebida en sí misma como un valor (Muratorio 1995).
7. Cuando se centra en el análisis de textos, arte y música popular como expresiones inter-culturales, esta literatura frecuentemente omite las complejidades de los problemas implícitos en las así llamadas "culturas híbridas," complejidades que se analizan de otra manera en las discusiones más históricamente informadas de este concepto en los trabajos de Rowe y Schelling (1991) o García Canclini (1995).

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### Notas

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<sup>1</sup> En estas conversaciones participaron tres y a veces cuatro mujeres adultas quienes vinieron frecuentemente acompañadas de sus nietas. Todas son del área de los ríos Pano y Tena. Desde 1994 he colaborado con Dolores Intriago en establecer una oficina de la mujer y un centro de refugio para mujeres abusadas. En este proceso hemos recogido información y documentado las historias de vida de más de 50 mujeres.

<sup>2</sup> Por ejemplo, aún cuando son confrontados con casos irrefutables de violencia doméstica en sus propias comunidades, varios líderes indígenas han desoído las quejas de las mujeres o las han descartado con argumentos "tradicionales" acerca de las relaciones de género. Esta actitud ha motivado a muchas mujeres de Napo y de otras provincias Amazónicas a formar sus propias organizaciones de mujeres. Ver Warren (1992) para una forma similar de esencialismo cultural en los discursos de etnicidad de líderes maya contemporáneos. Wilson (1988) analiza explícitamente el problema de la representación de género en el pensamiento indigenista en Bolivia. Las relaciones simbólicas entre las mujeres y la *Pachamama* (Madre Tierra), reconocida por las mujeres indígenas de la Sierra, no se traduce fácilmente en la relación de las mujeres amazónicas con la chacra (cf., Descola 1992:215; Harris 1988).

<sup>3</sup> Varios estudios antropológicos recientes se han ocupado de los conflictos inter-generacionales sobre las contradicciones entre la tradición y la modernidad, pero pocos se han centrado en los discursos de las mujeres. Una excelente excepción es el trabajo de Abu-Lughod, esp. 1990.

<sup>4</sup> Cruikshank (1992, 1995) propone un enfoque analítico que tome en cuenta la confluencia entre la cultura oral y material. Desde la perspectiva de la antropología de los sentidos, Serematakis (1994a) sugiere que la representación y la experiencia histórica deben ser consideradas en su incorporación a la cultura material. En la Amazonia Ecuatoriana, el trabajo de Dorotea y Norman Whitten (ver e.g., Whitten y Whitten 1993 y Whitten 1985) con las mujeres indígenas ceramistas de Canelos, demuestra la riqueza de este enfoque.

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<sup>5</sup> Varios antropólogos que han trabajado en diversas áreas etnográficas han elaborado las relaciones entre el parentesco, la muerte, y las memorias en la constitución de la identidad (ver Gow 1991; Serematakis 1994b; Taylor 1993). Esta forma de llanto tradicional es similar al que tiene lugar en los velorios, pero este último es también común entre los hombres, mientras que el primero lo he oído sólo entre mujeres. Briggs (1992) ha señalado que entre los indígenas Warao, las mujeres usan una forma similar de lamento como una voz crítica frente a la autoridad de los hombres.

<sup>6</sup> A pesar de siglos de misionización, los Napo Quichua nunca aceptaron la idea Cristiana del pecado original. En este caso particular, las relaciones sexuales pre-maritales de las mujeres no son consideradas "pecaminosas" ya que la virginidad no es concebida en sí misma como un valor (Muratorio 1995<sup>a</sup>).

<sup>7</sup> Cuando se centra en el análisis de textos, arte y música popular como expresiones inter-culturales, esta literatura frecuentemente omite las complejidades de los problemas implícitos en las así llamadas "culturas híbridas," complejidades que se analizan de otra manera en las discusiones más históricamente informadas de este concepto en los trabajos de Rowe y Schelling (1991) o García Canclini (1995).

WOMEN'S DIALOGUES, MONOLOGUE OF POWER: GENDER AND THE CONSTRUCTION  
OF THE COLONIAL SUBJECT IN THE UPPER AMAZON

Blanca Muratorio

University of British Columbia

One of those Amazonian afternoons when heavy rain disuades any <sup>a</sup> woman <sup>from</sup> of going to attend her garden plot, Francisca Andi, a Napo Quichua woman from the Ecuadorean Upper Amazon, came with her youngest daughter to my house for a visit. She brought with her a musical instrument made of a thin branch and a piece of agave string and expressed her desire to sing for the two of us. In the course of the several years I have worked with her, Francisca has sung quite a few songs, <sup>she</sup> some learned from her mother, others <sup>she</sup> composed ~~by her~~ for different occasions, such as weddings <sup>or</sup> and as farewells to kin <sup>who would be</sup> when travelling afar. The song she <sup>a</sup> sung that afternoon, however, was intended to be different: it was the legacy of her <sup>her</sup> autobiography for her daughter and <sup>me</sup> myself to remember and cherish and, as she enticed us, "for you to understand and interpret my past and present sufferings."

Through her poetic imagination, Francisca provides <sup>a</sup> a highly individualized <sup>autobiography</sup> biography, shaping her own life experience, but <sup>she</sup> she also incorporates <sup>ing</sup> the signs and symbols of her ethnic group identity (**Basso** 1990:21). Thus her song expresses <sup>a</sup> a form of collective memory of the experiences that were shared by the Napo Quichua women of her generation. ~~As Basso suggests, biography is~~ <sup>Francisca</sup> one way in which people choose to construct and present their own histories (1990:20). (see). Through her memories <sup>she</sup> she supplies the

terms to explore how the wider forces of history -such as frontier capitalism, settlers' colonialism, a liberal state, and conservative missionaries- were brought to bear on indigenous consciousness and how particular aspects of colonial history were appropriated, rejected, reconceptualized, or reinvented by indigenous women to be used in the present. When she evaluates this present, Francisca opens up ~~the~~ possibilities to understand not only how her world was constructed, but also how it is being transformed.)

Throughout her singing Francisca weaved the meanings of her song as a dialogue, both with the audience she selected for that particular performance (her youngest daughter and myself), and with the past colonial agents who shaped and constrained her life experiences. In this paper I shall attempt to give only a partial answer to her challenge to "interpret her past and present sufferings." First, I provide the political and economic background of the song through the analysis of historical documents. By recovering the voices and personae of the colonizing agents I try to show how the colonial encounter becomes a multivocal one, revealing a multiplicity of consciousness (Cooper and Stoler 1989). This is followed by Francisca's own voice and by my analysis of fragments of her song, not primarily as poetic texts in their own right, but as Francisca's culturally and historically situated construction of her gendered self, and as her response to the relations of power through which the agents of colonization tried to constitute indigenous peoples -and specifically indigenous women- as subjects.

## Women's voices

Anthropologists working in very different ethnographic areas have already shown how mythic and historical modes of social consciousness are incorporated and expressed not only in narrative themes, but also in poetry, song, political rethoric, and other forms of non-narrative discourse (~~Basso-Sherzer~~ <sup>and</sup> 1990; Hill 1990; ~~Jean and John Comaroff~~ <sup>Travich 1988</sup> 1987; Coplan 1987; Messick 1987). In lowland Ecuador ~~can~~ <sup>still today</sup> Quichua societies, where discursive speech is the public domain of men ~~even today~~, women have <sup>✓</sup> privileged other symbolic languages such as ceramics, songs, ritual wailing, and the interpretation of dreams and visions <sup>which they use</sup> to create a strong sense of themselves, to structure their worlds, to interpret their past and present experiences of violent social change, and to create a sense of their own history as indigenous women (~~Norman~~ Whitten 1976, 1988; ~~Dorothea~~ Whitten 1981; Seitz 1987<sup>2</sup>; ~~Dorothea~~ and Norman Whitten 1988; Harrison 1989). These are the preferred idioms of expression, the "hidden transcripts" (Scott 1990) used by women in their homes, in the <sup>in</sup> garden plot<sup>s</sup>, by the riverbanks when they pan gold, or in the privacy of their forest spaces, <sup>however these</sup> but are not the only ones used. The generation of middle-aged <sup>2</sup> Napo Quichua women with whom I worked <sup>note</sup> are monolingual in Quichua, but they have lived all their lives in a society where Spanish has been the language of domination and <sup>hence</sup> accorded higher status in daily interaction. This (situation of) <sup>←</sup> language colonialism <sup>of language</sup> has not "muted" these women, ~~who~~, through <sup>several</sup> ~~several~~ intermediaries, or <sup>by</sup> directly delivering whole speeches <sup>✓</sup> in Quichua in public festivities, have made their voices heard. They <sup>either</sup> ~~who~~, through <sup>occasions</sup> ~~intermediaries~~ or by delivering whole speeches for public festivities directly in Quichua,

(like to) refer to themselves and to their mothers -but not to their daughters- as pitalalashimi huarmiguna (as does Francisca in her song, lines 42-48), that is women who, just as the pitalala (poisonous Equis snake) are always ready to counter attack by verbally protesting perceived injustices in government offices, the market or, more often, the abuses committed by the gold merchants (see Muratorio 1991 for the importance of power of speech in Napo Quichua culture). This capacity to move in more than one expressive world helps to explain why Francisca was able to take a traditional aesthetic form widely used by women in lowland Quichua culture (see Harrison 1989 for a fine analysis of love songs of enchantment), and transform it into a more "narrative" historical discourse and a dialogue with her audience.

Poetically asserting her freedom, independence, and self-realization using the metaphor of walking to the far reaches of the forest, and symbolically enlarging her own space and that of those she loves with the power of her dreams and visions, Francisca contrasts her own cultural ideal of <sup>the</sup> Napo Quichua woman ~~(e-self)~~ with the main design of the hegemonic colonial project that I will epitomize here as "sedentarization" of the indigenous peoples in its broadest meanings.

*appropriate indigenous femininity.*

*Francisca's*

**The hegemonic project: the political economy of song**

In the colonial discourse, sedentarization of the Indians was a monologue of power although the voices were not always in unison.

*Blanca -  
Can you  
give me full  
reference to  
Harrison 1989?  
(see p. 101)*

*Should  
he  
note  
to say  
write ?*

*place*

*and are willing to create the best circumstances. do say what they want to say.*

Of the many connotations of this term, each of the colonial agents seems to have emphasized the most convenient for their interests in different historical periods. At times the patrons wanted the Indians "vegetative," "unchanging," and "routine;" the state fixed its subjects in space in order to "allocate," "classify," and "parcel them out;" and the missionaries always wanted their children of God, "quiet," "calm," "composed," "serene," and "unruffled" (Rodale 1978:1085).

As a result of the Liberal revolution at the turn of the nineteenth century, a new administration was installed in the Oriente province, which at that time comprised all of Ecuador's Amazonian territory. <sup>This new administration replaced</sup> ~~It came to replace~~ a previous Conservative experiment <sup>in</sup> of political administration ~~of the province~~ by the Jesuit Order from 1870 to 1875. "Papá" García, the first Liberal governor for whom we have reliable documentation, desperately tried to govern <sup>the</sup> that vast province and to remain faithful to the ideals of the revolution in an area that was suffering the ravages of the Amazonian rubber boom (1888-1914). Even in the farthest reaches of his province <sup>García</sup> ~~he~~ kept his officials busy, symbolically constituting the Indians as citizens of the Republic and enforcing the new laws of civil marriage. After the celebration of Independence ~~Day~~ <sup>in</sup> Curaray in 1909, his political lieutenant <sup>red</sup> informs him: "Four Indians of Mr. Garcés asked to be married because they had their sweethearts ready and they wanted the ceremony to take place under the flag <sup>on</sup> ~~in~~ the main platform. After the marriage, the Indians remained dancing around the flag with their drums and flutes,



shouting 'Long live apu [white authority] García! Long live the government of General Eloy Alfaro [the national leader of the Liberal revolution]!' (Curaray, August 24, 1909, AGN).

The Oriente was a frontier area, where soldiers sent to defend the national borders against Peruvian incursions turned into rubber traders, government officials, or both, <sup>They were</sup> and where a group of adventurers and profiteers of different nationalities, <sup>they</sup> suddenly enriched by rubber, <sup>and</sup> gained respectability and power <sup>and</sup> establishing large haciendas along the main Amazonian rivers. It was an area where the limits between <sup>to</sup> state and civil society were blurred by distance and by the common -if conflictual- search by both merchants and state officials for the reluctant labor of the indigenous population who lived on hunting, fishing, gathering, and shifting horticulture. In the aftermath of this period, the white and mestizo <sup>men</sup> men and women who settled in the provincial administrative centers of Tena and Archidona became the state officials, teachers, policemen, and, most important, the patrons and merchants who created the model of "frontier colonialism" that prevailed for the next three decades. The moral (organizing) framework for this rather unpolished political and economic plan would soon be provided by the <sup>inevitable?</sup> ~~unavoidable~~ missionaries.

This was not, however, the design for an egalitarian expanding frontier in the spirit of Jeffersonian agrarian democracy (Harvey 1989:257). It was a neo-colonial project that inherited from Spanish colonialism, and accepted as 'the natural order of things', a class-divided society in which the positions in the division of

Note

and the organizational structuring of the encomiendas.

labor were determined by racial status and distinct cultural differences. <sup>when</sup> Since the conquistadors entered this area in the middle of the sixteenth century <sup>to look</sup> looking for the Land of Gold and Cinnamon and <sup>to</sup> established ~~encomiendas~~, the prime mover of that colonial society was - and continued to be during the Republican period - the labor of the indigenous people. Napo Quichua women and men were shaped as subjects from the time of that first colonial encounter. As a group, they were <sup>the Napo Quichua became a distinct group</sup> carved out of the ethnic complexity of the Upper Amazon, by both conquistadors and missionaries. <sup>through the evangelizing processes of the missionaries and the organizational structure of the encomiendas</sup> The Napo Quichua are not, therefore, "distinct cultural archipelagos, nor ethnic islands of savagery recently incorporated into civilization." <sup>is this a quote?</sup> ? (reference?) (is this self?)

While the economy remained exclusively extractive, the colonizing agents needed <sup>a mobile</sup> that labor force to be mobile so that it <sup>that is</sup> could go into the forest for long periods of time <sup>to look</sup> looking for gold or rubber <sup>to</sup> in exchange for manufactured goods. For these turn-of-the nineteenth century- <sup>Indians</sup> conquistadors, the "savagery" and "nomadism" of the ~~Indians~~ were their best assets. <sup>This</sup> That conception of a useful colonial subject was precisely the one that clashed with the Jesuits' <sup>utopian attempts</sup> utopia to turn the Napo Quichua into settled Christianized peasants (2)

When the rubber boom was over, <sup>greedy</sup> however, the rubber traders turned ~~their greed~~ to land for cattle and agriculture, <sup>however</sup> although the main source of their wealth was always gold, with a brief return to rubber during the <sup>second</sup> World War. Helped by government legislation that favored colonization, the new <sup>born</sup> farmers

Note

expanded the process of land occupation, turning what had previously been Indian settlements into white towns and haciendas. One of these early agricultural converts left us a transparent if utopian example of the rethoric of the times:

"This land is so rich that in no time the magic whistle of the locomotive will not only bring us national and foreign capital, but will also drive away from the forests the puma and the porcupine ~~to~~ replace them by hundreds of heads of cattle. For this wonderful ideal to be realized we need to start with a small settlement. At the headwaters of this river [Curaray] there are a considerable number of indigenous peoples who, far away from all commerce and only rarely visited by a Dominican priest, live ~~like~~ nomadic tribes, wandering and given to idleness and loafing. Mr. governor, you have to look after this group of unfortunate beings, settle them in one place, and enlighten them about the benefits of civilization and work. Then, in no time, they will constitute a core of hardworking and honest citizens who, with their diligence and labor, will also contribute to the development of national wealth in the Oriente. I cannot conceive of Ecuador's enhancement without the colonization of this majestic world, nor without ideas flying through telegraphic cables across hundreds of miles, nor without a thousand steamships cutting through its rivers, nor without the multiplication of industries or the commerce that would carry to all the peoples of the world the most precious products of this fertile and privileged land." (Curaray, San Antonio, December 24, 1908, AGN)

By 1921 there were four haciendas in the (very) outskirts of the town of Tena, the administrative capital. The buildings for the government house, the police station, the church, and the convent completed the spatial grid of institutional and symbolic domination over the indigenous population. The main plaza became the place for the affirmation and practice of class relations; ~~Every Sunday~~, when Indians were called to mass at the sound of the church bell, ~~symbol of a meaningless devotion,~~ followed by the assignment of their labor tasks for the week; or during the yearly ceremony of the change of

*It was also the place of the yearly ...*

staffs, when the white authorities nominated the indigenous leaders who would be in charge of commanding the labor of their peers, and when "good" workers were sometimes rewarded with the "assignment" of wives. The construction of the administrative town as a place of discipline and surveillance <sup>initiated</sup> started the struggle between those for whom the commodification of land is a sign of progress, and the indigenous cultural ideal <sup>people, whose</sup> of the land claimed through ties of time and memories <sup>was a</sup> a struggle that continues to this day, although under <sup>the white</sup> the terms of a different social formation. The white

Once in control of the best lands around the administrative centers, the patrons were able <sup>more easily</sup> to get easier access to the labor of the Napo Quichua living near or inside the territories of the haciendas, and to consolidate <sup>a</sup> the system of indebtedness by which the Indians purchased manufactured goods at highly inflated prices, primarily in exchange for gold and occasional agricultural labor. Indigenous women did the same tasks as men, except for clearing the forest, but usually got paid in cloth and necklace beads through their husbands. In addition, women were preferred as domestic servants, performing all the <sup>heavy</sup> hard household tasks, <sup>They also fulfilled</sup> and the role of resident pharmacists, since their vast knowledge of forest plants made them indispensable in a society that had no easy access to conventional medicines.

Once ~~they destroyed~~ <sup>had been destroyed</sup> the nearby forests, for agriculture, the patrons considered they had tamed the "savagery" of those Indians under their control. They became the true "indiecitos", the domesticated little Indians, almost household objects to be



escape into the forest at the "slightest" pretext, <sup>which</sup> as they continuously <sup>ally</sup> did. <sup>For this reason</sup> ~~That is why~~ the patrons finally had to come to terms with some of the contradictory objectives of the state and the missionaries.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Liberal state issued a series of laws and decrees, including specific ones for the Oriente province, <sup>that</sup> ~~which~~ exempted the Indians from subsidiary work and recognized their legal status as Ecuadorian citizens entitled to education and judicial protection (Rubio Orbe 1954:63-67). Not unlike the Spanish crown in the early colonial period, the Liberal state had to confront the fact that these social policies often conflicted with <sup>its</sup> their economic and geopolitical objectives. <sup>The colonization of</sup> Colonizing what was then considered a "vast, rich, and empty" space and <sup>the construction of</sup> ~~a~~ building at least a primitive network of transport and communications <sup>were</sup> was regarded as an economic and highly patriotic project, <sup>The settlement of</sup> ~~since~~ populating the frontier areas with Peru constituted, from the beginning of the Republican period, a problem of Ecuadorian sovereignty. <sup>since</sup> "savage subjects" could not be trusted to remain loyal citizens.

The state's main dilemma was that in order to achieve these objectives it still <sup>had to rely</sup> ~~relied~~ on Indian labor, <sup>The state</sup> and could not afford to relinquish the colonial power to require <sup>Indian</sup> obligatory tribute in labor for public works, although <sup>that labor was</sup> ~~now~~ paid in cash wages. For bureaucratic administrative purposes the Indians were divided into "debtors", those who worked for patrons, and "freemen", ironically those who, unlike the true "savages", had remained under white

control and were policed to work for the state. Reality, however, blurred the <sup>as</sup> next categories of this classificatory system of subjects because of the <sup>newly</sup> already created cultural needs of the Indians for manufactured goods controlled by the patrons, because of ~~the~~ internal competition for labor between the different agents of colonization, and ~~due to~~ the very contradictions of a state that needed to promote the white colonization of the Amazon by providing its "pioneers" with cheap Indian labor, <sup>conflict-d with the government's own</sup> at the same time that it <sup>mandate</sup> was obliged to defend its Indian citizens from the worst abuses of the patron system. In the 1930s, when a progressive military administration was in charge of the Oriente, <sup>this</sup> the dilemma was still <sup>present</sup> the same, as <sup>one</sup> this lieutenant explains to his superior: "I am working hard to eliminate vice, abuse, and corruption, and at the same time to obtain the resurgence of the indigenous race so that <sup>these people may</sup> they (sic) might become some day useful citizens for <sup>their</sup> his (sic) own benefit, that of <sup>their own</sup> his people and <sup>for</sup> the Motherland in General" (Tena, March 21, 1938, Oficio No.103 AGN). In reality, until quite recently, Ecuadorian state policies of <sup>all</sup> any political denominations never questioned the opposition between white civilization and Indian savagery, the "childlike" character of the Indians, or the need to christianize them. When the Italian Catholic congregation of Josephine missionaries ~~were~~ assigned the Vicariate of Napo in 1922, the state delegated to them the task of civilizing the Indians through evangelization, education, the moral reorganization of their time and space, and the domestication of their bodies in order to create the "proper" Christian subjects.

As soon as they arrived into the Tena-Archidona, they carved their own space of power by establishing several haciendas and by pioneering the building of the modern infrastructure that would turn the "primitive wilderness" into a "civilized" urban space. Unlike the Jesuits who preceded them, the Josephines practiced a more pragmatic evangelization strategy of Indian integration into the local economy through productive labor as artisans and agricultural laborers. Their image of the Indians, however, reflected the same duality (of self) typical of European representations since the beginning of the Conquest; an image that shifted from the noble to the ignoble savage according to the needs of European selfhood. For the Josephines, the Napo Quichua oscillated without reason between the innocent child and the auca (savage, in Quichua), and had to be dealt accordingly with condescending paternalism or with the harsh moral controls considered necessary to restrain natural wild instincts.

In the discourse of domination, the infantilization of the Indian was marked by the demeaning use of the diminutive, a mannerism of speech that the missionaries utilized with unnecessary and sugary assiduity, as is obvious in a section of the following document addressed to the provincial governor by the Vicar in 1925: "To congregate the Indians and to achieve for them our desired improvements, we have distributed one hundred botoncitos (little buttons) to the indiecitos and long cotton tunics. During the celebration of Holy Week, those indiecitos who attended services regularly were given fishhooks, espejitos (little mirrors) and

of change itales

see itales in Comasoff

for self-affirmation.

(- Capital?)

therefore

treated

either

of change itales.



matches, and the indiecitas needles and medallitas (little religious medallions)" (Tena, June 15, 1925, AGN).

INTRO - ojo

The long-sleeved cotton blouse (maguicutun) and the ankle-length skirt (pampanilla) that became the "traditional" dress of Napo Quicua women of this area -now only worn to represent female Indianness in festive occasions or in beauty-queen contests- was probably invented by the Josephines because, as long as the women remember, it was machine-sown in the convent or by industrious colonas for "their" Indians, and literally paid in gold. That dress became an integral part of the strict female code of modesty, decency, and bodily shame supervised by the nuns, at least in the urban areas. As Foucault ( ) argues, the space of the body is where the forces of repression, socialization, discipline, and punishment are inflicted, and this was especially true in the boarding schools run by nuns.

Moral discipline could only be enforced within the missionaries' own time and space. They assumed that away from white surveillance in their own cultural and symbolic spaces, the Napo Quichua did not enjoy "liberty," but "libertinism," because and they spent their time in orgies, debauchery, and all kinds of alcoholic self-indulgence. This other side of the dual nature of the Indians in the missionaries' discourse justified their encouragement and promotion of very early marriages for women in order "to avoid the natural immorality of the Indians" (Tena, April 15, 1929, AGN). To create a civilized and Christian Indian female, the Josephines relied on the Dorothean Sisters. The role of the nuns is explained

Emphasize the construction of this Indian femininity - you do just this but he explicit here - perhaps w/ a strong intro. sentence

Ho!

white woman's "civilizing" mission - again - see Von Wale

by a male missionary as follows: "Jointly with us, the Dorothean Sisters evangelize, instruct, and educate the indigenous woman of these jungles <sup>in order</sup> to snatch her away from the slavery in which she ~~lies~~ <sup>lives</sup>, and to transform her into a civilized wife and mother of the future generations that will constitute the foundation of progress in this area, and of the complete restoration of Ecuadorian territorial rights in the Oriente" (Tena, April 11, 1931, AGN). The Josephines had taken upon themselves the patriotic duty of supporting the Ecuadorian state's defense of its Amazonian frontiers, but ~~seemed to have~~ <sup>had</sup> passed on to the indigenous women the task of bearing the children who would go to fight the wars. Several Napo Quichua elderly women often explained their reluctance to send their sons to boarding school because of their fear that the missionaries would draft them for war.

Research  
context  
analysis

The convent was also used by both the state and the patrons as a sort of temporary "refuge" to tame the most recalcitrant women rebels who consistently ran away from oppressive domestic service or from other forms of white guardianship. No indigenous woman ever went into the convent voluntarily. The Dorothean Sisters <sup>ran</sup> ~~ran~~ <sup>administered</sup> a school for white boys and girls with a separate section for indigenous girls where, "in addition to religious and civic instruction, they [were] taught the handiwork suited to their domestic duties and according to their abilities" (Tena, April 9, 1931, AGN). This gendered model of domestic confinement for indigenous women was to be symbolized by the spiritual virtues of the Virgin Mary and, more mundanely, by the general comportment and

Note



early, has the huayusa (tea) ready before dawn, knows the songs to please the curi huarmi (master spirit of gold) in order to find gold, and moves as lightly as the pichi bird in all of her activities. This is the ideal represented by the "Picher" women mentioned in her song (lines 114-119), a generation of women who, like Francisca's mother, worked along the men tapping rubber <sup>side</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>to meet</sup> ~~which there was~~ a new demand <sup>s</sup> during the Second World War. As <sup>below</sup> usual, they brought the rubber to the local patrons in exchange for manufactured goods. The preferred item was a <sup>Picher</sup> gun imported <sup>was a type of gun</sup> from Peru that did not explode as easily as ~~the~~ others. By calling themselves Picher huarmi, these women incorporated that source of white power as a metaphor for their strength and endurance, a form of symbolic empowerment <sup>that allowed them to protest</sup> protesting the fact that their labor remained unrecognized. Francisca contrasts <sup>this</sup> ~~that~~ image with that of today's acculturated indigenous women <sup>a</sup> who, confined in <sup>her</sup> their high heels or in <sup>kind on copying</sup> their white TV female models, only look <sup>s</sup> for work in town <sup>or</sup> ~~and~~, more often, remain <sup>s</sup> dependant <sup>on her</sup> from their husbands' oil-company wages. <sup>Such women</sup> They "walk aimlessly", without reason, having lost the cultural guidelines for knowing and working in the forest (lines 120-128).

Like other native biographical expressions, Francisca's song shows a sense of history that does not develop primarily within a lineal time frame. On the one hand, it selects those historical episodes of contact that were particularly critical for her own people. This characteristic of indigenous consciousness that understands history in relation to a few peaks of rapid or painful

social change has already been noted and analyzed for other Amazonian societies (see Hill, Introduction, 1988, and Reeve 1988 for the Curaray Quichua of Ecuador). Through her symbolic interpretation of those events, Francisca shows why they became memorable. On the other hand, she emphasizes certain significant events and crises of her life <sup>but</sup> without the beginning and the closure typical of conventional Western biographies (cf. Basso's discussion of Kalapalo warrior biographies, 1990).

Her claims to the space of the tropical forest are not only culturally but also historically grounded. She clearly mentions the entitlement of her own muntun (kin group) when she defines herself as "Andi woman", and their historically specific rights of occupation of the territory in the town of Tena now usurped by the whites. This is the space where her father hunted, and where in the not so distant past, indigenous authorities could at least symbolically occupy the main plaza for their drinking and dancing. <sup>This is</sup> a space now physically surrounded by what Francisca regards as the symbols of regulation, repression, and confinement: the government house, the police station, and the mission (lines 52-55, 97-113). The administrative occupation of the space where ancestors were buried <sup>has broken</sup> ~~broke~~ down the time continuity of indigenous history and claims to land.

Visually, geographical spaces become historical markers when they are remembered through the love and pain of social relations. Whenever Francisca crosses the Mount Huamaní and its freezing páramo (high plateau) she recalls that period in the history of her

father and others like him when they had to carry the whites <sup>in</sup> on their backs in the hazardous journey from Quito to Tena. Her father made her see and feel the cold and the oppression so that she would know and cry (lines 70-84). And in the retelling of the experience to her <sup>daughter</sup> children, new cultural history is made. As Harvey (1989:218) suggests: "[And] if it is true that time is always memorialized not as flow, but as memories of experienced places and spaces, then history must indeed give way to poetry, time to space, as the fundamental material of social expression."

As I have suggested, during the time period of Francisca's generation, power over women took many forms through the control of their movements and their labor. For Francisca, the most traumatic personal experience of that power was her arranged marriage to an older man when she had not yet reached puberty. She regards as particularly painful her early separation from her parents to live far away with her in-laws. Confronting formidable dangers for a girl her age, she <sup>by</sup> escaped three times walking at night through the forest to return home, until she finally convinced her reluctant husband to come and live with her parents. The story of her fears, and of her resistance still evokes strong <sup>emotional</sup> emotions in her memories, as she has recounted ~~it~~ to me several times over the years I have known her. The portrait of her husband in the song is not a very flattering one (lines 85-96), but it is revealing that the main two negative characteristics she chooses to mention about him are his illiteracy and his meekness. The only positive comment I ever heard her <sup>make</sup> made about her husband is that he allowed her to travel with

him to a far away place in another province where she was able to seek knowledge from some of the famous Tsachila shamans. Unlike the women of her mother's generation, Francisca has come to realize the power of literacy and to resent the fact that her early marriage, her parent's resistance, and the condescending attitude of the nuns, prevented her from learning how to read and write. This is how she explains it now: "Let the whites be grateful that my parents did not teach me to read and write, otherwise I would have become a lawyer or a doctor. They [her parents] thought that women who learned to read would be taken away by white men. But nowadays, when I want to protest and I don't know Spanish, I get furious. Leaving the old beliefs <sup>behind</sup>, I have sent my daughters to school, <sup>Francisca</sup> but when I teach them the old ways I want them to listen clearly." At the same time, she perceives literacy as the spatialization of knowledge, as when she tells me: "unlike your books, my word is free." <sup>But her freedom has become limited since</sup> The acceptance of universal schooling for children meant, de facto, the sedentarization of their mothers. *now!*

In the final lines of her song Francisca goes even further in rejecting the missionaries' ideal of a female indigenous subject. She compares herself with the aucas, using the double connotation of this term in Ecuador<sup>an</sup> lowland Quichua to refer to "savages" and to the Huocarani Indians, some of whom still avoid white contact. By this comparison she turns on its head an important aspect of her own people's myth of origin, which states that the Napo Quichua became runa (people, human beings) by accepting baptism and salt to differentiate themselves from the aucas (see

Muratorio 1991). Furthermore, she identifies herself with the Huaorani Indians, the Quichua's traditional enemies, of whom in the past she had told me several tales of their alleged cannibalism, and of the many killings they perpetrated on Quichua people. Puzzled by her sudden change of heart, I asked Francisca about it and her answer can serve as a categorical closure to the main theme of contrasts in the colonial encounter I have tried to explore in this paper. These were Francisca's words: "What I told you <sup>before is</sup> was true, but the aucas still walk naked through the forest and they are free."

## ENDNOTES

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 agradesimientos

1. The source of my ethnography were middle-aged and elderly women from the area of the rivers Pano and Tena. I have known Francisca Andi for a period of seven years.

2. Indigenous people do not make the distinction between whites and mestizos. All non-indigenous peoples are referred to as "whites," and I will do so from now on. Foreigners are known as rancias or gringos.

3. This was the first schism in an allegedly monolithic colonial project that was resolved with the expulsion of the Jesuits from the area in 1895, to the delight of the Napo Quichua who had sided with the traders because their economic objectives allowed the indigenous people to maintain their traditional subsistence strategies and their religious freedom.

4. More permanent relations of concubinage between white men and indigenous women, and even marriages, were common in more remote areas of the Oriente, but near the administrative centers, the presence of white women made for different domestic arrangements.

5. It was common practice for white households to "adopt" indigenous children from their early childhood to keep them as servants until they became of age. A large number of documents in the AGN provide evidence that <sup>ally</sup> these children resisted this type of confinement by continuously running away.

6. The analysis of this song is here limited to the purposes of this paper. There are several more levels of meaning that would be revealed with a different kind of translation. The Spanish version of this song was translated from the Quichua with the help of Francisca's daughter Juanita, and Dolores Intriago.



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## GLOSSARY OF QUICHUA AND SPANISH TERMS

<i>Auca</i>	savage; also the Huaorani Indians, a small group of whom still remain uncontacted by whites.
<i>bobonero</i>	Bird associated with shamanic powers.
<i>chicha</i>	Manioc drink.
<i>curi huarmi</i>	Spirit master of gold.
<i>cushillu</i>	Spider monkey.
<i>encomienda</i>	grant of land given to a Spanish conquistador by the Crown.
<i>huarmi</i>	woman.
<i>longo</i>	derogatory form of address for Indians.
<i>patron</i>	landowner, merchant.
<i>pitalalashimi huarmi</i>	a woman who, like the <i>pitalala</i> (poisonous Equis snake), is always ready to counter attack by verbally protesting perceived injustices.
<i>purina</i>	to walk, travel.
<i>samai</i>	breath, spirit, power.
<i>yanamachin</i>	night monkey who moves lightly and swiftly.

## NOTAS

1. Este trabajo está basado en diez meses de trabajo etnográfico realizado en la Provincia de Chimborazo durante 1975-76. La investigación recibió fondos del Canada Council (Research Grant No. S 750111) y contó con el apoyo del Departamento de Antropología de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. En las diversas etapas del proyecto más amplio sobre "Estrategias de Movilización del Campesinado de la Sierra Ecuatoriana", participaron dos asistentes de investigación, Ana María Granja y Fernando García, a quienes agradezco la colaboración en la obtención de parte de los datos usados en este trabajo. La interpretación y conclusiones de este trabajo son, sin embargo, exclusiva responsabilidad de la autora.
2. Para la Provincia de Chimborazo, al menos, el IERAC no tradujo al Quechua el texto de la Ley de Reforma Agraria. Ni aún copias del texto en castellano están disponibles para los campesinos en la oficina regional.
3. Los intentos de organización campesina desde abajo son canalizados por el IERAC, pero principalmente por el Ministerio de Agricultura, hacia la formación de comunas. Aún cuando, en ciertos aspectos, las comunas responden a organizaciones campesinas tradicionales de base, desde 1937 -año de promulgación de la Ley de Comunas- están controladas desde afuera a través de la participación del Teniente Político de la Parroquia en la elección de los líderes y de la supervisión a que están sujetas por diferentes funcionarios del Departamento de Desarrollo Rural del Ministerio de Agricultura.
4. Se han usado nombres supuestos para referirse a las personas identificadas en los casos.
5. Esta es una de las formas en que, al nivel de la iglesia local, la misión Evangélica, a través de los pastores indígenas de orientación más conservadora, contribuye a la depolitización del campesinado, sancionando individualmente a aquellos que deben entrar en juicios para reclamar sus derechos. Sin embargo, los mismos criterios no son aplicados en los casos que conocemos en los cuales toda la comunidad hace un reclamo.
6. Datos obtenidos en el archivo de la oficina regional del IERAC en Riobamba.
7. Ver Whitten para una caracterización de "etnicidad" y su discusión en el contexto de las relaciones económicas y sociales en el Oriente Ecuatoriano (1975). Su más reciente trabajo sugiere interesantes comparaciones con el caso de la Sierra (Whitten 1976).
8. El Estado creó EMPROVIT (Empresa Nacional de Productos Vitales) y ENAC (Empresa Nacional de Almacenamiento y Comercialización) con el objeto de suprimir los intermediarios. Sin embargo, estas instituciones están sujetas a las presiones de las burguesías comerciales que siguen controlando la comercialización. Pudimos constatar, además, varias instancias en que campesinos fueron discriminados en sus tratos con agentes de estas empresas.

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EL CAMPESINADO Y LA BUROCRACIA ESTATAL:  
UN CASO EN ECUADOR.<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCCION

En las últimas dos décadas se ha producido en los países andinos un proceso característico que intenta la articulación del campesinado con la sociedad nacional. Se trata de las diversas formas en que a través de programas de reforma agraria se ha tratado de modificar la estructura de propiedad de la tierra y de modernizar el sistema productivo ofreciendo al campesinado una coyuntura de participación. En esta apertura a la participación social, política y económica del campesinado, las agencias que tienen a su cargo la implementación de la reforma agraria cumplen un papel importante. Estas organizaciones deben ser vistas como los nuevos "intermediarios" entre la clase campesina y el Estado. Tal es el caso de los Sindicatos Campesinos en Bolivia, SINAMOS en Perú y el IERAC (Instituto Ecuatoriano de Reforma Agraria y Colonización) en Ecuador. El análisis de la forma en que estas organizaciones cumplen el rol de "intermediarios" ofrece particular interés para el estudio de procesos de articulación. El objetivo de este trabajo es, justamente, explorar algunos aspectos de las relaciones del campesinado con el Estado, analizando para ello el rol de una agencia burocrática de reforma agraria, IERAC, como uno de los nexos conectivos mediante el cual el Estado Ecuatoriano intenta articular al campesinado indígena de la sierra con la sociedad nacional. La discusión se centrará en el carácter de los mecanismos de vinculación que resultan de la acción de esa burocracia y en las consecuencias de los mismos para la dinámica del conflicto y solidaridad de clase en un medio rural en proceso de cambio.

## CAMBIOS EN EL MEDIO RURAL

El campesinado indígena de la Provincia de Chimborazo constituye el 50% de la población total (Junta de Planificación 1973: 15). Hasta hace pocos años, los campesinos vivían incorporados o en las márgenes del sistema de grandes haciendas predominante en la zona. En este sistema, un pequeño grupo de blancos y mestizos monopolizaba no sólo la propiedad de la tierra sino también los medios de intercambio y distribución de la producción y el poder político local. Se trataba de un característico sistema de dominación tradicional en el que el patrón ejercía el rol de articulador del campesinado con el Estado, sea porque a nivel local controlaba a los representantes del Estado, tales como el Teniente Político, el Intendente y la Policía, o porque él mismo era el representante del Estado al ocupar posiciones tales como Prefecto Provincial, Gobernador o legislador. Este rol de articulador entre campesinado y Estado era esencial para el patrón en cuanto le permitía, por una parte, tener el control absoluto del sistema económico de la hacienda y por otra impedir que el campesinado presentase directamente sus demandas al Estado. La ideología correspondiente al sistema de dominación tradicional paternalista de la hacienda legitimaba ese rol de intermediación.

A pesar de todas las limitaciones de la formulación e implementación de la política agraria del Estado Ecuatoriano es indudable que, desde 1964 cuando se promulga la primera Ley de Reforma Agraria hasta el presente, en que se está implementando la nueva Ley de 1973-74, ese sistema de dominación tradicio



nal sufre una transformación. Un aspecto significativo de este cambio, que deseo analizar aquí, es el tipo de articulación del campesinado en el nuevo dominio de poder (Adams 1966) es decir, en la burocracia estatal que implementa la reforma agraria.

Como toda burocracia, el IERAC es el aparato de dominación del sistema de poder que representa el Estado. Como principal organismo ejecutor de la política agraria del Estado, esta burocracia cumple un papel fundamental en la orientación y canalización del conflicto de clases que todo intento de cambio en el sistema de propiedad de la tierra y en el régimen de producción rural, por más lento y tibio que sea, tiende a agudizar.

#### EL IERAC COMO NUEVO INTERMEDIARIO

Las rutinas de la administración burocrática son diferentes de las rutinas de la administración tradicional que el campesino conocía, aceptaba como "naturales" y en las que sabía cuál era su propio rol. Por el contrario, acudir al IERAC significa para el campesino enfrentarse con un universo totalmente desconocido, un universo que no está mediado por la persona del patrón, el mayordomo o el compadre sino por la palabra escrita, el documento, las decisiones técnicas y "racionales", las acciones y reglamentos objetivados en el expediente y más aún expresados en un idioma que, en el mejor de los casos, el campesino indígena apenas domina oralmente<sup>2</sup>, todo lo cual pone al campesino en una situación de incertidumbre e inferioridad. Una consecuencia inmediata de esta situación es facilitar la intervención de otros agentes intermediarios, quienes por su parte están interesados en buscar a los campesinos como clientes: abogados,

tinterillos, partidos políticos, agencias de desarrollo de la comunidad, misioneros católicos y protestantes. Estos agentes se convierten en "puentes" en la relación del campesino con el IERAC. Se establece entonces una nueva forma de dependencia en la que los campesinos se transforman en una "clientela" de estos agentes, siendo a menudo obligados a seguir una determinada orientación ideológica en el proceso de cambio. No es posible, entonces, desconocer la importancia de este tipo de intermediario. En un trabajo anterior he examinado la estrategia de uno de estos agentes (Muratorio 1975). En el presente trabajo presentaré más adelante datos relativos a los casos en que la intervención de estos intermediarios se ve facilitada por fallas o limitaciones en la acción misma del IERAC como articulador.

La actual política agraria del Estado es el resultado de dos leyes de Reforma Agraria, la de 1964 y la de 1973. Ambas leyes, promulgadas durante regímenes militares, fueron elaboradas con velada o explícita participación y presiones de los terratenientes. En 1964, las Cámaras de Agricultura, principales organismos representativos de los terratenientes participaron activamente en la comisión encargada de formular la ley. Cuando, en 1973, se promulga la nueva Ley de Reforma Agraria, el desarrollo de la economía exportadora, principalmente el petróleo, ha producido ya un cambio en la dinámica de las clases dominantes. Los nuevos intereses exportadores requirieron una transformación modernizante en la estructura del Estado. Sin embargo, los terratenientes mantienen todavía el necesario poder económico, político e ideológico para obstaculizar el

proceso de implementación de la Reforma Agraria. Esto resulta obvio para quien examine detenidamente los juicios de afectación de los grandes predios, especialmente en la Provincia de la que nos ocupamos. La ley de 1973 refleja las inconsistencias y complejidades de estos compromisos políticos. La intención es desviar la Ley de Reforma Agraria de los objetivos de justicia social hacia objetivos que parecen ser políticamente neutros, tales como "productividad" y "eficiencia", no sólo porque se trata de aumentar la productividad de los campesinos, sino principalmente porque se establece que no se afectarán aquellos grandes predios que se consideren "eficientemente cultivados". Por otra parte, ya sea entregando los huasipungos o permitiendo la compra y venta de pequeños predios, la reforma agraria intensifica el minifundio. Se crea así también un surplus de mano de obra rural, que al no poder ser absorbido en el medio rural migra constantemente hacia centros urbanos y constituye la población urbana marginal de Quito, Guayaquil y algunos centros en Colombia.

La Ley de Reforma Agraria adolece de todos los defectos que posibilitan lo que Feder ha llamado la "contrarreforma", o sea, el mecanismo de defensa que inician los terratenientes cuando sus intereses se ven seriamente amenazados (Feder 1970: 177). Feder presenta las características de este tipo de legislación en términos que describen adecuadamente el carácter de la ley del 73, a saber:

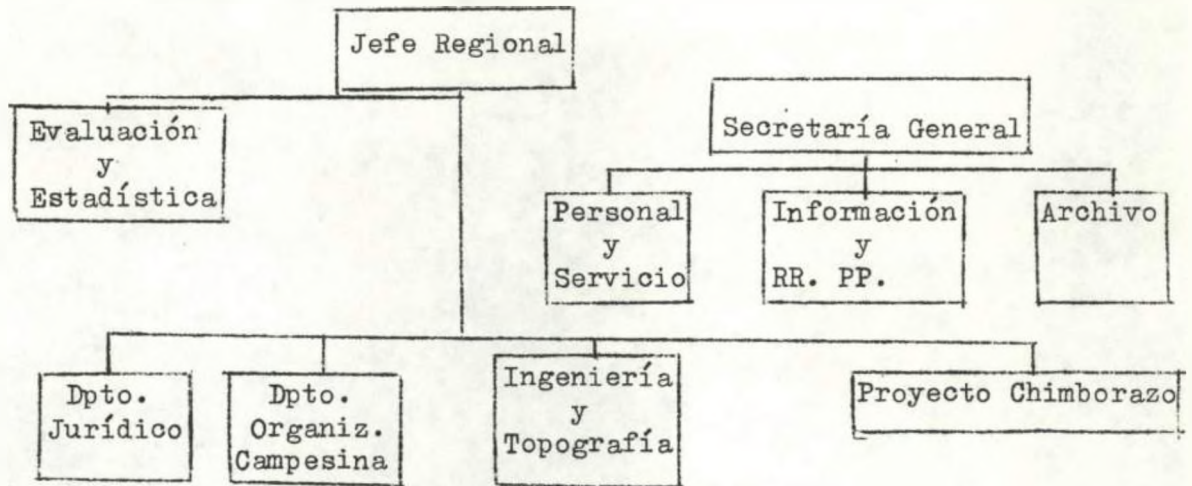
- a) La inclusión en la ley de un sinnúmero de provisiones y de excepciones, expresadas en términos legales que admiten diversas interpretaciones.

- b) Los procesos de reforma agraria se condicionan a requisitos previos cuyo cumplimiento da lugar a grandes demoras en la ejecución de la ley.
- c) Las detalladas regulaciones de todos y cada uno de los aspectos del proceso no permiten que la agencia encargada de la ejecución de la reforma pueda ejercer iniciativas propias para su implementación.
- d) La legislación resulta difícil de implementar y no sienta nunca las bases para un cambio radical o aún para un cambio puramente simbólico.

No es mi intención en este trabajo hacer un análisis detallado y específico de los defectos de la Ley del 73. Se trata aquí simplemente de establecer las características generales que condicionan la acción del IERAC como burocracia implementadora de la Ley. El IERAC tiene su sede central en Quito y está dividido en diversas estructuras regionales, localizadas en los distintos centros agrícolas del país. La jefatura regional Centro-Oriente, que nos interesa, tiene su sede en Riobamba, capital de la Provincia de Chimborazo, aunque su jurisdicción abarca zonas de otras 6 provincias. Riobamba es el centro regional hegemónico que concentra el 73% de la población urbana de toda la Provincia. Es el centro político, administrativo, cultural, comercial, financiero e industrial. Con respecto a las comunidades indígenas de la zona, Riobamba constituye una "metrópolis colonial" y las comunidades indígenas son política, económica y socialmente las "colonias internas" de esa metrópolis".

La organización de la jefatura regional Centro-Oriente se

## ORGANIGRAMA



Nota: En la sección proyectos se incluye sólo Chimborazo

describe en el organigrama. El staff lo integran alrededor de cincuenta empleados permanentes. Aparte de secretarías, choferes, conserjes y personal de servicio, el resto del personal lo constituyen abogados, ingenieros agrónomos, estadísticos, economistas, topógrafos, veterinarios y promotores sociales. El personal es en su totalidad blanco o mestizo, de origen urbano. De acuerdo con el personal de esta jefatura regional, los fondos son insuficientes, el personal escaso y las facilidades inadecuadas.

Las funciones del IERAC están especificadas en la Ley de Reforma Agraria con cierto detalle. El Consejo Superior del organismo, con sede en Quito, reproduce en miniatura la estructura de poder político y económico del Estado. Los campesinos o sus organizaciones no están representados en ningún nivel de

la jeraquía burocrática.<sup>3</sup> La posibilidad de esta representación no es ni siquiera imaginada aún por aquellos que podríamos llamar "los jóvenes turcos" dentro de la organización. En varias entrevistas con estos miembros del staff se pudo comprobar que, aún a nivel especulativo, sus ideas admiten a lo sumo la posibilidad de que intermediarios mestizos, relativamente radicalizados, representasen al campesinado frente al IERAC.

En resumen, la Ley de Reforma Agraria deja abiertas las puertas a las influencias y presiones de los terratenientes, excluye la participación de los campesinos y deja en manos de burócratas mestizos tanto la adoctrinación de los campesinos en los valores de la sociedad nacional como también la decisión - sin especificación de criterios precisos - de determinar cuándo los campesinos están capacitados para asumir los roles prescritos en el nuevo sistema de producción, comercialización y modernización cultural definido "desde arriba".

En cumplimiento de los objetivos principales de la Ley de Reforma Agraria las funciones del IERAC - al menos en Chimborazo donde hicimos nuestra observación - pueden subscribirse en dos tipos de acción de intermediación con el campesinado.

1. Acciones del IERAC como intermediario técnico y legal entre los campesinos y los terratenientes para solucionar conflictos que se presentan como consecuencia de la compra y venta de tierras, abolición de precarismos, juicios de expropiación y reversión de tierras.

2. Acciones del IERAC como patrón provisorio. Casos en que su función consiste, por un lado, en tomar posesión y administrar aquellas haciendas en poder del Estado para entregarlas a los campesinos una vez que éstos "estén listos para asumir la responsabilidad" y, por otro, actuar como intermediario "cultural" y "organizador" asumiendo el rol de promover social y económicamente al campesinado mediante creación de cooperativas, cursos de asesoramiento a las bases, formación de líderes e incorporación al mercado nacional.

Al presentar aquí algunos casos en detalle mi intención es tratar de ilustrar cómo funcionan realmente estos mecanismos de intermediación desde el punto de vista de los campesinos.

#### EL IERAC COMO INTERMEDIARIO ENTRE CAMPESINOS Y TERRATENIENTES

Los primeros dos casos se refieren a aquellas situaciones en que los campesinos se ven obligados a tomar la iniciativa de dirigirse al IERAC a reclamar sus derechos como respuesta a los abusos de los que todavía son objeto por parte de los terratenientes. Ambos campesinos son partidarios, es decir, trabajan una parcela de tierra de un patrón entregando en pago por el uso de la tierra el 50 por ciento de la cosecha. El partidario es lo que la Ley de Reforma Agraria considera un "precarista", es decir todo aquel que trabaja para él una porción de tierra ajena y paga por su uso dinero, productos, trabajo o servicios. Uno de los objetivos explícitos de la Ley es acabar con el precarismo. Los casos de precarismos son

todavía numerosos en la zona de Chimborazo. Lo que me interesa mostrar con estos dos primeros casos son las consecuencias para los campesinos de la falta de iniciativa y empuje del IERAC para solucionar este grave problema.

#### El caso de Juan<sup>4</sup>

Juan ha sido partidario de una patrona por mas de 25 años y antes de que la ley de 1964 eliminara el trabajo gratuito, Juan trabajaba como peón y huasicama para esa patrona como parte del pago por el uso de la tierra, además de entregarle el 50 por ciento de la cosecha. Cuando en marzo de 1976 Juan visita a la patrona para renovar el contrato verbal para la próxima siembra no le lleva el acostumbrado camari ( regalo o agrado, generalmente en productos, que el patrón recibía tradicionalmente de sus campesinos). La patrona reacciona insultando a Juan y amenazándolo con quitarle el usufructo de la tierra. Juan no tiene medios de saber que de acuerdo con los artículos 35 y 36 de la Ley de Reforma Agraria no puede tomar esa decisión. De acuerdo con esos artículos, la patrona puede continuar el arreglo de partidario o venderle la tierra luego de haber pagado salarios, vacaciones y demás obligaciones que le deba a Juan de acuerdo a las leyes laborales. Pero la Ley de Reforma Agraria no está disponible en ninguna institución que Juan conozca o a la cual tenga fácil acceso y, aún si pudiera consultarle Juan no sabe leer, ni habla castellano. Enfrentado así con un serio problema de subsistencia de su familia Juan, como muchos otros campesinos, recurre a aquellos parientes que él sabe tienen relación con alguien que conoce



la Ley. Ese pariente resulta ser su prima Lorenza, que es amiga mía y vive en la comunidad donde estoy haciendo trabajo de campo donde se sabe que me intereso por problemas relacionados con la Reforma Agraria. Juan se presenta en mi casa, le explico la ley y le sugiero acudir al IERAC para buscar una solución a su problema. A la semana siguiente Juan vuelve a verme para informarme que su problema está solucionado. Me cuenta que fué a ver nuevamente a la patrona para notificarle su intención de llevar el caso al IERAC e inmediatamente ésta desistió de su intención de no dejarle sembrar la tierra "al partir" el próximo año. El statu quo se mantiene. La explicación que da Juan es que él no tiene dinero en efectivo para pagar la tierra en caso que la patrona accediese a vendérsela - conforme a las disposiciones de la Ley de Reforma Agraria - ni tiene tampoco las conexiones necesarias para solicitar la ayuda de un abogado que facilite su trámite en el IERAC. Por lo tanto, desiste de presentar sus demandas. La cosecha del año que viene está asegurada, pero la incertidumbre e inseguridad de su situación persisten. No es dueña de la tierra y si quiere mantenerla, aunque sea como "partidario", debe también continuar los lazos de subordinación tradicional con la patrona: el agrado, el camari, el trato deferencial de "amita" y "patroncita", la entrega del 50% de su cosecha y la seguridad de que no presionará por sus derechos en caso de abuso. En este caso, las dificultades del acceso del campesino a la burocracia del IERAC contribuyeron a mantener y reforzar las relaciones tradicionales de explotación.

### El caso de Pedro.

En este caso se pone de manifiesto cómo la ineficacia y falta de acción decisiva del IERAC, como también las limitaciones mismas de la ley llevan al campesino, por un lado, a entrar en dependencia de otros intermediarios y, por otro, favorecen el conflicto dentro de la clase campesina misma.

En el caso de Pedro la situación inicial es la misma que en el caso anterior. Pedro ha trabajado durante 25 años como partidario para una patrona, cumpliendo las mismas obligaciones de trabajo gratuito hasta 1964. Hasta hace dos años, Pedro continuaba entregando a la patrona el tradicional canari en el momento de la cosecha. En 1974, varios de los otros partidarios de la misma patrona deciden comprar la tierra sin intervención del IERAC, es decir, ilegalmente. Pedro se ve obligado a hacer lo mismo y lleva a la patrona todo el ahorro que tenía - 5000 Suces - como primera entrega por su terreno de 3.240 m<sup>2</sup>. La patrona rechaza el dinero de Pedro porque dice tener otro comprador que le ofrece un precio más alto. Ante la protesta de Pedro la patrona lo amenaza con no dejarle cultivar la tierra el próximo año. A diferencia de Juan, Pedro decide reclamar por sus derechos y lleva su caso al IERAC. La patrona es citada por el IERAC en dos oportunidades, pero no se presenta. El expediente del caso de Pedro se extravía. Finalmente un promotor social del IERAC se compadece de Pedro y le aconseja llevar su caso al Ministerio de Trabajo, para tratar de lograr que la patrona le reconozca los salarios por todos los años que trabajó gratis como peón y huasicama. Aquí comienza la real odisea

de Pedro. En el término de dos años que han pasado desde que se inicia la acción en el Ministerio de Trabajo, Pedro ha adquirido una situación de dependencia con un abogado de Riobamba y la enervidad de varios otros campesinos. Cuando Pedro tuvo que presentar testigos ante el Juez de Trabajo para probar que había trabajado como partidario por 25 años, varios campesinos que ya habían comprado tierras y sobre todo aquellos que tenían interés de comprar tierra a ese misma patrona declararon en contra de Pedro, diciendo que había sido partidario por sólo 6 años, lo cual no le daba derecho prioritario para comprar la tierra. El argumento que usaron fué que Pedro tenía la tierra gratis y que "le estaba robando a la patroncita". Se debe tener en cuenta que los procedimientos para compra y venta de tierra sumados a la escasez de tierras en la zona llevan a los campesinos a competir desesperadamente por una parcela. Esta competencia institucionalizada por los organismos estatales, indudablemente, debilita el potencial de solidaridad de clase del campesinado. Por otra parte, como se ha dicho, Pedro tuvo que acudir a un abogado de Riobamba para poder preparar, presentar y llevar su caso adelante. Desde que el caso se inició, Pedro visita regularmente al abogado cada dos semanas llevándole el correspondiente y esperado camari, a pesar de que sabe que el abogado cobrará luego su honorario en efectivo una vez finalizado el procedimiento. Cada una de estas visitas significa gastos de transporte más el valor del camari lo cual suma unos 500 Sucres al año, sólo para averiguar el estado del juicio. Después de un año de iniciarse, el caso de Pedro pasó a la Corte Superior

Regional y Pedro siguió visitando regularmente al abogado. En Junio de este año, el abogado decide apresurar el caso para lo cual sugiere a Pedro que el próximo sábado vuelva a Riobamba con un conejo "como agrado" para un funcionario de la Corte. Ese sábado Pedro tiene que trabajar y su mujer, María, debe ir a Riobamba llevando el conejo de regalo. María no habla castellano y tiene poco conocimiento de la ciudad y me pide que la acompañe. Una vez en la oficina del abogado, éste comienza por cerciorarse que tenemos el conejo, nos entrega luego una tarjeta donde ha escrito "de parte de Pedro" y se dirige a mí dándome instrucciones precisas para que una vez que lleguemos a la casa del funcionario yo desaparezca de la escena "para que el funcionario no se avergüence". María me informa luego que el funcionario miró la tarjeta, miró el conejo, lo volvió a poner en la bolsa y se lo devolvió diciéndole "no te preocupes m'hijita, todo se va a arreglar". Lo que realmente importa en esta situación no es decidir si el funcionario era honesto o el conejo no fué suficiente para que lo aceptase como "agrado", si el abogado espera que su cliente le lleve regularmente regalos, si los campesinos llamados a declarar mintieron. Lo que resulta importante y revelador es el hecho de que ninguno de los actores, tal vez excepto yo misma, consideró la situación como algo fuera de lo usual y esperado. El sistema existe y el campesino lo ve como natural. Lo que antes se debía al patrón se debe ahora a los nuevos intermediarios y no existe otra alternativa. Las presiones sobre Pedro continuaron. No sabe si podrá cultivar su tierra en la próxima siembra, algunos campesinos le dicen

que la patrona ya ha vendido esa tierra, ilegalmente, a otro campesino. Por último, su conducta es también criticada por algunos pastores campesinos de su Iglesia Evangélica por ir contra el espíritu de la Biblia "buscando pleitos" <sup>5</sup>. Pedro se ha visto obligado a vender una de sus vacas para poder pagar al abogado 2000 Sucres a cuenta de sus honorarios, en un caso que no está definitivamente resuelto. El proceso de reclamar sus derechos ante el IERAC sumado a la ineficiencia y corrupción de los intermediarios han significado gastos enormes para el campesino. El reclamo de sus derechos conforme a la ley le ha traído conflictos con sus propios compañeros de clase y de fé.

Los dos casos que hemos presentado son similares a otros que pudimos observar en varias comunidades de la zona. No debe parecer extraño que los campesinos "resisten el cambio" y desconfíen de quienes les prometen incorporarlos a la sociedad nacional en el proceso de modernización. Este proceso de incorporación es experimentado por el campesino en los términos de Juan y de Pedro.

#### Patrón vs. 7 campesinos.

Un patrón dueño de una mediana propiedad se presenta en la oficina de uno de los promotores sociales del IERAC acompañado de siete campesinos que son partidarios en su hacienda. El patrón se dirige al funcionario y le explica que "estos indios roscas se empeñan en que la tierra les pertenece porque son precaristas". Frente a los campesinos el funcionario asiente y, con solemnidad, lee en voz alta un artículo de la Ley, sobre precarismos. Seguidamente, en un aparte con el patrón,

le sugiere que lo más conveniente sería tratar de arreglar las cosas lo mejor posible "antes de que los campesinos se avisen" y le sigan un juicio por extinción de dominio. El consejo del funcionario es hacer un acta transaccional por la cual el patrón venderá la tierra a los campesinos. Para ello el funcionario requiere la presentación de las escrituras con el objeto de poder ubicar los terrenos en venta. Ante esta exigencia el patrón afirma que él recuerda de memoria los límites exactos de su hacienda y que el asunto se puede finalizar inmediatamente. Ante la insistencia del funcionario sobre la necesidad de presentar las escrituras, el patrón indignado lo increpa diciendo que cómo es posible que se dude de su palabra y que, por otra parte, es inconcebible que él pierda otro día por "estos indios roscas". El funcionario lo mira con actitud comprensiva, pero insiste que sin las escrituras "no se puede hacer nada". El patrón responde con otra mirada comprensiva y saluda diciendo "si no queda otra alternativa traeré las escrituras para hacer pronto el acta".

Este caso demuestra cómo en las situaciones de enfrentamiento que se llevan a resolver en la estructura burocrática presente, el campesino indígena es colocado en una situación social de desventaja con respecto al terrateniente blanco o mestizo ya que el campesino, individualmente o en grupos pequeños está desprovisto de todo poder de influir en las decisiones y procedimientos de la burocracia del IERAC. En la situación de dominación tradicional, el campesino usaba el camari y otras formas de agrado para influir a su favor las decisiones del patrón. Esta acción formaba parte

de un sistema de reciprocidad que era desigual, pero en el que las obligaciones y derechos mutuos estaban gobernados por la costumbre y legitimados por la creencia en la tradición y, por consiguiente, no eran considerados ni por los campesinos ni por la sociedad en general como formas corruptas del ejercicio del poder. Las rebeliones y levantamientos campesinos, numerosos en esta zona de Chimborazo, no eran protestas contra todo el sistema de dominación tradicional sino contra los "abusos" de ese contrato tradicional.

Por el contrario, como señala Weber, el sistema de dominación legal con administración burocrática supone una estructura social que impone como criterio de conducta adecuada de los funcionarios públicos, el requisito de que éstos mantengan sus intereses y contabilidad privadas separadas de los intereses y contabilidad públicas (1968 : 219). En consecuencia, el campesino tiene prohibido ofrecer camari u otras formas de regalos a los empleados del IERAC. Si lo hace, su acción puede recibir acción penal como corrupción de funcionarios públicos. Ante la burocracia, el campesino ha perdido ese mecanismo real o sentido de que disponía ante el patrón. El sistema legal justifica esta nueva relación, en términos racionales como contribuyendo a la eficacia del funcionamiento de la administración. Sin embargo, las situaciones de poder dadas por el sistema de estratificación étnica no han cambiado ni son cuestionadas dentro de la nueva estructura de dominación. En razón de sus respectivas posiciones en esa estratificación tradicional, el burócrata blanco o mestizo y el

terrateniente blanco o mestizo comparten una serie de presupuestos con respecto a la idiosincracia y a los derechos y deberes de los indígenas en la sociedad, que son usados para establecer e interpretar las relaciones de éstos con los blancos y mestizos. Estas perspectivas y experiencias compartidas por las clases y grupos étnicos dominantes generan las ideologías y las formas de acción que mantienen una determinada estructura de poder y que, en el caso del IERAC, hacen innecesaria - aunque no imposible - la corrupción directa del burócrata por el terrateniente mediante el ofrecimiento de dinero o privilegios.

#### EL IERAC COMO PATRON PROVISORIO

Las consecuencias de esta ideología y formas de acción son también evidentes cuando el IERAC cumple su rol de intermediario directo entre el campesinado y la sociedad nacional como patrón provisorio de aquellas ex-haciendas que se encarga de administrar y como intermediario cultural capacitando y organizando al campesinado para aquellos tipos de acción social requeridos por un capitalismo rural en expansión.

Un breve resumen de los objetivos y mecanismos de ejecución de uno de los programas diseñados por economistas y agrónomos para la administración de una de las ex-haciendas de la zona, nos dará una idea de los criterios usados por el IERAC para ejecutar este rol.

Objetivos generales del proyecto : Mejorar el nivel de vida de los campesinos y absorber a toda la masa campesina al proceso desarrollista del país.



Criterios de ejecución : 1) Entrega de tierras y reasentamiento de los campesinos. 2) El organismo ejecutor IERAC se convierte en administrador temporal de la hacienda donde realiza programas agropecuarios específicos con el objeto de mantener la producción nacional y de formar una moderna empresa de producción. 3) Posteriormente, cuando los campesinos estén capacitados para asumir las responsabilidades requeridas para mantener una producción segura y organizada el IERAC les entregará (léase venderá) esas tierras. 4) Los programas de promoción social o de capacitación campesina que se ejecuten deben tener como objetivo la transformación de los campesinos en eficientes y capaces productores. Estos programas deben estar orientados a provocar necesidades en los campesinos y consecuentemente la búsqueda de los medios para satisfacerlas. En otras palabras, deben estar orientados a despertar la iniciativa de los campesinos <sup>6</sup> (énfasis mío).

El paternalismo explícito en la ley de Reforma Agraria convierte al IERAC en una nueva agencia paternalista. La práctica de ese poder administrativo implica implementar una ley que es, como toda forma ideológica, un conjunto de conceptos, conocimientos y fórmulas para la acción, creadas por personas e instituciones que forman parte de la estructura dominante de la sociedad para legitimar y sancionar un orden social. Respaldados por esa legitimidad, los funcionarios del IERAC inician y controlan las formas de cambio en las prácticas de producción y las relaciones sociales en el medio rural. Estas nuevas formas son ahora presentadas al campesino para que entienda lo

que le pasa, solucione sus problemas y entre en nuevas relaciones sociales definidas para él por un Estado que ciertamente no lo representa. Los campesinos indígenas son sistemáticamente excluídos del control de los medios materiales y sociales necesarios para participar en la creación de las formas de pensamiento y acción más relevantes y adecuadas para expresar su propia experiencia y elucidar su propia conciencia como grupo étnico y como clase. Deben entender y actuar su propia transformación a través de formas de interpretación y acción mestizas, orientadas a reemplazar la cultura y formas de organización indígenas.

Con total paternalismo y arrogancia burocrática, el Estado, a través del IERAC justifica sus acciones - como todo sistema colonialista - decidiendo "lo que más le conviene" a los campesinos y cuándo éstos "estarán preparados para asumir las responsabilidades requeridas". El rol de la burocracia modernizante es convertir al campesino de la sierra en "eficiente y capaz productor". El problema es que la nueva burocracia mestiza tiene un total desconocimiento, cuando no un desprecio explícito por los valores y concepción del mundo de aquellos a quienes quiere cambiar. La socialización de esos burócratas en la sociedad nacional urbana ( y el IERAC no hace nada para cambiar esta orientación) lo prepara para relacionarse con el campesino de la sierra en términos de categorías étnicas estereotípicas<sup>7</sup>. En la concepción mestiza, el indígena es extraño, impredecible, miedoso de los riesgos, falta de iniciativa, individualista e irracionalmente apegado a la tradición. Como lo ha señalado Bailey para las correspondientes élites modernizantes en la

India, "estas actitudes refuerzan la moral de la élite modernizante y la convencen de que hace bien en luchar por el bienestar de los campesinos en contra de su propia ignorancia y prejuicios" ( 1971 : 300 ). Esta actitud, sumada en la casi totalidad de los casos a la ignorancia del idioma Quechua, hace que el burócrata del IERAC trate de imponer categorías de cambio y organización sin preocuparse por averiguar, por ejemplo, cuáles son los valores del campesino, sus formas de racionalidad en la producción o en la conducción de sus relaciones sociales. El resultado de la confrontación de estos dos sistemas cognitivos y visiones del mundo es, por supuesto, la frustración mutua o el conflicto abierto.

En una de las ex-haciendas de la zona, a hora administrada por el IERAC, por ejemplo, sólo la huelga y la invasión de tierras por los campesinos obliga finalmente al IERAC, después de varios años de conflicto, a entregar los títulos de los huasipungos en los términos definidos por los campesinos y no en aquellos usados por los ingenieros agrónomos para redefinir los huasipungos en términos de "unidades agrícolas productivas racionalizadas". Según los ingenieros agrónomos, la culpa es de los campesinos quienes se aferran "irracionalmente" a la tradición. Sin embargo, la posible lógica interna de esa tradición no es un problema para los funcionarios del IERAC. No es mi intención decidir aquí si, en este caso particular, las razones de los campesinos eran o no justificadas sino solamente ilustrar algunos de los parámetros dentro de los cuales se generan las confrontaciones entre el campesinado y esta

burocracia. Por otra parte, la mas reciente investigación de etnohistoriadores y antropólogos en el area Andina parece demostrar claramente que la persistencia de formas culturales y de organización económica y social indígenas responden al hecho de que éstas han funcionado como eficientes instrumentos en la adaptación ecológica al medio Andino ( ver Murra 1975), y en la defensa contra el poder de los terratenientes (ver Martinez Alier 1973), o contra la expansión de las fuerzas impersonales del mercado (ver Alberti-Mayer 1974).

Uno de los principales factores generadores de frustración mutua en la relación del IERAC con el campesinado es la formación de cooperativas. Los promotores sociales del IERAC, con la colaboración de funcionarios del Departamento de Desarrollo Rural del Ministerio de Agricultura, tienen como función promover la cooperativización de los campesinos. De acuerdo con uno de estos promotores, la racionalidad de este objetivo es promover el desarrollo económico más rápido de los campesinos permitiéndoles, por un lado, reunir un cierto capital que puedan invertir en la tecnificación de las tareas agrícolas y en mejorar su standard de vida y, por otro, la comercialización en gran escala de sus productos. En suma, convertirse en "un elemento productivo de la sociedad nacional". El problema es que, con raras excepciones, los campesinos rechazan las cooperativas. El énfasis de la explicación de los funcionarios en estos casos es el "irracional individualismo" de los campesinos.

Sin embargo, distintas formas de cooperación son prac-

ticadas en la mayoría de las comunidades campesinas de la zona. Pero es una cooperación dentro de los límites sociales conocidos por el campesino, generalmente dentro del grupo de parentesco o la comuna donde las expectativas de reciprocidad están bien demarcadas para situaciones concretas. Mientras no se cambien las estructuras de mercado, los sistemas de precios y las organizaciones de crédito rural el campesino no puede ver la racionalidad de embarcarse en nuevas formas de organizar su producción. Los campesinos perciben claramente la inseguridad de la situación en que viven, así como las dificultades de enfrentar un mundo que los discrimina y donde tanto para pedir un crédito como para comprar un tractor se necesita tener una serie de conocimientos, garantías y "palancas" personales que no están a su alcance. Los riesgos implícitos en pedir un préstamo para hacer producir toda una hacienda, aún colectivamente, son demasiado grandes como para que los campesinos, dadas sus experiencias pasadas, puedan considerar esta alternativa como viable. Su racionalidad es la del sentido común. La integración del campesinado al proceso de desarrollo no puede efectuarse si la reforma se limita a cambiar sólo un aspecto de la estructura rural - la de los campesinos - dejando las instituciones de comercialización y las instituciones políticas del gobierno local intactas.

### CONCLUSION

Aunque formalmente la Ley de Reforma Agraria intenta proteger al campesinado frente a los grandes terratenientes, en

su implementación busca articular al campesinado a una sociedad nacional en expansión, sin alterar fundamentalmente las relaciones sociales de poder en el campo. Como toda política paternalista, trata de manipular al campesinado de tal manera de evitar la actualización de la formación del campesinado como "clase para sí", El IERAC contribuye a cumplir este objetivo, al menos en parte, por los tipos de estrategias que sigue en la ejecución de su rol de intermediario: primero, como amortiguador del conflicto entre los campesinos y la clase dominante en el campo. Segundo, intensificando el conflicto interno en la clase campesina a través de la competencia por adquirir tierras y tercero, por la forma en que cumple su rol de intermediario cultural tratando de incorporar al campesino a la sociedad nacional.

La relación tradicional patrón-peón reconocía explícitamente la variable étnica y la incorporaba como justificación de la dominación paternalista. La nueva forma de dominación simplemente la niega y al excluirla, mistifica las relaciones reales donde el indígena es el dominado bajo la ideología de homogeneización mestiza y desarrollismo democrático, cuando en realidad empuja a los campesinos a relaciones similares de dependencia paternalista, obstaculizando así el surgimiento de nuevas formas de conciencia campesina autónomas que cuestionen el sistema de dominación existente.

PROTESTANTISM AND ETHNICITY IN CHIMBORAZO

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## PROTESTANTISM AND ETHNICITY IN CHIMBORAZO<sup>1\*</sup>

### Introduction

Although discussion of the folk Catholicism of Andean Indian peasants has a long tradition in the anthropological literature, only a few social scientists<sup>2</sup> have dealt with the problem of Protestantism in South America. Their studies have focused either on large urban centers in Brazil, Chile (Willems 1967, Lalive D'Espinay 1969) and Colombia (Flora 1976), or on relatively small Indian populations in the Brazilian tropical forest (Ribeiro 1973) and the Argentine Chaco (Miller 1971, 1974, 1975).

This essay examines the emergence and development of evangelical Protestantism among a group of Indian peasants in the Ecuadorian highlands. Unlike Protestants in the large cities, who are described as anomic and alienated individuals, in the literature, the Indian peasants still preserve fundamental aspects of their culture and social organization. Unlike the relatively egalitarian tribal groups of the tropical forest, they have been for more than four hundred years an integral part of a class society as semi-serfs and now as freeholders. Consequently, in this essay I will discuss the effects of the adoption of Protestantism on both ethnic and class consciousness.

Furthermore, since the previous religious ideology of Catholicism professed by the peasants was closely tied to the hacienda system of domination, it is necessary to analyze how the breakdown of that system made possible the penetration of Protestantism, which now operates in the context of changing social and economic conditions in the highlands.

The transformation of the traditional hacienda system of the Ecuadorian highlands gathered momentum after the first and rather lukewarm Agrarian Reform Law of 1964 and the abolition of precarismos<sup>3</sup> in 1970, and after the



new Agrarian Reform Law passed in 1973 eliminated rent in labor and gave the peasants legal ownership of their plots. Concurrently, the decade of the 60's witnessed an important ideological change in the position of the Catholic church vis-à-vis social and economic issues. These developments played a significant role in undermining the hegemony of the landowning class traditionally legitimized by the Catholic church, and they must be taken into account in order to understand how a new religious ideology "interacts" with the new relations of production. In order to clarify this last statement I will say that I do not assume that ideologies occupy a secondary role in social life or that they may be explained by reducing them to a passive reflection of economic or other aspects of society. The ideological sphere has certain degree of autonomy and articulates in complex ways with the ongoing social processes. This essay is an attempt to understand some of those complexities.

The peasant population to be discussed is, primarily, that living in a region known as Colta, which comprises several Indian peasant communities located around or near the Colta lake in the province of Chimborazo. Riobamba, the capital of the province and an important market town, is located at a distance of about 14 miles from Colta.<sup>4</sup>

Because this area, and particularly the community of Majipamba, where I was stationed, is the major center for the diffusion of Protestantism in the highlands, other peasants frequently visit the area, and references will be made to them in the course of the argument. All Protestant peasants discussed are known as "evangélicos" or "Quichuas" and have been converted by the Gospel Missionary Union, which includes missionaries from a variety of Protestant denominations.

CATHOLIC IDEOLOGY AND HACIENDA. THEIR TRANSFORMATIONS.

In the hacienda system the landowning class had the actual monopoly of the land and granted the peasants usufruct of small plots known as huasipungos. Consequently, as direct producers, the peasants had effective possession of the means of production necessary to meet their subsistence needs and thus reproduce themselves as a labor force. Under these conditions the extraction of surplus by the landowning class was possible only through forms of extra-economic coercion over the direct producers (Marx 1962: 771). This surplus appropriation was accomplished effectively first because the landowning class had political control of the State. Its members occupied the highest political offices in the country and could call the police and the army to impose order in the hacienda whenever there was peasant unrest. Moreover, appropriation was accomplished effectively because the existing social relations of production were legitimized by the ideological apparatus of the Catholic Church.

Until the first decades of this century the Church was one of the largest landowners and shared with the rest of the dominant class the control of the State. Priests could hold political offices as legislators and State councillors. Even more important, the Church had a dominant ideological role in the State as it was recognized in the Constitution of 1830, which accepted Roman Catholicism as the official religion of the State, excluding all others (Hurtado 1977: 66-67). In addition to its specific religious functions, the Church had control over all levels of the educational system and the exclusive right to register births, marriages, and deaths. Catholic ideology regarded the hierarchical order of the universe as ordained by God, and poverty in this world as a blessing to be accepted with resignation, thereby transforming the existing class structure of the hacienda into a

"sacred" order. Furthermore, the belief in the racial inferiority of the Indians - taken for granted in Colonial times but still prevalent in the XIX century - contributed to the disguising of class relationships, legitimizing the social order of the hacienda as "natural". The link between these two components of the ideology was recognized as part of the legal order. The Constitution of 1830 put the Indians under the control of the Church, ordering that the parish priests be nominated "tutors and natural fathers of the innocent, servile and miserable indigenous race" (Hurtado 1977: 69). Ethnicity, defined in these terms, was appropriated by the dominant ideological apparatus to set the conditions under which the Indians were incorporated and reproduced as a labor force within the existing class structure.

Furthermore, the State used this same ideological justification - the definition of the Indian population as a special race - to impose on the peasants the payment of the tribute, abolished only in 1857 (Jacome and LLumiguina 1977: 115). On the same grounds the Church could expropriate part of the Indians' surplus primarily through the tithe and primicias - a form of rent in kind. The local priest could also extract rent in labor through the minga - a form of collective work - and in cash or kind in payment for the religious services of baptisms, marriages and funerals. One of the main methods of the local priests for extracting surplus from the Indians was the fiesta complex, in which the priostes (sponsors of religious fiestas) had to pay for all the necessary religious services. The fiesta complex of Andean Indian communities has been extensively discussed in the anthropological literature. The only aspect I would like to examine here is the way in which the fiesta actually contributed, directly and indirectly, to increase the different forms of surplus extracted from the peasants by the Church and

the landowners.

In order to pay for the religious services of the fiesta the peasants asked the landowners for advances in money (suplidos) and in kind (socorros). These advances were difficult to repay and frequently resulted in a form of labor contract that tied the peasant permanently to the hacienda (concertaje) (see Peñaherrera and Costales 1964), unless he accepted imprisonment for debt. The following statement about concertaje by a member of the landowning class, quoted by Hurtado, is revealing: "What would be the fate of the agricultural class if suddenly the bases of concertaje are destroyed? The most horrible misery, a proletariat worst than the one produced in Europe by large industry" (1977: 65). Concertaje was abolished only in 1918 but debt-peonage continued to be enforced. Furthermore, the fiesta guaranteed the landowners that part of the surplus produced by the peasants in their huasipungos would be consumed rather than marketed. Then, the peasant family would have only the necessary means for its own reproduction and some of its members would be forced to sell their labor power for wages to the haciendas.<sup>5</sup>

Casagrande and Riper's study (1969) conducted in Chimorazo province, provides an interesting example of the collaboration between the Church and the hacendados in using the fiesta complex to tie the Indian peasants to the hacienda. In 1908 the Bishop of Riobamba intervened to grant the ecclesiastical status of "parish" to a población (hamlet) next to a large hacienda. Having the status of a parish, the población could be the center for the yearly cycle of fiestas. Thus, the peasantry did not have to leave the area for days, and even weeks, to attend the celebrations somewhere else. The hacendado could then have more effective control over his Indians and their labor, and the new parish could benefit through the above mentioned forms of extracting surplus from the peasantry.

Finally there are some ways in which the fiesta complex contributed, indirectly, to extract surplus from the peasantry for the benefit of the dominant class. The alcalde, an important authority in the peasant communities was generally selected with the approval of the priest. One of his functions was to nominate the priostes and to organize the fiestas. But he also used his prestige and power to recruit Indian labor for the mingas called by the priests, the landowners, or the State officials. An informant in Colta remembers how the Police Chief from Cajabamba helped the alcalde by jailing those who refused to be priostes, this in exchange for the alcalde's influence in recruiting people from Colta to work in mingas for him and his relatives.

At the beginning of this century the reforms of the Liberal government of Eloy Alfaro started with a direct attack on the economic power of the Church in the highlands. In 1908, the Liberals passed the Mortmain Law, expropriating some of the largest landholdings of the Church and the religious orders. Since these properties reverted to the State and were rented to powerful landowners from the region, this policy did not particularly affect the power of the landowning class.

Most of the legislation passed by the Liberals, such as public education, civil marriage, and divorce, and the formal separation of Church and State, can be regarded as attempts to destroy the ideological domination of the Church over the State apparatus and to create the juridical conditions of a secular bourgeois State. None of these policies directly affected the highland Indians, nor did they weaken the ideological control of the Church over them. As I will show later, at the beginning of this century the Church had the power to prevent the introduction of Protestantism among highland Indians despite the freedom of worship supposedly established in the 1906 Liberal

Constitution (Hurtado 1977: 120).

The possibilities of proletarianization for the highland peasantry started with the abolition of concertaje in 1918. In the 50's, under the presidency of Galo Plaza Lasso, the introduction of capitalist agriculture in the coast and the improvement of the country road network created conditions for a large migration of manpower. Some highland landowners were then forced to pay regular wages to their peons and to rationalize the use of the labor force by introducing various technical changes. Nevertheless, the great majority of the landowners continued to extract surplus from the peasants by the traditional means already described. Only the agrarian reforms of the 60's and 70's created structural conditions for the disappearance of forced labor.

In the decade of the 60's, the Encyclicals of Pope John XXIII and Paul VI inspired significant changes in the social and political ideology of the Latin American Catholic Church. The new orientation called for the liberation of the poor from social injustices and for an active role of the Church in helping them to change the structure of exploitation. In 1963 the Ecuadorean Church demanded agrarian reform and soon after started to implement it in its remaining highland properties. In Chimborazo, Leonidas Proaño, Bishop of Riobamba, initiated a series of social action programs directly concerned with improving the material and social conditions of the peasantry (see Proaño 1975).

Although in 1977 there were still many "traditional" parish priests left in the province, the new social and political action of the Church finally broke its holy alliance with the landowning class. At present, some of the worst indictments against the new Catholic clergy come from the remaining landowners, who see the action of the Church as "class treason". Having lost

their main source of ideological legitimation, only their remaining influence on the State apparatus allows the landowners to block the action of those peasant groups who try to have their rights recognized through the implementation of the Agrarian Reform Law.<sup>6</sup>

The liberalization of Catholicism was decisive in opening up the area for the Protestant Churches. Systematic action against Protestantism by the Catholic Church no longer exists. Nevertheless, there are still conflicts between Catholic and Protestant peasants which sometimes involve violence. This religious factionalism contributes to weaken the Indians' ethnic consciousness and consequently the unity of the peasantry as a class.

#### Changes in the social relations of production

In Chimborazo, the hacienda system has been succeeded not by full fledged agrarian capitalism but by an economy increasingly dominated by small peasant freeholders (minifundios). Still sharecropping, traditional and modernized haciendas, and communally owned land coexist with peasant freeholders in complex interrelationships. The data I will discuss here refer specifically to the Colta area. What is happening there is similar to developments in many other areas, however, as I found through discussing aspects of the Agrarian Reform Law with peasants from other parts of Chimborazo, and through following several land disputes in the Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization (IERAC) offices in Riobamba.

The fact that peasant minifundios are further sub-divided by inheritance results in a constant demand for more land to meet subsistence needs, bringing about an increase in land prices. As a consequence, the number of sharecropping arrangements has increased, primarily between peasants who bought or were granted land after the agrarian reform and those who do not own enough land

to produce for subsistence. Besides, many peasants still maintain old sharecropping arrangements with landlords from Cajabamba, Sicalpa and Riobamba. Under the new Agrarian Reform Law arrangements with these landlords are illegal. In order to legalize this situation with IERAC and the Ministry of Labor, peasants are spending huge sums of money on lawyers and many are ridden with debts (Muratorio 1976).

The Colta peasants have always preferred the common Andean pattern of having several small plots of land located in different ecological micro-zones in order to minimize risks and to diversify production. However, given the increasingly smaller size of the plots and land erosion in the Colta area, some peasants are now producing in as many as six or seven scattered tiny plots which do not add up to an acreage large enough either to engage the labor power of the whole family or to produce its total subsistence requirements. Young and adult male members of these families are then forced to seek employment outside the area. Some become itinerant merchants; others work as cargadores (carriers) or as unskilled construction workers in the urban areas; still others work as wage laborers in the sugar mills of San Carlos and Milagro or in the coastal plantations, thus becoming incorporated in marginal occupations or into the dominant capitalist mode of production as cheap seasonal labor, because part of their own reproduction still takes place in their peasant family plots.

The seasonal migration of part of the labor force leaves agricultural production mostly in the hands of women and older members of the family. This creates a demand for additional labor, generally performed for wages, by those landless people who did not migrate. The fact that these peasants are landless puts them outside of the forms of reciprocal labor exchange that are still quite prevalent in the area and highly valued by the peasants.



Old peasants continuously refer to times when community mingas were much commoner and when "younger people were more respectful and did not ask for wages." Actually, the common practice is still to pay those peons partly in cash and partly in kind because most peasants cannot afford full cash payments.

On the one hand, by consolidating the minifundios the new agrarian legislation favors inequalities, competition, and individualism. On the other, in order to subsist the peasants resort to reciprocity in goods and labor as the prevalent form of mutual help in the relations of production. As I will show later, they have even adapted the new religious ideology to the old ceremonial forms used to strengthen reciprocity.

Most communities in the area have some acres of land in the paramo (high plateau) for pasturing sheep and cattle. When animals have to be left to pasture for longer than a day, peasants in Colta enter into reciprocity arrangements with other peasants living in higher altitude communities where pasture is better and more abundant.

The development of a capitalist market is increasingly creating new needs for manufactured goods. Synthetic textiles are displacing many of the traditional peasant crafts such as bayeta (handwoven woolen cloth) and woolen ponchos. Peasants of the Colta area are still able to sell esteras (mats) woven with the tотора reeds which grow in the lake. To a large extent, the transportation and marketing of agricultural produce is controlled by mestizos in the Riobamba market (see Burgos 1977). Peasants try to avoid dependence on the mestizo market by diversifying production in their own plots, rather than specializing in cash crops. They increase the output for market purchases mostly by intensifying family labor. Part of the output of barley, potatoes, and quinoa, for instance, is sold in the market but not in large quantities.

The reproduction of the peasants means of production and the maintenance of their plots do not depend primarily on the market.

As far as the peasant freeholders are concerned, the national agrarian policies of prices, credits and technical aid do not favor the accumulation of capital in their hands but rather in the hands of the largest agricultural capitalists (Báez 1976: 260, Hurtado 1977: 244). The highland peasants are not turning into effective small capitalists farmers but instead are increasing the number of the proletariat and sub-proletariat in the cities. The recent policies of emphasizing colonization in the Amazon region at the cost of undermining agrarian reform and the role of IERAC in the highlands (see LAER, 28 April 1978, Vol.VI, NO.16:125) is not likely to help change that situation.

#### HISTORY OF PROTESTANTISM IN THE COLTA AREA

When the first members of the American Bible Society arrived in Ecuador in 1838, they were banished for circulating the Scriptures. It is reported that, rejecting a cargo of Bibles, a customs officer declared: "Protestant Bibles shall not enter into Ecuador so long as Chimborazo stands" (Nickel 1965: 12). Well, Mount Chimborazo still stands, and right in the highland province with the highest rate of growth of Protestant converts (Reed 1975:5). It is in front of Colta lake in Chimborazo where the Gospel Missionary Union (GMU) has its main headquarters for the highland provinces.

The GMU opened its first missionary station in Caliata, south of Riobamba in 1902. Two American missionary women were chosen to work among the Quichuas because it was thought that it would be easier for women to gain the confidence of the Indians. They encountered strong resistance from the local priests, who even organized processions sprinkling holy water along

the roads to scare away the missionaries "evil spirits" (Nickel 1965:25-27). The Protestant pioneers in the Colta area were the Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA). A married couple arrived there from the United States in 1921, rented a peasant hut, and started their missionary work preaching, treating the sick, and opening a school. None of these strategies proved to be very successful. The Indians viewed the missionaries' modern medicine as a form of miracle healing from the "white witchdoctors", and prayed in front of their Ford T model car, debating among themselves if the devil or an angel was responsible for making it run. Besides, the priest had threatened with excommunication anyone who dared ask for a ride (Westphal 1962:35-43). Catholic opposition to the missionaries' work was consistent and effective. They were accused, among other things, of being "heretics", and "white devils", and of "causing local droughts". After five years in Colta they were able to baptize only two men. One of them, presently living in Colta, still remembers those days: "I went to the missionaries' school only during rainy days when I was not working with my father. I felt proud because Indians did not go to school then. But everybody went to (Catholic) church on Sundays, and I was praying on Saturdays. I felt very lonely."

The SDA abandoned their work among the Quichuas and sold their Colta station to the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1933. Because of lack of personnel, this mission had to sell to the GMU in 1953 (Nickel 1965:77). The Canadian missionary couple who started the GMU mission 25 years ago is still in charge. Since, like many other peasants, the Indians of the highlands distrust outsiders, this stability of the core personnel becomes a great asset in the success of the mission in Colta and in other areas. Its missionary work was also greatly facilitated by the medical mobile teams who visited different communities ministering to the sick. In 1958 the mission opened a

hospital where, for the first time, Indians could receive medical attention from physicians fluent in Quichua. The importance of this step cannot be overemphasized. In 1976, when I accompanied many Quichuas to the local State hospital in Cajabamba, I could witness their fear and apprehension because no member of the staff spoke Quichua. The American physician of the mission hospital and some of the Quichua assistants he trained preached the Gospel to the Quichua patients.

In 1961, the mission started the operation of the radio station HCUE-5 in Colta, now called "La Voz de la Laguna de Colta" ("The Voice of Colta Lake"), broadcasting in Quichua. Pre-tuned receivers were sold to the Indians for a nominal price. Some of the older people in Colta still remember the feeling of awe when they listened to the radio for the first time, and in their own language. No wonder that Nickel reports one Indian as saying: "I want to belong to Jesus Christ as that box says" (Nickel 1965: 100).

Another strategy used by the GMU to reach the Indians was education. In 1956, the missionaries started basic literacy night classes for women. In 1957 they opened a boarding school where regular classes were taught in Spanish by an Ecuadorian teacher and Bible classes were taught in Quichua by the foreign missionaries (Nickel 1965:107). Many of the children became converted and taught their parents the new religion. The indigenous churches, which may be considered one of the most important strategies for the diffusion of Protestantism in the area, were started by the GMU in 1961. Missionary work by native preachers using a 1954 Quichua translation of the New Testament, helped considerably to attract Quichua peasants to the new faith, but resistance from the Catholics was still strong. By 1966 there were only 330 baptized members of the GMU church in all of Chimborazo, 480 in 1967 (Klassen 1974: 105)

and 8054 by 1977 (H. Klassen, personal communication). Converts have increased at the rate of nearly 33 per cent per annum for the last ten years. The present figure of 8054 baptized members would mean an evangelical community of around 24,000 members, if we accept the GMU calculation of at least two believers for every baptized member; or 16 percent of the Quichua population of the province as estimated by GMU.<sup>7</sup>

I have mentioned the implementation of the Agrarian Reform and the ideological changes in the Catholic church to account for the growth of Protestantism beginning in the late 60's. Its further growth in the 70's may be explained, in part, by the fact that a new translation of the New Testament into the Quichua dialect of Chimborazo was published in 1973. As reported by one of the missionaries the reaction of the Quichuas was: "This is our language, God is speaking to us. God actually loves the Indian as well as the Spanish (sic)" (quoted in Klassen 1974:72).

In a society like Ecuador, where the mass media are directed exclusively at a white or mestizo audience, a Quichua radio station becomes a very powerful form of ideological penetration among the Indian population. La Voz de la Laguna de Colta broadcasts for eight hours a day, five days a week. Every peasant family in the area, Protestant or Catholic listens to it. Only two and a half hours of the programs are in Spanish, consisting of musical, educational and evangelical programs. Except when it plays Ecuadorian music, attention decreases especially among women when the radio turns to Spanish. Through the transmission in Quichua everybody is kept informed of local, national and international news. A good deal of time is used to broadcast readings and explanations of the New Testament performed by groups coming from the different native churches in the province. All the programs, however, are preceded by everybody's favorite show - known

locally as saludos (greetings), in which every member of the group participating in the program greets every member of his or her extended kinship network by name and kin term wherever they may be. Given the amount of internal and external migration, this program certainly helps to keep the kinship network alive and serves as a bond among small and isolated communities. Quichua songs, hymns, and singing lessons constitute the second most popular program. The majority of these songs have been written by Quichuas from the Colta area using native tunes. "Witness bands", usually composed of young people, use music and dramatization to spread the Gospel. The popularity of the new music has attracted many converts and has begun what the Quichuas define as "a revival of our own music." The periodic Bible conferences, which assemble hundreds of Quichuas from Chimborazo and other provinces, are another important source of new converts and help cement bonds among the congregation of believers. I will have more to say about those conferences later.

Two institutions - the Leadership Training Institute and the Association of Evangelical Indians of Chimborazo (AIECH) - are crucial to understand the more formal organization of the GMU church in the area. Training of lay leaders is done at the Institute five or six times a year. One week at a time, designated leaders from each of the Quichua churches attend classes that deal primarily with the interpretation of the Bible and with local church administration. The classes are taught by the missionaries and by some of the older Quichua pastors. The emphasis is on training lay people who can "witness" in their own communities and through the radio. The foreign missionaries see their role now as that of advisors or consultants. The hospital has been replaced by a mobile clinic and the elementary school has been turned over to the State authorities.

The native churches, once organized, join the AIECH, which is the most important political organization in terms of the relationship of the evangelical peasants with the State authorities and other national institutions. The AIECH was constituted in 1967, so that the church could legally demand or purchase land for the church building and for the Colta Protestant cemetery. It was instrumental in defending the religious rights of the evangélicos when they were harassed and persecuted in the 60's. By 1977 there were 137 churches in AIECH and three other similar associations in the provinces of Bolívar, Cotopaxi, and Pastaza. The goal seems to be to constitute a National Association of Evangelical Peasants (President of AIECH, personal communication).

Finally, the GMU church is extending its scope in order to reach those highland Quichuas who migrate to the cities. It now has two organized churches in Quito and Guayaquil. These churches serve as meeting places and as centers of information for new and old migrants. In fact the network of GMU evangélicos reaches the eastern jungle of Ecuador and even Colombia, mostly through the Quichua commercial pedlars, who travel continuously, spreading the Gospel, and who become the trusted carriers of money, letters and greetings for other highland Quichuas who are already living there permanently.

#### PROTESTANTISM AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

Although the majority of the Protestant Quichuas in Chimborazo belong to the GMU church there are other Protestant churches active in the province.<sup>8</sup> It is beyond my competence and the scope of this essay to discuss the theological complexities which distinguish the GMU from the other versions of Protestantism. I will limit, therefore, my comments to the aspects of the

GMU version of Protestantism which seem to play a significant role in the ongoing process of social, economic, and political transformation in Chimborazo and, in particular, to the effects of that religious ideology in the dynamics of ethnic consciousness among the Indian peasantry.

Even to a lay observer, there are some characteristic beliefs and religious practices introduced by Protestantism that distinguish it from the version of folk-catholicism professed by the Quichuas before conversion. Those beliefs and practices center around the doctrine of "religious individualism", which Lukes defines as: "the view that the individual believer does not need intermediaries, that he has the primary responsibility for his own spiritual destiny, that he has the right and the duty to come to his own relationship with God in his own way and by his own effort " (1973: 94). Other important articles of faith are: salvation and justification only by God's bestowal of faith in Christ, as opposed to salvation by works and observances; the Bible as the sole reliable authority for the knowledge of God; the universal priesthood of all believers, as well as the idea of the individual's intrinsic worth and dignity under the will of God; finally, the belief that the secular government is ordained by God (see Dickens 1966, Chadwick 1964). The ethical principles involved derive from the Calvinist tradition, or what is commonly known as the "Protestant ethic". The moral precepts strongly emphasize discipline, abstention from alcohol, tobacco, from pre-marital and extra-marital sex and from all "excesses" believed to be sinful. Finally, the Quichua Protestants have enthusiastically adopted the congregational hymn - that "greatest liturgical innovation of the reformation" (Chadwick 1964: 439).

In addition to presenting itself as a way of knowing and explaining reality, religion implies a series of social practices as ways of acquiring power to influence postulated supernatural forces with the purpose of transforming the



world (Godelier 1977: 179). More generally, as Geertz puts it, religion is sociologically interesting mostly because it shapes the social order (1966: 35-36). When they were Catholics, the Quichuas used the cult of the saints and the different folk versions of the Virgin as the main social practice by which they attempted to reach those extra-human powers which they perceived as dominating them. Prayers, ritual drinking, and dancing with lavish costumes were practices performed to exert pressure on God's intermediaries.<sup>9</sup> The fiesta was a community affair, staged mostly with the purpose of obtaining benefits for the entire group, such as good harvests, rains, and protection for domestic animals.

In contrast Protestantism emphasizes an individualized religious experience. The Quichuas have been taught about the "inadequacy" and "powerlessness" of the old intermediaries. The saints are now nervously laughed at and regarded as "mere wooden idols" or "senseless painted dolls". The Virgin Mary is acknowledged as the mother of Christ but has lost her powers as an intermediary. The individual is alone with his God. In order to acquire influence with the supernatural the believer has to become worthy of God's mercy by inflicting on himself or herself a series of taboos and prohibitions to transform his or her body into a "clean temple", where God can dwell. Consequently, the emphasis is put on external cleanliness and on internal purity by avoiding drinking and by observing sexual taboos. These practices transform the Quichuas' "presentation of the self" (Goffman 1959). Changes are particularly evident among young Protestant women who, unlike other women in the area, do not cover their faces with the baita (woolen shawl), and are more willing to initiate face to face interaction with whites and mestizos and to speak and sing in public places.

Giving public "testimony", a ritual in which the new believer recounts

his previous life as a sinner, is a regular feature of conferencias (meetings) and other cultos (religious services). It serves as an example to other participants. The community becomes a witness of these "testimonies", but as a group it cannot influence the supernatural powers, only the individual can.

Unlike the members of some revivalist sects, such as Pentecostals, these Quichua Protestants are not looking for an instant or even future ecstasy but rather for present tranquility, a type of conformity arrived at by avoiding excesses and searching for a new self-identity. There is a small group of Quichua Pentecostals in Colta. The evangelicos criticize them because "they act crazy, very much like ourselves when we were Catholics. They shout, clapp, bang their heads against the wall, drink, and have more than one woman."<sup>10</sup>

Talking about their religious conversion, informants consistently identified their previous everyday life experiences as "animal behavior", with expression such as "we were like dogs", "like brutes", "like beasts". Self-control and freedom from behavior which is now regarded as "degrading" are the bases for their newly acquired self-respect and dignity. As one informant expressed it: "If I don't behave like an animal I can love and respect myself and, therefore, reject those who despise me and call me Indian."

This new self-image is also a rejection of the previous exploitative relations in which the Indians were literally treated as "beast of burden" and "less than human". These are not only images of the past, Protestant peasants - like other Indians in the area - are still subjected to discrimination and abuses by mestizos and whites. But the evangelicos are searching for a new

identity to liberate them from a condition of humiliation. As Ribeiro says of Protestantism among the Xóbleng, "conversion is a moving attempt to achieve ethnic transformation", "a new consciousness as civilized Indians" (1971: 302-303). But unlike the Xóbleng, the Quichuas are not trying to become non-Indians, i.e., mestizos. They are caught in a series of conflicts, in which their religious experience and their relationship with the GMU moves them both toward assimilation and toward efforts to define an ethnic consciousness in the context of a class society. What they wish is both to be and be seen as gente, human beings, and to be and be seen as Quichuas. They do not seek a mestizo identity as such--indeed mestizos are despised by most Indians, yet the patterns of behavior inspired by Protestantism, the very basis of their self-perception as gente and of their new Quichua identity, may lead them toward assimilation. The situation is thus ambiguous.

In Ecuador, as in other Latin American countries, the dominant ideology defines all members of the national society as mestizos, assuming that everyone has some Indian ancestry. If all are mestizos, by implication they can be equals in a homogeneous national society. Consequently, the ideology of mestizaje denies both the existence of social classes and the alternative of incorporating the Indians with their autonomous ethnic identity.<sup>11</sup>

The majority of Protestant Indians identify themselves as "Quichuas" rather than as "runas", which means "men" in Quichua but is still used in a deprecatory sense by whites and mestizos to refer to all Indians and by some Indians to refer to themselves (see Burgos 1970: 61). If the Indians of Chimborazo were originally Puruhá (Murra 1946: 796-798), that is no longer a reality for them. First the Inca conquest and later the Spanish have contributed to the obliteration of an original ethnic identity, such as that which may still be claimed by members of tribal societies of the Ecuadorian

Oriente (e.g., Canelo Quichuas, Shuaras), and even by other highland Indian groups (e.g., Salasacas, Otavaleños or Saraguros). More than any other, the Indians of Chimborazo were transformed into "generic Indians" (see Ribeiro 1973:16). Speaking the Quichua language, which clearly distinguishes them from mestizos and whites has become the central means for enacting their ethnic identity. Furthermore, the Quichuas have several pejorative terms to refer to whites and mestizos, such as tzala, and toto. The connotation of both terms is that whites and mestizos are "rude" and "vulgar" because, lacking competence in Quichua, they cannot convey the subtleties of respect, humor and feeling that this language allows for.

Protestantism has been of fundamental importance in reviving the Quichuas' interest in their language, and they talk about it with a renewed sense of pride. The revalorization of Quichua is also perceived by them as a form of strengthening their identity vis-à-vis the dominant elements of the national society as a whole, to whom the speaking of Quichuas as the first language is a de facto sign of social and intellectual inferiority.

Although instruction in public schools is conducted exclusively in Spanish, the evangelical Quichuas are showing increasing interest in sending their children to school. Formal schooling is becoming a new symbol of prestige among Protestant leaders and young people. Adult men and women are making an enormous effort to teach themselves to read, and all listen to the basic education programs broadcasted in Quichua through the local station. The major goal is to be able to read the Bible instead of merely learning passages by heart as they usually do now. When travelling, men and women carry their Bibles carefully protected in plastic bags. They do not use their Bibles as a fetish, as Miller reports the Pentecostalists Toba of Argentina used to do (1974: 396), but they see the Bible as containing

"the Word" and as a "model for their new lives". But, in addition, owning a Bible has for the Quichuas specific social meaning because it shows to the outside world that they now know how to read, and it gives them a special sense of dignity in front of all those who once had a monopoly of information, education, and religious interpretation. Through the reading of the Bible, the representation of biblical dramas, and the viewing of religious films, the Quichuas are beginning to understand other cultures and to see themselves incorporated into a common humanity of equals.

Burridge has pointed out the importance of the Bible as a vehicle to break down cultural boundaries, thus bringing a variety of European communities into a common humanity (1973: 14). In one of the many cultos I observed, the pastor read parts of Paul's Epistle to the Romans on the equality of divine punishment and interpreted it to the audience by saying: "Whites, Quichuas, Mestizos, Blacks, and Gringos will be judged equally before God's law." Although this interpretation of the Bible stresses only equality before God, it contrasts with the previous ideology as manipulated by the Catholic Church, which discriminated against Indians as half witted children.

#### Taita vs. Huauqui

Unlike the "mission oriented approach", which is typical of the Protestant missions working among Indians of the tropical forest, (e.g., Wycliffe Bible missionaries in Ecuador), the goal of the GMU missionaries in the highlands is to create a "people's movement" and an "indigenous church" where the most direct aspects of evangelization are being carried out by lay people and Quichua pastors and deacons. Even the missionaries admit that the mission stations grow faster once they leave (Klassen 1974: 111).

This ethnic expression of the "universal priesthood of all believers" contributes to create a sense of egalitarian participation. The faithful use the term "huauqui" (brother) among themselves and to refer to the pastors. The majority of the pastors do not receive special deference. If they are offered food or money, these offerings are still made within the limits of traditional Quichua reciprocity rather than as payment for specific services as was the case with the Catholic priests.

By monopolizing ritual performances such as the mass, the administration of sacraments and the interpretation of the scriptures, the Catholic priest controlled access to a symbolic power beyond the reach of the faithful, thus stressing the hierarchical relationship between himself, as white or mestizo, and the Indian believers. The Indians used the term "taita" (father) to address all Catholic priests and greeted them with the same ritual deference used to greet the landowners - kissing the hand from a kneeling position (see Maynard 1966). In contrast, the Protestant Quichua pastors are examined by other pastors and by the missionaries in public meetings, where any member of the congregation can interrogate them on doctrinal matters. Men and women deacons are democratically elected within each indigenous church. Their role is one of guidance and example, and the normative model is given by the Bible.

As Reyburn has pointed out for the Protestant Tobas in Argentina, it is also easier for the Quichuas to accept the impersonal authority of the Bible than that of another human being who is perceived as coercing them (quoted in Miller 1971: 156). The passages selected to be read from the Bible on these occasions, when religious leaders are elected, underline the exemplary character of the lives these leaders should lead in order for all the rest to imitate. Imitation, however, is successful because the model

comes from their equals, from other Quichuas.

Here it must be said that, although Protestantism stresses conversion as an individual religious experience, Colta is a peasant society where the social pressures that have always regulated peasants' lives, such as kinship, friendship and community obligations are still binding.

Protestantism, family and kinship: Relations among equals.

Recruitment of new converts takes place predominantly along kinship lines. Usually whole families become converted as a group, and then their extended kin are convinced to join. Several of the life histories of converts reveal the sense of relief they felt when they became converted because it meant re-establishing family and kinship ties with other members who were already believers. As Protestantism grows, fewer families want to be on their own.

Protestantism has had a strong influence on the Quichua family, mainly because it has reduced the level of mutual violence among its members. Both men and women informants reported how they used to beat each other when they were drunk. More peaceful family relationships have led to a more egalitarian participation in domestic chores and in agricultural labor. It is now often possible to find husbands teaching their wives reading and some rudiments of arithmetic. Women informants pointed out that such knowledge gives them more independence when going alone to the market and more self-confidence when confronting mestizo merchants.

Commensality has always been an important factor in cementing family and kinship ties among the Quichuas. Most evangelical families insisted in pointing out to me that their meals are now more peaceful and enjoyable. The evening meal, when the whole family eats together, is always preceded

by common prayers and singing. The Protestant Quichuas feel that this ritual helps to create an atmosphere of gentleness more conducive to family understanding.

What the Quichuas call the "family service" (culto familiar) is the ritual that best expresses, in a new symbolic form, this renewed solidarity among family, extended kin and neighbors. These cultos take place generally once a week and consist of singing, praying, and studying the Bible together. They are initiated by one family, which invites close neighbors and kin. The house is specially cleaned for the occasion. Food is offered after the service. The culto is led by the household head, but he conducts it as a dialogue so that everybody can participate. The culto familiar and commensality help reinforce important ties with those who are in the network of reciprocal labor exchange. Besides, this culto transforms the peasants' hut into a sacred place, in contrast with the hierarchy of space created by Catholicism, in which the church was the only place of worship, one where the sacred was controlled by the priest. Now the peasants feel in full control of the sacred within their own homes. This "democratizing" effect of Protestantism over the religious experience is, of course, not peculiar to the highlands. It has been pointed out repeatedly by students of the European Reformation (see Charles and Katherine George 1968: 158).

I have already said that for the Colta peasants reciprocity is still an important pattern in the relations of production. When the peasants were Catholic they used relationships of compadrazgo as a way of extending their reciprocity network. Within the Catholic ideological system, these relationships of compadrazgo were ritually made sacred, and therefore strengthened, mainly through the sacraments of baptism, and marriage. Protestantism has eliminated the godparents for baptism and usually the



parents of the groom are selected as godparents for marriage. Need for labor, beyond that of the family still exists, however, and Protestant peasants now use the relationship of "brother in the faith" (hermanos) to engage others in the same social and economic relationships previously assumed by compadres. Hermanos are now preferred in sharecropping arrangements. They are also asked for help when building a house and in harvesting, threshing, and other agricultural tasks. Hermanos are sought after in areas near the páramo to take care of pasturing sheep and cattle. In exchange, those hermanos are housed and fed when they come down to Colta. Hermanos are also asked for money loans and to act as witnesses in law suits. The reasons formerly given by the Quichuas for these preferences are the same as those given for selecting compadres in traditional reciprocal arrangements: "they can be trusted", "they act like real brothers" and "they are willing to share". In addition, some of the "Protestant virtues" are now added to the explanation: "they are more honest", "they work harder", and "they don't drink and are more reliable".

Protestantism has also enlarged the reciprocity network of the Quichua migrants in the big cities and wherever their jobs may take them. They can obtain room and board cheaper - and sometimes for free - if they lodge with hermanos. If need be, merchandise can also be left with them because "they can be trusted". Even those migrants who work as wage earners in the coastal plantations or in sugar mills have established a system of "substitutes" between hermanos by which they will replace one another in the job while one of them returns to the countryside to take care of his plot. Thus, in a labor market where supply exceeds demand, the relationship of hermano has been transformed into a form of job security. It is then possible to say that, in several ways, the Quichuas are enacting the ideological relationship

of "brother in Christ" as a social relationship of production. As fiestas and other rituals were used before to strengthen kin and fictive-kin relationships, the culto familiar, conferences and other forms of Protestant rituals are used now to confirm and sanctify the "new sibling" relationship.

#### Protestantism and class relationships

In the preceding section I discussed how the Quichuas have adapted aspects of Protestantism to maintain those relationships among equals which are meaningful within their culture. My data do not suggest that Protestantism is directly related to an internal differentiation of the peasant class in the region nor that Weber's famous thesis on the relationship between Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism (1958) is relevant in understanding the effects of Protestantism among highland peasants in Ecuador.

The majority of evangelical peasants do not have a standard of living drastically higher than non-Protestant peasants. The virtues emphasized by the Protestant ethic, such as "industriousness", "thrift", "dedication to work", are not new to peasants who have always lived close to subsistence level. Generally, in order to increase his output the peasant has no alternatives other than intensifying his labor by prolonging the working day, or what Chayanov (1966) calls the "self-exploitation" of labor power within the peasant economy. Furthermore, Protestant peasants do not save but, if possible, try to spend whatever cash they may have on education, modern medicine, zinc roofs for their houses, radios and bicycles. What Protestantism has done is to remove the social pressures for ceremonial consumption. As Wolf argues, when the peasants can escape those demands, they may reduce ceremonial consumption as one of the possible strategies to achieve economic betterment for their families (1966: 14-15). The peasants changed their

consumption patterns from what the new religious ideology defines as "pagan", "extravagant" and "wasteful" to what the same ideology regards as "responsible" and "proper" consumption. These patterns of consumption may put Protestant peasants somewhat ahead of non-Protestant peasants in terms of their participation in the capitalist market for commodities. Differential consumption patterns, however, do not constitute a basis for class relations.

As I have showed already, in this area of Chimborazo there are structural limitations - lack of land, high land prices, scattered small plots, debts - that prevent the emergence of a class of small capitalists farmers, Protestant or other, who might start exploiting the labor power of poorer peasants. However, regarding the participation of Protestant peasants in the wage labor market, my data show that landowners in the area are beginning to appreciate the value of a "puritanical" labor force. It seems that Protestants acquire everywhere (Willems 1967: 177) a reputation for being "dependable", "honest" and "sober" but, most important, they are also well known for not joining unions or other "troublesome" groups. Commenting on the fact that evangélicos comprise the 90 percent of his labor force, the owner of one of the largest traditional haciendas still in operation in Chimborazo had this to say: "At first I was extremely upset about all my peons becoming Protestants and blamed the priest for not doing his job properly, but now I have come to realize that the Protestant Indians are more rational, more reliable than those in the hacienda X - for instance - who are organized, mutinous, and rebellious, that is, non-rational."

Furthermore, if the situation that Willems describes for the Protestant urban migrants in Brazil and Chile (1967: 177) is repeated in Ecuador, the "Protestant virtues" of the peasant migrants could be used by urban capitalists to keep a more "docile", "quiet" and "efficient" labor force.

Ethnic consciousness and class consciousness

In most instances analyzed so far - individual, family and kinship, and relations among equals - the Protestant peasants have adapted the new religious ideology to social practices which revive and reinforce their cultural and social identity as Quichuas. In order to understand other aspects of Quichua ethnicity in relation to class consciousness I will turn now to the analysis of two ritual occasions where evangelical peasants are mobilized to act as a group. When examined together these rituals manifest the ambiguities which permeate the process of incorporation of the Quichuas - as an etnia and as a class - into the modern bourgeois State. Here the Quichuas are caught - along with other Andean and Amazonian native peoples - in the predicament of asserting their ethnic identity while confronting the ethnocidal policies of the dominant elements of <sup>the</sup> national society. It is an intricate and difficult dilemma where, as Whitten has argued, "the complementarity of ethnocide and ethnogenesis exists in the most tenuous balance" (1976: 285).

First I want to examine the religious event known to the evangélicos as conferencia, a ritual occasion which assembles for a period of three days large numbers of Quichuas (200 to 3000) from a multitude of peasant communities often from different provinces. They gather to pray, sing, listen to the message of the Gospel, and engage in enjoyable socializing and sports.

Because the Protestant leadership recognizes the competitive attraction which traditional fiestas may still have for recent converts, the largest conferences are scheduled to coincide with Catholic festivals such as Corpus Christi, Christmas and Holy Week. The peasants themselves perceive the conferences as substitutes for the fiestas, without the hang-overs or the large expenses. The improvement of the means of transportation in the region

and the popularity of the Protestant radio have made these events possible.

Any community can hold a conference, thus becoming the "sacred" place of congregation for all the others. Conferences take place outdoors in a large tent provided by the missionaries. The community responsible for calling the conference is in charge of preparing the food for all the participants although a minimal amount of around \$1.20 is paid by each person for the right to eat three meals a day and to sleep in the tent for the duration of the conference.

An experience of the sacred is expected to occur, and usually, several people "receive the Lord" during the course of the three days. However, there are no sacred influential intermediaries to make it happen. The emphasis is in the inner transformation of the individuals. Religious testimonials from old converts are heard in order to give confidence and encourage the newcomers. The new believers are assured that there is a "normative communitas" (Turner 1974: 169) of the faithful to support them.

Through a complex system of formal ranked offices of ritual sponsorship the traditional fiesta was an enactment of the social, political, and economic hierarchy that controlled the affairs of each peasant community. Ceremonial redistribution became the source of authority and power for those who could pay the expenses involved. In contrast, the conference creates that "ritual of inclusiveness" which Turner describes as part of religious pilgrimages, where "the other" becomes the generic human "brother" and "specific siblingship is extended to all who share a system of beliefs" (1974: 186). However, if in the more abstract ideological sense the "brotherhood of all mankind" is emphasized, the conferences are kept within the ethnic boundaries (Barth 1969: 15-16) of the Quichua population. All the aspects of the event, including praying, singing, preaching, and instruction are conducted in Quichua. Mestizo

merchants are conspicuously absent. For at least three days, during the conference, Quichua peasants remove themselves from those every-day social interactions where they are continuously being reminded of their "inferiority" as Indians by mestizo and white merchants, landowners, bus drivers, and local bureaucrats. In that sense, conferences also create a kind of "ethnic communitas" by which a considerable number of peasants can experience a feeling of brotherhood and sisterhood as Quichuas and actually reinforce ties of kinship and friendship.

One could argue that, by generating this kind of solidarity, the conferences could be instrumental in overcoming the fragmentation and isolation of the peasantry which many scholars regard as one of the main sources of the "low classness" (Shanin 1971: 253) of the peasantry as a class and, consequently, as an important obstacle for its political action (Marx 1963, Wolf 1969, Hobsbawm 1973). Nevertheless, the conference only removes the peasants from social situations where they are exploited as peasants and as Indians and, by clouding class solidarity into a religious experience, it conceals the oppressive nature of the larger system of social relations. In this sense we can say that the function of the ideology is resolving the contradictions by excluding them (Poulantzas 1975: 208).

As Turner points out for religious sects and schismatic movements, in general, "when they attract great numbers and persist for many years, they often find it necessary to compromise with structure once again, both in their relations with the wider society and in their own internal concerns, both liturgical and organizational" (1974: 267).

In order to understand how the Protestant Quichuas "compromise with structure" we have to analyze the second ritual performance I mentioned before,

where as a formal organization the evangélicos confront the rest of the national society. This is the yearly meeting organized by the Association of Evangelical Indians of Chimborazo mainly to maintain their relation with local and national State authorities. Evangelical peasants of the GMU from all parts of Ecuador congregate in Colta for a one day event which is very similar in structure, to the celebration of national civic fiestas, with music followed by speeches and parades, and a large display of banners. Usually children sing the Ecuadorian national anthem in Quichua. They present the authorities with "typical" gifts - shigras, ponchos, sombremos - and offer them "typical" Quichua food. In the parade "typical" Quichua music is played and participants wear their best "typical" dress. In this event, ethnic consciousness is transformed into expressive folkloric consciousness. This form of ethnic consciousness does not conflict with the national ideology of assimilation, because ethnicity becomes just another commodity to be sold to tourists, as has already been done with the Otavaleño Indians whose handicrafts and personal characteristics of "cleanliness" and "industriousness" have become one of the trade marks of Ecuador's tourist industry.

In the speeches addressed to the authorities during this celebration, the leaders present the demands of the Protestant peasants as a group. They ask for better roads, better schools, for drinking water supplies and sewage systems for rural communities, for modern medical care to do away with the Indian witchdoctors - who are satirized in sketches - and for better treatment of the Quichuas by the bureaucratic structure. None of these petitions implies an actual confrontation with the "modernizing" goals of the bourgeois State. On the contrary, those demands assure the representatives of the State that the Protestant Quichuas as a group want to become "acculturated" by working

within the existing political institutions. No references are made to land claims and working conditions, which are the main problems peasants as a class are facing.

This celebration can be seen as a stage where the Protestant Quichuas express their identity as "good citizens" demonstrating their adherence to the dominant national ideology.

At the beginning of this essay I discussed how the Catholic Church legitimized an ideological definition of ethnicity that kept the Indians as servile labor in a semi-feudal class structure. The version of Protestant political ideology - as manifested in the meeting described above - legitimizes that aspect of the bourgeois political ideology in which the State appears as representing the general interests of equal and free citizens, concealing their distribution in the class structure (see Marx 1975: 211-241).

However, not all Protestant peasants accept unconditionally that version of Protestant political ideology. Many Quichua informants with whom I discussed these problems, described how as members of the peasant class and as Indians they enter into daily confrontations with a society that exploits them. The ambiguity between a Protestant political ideology of acceptance of the status quo and the perception by many Quichuas of their class position is already causing tension and actual conflicts within the Protestant peasant community. These conflicts take place, mainly, between the Protestant leaders of peasant comunas (legal organization of peasant communities) and those of the indigenous churches. The former see the need to fight for land rights and against all forms of exploitation of the Quichuas as a peasant class; they give priority to the needs of the peasants over religious divisions; and they see their role as one of service to the peasant class fighting for its rights. The latter define most conflicts as "moral individual issues"



so that they can be controlled within the church. When asked how they solve possible confrontations with the authorities, their answer is invariably an abbreviated version of Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Chap. 13: 1-2) "The authorities have been established by God and should be respected."

The complexities of the conflict between these two types of leaders reflect the ambiguities I have tried to examine in this essay, ambiguities which involve the different levels of ethnic consciousness which differ in their relation to the dynamics of class consciousness.

NOTES

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2       There is, however, a substantial amount of literature on Protestantism in Latin America written by Protestant missionaries and Catholic priests. For the purpose of this essay I only used some of the sources that deal specifically with Ecuador, and they are quoted in the text.

3. In the Ecuadorian highlands, precarismos refer to those forms of land tenure by which the agricultural workers hold land in usufruct paying for its use in labor, services or produce, e.g., huasipungo (see Hurtado 1973: 31-33).
4. In 1966, a team of the Department of Anthropology from Cornell University did field work in the Colta area in collaboration with the Ecuadorian Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization. Their ethnographic work makes for interesting comparison because it deals with this area when a majority of the peasants were still Catholics, and just before the Agrarian Reform was actually implemented (see Maynard 1966 and Cornell University 1965).
5. For a good discussion of the use of wage labor in the highland haciendas, see Guerrero 1975.
6. In 1976-77 there were at least seven different agencies - from Catholic action groups to unions and associations connected with political parties - trying to mobilize the peasants of Chimborazo. Their efforts resulted in several political meetings of peasant unions and associations in Riobamba; in peasants' land claims, and in land invasions mostly to demand access to pasture land. The landowners retaliated by constituting the "Committee for the Defense of the Land". The peasants accused the local State authorities for, allegedly, backing the landowners by jailing peasant leaders and closing radio programs broadcasted by peasant unions (see El Comercio, January 30, 1976).
7. To the best of my knowledge, the GMU missionaries in the area are extremely careful in the collecting of statistics, and cautious in their assessment of the growth of the church. Totally accurate statistics, however, are difficult to obtain because it is almost impossible for

the missionaries to have full control over the number of conversions and baptisms performed by the relative autonomous indigenous churches. The 1974 National Census gives the total of the rural population of Chimborazo as 226,145. It is impossible to deduce from this figure how many are Quichua speakers, but a figure of 150,000, as estimated by the GMU, seems reasonable.

8. To the best of my knowledge, there were at least ten other Protestant missions working in Chimborazo at the time I did my field work. It is difficult to have an accurate and up to date estimate of their success in converting the Quichuas, relative to that of the GMU because the number of converts is changing so fast. All my data suggest the GMU was better organized and much more visible to the peasants in the area.
9. The two major traditional fiestas in the Colta area were in honor of Saint Michael and of the Virgin of Balvanera. The Catholic peasants from Colta do not hold these fiestas any more because - as they explain - now that many of their relatives are evangélicos, they do not find the same incentives and support. It must be added, that some of the "new priests" working in the area discourage peasants from holding traditional fiestas because of the costs involved.
10. This type of behavior during cultos is common among the members of Pentecostalist sects. Nevertheless, this particular description quoted here portrays the evangélicos' own perception of the behavior of Pentecostalists in the Coita area. I do not have independent evidence on their drinking behavior or their marital and extra-marital practices.
11. For a detailed discussion of the ideology of mestizaje and its implications for the tropical forest Indians of Ecuador see Whitten 1976: 265-285.

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## CHANGING BASES OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN A BOLIVIAN COMMUNITY \*

Bianca Muratorio<sup>1</sup>

The 1952 Revolution was the most significant event Bolivia experienced since gaining independence from Spain. It can be viewed as an attempt to transform the social structure and introduce in a traditional society based on privilege, the possibility of becoming an actual nation-state. After fourteen years, this process of national development has not been fully accomplished. Yet the Revolution has produced significant changes in the lives of the Bolivian people.

This paper<sup>2</sup> will deal with the transformation of the stratification system, and specifically with the new class relations that have arisen from new sources of power, as well as the ways in which people understand and react to these transformations; that is, how structural dimensions — such as class, power and prestige — are used by members of the society to interpret their social environment and influence their daily behavior.

When a system of social stratification is said to be crystallized, it rests upon a set of implicit common understandings concerning the unique rights and duties of each social stratum in the system. These shared understandings about who should enjoy privileges and who should not, are only one aspect of the more general experience which Schutz refers to as "the social world as taken for granted." That is to say:

The system of socially approved typifications in terms of which the common-sense experience of man living his everyday life within it, interprets the social world and its organization.<sup>3</sup>

\*This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, November 17-20, 1966, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

A truism of social organization is that, when the system of social stratification is undergoing change, the consensus about it tends to break down. This should mean that traditional typifications and mutual expectations become problematic or invalid as guides for interclass behavior and evaluations. Some groups in the society should presumably try to justify the maintenance of the old categories; others should attempt to transform them. How conflict may arise in this process of redefining the basis of inequality is of obvious interest for stratification theory.

In order to examine the transformation of the system of stratification and the conflicts which have resulted from it, I have chosen to discuss a single Bolivian community — Corolco. This paper is based on extensive anthropological field data and on qualitative analysis of open-ended questions from a survey conducted in Corolco as part of the research project.<sup>4</sup>

#### THE TRADITIONAL STRATIFICATION SYSTEM

Corolco is an important center in the Yungas region for the production of coca, coffee and fruit. Before the Revolution, most of the hacendados, or landowners, lived on their fincas, located around the town and had mayordomos to administer the work on the land. Peasants were given small plots of land for subsistence farming by the patron. In return, they were obliged to work the patron's land and to perform personal services for him on the fincas. A small part of the hacienda crop was sold to wholesalers in Corolco, but most of the trade was carried on by the hacendados directly with the markets of La Paz. The economic power of the upper class was based, then, on its monopoly of the land, on large-scale commerce and on free peasant labor.

The basis for the absolute political power of the rural oligarchy was established as early as 1825. It was in that year that Bolívar, backed by the creole elite, drafted a restrictive constitution which left ninety per cent of the population disenfranchised. It is true that in the cities, with the revival of silver and tin mining, the landowners were obliged to play the game of a limited democracy with the emergent mining oligarchies; nevertheless, their control in the rural areas remained unthreatened. They retained full control of the political machinery of the rural areas. In Corolco the hacendados monopolized all the important political offices and formed a conscious and cohesive political class. They reproduced, on a small scale in the community, the democratic farce that was going on at the national level. As a former hacendado's wife describes the "old days" now,

They (the hacendados) were a very united group. There were no disparities and all respected each other. In the old days there were only two political parties, the Liberals and the Republicans, but there were no fights and quarrels as there are now. People had dignity and they all got along very well.

In the stratified society of the hacienda, according to informants, three main ethnic categories were clearly defined and easily recognized by everyone. One was either a blanco, a mestizo or an indio.

The classical landowner -- known variously as blanco, caballero, vecino or decente -- claimed to be a direct descendant of the early settlers. He was a cultured gentleman of long-established wealth, who lived elegantly, maintaining both a country estate and a town house. Decentes spoke only Spanish among themselves but sometimes learned Aymara to aid them in their relations with the campesinos. They wore refined Western style clothes. The women were de vestido, or European in dress, as opposed to being de pollera,

or wearing the traditional Indian woman's costume. The blancos formed a closed status group. They married almost exclusively within their group and belonged to organizations whose membership was limited to blanco landholders.

Since any direct connection with manual work was a factor of status disqualification for the blanco, inferior mestizos served as the active managers of blanco properties. Mestizos often became merchants and artisans in town, as well. Some even were allowed to hold secondary public offices. The mestizos formed the middle class in Coroico and used the decentes as their reference group. They were the Quisberts, the Falcons, the Condes, who denied their ethnic identity by changing their names from the Indian equivalents Quispe, Mamani and Condori.

The campesinos who worked as peons under the hacendados were Indians.<sup>5</sup> Indians have been considered genetically inferior -- a belief that dates from colonial times, when even their "condition as rational human beings" was an issue that provoked impassioned debates in the Spanish courts. Belief in the alleged inferior racial status of the Indians was reinforced by various cultural characteristics which the Spaniards and their descendants scorn -- illiteracy, lack of knowledge of Spanish, "paganism," native dress, manual labor, among other traits. In fact, prior to the Revolution of 1952, the Indians were not "citizens" of Coroico. Being denied the right to vote and access to the courts, their status in the community was defined only by the burden of their duties and obligations.

We know about the daily life of the hacienda society primarily through the verbal accounts of the people who participated in it. Their memories may be blurred by time or ideology, but the accounts provide valuable information about their common daily experiences. From them we learn that social

Interaction between strata was mainly oriented by the crystallized norms and symbols which identified the ethnic categories. B Blancos, mestizos and Indians perceived and evaluated themselves and others according to those social and cultural standards that they equally took for granted.

The system of ethnic stratification on the hacienda enjoyed a high degree of consensus as to what was expected formally, but a blanco's reasons for accepting the system differed sharply from a campesino's reasons. From the point of view of the upper group, the social relationships within each hacienda reflected an idealized social harmony based on paternalism and dependence. This view is expressed in the words of a former hacendado:

In my finca we gave equal treatment to blancos and Indians. All the Indians were well loved. When they needed something they came and asked "nifio prestame," and we gave them all they asked for. Even more, my father arranged their marriages. He would grab hold of one Indian and ask him who he wanted to marry, and no matter if she was single or widow, my father would immediately make them marry. It was a splendid life, and see how it is now!

For the hacendados, this system of authoritarian social relations fulfilled two main functions. On the one hand, it helped them to maintain their own image as a superior, virtuous and responsible group; and on the other hand, it helped them to sustain the coercive social order. Since the patron was the sole provider of justice, social welfare, education and religious guidance, the campesino could turn nowhere but to the patron to fulfill these needs.

But we find the following view expressed by a campesino:

Before we were slaves because we were stupid, we didn't understand what was going on. We didn't have anybody to defend us and we were afraid to do anything for fear that the patron would beat us. We didn't know why we were beaten. We didn't know about our rights.

We may infer from this that, in order for the fiction of social harmony to be preserved, the campesinos were forced, out of their own ignorance and impotence, to accept in silence the subjugation and deprivations imposed upon them. For "staying in their place" they were rewarded by social approval. They did nothing more than perform the duties traditionally assigned to their station. As the former hacendados describe them now, the pre-reform Indians were "docile, humble, obedient, respectful and disciplined hard workers."

In fact, for the campesino, the hacienda system offered no alternatives but to comply with the coercive power structure which rewarded his subservience or to risk his life by leaving the hacienda.

POST-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD:  
THE DECADENCE OF AN ARISTOCRACY

The quiet stability of hacienda life around Coroico remained undisturbed until 1952. When the Revolution broke out, bands of armed campesinos threw the patrones out of their fincas and occupied the land. Freed from their old ties, the campesinos exercised their newly acquired power by organizing themselves into sindicatos, voting for their political candidates and coming into town to demand their rights. According to accounts, the blancos, stunned and impotent, whispered among themselves: "There is no order;" "There are no guarantees." The obvious inference to be made is that the bases of the traditional order were undermined. With the destruction of the latifundio and with the franchise given to the Indians, the upper class lost the "secure guarantees" of its economic and political power.



The structural changes brought about by the Revolution disrupted the previous coincidence of power, privilege and prestige and the formal consensus which had existed concerning the rights and duties of each social class. Today the people live with discrepancies between their relative social standing and the actual power they have over others, a situation which creates uneasiness in the relations between strata, mainly because people are not quite sure of what to expect of one another. There is still no clear basis for a new working agreement. The following is a tentative explanation of the ambiguities of this stratification system.

When the Agrarian Reform caused most of the hacendados in Corolco to lose large portions of their estates, those patrones whose treatment of the peons had been more oppressive were driven out of town. Among those who remained we see very different expressions of the difficulties encountered when normative expectations have been upset. Some have refused to acknowledge the loss of their privileges and still live in the hope of recovering their land. A typical case is that of a former hacendado who returned to the finca he used to own and tried to break into the place, giving orders to the campesinos as if they were still his peons. They threatened to kill him. Upon presenting his "case" to the police, he was threatened with arrest for illegal entry. Seeing nothing illegal about entering his "own property," he was unable to understand the "injustice" being inflicted upon him.

Other, more realistic, former hacendados are able to live in leisure with the money they managed to retain or to inherit. The less fortunate are obliged to earn their living, and work mainly as rescatadores (collecting coffee and coca crops from the peasants to take them to the markets). This occupation has now lost the prestige it formerly had as an exclusive

upper class activity because it is practiced also by former peons and by mestizos. The blancos, therefore, are sometimes ashamed to admit that they are rescatadores. Nevertheless, sharing an occupation has established between the classes a very important bond of economic interest, strengthened by the threat of an impending coffee monopoly controlled by large concerns in La Paz.

The political power of the hacendados was severely weakened immediately after 1952, causing them to lose temporary control of public offices. They managed, however, to retain their ascendancy in the bureaucracy by means of personal "contacts" through compadrazgo or by direct participation as lawyers of tinterillos ("street corner lawyers"). By virtue of their influence in the spheres of justice and law-enforcement, the hacendados can offer protection to some of their former peons, who still come to them when they are in trouble. In this way, the hacendados are able to retain some of their former paternalistic control over the campesinos, and at the same time receive added economic advantage insofar as the campesinos are more willing to sell their products to those who help them in other spheres.

Being competitors in the market and divided by political issues, the members of the upper group have lost their previous unity for action as a class. Their main bond is their prestige as decentes. Since much of the economic basis of their class distinction has gone, the principle distinguishing criteria separating the blancos from their social inferiors are race and ancestry. A blanco, asked how "poor whites" are regarded in town, supports this point in his reply:

Poor whites, as long as they are whites, are accepted. But take an Indio, for instance, and give him wealth. The people are still going to say he is an Indio. You can't buy blood. Of course this is changing more and more. Before, the families that were in top social positions were there due to name and wealth. Usually the two went hand in hand. It was coffee. Now everyone meddles in coffee and it is the only way to riches. So that people can earn more easily and they can gain position, but they don't have the other things the people formerly had -- culture and higher style of living.

Blancos, then, do not consider wealth as a criterion for social class because it cannot buy what is inherited -- race and ancestry. Education is used primarily as a criterion for consolidating one's general status, since this does not refer to schooling but to "breeding" and "general refinement," qualities that can be obtained only by being socialized within a class. Consequently, the blancos view their status as inviolable in spite of the change in the supports of their position. A decente who behaves improperly may only lose prestige within his class, but he will never fall into any of the inferior strata.

#### THE RISING MIDDLE CLASS

Two results of the Revolution -- the expansion of the market and the greater need for service activities -- have enlarged the economic and social group known as cholos.<sup>6</sup> A cholo is an Indian who has recently assumed some mestizo traits, wears refined Indian style dress, is bilingual and lives in town, engaged in commerce or artisanry. Unlike decente women, the cholas are noticeably hard workers and often work in the same occupations as the cholo men. The cholos have a virtual monopoly of the trucking industry in town, and thus are a critical link in the commercial operations between Corolco and La Paz.

One of our cholo interviewees, who is the son of a campesino and who now works as a cattle merchant, gives us a vivid account of his process of upward mobility:

Before the campesino was deceived. My father was a campesino and that's how I know. It isn't any good for a campesino to be looked down upon by others. I had a truck that my father bought me so that I would no longer be a campesino like him. With that truck I made trips to La Paz to sell various products. Little by little, the people ~~didn't~~ look at me any more as the son of a campesino, but told me I was good and generous. Afterwards, I bought a house in town and then I was not considered a campesino any more. Even though later on I sold my truck, nobody looks at me like an Indian now. Now there are no longer any marked differences. There is only hate between Indians and cholos, but with time it is going to disappear and it will be better.

As a recent upward mobile group, the cholos are still more preoccupied with maintaining their positions above the Indians than with their full acceptance into the decente society. They have some of the characteristics of a marginal group, insofar as they are resented by both the campesinos and the decentes. The cholos are often described by these groups as being deceitful, opportunistic, disloyal, treacherous and aggressive. The campesinos in Corolco seem to resent the cholos, not so much because they have moved up, but because the cholo rescatadores are felt to have exploited the ignorance of the campesinos by cheating them in business transactions. The decentes feel threatened by the growing economic power of the cholos, and behave towards them very much like an old aristocracy towards the nouveaux riches.

It is interesting to point out that chola women scorn the claims of a member of their group who tries to "pass" as a decente. They call her viralocha, a derogatory term which means a cholita or "de pollera" who tries

to be a decente or "de vestido" simply by putting on Western style dress. This term is derogatory because it implies that even by changing her dress the woman cannot hide the fact that she is a chola, and is trying to put on airs.

In view of their ambiguous position in the community, the cholos have tried to form a differentiated society of their own. This could be done in Coroico because the cholos constitute a large part of the population and do not have to face the difficult problems attributed to lonely marginal men in other ethnic stratified societies. One chola woman expresses very clearly this group consciousness:

We don't try to hide the fact that we are cholitas. We work in the market, and all our friends are cholitas. It is the word "Indian" you cannot use around these people. We talk Aymara and Spanish and have different customs, but since the Reform we are all equal.

As a rising middle group, the cholos are quite sensitive to the changes that are going on in the community and try to profit from them. They work hard to accumulate wealth and seek a good education for their children. Aware of the conflict between ancestry and wealth as determinants of members' class rankings, the cholos consider wealth the more important criterion of upward mobility. Evidence for this statement can be found in the words of this chola woman:

I don't care if I am called a chola, because what is important for me is to know how to work in order to have money. I am not going to live on the "good names" of the people of "blue blood." The "good names" don't feed me. They may say what they want, I don't care, as long as I have money and can educate my children. That's what I am concerned about.

THE EMERGENT CAMPESINO CLASS

The destruction of the hacienda system has integrated the Indians into the market economy. Their rights to own property and to enter in free labor relations meant their first step into citizenship. Access to education and to the possibility of learning Spanish has begun to awaken a new sense of security and self-assurance. Finally, and most importantly, universal suffrage and freedom of association have allowed the Indians to organize politically and to emerge as a self-conscious peasant class.

It is not my intention here to discuss this process in all its implications, but simply to point out some of the obstacles that the peasants in Corolco confront in the actual exercise of their power as a class.

The Agrarian Reform implemented a policy of distribution of the land in Corolco which mainly settled the campesinos on their old plots of land around the hacienda house, and created a system of land tenure based on a multitude of small family holdings. Campesinos who were able to get the land of an entire hacienda organized themselves into cooperatives for production and commercialization. In the case of family holdings, the small size of the plots and the lack of technical and credit assistance from the State result in very low productivity. As a consequence, the campesinos have to depend on the big merchants in town, both for the necessary capital to invest in production and for marketing their products. This credit system, together with compadrazgo relations, affords the rescatadores security in buying -- as the campesinos provide them with their crop -- and in selling -- as the campesinos shop in their stores.

This economic exploitation, together with political exploitation, has led to an increasing cynicism toward political matters on the part of the campesino. Even the sindicatos, which grew up as protective associations for the campesino, have, through inefficient management and corruption, served to feed this cynicism. At the same time, the sindicato has represented a means of acquiring political power and a symbol of campesino unity and class identity. A strange mixture of cynicism and hope evolves from this situation. The feeling of hope is expressed by a campesino whose former patron demanded payment for the land taken by his peons after the Reform. The patron's threat was to throw the campesinos off their plots if they did not pay him, but the campesino declares:

For sure the patron is not going to see that. Those times are over. He will never be able to do that because now we have the sindicato and with that institution we can defend ourselves from the patron and from anyone else who attempts to take away our land or our rights.

The campesinos in Corolco are now caught in an ambiguous situation. On the one hand, their awakened class consciousness makes them unwilling to accept a dependent role within the community. They feel capable of managing their own affairs as an organized class, and legally equal to the blancos and cholos. On the other hand, their precarious economic situation and the corrupt judicial and police authority in town force them to look for protection and security through the traditional paternalistic bonds, thus reinforcing their previous status as an underprivileged ethnic group.

#### DISRUPTION IN INTER-CLASS BEHAVIOR

Thus far I have tried to explain the structural reallocation of power and prestige within the community and the implications of this process for

each of the strata. The analysis reveals a picture of present Corolco society where each stratum is trying to redefine its position relative to the other strata. While the traditional order provided the basis for agreement on the coincidence of the three dimensions of the stratification system, now each stratum is stressing the importance of one of those dimensions in an effort to assert its dominant role. The blancos rely upon prestige, the cholos on acquired wealth, and the campesinos on political power. For each of these groups the other two dimensions are uncertain. Most of the blancos lost their land and their political supremacy; the cholos are displaced socially by the blancos and politically by the campesinos; the campesinos are still poor and socially subordinate to blancos.

The old expectations which shaped class behavior broke down and the new definitions are unclear and still in the making, which suggests why there is uneasiness in the relations between the classes. Continuous changes of authority, legal land disputes, differential treatment by the police, distrust in commercial activities and manifest or latent aggressiveness in interpersonal relations are some of the conflicting situations involved in the redefinition of the basis for a new consensus. I should like to conclude with a brief discussion of some instances of disruption in inter-class relations in everyday life situations.<sup>7</sup>

As their self-image is threatened by the increasing relevance of other stratification criteria such as money and political power, the decentes struggle to maintain their reputation and "save face." Like a decadent aristocracy, the blancos are primarily concerned with keeping up appearances. They will buy clothes instead of food if their image is at stake. Blancos who are illiterate will not participate in the literacy courses for shame of



sharing that inadequacy with campesinos. Decente women are reluctant to admit that they drink alcohol because this is very common among chola women, and deny that they do the kind of work typically associated with cholo or Indian status.

In the performance of the new roles required of them, the blancos try to present themselves as disengaged. Of relevance here is Goffman's concept of role distance, i. e., "actions which convey some disdainful detachment of the performer from the role he is performing."<sup>8</sup> What the decente is denying is the image of self implied in the new roles he has to perform, because this image draws him closer to the classes from which he still wants to keep apart. For example, unlike the campesinos who pause to chat with cholo store keepers, the blancos make their purchases and quickly leave. They may invite campesino customers to their homes to eat, but serve them in special dishes reserved for use only by campesinos. They now have to buy the campesinos' coffee crop and lend them money but they do this while still maintaining some of the traditional paternalistic attitudes rather than according to the specific patterns of an impersonal commercial transaction. The image of self that the blanco tries to present is that of the old patron, and at the same time he tries to show that the new relations involve only a very superficial level of his self.

We get a vivid picture of the uncertainty in the mutual expectancies of interaction between strata by observing the way in which people comply to the ceremonial rules of inter-class behavior. The blancos still will be offended if the lower classes address them too familiarly and avoid the use of the old respectful terms of address with campesinos. Titles like don or caballero are used by blancos only in addressing other blancos. As for the

deference the campesinos now pay to the blancos, let me quote what a decente woman has to say about it:

Twenty years ago the Indians were humble, polite and docile. But today it seems that they have the devil inside. They are not the same. It was nice to see how they greeted us before: "Good morning Tata;" "Good morning nifito;" "Good morning patroncito." Now when one goes to their houses they don't even invite us to come in.'

### Footnotes

1. Senior Analyst, Studyman/Bolivia Project
2. This paper is based on ethnographic and survey data collected in Corolco as part of the Bolivia project of the Research Institute for the Study of Man, supported by Peace Corps Grant No. PC(W)-397. The ethnographic data was collected during 1964-65 by the following fieldworkers: Dwight B. Heath and Eloy S. Robalino, Research Associates; Katherine J. Barnes and Felix Mangudo, Research Assistants; and several local field assistants. Survey data was collected in 1966 by a team of eight survey interviewers under the supervision of Blanca Muratorio.
3. Alfred Schutz, Collected Papers, Vol. II, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1964.
4. An epidemiological study was also undertaken in Corolco and five other study communities as part of the research project. This paper deals with only one aspect of the research, as a preliminary formulation.
5. Corolco is one of the few communities in Bolivia where there is a Negro population. They have lived there since colonial times. For the purpose of this paper I am not treating them separately from the Indians, because they shared the same subordinate situation and lowest prestige in the community.
6. I distinguish cholos from mestizos. The latter do not constitute now, in Corolco, a very distinct group. They have merged with blancos or occupied their positions after many of the blancos left town as a result of the 1952 Revolution.
7. My discussion throughout this part of the paper is indebted to Erving Goffman's "The Nature of Deference and Demeanor," American Anthropologist, Vol. 58, June 1956.
8. Erving Goffman, "Role Distance" in Goffman, Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction, Bobbs-Merrill, Indianapolis, 1961.

DOMINANT AND SUBORDINATE IDEOLOGIES IN SOUTH AMERICA:

OLD TRADITIONS AND NEW FAITHS

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DOMINANT AND SUBORDINATE IDEOLOGIES IN SOUTH AMERICA:

OLD TRADITIONS AND NEW FAITHS

The Indians of South America are currently engaged in a struggle to challenge what has been until now the dominant ideological interpretation of their identity and of their role in the formation of the different nation states. The Indians defy the policies which attempt to acculturate them into a homogeneous blend, trying to reevaluate their own traditions in order to defend the right to subsist as unique cultures. From within indigenous organizations, ethnicity is being reformulated as an oppositional ideology, that is, as a critique of present and past systems of domination.

In an attempt to write "history from below" for Mexico and Peru, Portilla (1972) and Wachtel (1977) discussed the "visions of the vanquished" to understand the Spanish conquest from the Indians' point of view. At the present time, the Indians confront the contradictions of a process of de-colonization, and their forms of consciousness can be regarded as the "new visions of the vanquished"; "new" because for the first time the Indians are speaking with their own voice.

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The main argument of this paper is that dominant and subordinate ideologies should be studied as interrelated, and that different forms of social relations have conditioned (i.e., set limits, modified, subdued, assimilated or coopted) the Indians' ideological practices in Colonial, post-Colonial and contemporary South America.

Throughout history, Indian consciousness has taken different forms, expressed in oral traditions, messianic and nativistic rebellions, class movements, festivals, rituals, and in many other forms of individual and collective behavior. But, as this consciousness is rarely, if ever, conveyed through written texts, its history is not easy to write. In the first part, this paper attempts to explore it through an analysis of the historical changes in the dominant ideologies about the Indians. Among many possible strategies to deal with this issue, this one has been chosen because the analysis of dominant ideologies often reveals some important aspects of the subordinate ones, although the image presented may be blurred or fragmentary (see Duby 1978:164, 166). The second part deals with the present social, economic and ideological contexts where new forms of Indian consciousness are emerging.

To introduce the topic we propose an interpretation of an episode in One hundred years of solitude, one of the best ethnographic novels about Latin America by the Colombian writer Gabriel García Marquez. The day the insomnia plague struck the town of Macondo, the first to be alarmed were the Indians. They were the only ones who could understand its meaning and its inescapable consequences. What worried them about the plague was not the impossibility of sleeping but its inexorable

evolution towards the loss of memory. As Visitación, the Indian woman explains: "... when the sick person became used to his state of vigil, the recollection of his childhood began to be erased from his memory, then the name and notions of things, and finally the identity of people and even the awareness of his being, until he sank into a kind of idiocy that had no past" (1970:50). Furthermore, although the plague overtakes the whole population of Macondo, it is a sickness peculiar to the Indians. It had already attacked them once before, forcing Visitación and her brother to exile themselves forever from an age-old kingdom where they were princess and prince.

Several characters in the novel suggested different cures for the insomnia plague. For instance, Aureliano - who represented the scientific mind - proposed to label every object in town with its name and an explanation of its use, so that by reading the labels people would not forget them. But Aureliano's solution was as futile as what museums actually do with Indian culture. The real and definite cure was brought to Macondo by Melquíades, the old gypsy who, as García Marquez says "... in spite of his immense wisdom and his mysterious breath, (he) had a human burden, an earthly condition that kept him involved in the small problems of daily life" (Ibid.:15). Melquíades combined a knowledge of the ultimate secrets of the magical vision of the world with the capacity to introduce the people of Macondo to new ideas, to technological inventions and to marvelous objects from the outside world.

The insomnia plague, and the consequent loss of memory, are

rich metaphors for the process of socio-economic coercion that forced the Indians out of their lands and clearly symbolize the ideological forms of colonialism that during the last 450 years have attempted to deprive the different Indian groups of South America of their cultural memory and collective identity.

This forced acculturation has been perceptively characterized by Darcy Ribeiro as a process through which the different Indian groups, after being deprived of the rich specificities and peculiarities of their cultural traditions, found themselves in the condition of being "generic Indians" rather than actually assimilated into an alleged "national society." However, after a careful analysis of all the factors which contributed to the systematic cultural disintegration and even physical extermination of a great number of the Brazilian tribal groups, Ribeiro argues that these groups still maintain a source of strength. It lies in an element of continuity which fights back to maintain the singularity of each group, despite powerful outside pressures towards homogeneity. This continuity is based on a predisposition of each particular group to develop forms of communal social relations that intensify its solidarity, combined with the Indians' capacity to affirm their self-dignity vis-à-vis strangers through the restoration of old myths, or through the elaboration of new visions of the world (1973:28, 331).

In One hundred years of solitude, Melquiades liberates the people of Macondo from the insomnia plague because he bridges the gap between the precapitalist and the capitalist worlds, between community



and nation, between the magical world view and the social and economic realities of every-day life. He symbolizes the process by which many of the Indian groups in South America today are trying to recover their cultural memory and their self-identity, not by simply going back to an elusive pre-capitalist past, but by becoming engaged - voluntarily or involuntarily - in the complex realities of modern society. Like all of us, the Indians of the highlands, the tropical forest, and the marginal urban areas are immersed in the hegemonic world of industrial capitalism, embodied in - but certainly not bound - by the political limits of the particular nation-states. Consequently, the new visions of the vanquished, their present ideological practices, emerge from the actual social relations generated in this specific historical context. These visions express, at the level of consciousness, the contradictions which originate in the articulation of different modes of production which characterizes South American social formations today.

The ideological conflicts are fought out within the legal, political, economic and religious institutions where people live those contradictions. This process involves ideological accommodation, as well as conflict, by which all sides transform their traditions and their definitions of themselves and of others. When these redefinitions take place in ethnically divided societies, the issue of "ethnicity" and "ethnic tradition" becomes a crucial analytical variable. The concept of "ethnicity" is complex, and has been used with different meanings in South American ethnography. Frequently, a study of ethnicity meant an "objective" description of a given social group based on certain cultural

characteristics such as language, dress, forms of kinship, and the like, all of which defined an alleged "form of life" for that group. However, in the practice of inter-ethnic relations, each group may interpret and modify the meaning of those characteristics in order to construct an identity which would enable it to confront a specific situation of interaction. For the purpose of this paper, "ethnicity" is then analyzed as any other ideological practice, which is socially organized and manipulated by different groups - both Indian and non-Indian - according to the dynamics of class relations in concrete historical contexts. In each specific case it is necessary to examine how the dominant classes use their control over economic, political, and cultural practices in trying to impose or co-opt the subordinate classes into accepting the dominant definition of "ethnicity."

In more general terms, Raymond Williams has argued that hegemony, or the social practices by which the dominant classes establish ideological supremacy, involves a dialectic. In order to reproduce itself, hegemony has to be continuously renewed, defended, and modified, and in this process, it will attempt to neutralize, change or incorporate the oppositional ideologies generated by the subordinate groups (1977:113-4).

When examining this phenomenon in the South America context, it is necessary to consider an additional factor. There, successive colonialism (Inca, Spanish or Portuguese, and North American) have generated different layers of ideological practices based on quite contradictory principles and meanings. Consequently, both dominant

and subordinate classes have, in the course of time, selectively used these different ideological contents to inform the practices that Williams sees as constituting the dynamic interrelationship between hegemony and counterhegemony.

In the study of the conversion to Protestantism among highland Indian peasants in Ecuador (Muratorio 1980) the concept of "ideological articulation" was used in an attempt to avoid at least three pitfalls found in the anthropological literature on South America. First, the static character of concepts such as "survivals" and "persistence of tradition" prevalent in theories of modernization, and the idea of a "pre-hispanic Andean world view" so dear to the structuralists. Second, the assumption implicit in many theories of change, that retention or redefinition of tradition is a practice exclusive to the subordinate allegedly "traditional" groups. Third, the oversimplified Marxist perspective that regards as almost inevitable the success of capitalism in eliminating or effectively incorporating all pre-capitalist ideological practices into its own rationality.

Although the concept of ideological articulation may be useful in describing a particular situation, it does not explain the actual social processes by which a particular group deals with diverse and competing ideological contents to make sense of a specific experience and to be able to act on the basis of an informed consciousness. Theories of acculturation, modernization, cultural ecology, different versions of structuralism, or economic Marxism seem to provide partial or no answers at all to this problem, at least when applied to the South

American ethnographic area. These approaches overlook the relation between theory and practice and ignore the complexities of the social experience by forgetting the subject, the realities of history, or both.

For the Amazonian basin, the work of Darcy Ribeiro (1973) provides an interesting analytical strategy. Trying to deal with the general issue of the confrontation of all the different Amazonian tribal groups of Brasil with a homogeneous "civilizing" front, presented to them by the white national society, Ribeiro makes a pioneer attempt to examine the main socio-economic, legal, political and ideological aspects of the articulation of two, or more, modes of production in that particular social formation.

Recently, and for the Andean area, June Nash's study of the Bolivian miners (1979) deals, more specifically, with the problem of ideological articulation as presented here. The miners are able to handle, without apparent contradictions, ideological beliefs and practices generated in the context of pre-hispanic, colonial, and capitalist systems of social relations. Furthermore, Nash provides a solution to the puzzle. She argues that the miners solve the apparent contradictions in their own belief system neither by uncritically accepting the unifying ideologies offered to them by the church, the politicians, and the union leaders, nor by falling into an easy syncretism, but by compartmentalizing their beliefs in time and space. If the Virgin of the mineshaft is revered at level zero, the Devil reigns undisputed deep down in the mine, while the Marxist-Leninist

ideologies are quite alive inside the unions. Some working days in the week are set aside for recognizing the pagan forces, while Sundays and Saints' Days are devoted to the Christian deities (1979:6-7).

Nash's study represents a systematic attempt to undertake an analysis of complex ideological practices in the context of changing social relations of production. Mainly because of its depth, it poses at least as many problems as it solves. For example, is this compartmentalization in time and space peculiar to the miners or can it be generalized to other groups? What happens if the subordinate groups are forced to choose between these different ideologies because agents of the state and of the capitalist economy try to impose upon them their own conceptions of time and space? Are not "time" and "space" also ideological constructions which vary with changes in the social relations of production?

In order to start examining some of the complex issues posed by these questions and by the general problem of the possible mechanisms of ideological articulation in South America, two analytical strategies are suggested here. First, in-depth studies of the changing historical versions of the dominant ideological practices in the specific socio-economic context where they are generated. Second, to study the visions of the vanquished in their close interrelation with these different versions of the dominant ideologies. What follows in this paper is a preliminary attempt to reflect, in these terms, on a selective sample of such complex situations.

Among the many possible ideological contents, the analysis

concentrates on the "image of the Indian," or "ethnicity as ideology," as it is developed in selected historical periods by the Indians, by the State and the dominant classes it represents, by the missionaries, and by the anthropologists. The assumption is that when these images become active elements in ideological practices, they play a significant role in guiding the behavior of social groups and classes. Consequently at different time periods the images have to be examined in their specific organizational contexts. Through this analysis of the changing conceptions about the Indians in the practices of all these groups, it might be possible to penetrate the meaning of social relations between Indians and non-Indians and to reveal more clearly the intentions behind the policies directed at the Indians and their responses to those policies. Finally, it will hopefully permit an interpretation of the context in which some anthropological approaches to the South American Indians have been generated.

#### The Savage and the Innocent

As has already been mentioned, the Spanish colonial system dominated by merchant capital, represented an attempt to destroy or to incorporate native modes of production in order to appropriate the Indians' lands, and their labor. Thus, it is obvious that in the minds of the colonizers, "Indian" meant "colonized," and this concept was used to place all native populations into an undifferentiated category of generalized inferiority. Marx (1975:254) has argued that one of the forms in which ideology operates is by representing particular interests.

as universal interests. In Spanish America, the particular interests of the colonizers were legitimized by presenting them as the universal interests of "civilization." According to Rowe, the term "civilization" did not become current before the end of the seventeenth century, but its sixteenth century equivalent was "civility." This latter term, taken from the Greek and Roman political theory, referred to the existence of organized government and the qualities of good citizenship (1964:6-7). This definition of "civility" allowed the Spanish administration to categorize the colonized as "savages," or people without law, government, or religion who could then be legitimately incorporated into the empire.

This idea of the savage nature of the Indians, illustrated in Europe with "live specimens" taken as captives (Rowe 1964:3; Hemming 1978:11-13) did much to influence European political philosophy. However, in the Americas it could be maintained only while the Spaniards had contacts with the Arawaks and Caribs, or the Portuguese with the Tupi tribes of Brasil. It was soon shattered by the Spaniards' confrontation with organized political empires, such as the Aztec and the Inca.

In order to deny this contradiction in the dominant ideology, the colonizers effectively used a mechanism which Williams (1977:108-114) has described as the neutralization or absorption of possible ideological contents into the hegemonic ideology. They legitimized the incorporation of the native aristocracy into the colonial system of domination, by introducing a European tradition of dichotomizing the social order

into nobles and commoners. They were thus able to justify the privileges granted to the Inca nobility, until the end of the eighteenth century. However, as Spalding has argued for Perú, the body of Colonial legislation was based on the premise of the natural inferiority of the Indians. Colonial laws defined the Indians as "miserable," declared them "minors," and put them under the guardianship of the corregidor, or protector of the Indians (1974:155-57).

In relation to the discussion of this last ideological mechanism, Giddens has noted that making social relations appear as natural law is a common recourse used by dominant classes to maintain the status quo (1979:195). More specifically, Barnett and Silverman have argued that in pre-capitalist societies, the incorporation of an ideological element such as "race" allows the hegemonic ideology to represent the dominated as incomplete or defective individuals (1979:42).

Once the colony became established, the routine tasks of a centralized bureaucratic state demanded more accurate knowledge about the colonized than the impressionistic accounts provided by the early conquistadors, and this was the task of the Crown officials. Rowe notes that a large part of the ethnographies written in the sixteenth century represented a form of applied anthropology carried out by those officials or by missionaries. However, due to the secrecy surrounding Spanish policy, most of these reports remained as "classified" documents, and were not published until modern times (1964:3). Recently, they have become one of the best sources for Latin-American ethnohistory.



The missionaries were clearly assigned the ideological function of changing the Indians' world views. In order to extirpate idolatry, they became not only some of the best ethnographers of native cultures, but significantly influenced state policies. Furthermore, it has been suggested that Bartolomé de las Casas may be considered the father of the tradition of "politically engaged" anthropology (Sevilla Casas, 1977:15-29). Las Casas was not only a philosopher but also a clever politician. He used his massive first hand ethnographic descriptions of the Indians' condition to actually change Spanish official policy and, in his old age, radically called into question the legitimacy of Spanish domination in the Americas (Ibid.:21). The philosophic basis of his debate with Sepúlveda was about whether or not the Indian was a rational being. By having the Indians recognized as human his victory put an end to the image of the Indian as wild man, at least in the official Spanish view (Robe 1972:47) if not in its colonial practice.

While these intricate intellectual debates were taking place at the higher levels of imperial bureaucracy, it is clear that in the everyday practice of colonial life, the first colonizers which included common immigrants, artisans, lawyers, sailors and some women, in addition to the soldiers of good fortune, were not concerned with philosophical speculations about the human or non-human nature of the Indians. For instance, in many of the letters they wrote from Perú (see Lockhart and Otte 1976) they mentioned only those characteristics of the Indians that were most relevant for their personal colonizing objectives. The

Indians are depicted as a source of wealth, of labor, or of prestige; an obstacle or an asset according to the military and economic strategies of the moment.

In sum, one can argue that the first images about the Indians were probably influenced by a long oral tradition about wild men and women that had been popular in Spain and in the rest of Europe since the middle ages (Robe 1972:40-1). These images contained the ever-present internal contradiction between, on the one hand, wild men as incarnation of the devil, as chaos, and as heresy and, on the other hand, as a noble creature living in perfect harmony with nature (Husband 1980:12-13). However, as it happens to most myths, the myth of the wild men changed in content and meaning as the society that created it transformed its structure and world views (White 1972:5). The gentle nature of the Arawaks, contrasted with the fierceness and cannibalism of the Caribs and the Tupinambas, confirmed for the colonizers that mythical duality of the wildman's image.

Which one of these contrasting images the European chose to stress in America depended very closely on the changes in the social relations of production. For example, Hemming has shown how the image of the "peaceful," "innocent," "generous," "beautiful," and "noble" Brazilian Indians (so common in the French and Portuguese early accounts), soon turned into the picture of "the fearful savage," once the original trading relations between Indians and Portuguese were transformed into institutionalized slavery in the profitable sugar plantations (1978:1-44). Then the warrior Tupi tribes became the archetype of the "ignoble

savage" (Rowe 1964:5).

By contrast, the side of this dual conception about the Indians which was stressed in Europe, reflected the specific socio-economic developments of that society. In the hands of the social and political philosophers of the Enlightenment, the Indian of the Americas was turned into the noble savage, and was primarily used as a form of social criticism for the evils of European civilization. From there, it influenced the anthropological tradition if, as Diamond (1974:220) and others have observed, we can consider it to be the natural heir of the Enlightenment.

This discussion has tried to demonstrate that the homogeneity of the colonial ideology of domination was only apparent. The actual practice of Spanish administration was also plagued with ambiguities. The constant conflicts among the Crown officials, the conquistadors, and the missionaries hindered the consolidation of their hegemonic power, and left enough room for the existence of some culturally autonomous, self-contained indigenous communities, (especially in the Amazon basin), as well as for the class divisions internal to Indian society in the Highlands. The Inca nobility, the curacas (or local chiefs), and the ordinary peasants were differently located in the social hierarchy of the colonial system. The images they formed about themselves, the different ways in which they restored or redefined their traditions, and the ideologies that guided their continuous rebellions against the colonial system reflected those social divisions under the constraints imposed by the Spanish domination.

The most articulate responses to the colonizers' legitimation of the conquest were formulated at the beginning of the seventeenth century by two Peruvian chroniclers, Garcilaso de la Vega and Guamán Poma de Ayala. The writings of these two men who could claim descent from the Inca nobility, represent the first intellectual challenge to those Spanish historiographers who justified the conquest as a spiritual and political liberation of the Indians from their previous "idolatrous" and "tyrannical" forms of government. Through recent work done by structural anthropologists and ethnohistorians (Ossio:1977; Wachtel:1977), we have a better understanding of their contrasting reconstruction of the Indian tradition.

Garcilaso was a mestizo, the child of a marriage between the Inca and the Spanish aristocracies, who spent most of his life in Europe. There, he was influenced by neo-Platonic philosophy and by sixteenth century humanism (Wachtel 1977:160-61). Caught in the ambiguities of his own mestizo socialization, Garcilaso tried to resolve them by presenting a total idealization of his Inca past. In his phantasy, the Incas were the first to bring civilization into a pre-Inca world populated by wild men thus laying the ground for true Christian civilization. In his vision, the Inca empire becomes an archetype of harmony and rationality, a lost paradise or, as Wachtel argues, a "nostalgic utopia" (Ibid.:162). Garcilaso reconstructs his own version of the Indian tradition to glorify it, but it contains a tragedy from which the Indians cannot be liberated. His solution leads into the trap of mestizaje as total assimilation of the Indians into the

dominant culture.

On the contrary, both Ossio and Wachtel argue that Guaman Poma's chronicle represents the true structure of the native world view. Although obviously influenced by Spanish culture, Guaman Poma was a pure Indian who refused to recognize any legitimacy to the Spanish conquest. In order to preserve what he considered to be truly Indian, he proposed a total separation between the Spanish and Indian worlds. In his eyes, all mestizos were despicable creatures whose main sin consisted in disturbing the ideal endogamic order of the Andean world (Ossio, 1977:70). Ossio explains that Guaman Poma did not see the conquest as a historical event but as a cataclysm, a total chaos. His image of the Indian is not the outcome of ethnographic observations but of the logic of mythical thinking, where the Inca stands for a metaphysical principle capable of restoring order. His solution to the Indian tragedy is a messianic one.

These contrasting Indian images show that there can be at least two different reconstructions of the same Indian tradition, one leading to reformism and acculturation and the other to a form of millenarian liberation. In fact, one or the other of these visions inspired the Indian rebellions throughout the whole period of Spanish domination.

According to the now extensive literature on these rebellions, it can be tentatively argued that millenarian movements seemed to have started at the grass-roots level among the highland peasants (e.g. Taqui Ongoy rebellion, see Wachtel 1973, 1977; Millones 1973) and among the tribal groups of the Amazonian tropical forest (e.g. Campa rebellion,

see Varese 1973; Quijos rebellion, see Oberem 1980). They were led by native priests and shamans, who the Indians consider to be professionally qualified to deal with myth and tradition and who can translate new situations into mythical categories thus giving meaning to reality. What Varese - following Eliade - maintains about the role of a mythical world view in the Campa rebellion applies to all these millenarian movements. Myth explains reality and provides hope because it offers a way to "endure" the evil presence of white men. Liberation comes in the person of the shaman who can always recover the cultural continuity given by mythic time, in which rebellion becomes a sacred war (Varese 1973:303-304).

By contrast, the established Indian merchants and landowners of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were basically reformist and the rebellions they led were "colonial rebellions" (Spalding, 1974:190). Some of them might actually have been influenced by Garcilaso's romantic vision of an idyllic Inca past using it as a banner to unify the Indians and attempting to create a common identity. This recreation of tradition obscured the real class differences and other social divisions existing among the Indians by presenting the particular interests of a privileged few as universal. However, because this vision was staged as an oppositional ideology expressing a clear antagonism between Indians and whites, it had a successful appeal for a large majority of the Indian population.

The Spanish administration recognized its subversive character and reacted not only by brutally suppressing the rebellions but, after

the 1780's revolt of Tupac Amaru II, by actually depriving the Indian nobility of all its privileges. By 1825, this class had been legally abolished (Spalding, Ibid.:185-192). The ground was then prepared for the gradual transformation of all Indians into a generalized category of "despicable poor."

The Nation-State: The Indian rediscovered

Independence from Spain favored a creole landowning and commercial oligarchy, altering and actually worsening the socio-economic situation of the majority of the Indian population. The leaders of the independence movements, inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and liberal economics tried to change the conditions of the Indians through legislation, which they did not have the power to enforce. The abolition of legal inequalities and the Indians' communal land tenure system, were tried in order to turn the Indians into "citizens" and into "independent farmers." But because equality proved unenforceable, and the system of private property rights was an alien institution both policies further deprived the Indians of their lands, allowing the expansion and consolidation of the haciendas. Paradoxically, in the new liberal republics, the church replaced the corregidor by assuming the legal guardianship of the Indians, thus legitimizing the hacienda system as natural and sacred. The many Indian uprisings of the nineteenth century were then atomized and circumscribed within the closed limits of the haciendas, in the economic and social spaces defined by the landowning class as its own "feudal" domains.

Meanwhile, during this period the Amazonian Indians continued to suffer under missionaries, colonizers, and extractors of raw materials, all of whom greatly affected the Indians' way of life. The Amazonian tropical forest also became the stage where a large number of European explorers, scientists, ethnographers and artists fought their way fascinated by the exuberance of tropical landscapes, plant and animal species. Their well-illustrated books brought the hothouse darkness of the jungle into the European living room (Honour 1975:175). These books also conveyed an image of the Indians as romantic exotica, or alternatively as representatives of a barbaric stage in the evolution of mankind.

The massacre of Indians during the Amazonia rubber boom and the scandals it revealed to the British public in the early twentieth century, finally brought to the European consciousness the reality of Indians as human beings. The Antislavery Society then started a battle for the defense of the Amerindian peoples which continues to this day through several organizations. The anthropological work that they inspire and support follows quite closely the tradition of Las Casas.

It is in the first half of the twentieth century, with the emergence and consolidation of the Indigenista movement that a significant change took place in the perception of the Indian and in the "ideology of ethnicity" in South America. It is impossible to present here all the different aspects of this complex movement. The analysis will focus on the images of the Indian reflected in three of the better known forms of Indigenismo: the romantic, the reformist, and the revolutionary.



In the Andean world, the first Indigenista ideas are expressed in a form of romantic literature which brings back the image of the Indian as a noble, pastoral savage. As in the romantic movement in Europe, this is not a savage who reasons but one who feels (White 1972:282). In the early Indigenista novels, the main opposition is one between two archetypes: the hypocritical and civilized urban priests and mestizos, against the uncivilized but innocent pure Indian peasants, the true children of nature and God (Klaiber 1977:77).

A second form of Indigenismo, which considers the Indian as an "object of political and social reform" (Klaiber Ibid.:71) is espoused by a rising group of intellectuals and politicians. They are the representatives of a new bourgeoisie who emerges out of the commercial prosperity stimulated by the increased involvement of the Andean countries in the exports of raw materials in the aftermath of World War I (Chevalier 1970:189-90). This image of the Indian as an object of social reform is caught up in the actual conflict between that rising bourgeoisie and the old landed oligarchy and is used in legislation to undermine the power of the "feudal" structures regarded as an obstacle to the penetration of national and foreign capital. However, it is interesting to note that the rhetoric generated by some of these intellectuals has close similarities with that ideology which Barrington Moore has labelled "catonism" and sees as prevalent among a landowning nobility threatened by commercialism. In "catonism," the peasant is seen as the backbone of society, and the peasant way of life as an organic whole connected to the soil and morally superior to the disintegrated

world of urban civilization (1966:490-92).

Some of the Peruvian Indigenistas, for instance Valcarcel, espoused "Andeanism" under a political banner and as a doctrine of spiritual revivification. According to Valcarcel, the Andes had created a new race of Indians, that "rejuvenated by contact with the earth will demand the right to act," (quoted in Klaiber 1977:82). But, as in the cases discussed by Barrington Moore, the "peasants alleged attachment to the soil becomes the subject of much praise and little action" (Ibid.:492). Actually, the new economic forces contributed to the deterioration of the situation of the Indians. The growing demand for highland products such as wool, leather and cattle, increased the commercial value of the land, and encouraged landowners and entrepreneurs to further expropriations against the Indians (Chevalier 1970:193). These offensives led to several Indian uprisings which mostly took the form of land invasions, and legal reclamations of communal lands. These were not nativistic Indian insurrections, but peasant attempts to confront the increasing attacks of the hacendados through legal channels. However, as Hobsbawn has noted, we must not underestimate the potential revolutionary character of the "entrenched legalism of the peasants" in the Andean context. "For one thing, they are inclined to reject as morally invalid and 'unnatural' law, however constitutionally correct, which takes away common lands" (1974:124). In the most famous of these insurrections, the Atushparia uprising of 1885 in Perú, only a mestizo intellectual attempted to revive the Inca Empire as a nativistic ideology to inspire the Indians (see Stein 1976:179)

but he found no followers among them.

These uprisings and the denunciation of injustices against the Indians by the Indigenista writers finally inspired some studies of the socio-economic conditions of the Indians and legislation to ameliorate them. Most of this legislation remained on the books or its application was delayed, as Davies (1970) has demonstrated in his extensive study of Indian legislation in Peru during this period.

Mariátegui is the most forceful proponent of the third form of Indigenismo. This radical version transforms the image of the Indian from an "object" of social reform into the "subject" of socialist revolution. During his stay in Europe, Mariátegui became converted to Marxist ideas stimulated by the success of the Russian and Mexican revolutions, but was also influenced by the voluntarism of Bergson, Sorel, and Labriola (Klaiber 1977:100-108). He saw the roots of the Indian problem in the economic structure of land tenure, and considered the Indians as the carriers of what he called the "myth" of the revolution. In this conceptualization of the Indian problem and its solution, there is a renewed idealization of the Inca Empire, this time emphasizing its alleged socialism. The ideas of the Russian populists led Mariátegui and many of his followers to an idealization of the Indian Ayllu or community, which they regarded as the basis of a new socialist agrarian structure, and small-scale egalitarianism.

All Indigenistas coincided in their characterization of the oppressive role that the parish priests and the institutionalized Catholic church played vis-à-vis the Indians. But they had different

views about the Indians' own religion. Some Indigenistas viewed the Indian "pagan" religion as an obstacle to their spirit of rebellion, others looked nostalgically to what they considered to be the pragmatic this-worldly emphasis of Inca religion. They were also divided in their assessment of Protestantism. Some saw it as a way out for the Indians' backwardness (Klaiber 1977:87-88). Mariátegui discarded Protestantism for its obvious ties with capitalism (Ibid.:113). The same polemics are going on today.

In the 1950's and 1960's, not the revolutionary, but the reformist ideas of Indigenismo guided the practices of the applied anthropologists who worked in several projects in collaboration with the state governments, of which the Perú-Cornell project in Vicos-Ancash is perhaps the best known example. The underlying reformist assumption of the modernization approaches used in applied anthropology, at that time, was that the Indians "lacked" many characteristics of civilization. Once they had acquired them, they would be integrated into national life, also defined mostly in culturalist terms. The Indian problem became one of substitution of good habits for bad ones. In those approaches one can still detect traces of the nineteenth century conception of primitive men who came to be regarded as an example of arrested humanity, as those who had failed to raise themselves to the levels achieved by civilized man through science and technology (White 1972:34). By the 1950's, the racial deficiencies which in nineteenth century Social Darwinism were seen as the primary explanation for the conditions of the Indians, had been transformed into cultural deficiencies.

As applied in the Andean area, the theory of modernization introduced the ideas of the Indians' "attachment to tradition" and "resistance to change." Many of the anthropologists working in this area were inspired by Redfield's paradigm of the relation between little and great tradition and by his conceptualization of peasant or folk.

There are some striking similarities between some of the ideas of Indigenismo examined before, and Redfield's definition of "folk society and culture"; specifically, with reference to his characterization of the peasant community as "homogeneous and egalitarian," the peasants' almost mystical "attachment to the soil," and his "sober, earthly ethic" (1969:78). Totally removed from the specific relations of production, Redfield's peasant becomes an "arrangement of humanity" (1969:17). As Silverman argues, Redfield defines "culture" and "peasant-elite relations" almost exclusively in ideological terms (1979:54-57). Redfield does not question the role tradition often plays in reproducing the status quo, and in keeping little tradition, little.

However, I would argue that Redfield's distinction between little and great tradition, and his analysis of the interaction between the two, at least poses the problem of ideological articulation which is pertinent to this discussion. His solution to this problem and that of some of his collaborators and disciples (see Wolf 1974:17), leans too heavily towards an unidirectional interaction where "folk" ideologies become mere parochial versions of a great tradition enacted

in ritual and performances. These solutions still disregard the social relations in which those rituals and performances are imbedded, and the problems of power and ideological hegemony.

#### The State-incorporated Indian

The character of the economic and political penetration of capitalism into the rural areas and the tropical forest of South America is complex and changes rapidly. The search for land as a source of raw material rather than labor, the forceful introduction of consumer goods, and the increasing presence of the enlarged bureaucracies of consolidated nation-states, have brought into these areas new fronts of conflicts, new advocates of policies, new salesmen of civilization. For the effective penetration of capitalism, the dominant classes and their auxiliary groups will attempt to establish those political, legal, and ideological practices required for the stable operation of the new mode of production.

At first sight, the groups who articulate the dominant ideologies defining what the "Indians are" and what "they ought to be" seem to be the same ones who performed that function in colonial times: the bureaucrats and the missionaries. However, a closer look shows a more complex picture. The new bureaucrats represent several economic, social and political agencies of the state whose objectives are sometimes in competition with each other; the Protestant missionaries belong to different sects of more or less fundamentalist orientations; and the Catholic missionaries are divided between radicals and conservatives.

In addition, political groups and union officials, school teachers, foreign volunteers, and community developers compete for the Indians' minds, while local merchants and foreign or national representatives of multinational corporations compete for the Indians' money, lands or labor power. All the areas where these encounters take place are now interconnected by modern communication systems which provide the means of ideological production and distribution, putting a transistor radio even in the most isolated village, and a television set in the smallest town.

The ideological practices and the policies of all these agencies vis-à-vis the Indians cannot be regarded as a homogeneous front. They often represent the interests of different class fractions within the state, whose economic and political strategies may not always coincide. In dependent capitalist countries, the ideological interests of imperialism are channeled through different agents whose influence varies, within or outside the state, according to national and international circumstances. Furthermore, in these countries, the ideological practices prevalent in previous social formations, such as paternalism, racism, patronage, and various forms of magical thinking are still maintained, and not only among the Indians. Whites and Mestizos belonging to the ruling groups may use these ideological practices, sometimes in subtle articulations with capitalist ideologies, in order to consolidate their power (see Muratorio 1980). All these factors contribute to explain the difficulties and ambiguities involved in the process by which the dominant classes try to establish their hegemony in late capitalist-dependent countries.

In order to consolidate its dominance and legitimize its power in the modern South American states, the bourgeoisies require a certain degree of unification of the country, political centralization, and cultural homogeneity. These three goals are intimately connected and their implementation involves ideological practices which affect the Indian population.

Economic integration is needed in order to incorporate the majority of the population into a national market for the commodities now being produced by foreign and national industries. As a result of the new division of labor created by the restricted and dependent development of the South American countries, the industrial bourgeoisie, unlike the traditional landowning class, does not need to incorporate the majority of the Indians into the labor force. For these bourgeoisies, the Indian, like the rest of the population, is visualized as a potential consumer.

Given the fact that at the present time, South America, and specially Amazonia, has become a preferred region for the extraction of minerals and other raw materials, economic integration also means state policies to incorporate previous areas of the country into capitalist production. Some of the consequences of these developments are very familiar: the spreading of old and new diseases, ecological disasters, forced expropriation of land, genocide and ethnocide. As during the conquest and from then on, the Indians are the main characters in this drama. They are the ones who are being transformed from hunters and gatherers or peasants into reluctant farmers, petty merchants,



proletarians, and seasonally unemployed marginals in the urban centers.

Several anthropologists have documented the impacts of these socio-economic policies, especially on Amazonian Indian populations (e.g. Davis 1977; Varese 1973; Ribeiro 1973; Whitten 1976). The ideological practices underlying these policies are less well documented.

With reference to the specific strategies of colonization of the Amazon, it is interesting to reflect, for instance, on the ideological construction of a category such as "space" made by the state and other agencies. They define their Amazonian regions as "empty spaces," thus ignoring their long and effective occupation by indigenous groups. These groups have reacted with strong statements about their "ancestral rights" to those spaces, and with even stronger determination against their "illegal occupation" by outsiders. The actual social conflicts which are going on in Amazonia today are evidence of how these ideological practices are grounded on social relations of economic and political power. For instance, experts from state agencies and private companies are now trying to define for the Indians what constitutes an "adequate management" of their ecological space. Anthropologists (see Ribeiro 1973:202-203; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1972:1141-42), have already demonstrated how, in different regions of the Amazon, the missionaries' conceptions of the space of the Indians' communal houses (malocas) as "sinful" and "promiscuous," contributed to destroy not only a whole symbolic system but the intricate net of social and economic relations in which those symbols were embedded. Thus, the Indians were left

defenseless and ready to be integrated into a capitalist system of social relations.

The states try to establish political centralization in order to consolidate their control over the newly-incorporated areas, and to safeguard their national borders. Past and present wars over resources (especially oil) found in these frontier regions testify to this need. Political centralization implies the extension of a repressive state apparatus and a legal system over the entire territory, and also the establishment of political institutions, such as universal suffrage, by which the still great number of illiterate Indian men and women can participate in the political process. Defined now as citizens, the Indians owe allegiance to a national state where, according to bourgeois ideology, all private interests converge. Due to development programs, the state increasingly becomes an active participant in the process of political socialization of the Indians population. Different state agencies, often in collaboration with foreign and national missionaries, control education, the training of bilingual teachers, and the election of leaders of indigenous communities. More recently, states have started hiring Indians to work directly inside state agencies.

Through education, the media, and the socialization of the Indians in the armed forces, the state displays and manipulates symbols and rituals of patriotism to legitimize an official version of the national tradition, in which a carefully selected vision of the Indian past has been incorporated.

The third goal of the state, cultural homogeneity, is the most

explicitly ideological because it requires the elaboration, maintenance, and exhibition of symbols and values to create a "national identity." The integration of different cultural and ethnic groups into a "culturally homogeneous state" becomes a national problem. In those South American countries with large indigenous populations, the need to achieve cultural homogeneity may be explained by the fact that the official ideology of ethnicity is "mestizaje." In ethnic terms, the state defines all members of the national society as mestizos. By assuming that all citizens have equal rights in a homogeneous national society, the ideology of mestizaje negates the existence of factual differences of class and ethnicity. Through policies of assimilation and often direct ethnocide, the state attempts to neutralize all possible oppositional Indian ideologies of ethnicity (Muratorio 1981). Only very recently, the political pressures from indigenous organizations have forced some South American governments to question the legitimacy of "mestizaje" as national policy. This problem is far from being solved.

The paradox is that after destroying the Indians as unique social and cultural groups, the state tries to recover them as cultural objects for tourism and to feed the myth of the national heritage. Ironically, this is the other face of ethnocide. The state tries to impose upon the Indians its own definition of what their identity should be. This is done through diverse policies to preserve Indians cultures, now empty of their material and social bases. When folklorists and tourists deplore the "deterioration of the fiestas," or the "decline of folk crafts," the state hires international experts to improve and promote

native folklore. A new clean image of the Indian is depicted on T.V. and on tourist brochures, promoting visits to different Indian groups and "typical" Indian markets. The noble savage has been turned into a commodity.

Throughout the history of the Americas, there have been several different controversies about the moral and political implications of the missionaries' work among the Indians. Presently, in Latin America, the positions vis-à-vis this issue are quite polarized - often in very simplistic terms - between the missionaries' propaganda to justify their work, and their opponents' propaganda which often portrays all missionaries as part of a large imperialist conspiracy. However, it is important to examine the ideological assumptions about the Indians made by both sides in this controversy because they inform their evangelical and political practices. It can be argued that both positions coincide in treating the Indians as cultural dupes, or as half-persons who can either be conned into self-destruction, or immediately turned from "primitive half-humans" into "civilized persons" by the preaching of the Bible. These assumptions pose some interesting theoretical questions about how missionaries and Indians conceptualize and incorporate into practices issues, such as "person," "property," "labor," "time," "space," and "progress." However, it is impossible to generalize about the different ideologies of the missionaries without further empirical research. As Burrige has noted, missionaries represent a wide range of nationalities and cultures, although in South America the Protestant missionaries seem to be mostly North American, and Catholic missionaries, Italian and

Spaniards. However, as Burrige argues, all coincide in their main objective: "that those who are addressed should say 'no' to the past, change their minds, and enter into new ways with a positive 'yes'" (1979:209).

The important difference between radical and conservative Catholic missionaries, as well as the difference among the diverse Protestant sects, seem to be the "methods adopted to bring about this transformation," "what particular traditional ways should be rejected," "how a change of mind may be authenticated," and "how the entry into new ways may be expressed," (Burrige Ibid.). These different methods clearly reflect not only the ethical and moral components of the two Christian religions but also their images of what the Indians are and should become. They reflect the difference between the idea of a transformation brought about through the "integral development of the individual," removed from historical reality, as exemplified in the Summer Institute of Linguistics ideology (see Wise, Loos and Davis 1976) or through a change in the existing structures of domination, as exemplified by the new liberation theology espoused by the progressive new Catholic priests (see Klaiber 1977:114; Centro Regional Salesiano 1981).

The Indians, as they have always done, reassert their creative capacity adapting and confronting these different official and evangelical definitions of their own reality. For instance, an analysis of the behavior of Protestant highland Indians of Ecuador indicates that the role of Protestantism among peasants is an ambiguous one. On the

one hand it seems to have had the effect of "secularizing the world," paving the way for establishing capitalist social relations in the countryside. On the other hand, through the ideological and ritual forms of their own version of Protestantism, the Indian peasants in the highlands have been able to maintain and even to revive many of their traditional relations of reciprocity. In the process, this version of Protestantism seems to have lost the emphasis on individualism and competition which characterized its urban European version (Muratorio 1980, 1981). This is an example of how the Indians incorporate, transform or reject aspects of the ideologies presented to or imposed upon them by those who want to civilize, integrate or convert them. But, as has been already mentioned, their ideological practices are now grounded on indigenous political organizations such as unions, associations, federations, national and international councils, and congresses through which the Indians are proposing a re-evaluation and re-affirmation of their heritage. Precisely when each particular nation-state tries to incorporate them, some Indian groups are developing new organizational strategies to internationalize their opposition. Like Melquíades in Macondo, these organizations and their leaders come to play a concrete role in the articulation of pre-capitalist and capitalist social relations and world views. To borrow an expression from E.P. Thomson, they become important actors in the "dialogue between being and consciousness" (1979:200). The realities of exploitation prompt the indigenous organizations to develop strategies for the recovery of their lands, for the control and development of their

resources, and for their political representation. These strategies include different forms of oppositional consciousness, which in the past were often expressed in rebellions, and now result in subtle transformations of native social and ideological practices, where ethnic, religious and class interests articulate in new and creative ways. However, the Indians' voice is not necessarily a unified one. The complexities of these competing influences translate into actual conflicts internal to the Indian groups and organizations, as well as into different forms of confrontations between them and the dominant classes or other influential social groups.

Some Indian groups see their liberation from what they regard as a white-dominated society first as Aymaras, Quechuas, or Shuaras i.e., as Indians rather than as peasants or proletarians. For other groups, Protestantism has become an alternative ideology expressing a form of spiritual and ethnic liberation. For others still, their struggle is part of a joint class venture with other workers and peasants.

The formation of an oppositional ideology and a liberating consciousness is an arduous process. It involves combating and demystifying the present bourgeois ideology, which in close articulation with residual forms of colonial consciousness, functions to reproduce the present class relations. The final outcome is not certain. Since colonial times, different forms of hegemonic domination have produced not only Indian rebellions, but also cultural fragmentation, assimilation, passivity and very specific forms of alienated consciousness among the Indians.

Throughout this paper a number of critical points have been made about anthropological approaches as they apply to the study of South American Indians specifying some of their flaws in explaining the complexities of the situations the Indians confront today, without pretending to provide a final answer. The main strategy followed has been to deal with the problem of ideological articulation, by examining the visions of the vanquished in their intricate and changing relations with the dominant ideological practices in specific socio-economic formations. The historical analysis made attempted to show that anthropology should not be regarded as a mere reflection of colonialism or imperialism. However, it is possible to say that too often anthropological approaches to South American Indians have suffered from "a complicated exercise in cultural narcissism," the feature that Diamond rightly attributes to all forms of imperialism (1974:26). In studying the Indians anthropologists have repeatedly mirrored their own images of the primitive. Maybe it is time to turn away from the mirror for a while, and let the Indians reflect their own images, unless one wants to risk one hundred years of solitude.



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La exploración de objetos de la vida cotidiana porque

Nos concentramos en los *objetos de arte popular y de la vida cotidiana* porque consideramos que éstos son más "transparentes" (que los así llamados objetos de "arte culto")<sup>2</sup> en términos del tipo de investigación aquí propuesto. Es decir, sugerimos que las formas y contenidos de estos objetos son especialmente conducentes a revelar las experiencias humanas cotidianas personales y sociales; privadas, familiares y públicas en distintos contextos culturales e históricos<sup>3</sup>

Porque sabemos que estos objetos (como todos los objetos creados por el trabajo humano) pueden tener distintos usos y significados, proponemos que el *carácter interdisciplinario de este espacio de trabajo* en la web contribuirá a enriquecer su interpretación y análisis.

La información ya compilada para incorporar en este website, así como la investigación que se promueva a través del mismo, está anclada primeramente en el Ecuador pero se prestará particular atención a los *aspectos comparativos culturales, regionales y temporales* de los distintos temas.

La singularidad del presente proyecto consiste en *localizarse en objetos de la vida cotidiana en forma interdisciplinaria* para tratar de revelar sus múltiples significados.

Desde el análisis de una *estética* asequible a la mayoría de la población se intenta hacer una antropología del nosotros incluyente (en una sociedad claramente multicultural y de clases) con profundidad *histórica*.

*La memoria y la historia* se nutren de los objetos como rastros o vestigios tangibles de un pasado que frecuentemente distintos grupos humanos tratan de "recuperar" para luchar contra la "amnesia post-moderna" (Lowenthal 1985: xxiii) generada por la globalización.

Pero los objetos no son inmediatamente transparentes, necesitan de análisis e interpretación desde un presente para revelar sus distintos significados culturales y sociales. *Aquí hacemos al coleccionista.*

Desde estos distintos enfoques disciplinarios, consideramos a los objetos producidos por el trabajo humano como signos de ideas, sentimientos y relaciones sociales. Las personas organizan sus vidas creando e interactuando con el mundo material y éste constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Ciertos objetos forman parte

Historia  
1. Ver el papel en p. 2.  
3. en p. 4.  
↓  
lo de coleccionar y luego

Se trata de

Interpretación  
ver Portelli  
lo de cuadros vs estadísticas  
coleccionar  
necesidad  
con sus objetos

(ej. de Portelli es sobre claridad)

2



integral de narrativas de identidad tanto para los que los producen como para quienes los consumen. Y como las identidades son construidas, conformadas y reconfiguradas de memorias de una vida vivida pero siempre partiendo de un presente, es obvio que las relaciones personales y sociales de los seres humanos con los objetos *varían con el género y la edad*. Las narrativas de identidad que nos interesan aquí especialmente son contemporáneas y públicas (tal como historias de vida) o históricas (cuando existe evidencia de diarios personales, por ejemplo) en que ciertos objetos a los cuales las personas otorgan un cierto valor sirven para evocar sus vidas y sus memorias. (Ej. es la abuela o la tía soltera en la familia la que reconoce y narra las memorias "guardadas" en los objetos familiares?). Un souvenir puede ser una mercancía como otras pero adquiere un valor adicional si se le suman las memorias de la persona que lo consume y que lo guarda, por ejemplo, junto a otros objetos tales como fotografías familiares dentro de lo que podemos llamar "altares familiares" o *espacios de memoria*. *los cuadros se conservan en*

Como las personas, los objetos están mediados por *el tiempo*, envejecen y pueden ser descartados como basura y luego reciclados como antigüedades o guardados y convertidos en reliquias familiares, como "depositarios" de memorias biográficas e históricas. Cómo y por qué algunos de estos objetos pasan a formar parte de un patrimonio familiar y social y a veces son "sacralizados" en museos? Cómo es que políticas culturales pueden afectar de distinta manera a objetos semejantes? (Ej. cómo y quien decide que un dibujo de un chamán en una vasija precolombina pertenece al patrimonio nacional de Arte en el museo de la Casa de la Cultura y un mismo chamán en una pintura de Tigua pertenece a las "artes menores" o "artesanías" a ser desplegados bajo carpas en el Parque El Ejido? ) Es el tiempo el que da la pátina de valor y autenticidad a ciertos objetos del Otro? ¿Que es lo que dota de aura a unos objetos y no a otros? Como ha señalado Appadurai (1996: 76), los objetos deben ser mantenidos y manejados semióticamente, deben ser guardados, mantenidos, restaurados y desplegados en contextos "apropiados". Los espacios pueden ser privados como distintas habitaciones dentro de una casa o públicos como exhibiciones y museos. Pero siempre esta categoría de "lugares, espacios y formas apropiadas" es social e históricamente construida y frecuentemente es motivo de controversias políticas y económicas. Al prestarle "atención" y "manipular" a ciertos objetos y "olvidar" a otros, ayudamos a cambiar sus

*memoria y olvido*

1  
Se conserva e sacraliza en museos?

2

2 } significados para descartarlos en el olvido del tiempo o para rescatarlos, valorarlos y guardarlos como parte de un patrimonio familiar, nacional o universal. (Ej. En qué grupo étnico, de clase, o de edad diferentes, un retrato del ancestro se despliega arriba de la nevera o encima del piano de cola o no puede desplegarse en ningún lugar? O más públicamente, en las controversias por la restauración del centro histórico de Quito por ejemplo, qué memorias, de quiénes y de qué tiempo se quieren “restaurar”? Quién decide que ciertos objetos y ciertas estéticas son “auténticos” y otros deben ser desplazados al olvido de los “no espacios” de cemento? ) Cuál es la relación de poder entre memoria y olvido en este caso? Qué voces tienen el poder de ser oídas, publicadas o financiadas? Parafraseando a Lowenthal (1985:4), podemos decir que en este caso también el pasado es un país extranjero porque no podemos revivirlo, pero la nostalgia [de un grupo específico] logra transformarlo en un pasado con un exitoso mercado turístico. Son las políticas de patrimonio resultado de estas nostalgias? Las nostalgias producen y venden reliquias, souvenir y mementos. Siempre hay motivos políticos y económicos para “cambiar” los objetos del pasado.

Los objetos están también *mediados por género* frecuentemente en formas y sentidos complejos y cambiantes. Esto ocurre, no sólo porque en sus formas y contenidos los objetos pueden ser símbolos de las distintas concepciones de género a través de la historia (Ej. cambios en la gráfica sobre la mujer en Ecuador en distintos medios o la preponderancia de monumentos públicos de la mujer como “madre” y de los hombres como “héroes”), sino porque también las ideologías de género prevaecientes llevan a producir ciertos objetos (Ej. juguetes de distintos colores o diversas formas para niñas y niños que a la vez promueven distintas relaciones personales y sociales con ellos. Estos objetos por sí mismos se convierten a veces en motivo de conflictos de poder y políticas de género

Los objetos pueden ser analizados también desde el punto de vista de *la producción y de los productores* en términos de formas y estilos como expresiones de distintas ideas, valores y prácticas vividas. Distintos objetos adquieren también significados al ser transformados y usados en *representaciones* de distintos eventos como fiestas familiares (Ej. una torta en la boda) o públicas (Ej. una bandera en la fiesta patria) en que se re-

los productos  
Puntos de  
vistas

ver  
cuadernos

presentan o re-actúan tradiciones familiares o históricas. Objetos con valores particulares son sólo desplegados con motivo de conmemoraciones civiles o religiosas o lápidas y reliquias son usadas en cementerios para crear espacios de memoria donde se conmemoran y representan eventos o fiestas establecidas en los calendarios como el Día de los Muertos.

comienza con memoria 1 cementerio

mayor  
3  
en 1.1

*En resumen, los objetos que aquí queremos considerar constituyen entradas a la investigación y son motivo de análisis porque siempre están provistos de "guiones" culturales y sociales que cambian con el tiempo como resultado de ciertas relaciones sociales y sus consecuencias objetivadas en políticas públicas.*

### COLLECTOR

From John Elsner and Roger Cardinal Introduction  
To The Culture of Collecting Edited by John Elsner and Roger Cardinal  
Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1994

p.3 Cuando uno comienza a ser consciente de su propio ser, uno se convierte en un coleccionista consciente de identidad, proyectando el ser en los objetos con los cuales uno elige vivir. )ver traducción

el ser se proyecta en los objetos con los cuales uno elige vivir

quote

El Gusto (taste), el gusto del coleccionista es un espejo de su ser.

Pero ese coleccionar puede ser un acto de rebeldía, de no conformarse a las expectativas sociales., El coleccionista que crea un gusto puede ser aquel que tiene un enfoque diferente de todos los demás. Es ser distinto y distinguido

La compulsión de poseer una categoría completa de objetos en cada una y todas sus variaciones es un tratar de ejercer control sobre la existencia misma. Es ser único

cuando Juan hace de su manía de coleccionar

p. 4 museos y otras grandes colecciones patrimonio

Las grandes colecciones en sus templos con catálogos monumentales y nombres de donantes labrados en piedra, son testigos de la inclusión de la <Belleza y la exclusión de la fealdad, y del triunfo del recuerdo sobre el olvido y a lá permanencia del ser sobre la nada. Parecen así incontrovertibles,

P 5 Pero hay otro tipo de colecciones y coleccionistas. Donde también hay frustración, depresión y desesperación a la vez que triunfalismo. 4 Uno es el miedo de la muerte y el olvido y la esperanza de conmemoración e identidad.

Las colecciones hacen un gesto a la nostalgia de mundos pasados y a amusement. Diversión, pasatiempo. Pertenecen a sistemas culturales del cual coleccionar es una parte.

para quote de Juan - Bourdieu el coleccionar es significativo de un objeto

Diferencia entre coleccionar lo aceptado, lo establecido, lo monumental, le incontrovertible que es lo colonial y lo arqueologico es lo mas aceptado, pero coleccionar lo popular es otra forma de salvar del olvido expresiones de arte que todavía no estan aceptado aunque las monjitas lo hacen, Y ver museo banco central??

muertas no crean sus alteros

el patrimonio de la memoria

crear

# La pasión x los objetos los objetos amados

Jean Baudrillard  
The system of collecting p.7

en libro sobre  
coleccionar

Los objetos en nuestras vidas representan algo profundamente relacionado a la subjetividad. It is material and a mental real mover which I hold sway a thing whose meaning is governed by myself alone, It is all my own, the object of my passion.

controlar el  
significado  
de un  
objeto.  
El objeto  
se  
de  
persona

El objeto es poseído en tanto es desposeído de sus funciones y se transforma en relativo a un sujeto. El objeto se refiere back al sujeto, Así los objetos constituyen un sistema en base al cual el sujeto busca piece together su mundo, su microcosmo personal

p.8 Una vez que el objeto no es más definido por su función, su significado depende totalmente del sujeto. El resultado es que todos los objetos en una colección se convierten en equivalentes, gracias a ese proceso de apasionada abstracción que llamamos posesión.

Pero un único objeto nunca será suficiente, habrá siempre una sucesión de objetos. Esta es la razón por la cual la posesión de un objeto es siempre satisfactorio y frustrante

"El gusto por coleccionar, sugiere Maurice Rheims, es como un juego jugado con absoluta pasión."

queste  
della  
sore

## Partial recall

Review of Paul Ricoeur Memory, History Forgetting by Avishai Margalit

TLS sep30 2005

En virtud a qué cosas que existen el presente representan un pasado ausente, Rastros del pasado y de memorias sociales en los objetos.

Para el  
dual  
(ver)  
tyes

La memoria es un conocimiento inmediato de algo pasado.

Cual es la relación entre la memoria individual y la representación escrita en la historia.

(al fin la historia esta hecha de la confrontación de distintas memorias individuales) La fenomenología estudia las formas en que las cosas se nos aparecen, incluyendo cosas

memoria  
de  
Historia

Los documentos

para Ricoeur memoria ficción memoria

ausentes, así como cosas en u pasado. Las formas en que las cosas se nos aparecen es siempre a través de imágenes, pensamientos y conceptos, es decir representaciones.

Representaciones dan significado a nuestras experiencias. Un estudio fenomenológico debiera decirnos cómo, entre otras cosas, la experiencia de la memoria representando cosas del pasado difiere de las experiencias de la imaginación representando mundos ficticios.

cómo la experiencia se a pasado memoria

Qué características de una imagen la hacen una representación de memoria más bien que una representación de alguna ficción. No hay nada en la imagen visual misma que nos diga si es una memoria visual genuina o algo imaginario. Ricoeur dice que tratamos AIM de conseguir faithfulness en la memoria y playfulness en la imaginación. (donde se producen mundos alternativos.

¿q' eso cuadros son representaciones de memoria? q' representa se sea ficción

Relación entre la fenomenología y la hermenéutica. Quien recuerda? El individuo o la colectividad. Ricoeur trata de reconciliar estas posiciones, atribuye memoria a los individuos pero estas memorias atribuidas a los individuos son esencialmente

relacionales. Se relacionan al otro. Los individuos calibran sus memorias en relación a otros. Cómo estas dos memorias se alimentan mutuamente.

relacione y memoria

La memoria es una fuente de conocimiento, un asunto epistemológico. La investigación histórica en el pasado no agotan el pasado. El pasado incluye no sólo lo que pasó sino también las expectativas que los actores tenían en ese tiempo con respecto al futuro.

A diferencia de la memoria, la historia esta inherentemente relacionada a la escritura y

Ricoeur intenta encontrar una profunda analogía entre representación en memoria y representación en historia. La analogía resta en parte en el hecho de que la representación individual del pasado y la representación histórica excluyen omiten una gran parte en el olvido

Mucho se ha dicho de la relación entre el individuo y la sociedad en conformar los eventos en la historia, pero no lo suficiente en términos de cómo que el individuo se relaciona a la sociedad para dar forma a la historia la narrative de esos sucesos. A diferencia del científico que se basa en observaciones el historiador solo cuenta con el rumor (hearsay= lo que se sabe de oídas) del testimonio. La versión escrita de la historia no se confronta con el pasado crudo pero con los testimonios escritos de los archivos.

estas memorias están calibradas en relación a su gente y ciudad desde los recuerdos de un día hasta los polvos y vestigios

Ver lo esencial here too para lo que se recuerda con lo olvidado

ambas la historia y la memoria se alimentan del olvido

Olvido memoria y olvido

(Historiados)

el relacione a la sociedad y dar forma a la narrativa de ciertos sucesos

no podemos interpretar x q' en cuadros son un proyecto social

Un sistema cultural afina el significado de los símbolos pero nunca al nivel de hacerlos unicos, exclusivos uniqueness. Un clash de interpretaciones es inherente a nuestra habilidad simbólica. Nacemos en un sistema simbólico (como el del siglo xix en quito) y hay circunstancias históricas que nos permiten interpretar y entender los símbolos de una u otra manera.

El proyecto de interpretación y comprensión es un proyecto social y nunca un proyecto que se deja a las almas introvertidas o a los individuos aislados para que comprendan por si mismos (figure out +)

Ricoeur dice que el objetivo de escribir historia es corregir, amend y refutar la memoria colectiva. Pero el olvidar es una parte esencial de la memoria. Olvidar no es un fenómeno biológico, estamos siempre presionados a olvidar cosas importantes. La selección de lo que recordamos y olvidamos tiene mucho que ver con la cultura en la que estamos inmersos (a la que pertenecemos). La política de la memoria es también la política del olvido, especialmente en regimenes que tienen que olvidar cosas importantes. Diferencia entre el olvido que deja cosas que se pueden todavía recobrar y el olvido que no deja huellas. Ricoeur termina su libro con esto:

Bajo la historia, memoria y olvido.  
Bajo la memoria y el olvido, vida.  
Pero escribir una vida es otra historia.  
Incompleta

Paul Ricoeur  
Memory, History, Forgetting  
Translated from the French by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer  
University of Chicago Press 2004

Philippe Ariès  
Centuries of Childhood A Social History of Family Life.  
Translated from the French by Robert Baldick  
New York: Vintage Books 1962

no podemos interpretar los cuadros x q' la realidad es un proyecto social a pesar del colectivista unico

\* ojo para final

lo q' recordamos y lo q' olvidamos depende de cultura.

olvidos

Ver la memoria de Ricoeur y de Prolli.

Retrato niño  
S XIV — niño delgado  
S XVI — comienza a secularizarse

La iconografía del niño sale de la iconografía religiosa de Jesús y San Juan comienza mas o menos en el siglo XIV y en el XVI los retratos de niños comienzan a secularizarse , pero todavía no como retratos de sujetos sino como pinturas anecdóticas. Al fin del siglo XIX en el oeste se comienza a separar el mundo de los niños del de los adultos Se da el comienzo de la idea de la niñez.

Fuente del  
XIX  
idea  
niñez

Los temas del ángel y la niñez sagrada datan del siglo XIII, pero dos tipos aparecen en el siglo XV: el retrato y el putto.

Los niños aparecen en tumbas de sus maestros o de sus padres. No se pensaba en guardar un retrato o imagen del niño si se moría o si crecía . La niñez era una fase muy poco importante de la cual no era necesario guardar records.. En el caso de la muerte del niño no consideraba que la cosita que había desaparecido tan pronto en la vida merecía ser recordada. Había demasiados niños cuya sobrevivencia era problemática. Se tenían varios niños para quedarse con unos pocos. La gente no podía darse el lujo de tener un sentimiento muy profundo to become too attached to algo que se consideraba una posible pérdida. Too many of them died. La indiferencia era una consecuencia inevitable y directa de la demografía del periodo. Se respetó mientras también se respetaba el hecho de que la creencia cristiana era que los niños tenían un alma inmortal que había sido bautizada.

x q' no  
se  
recorde  
a los  
niños  
la indiferencia  
era una  
consecuencia  
de la demografía

palabra muerte.

Cuando aparecen retratos de niños como sujetos es una evidencia de que la muerte de niños no se consideraba una pérdida inevitable. Pero las dos actitudes coexisten en el siglo xviii

p.40 la aparición del retrato del niño muerto en el siglo XVI marca un momento muy importante en la historia de los sentimientos . Al comienzo retratado en la tumba de sus padres. Algunos están muertos y otros vivos.

Los pintores como los modelos permanecen desconocidos u oscuros. Diferente cuando el donante a una iglesia de un satín glass ha conseguido un pintor famoso como Holbein, por ejemplo.

En el siglo xvii son mas comunes los retratos de niños separados de sus padres. A veces pequeños príncipes o burgueses adinerados hacían pintar los retratos

ya no  
era  
inevitable

quote

identificados con nombre y edad. Retratos para ser recordados como personas  
mientras todavía eran niños.

p. 43 Hay fotos de niños en ex-votos como placas recordando la respuesta a una  
plegaria. Es que en desde el siglo xvii parece reconocerse que el alma es inmortal.

Fin aries

Now see ruby

ojo  
ex-votos

} ver apuntes.

Rodrigo Julián Vinales.

Sentido y semejanza del

Pueblo. Abonado los ojos a la  
cultura funeraria

Prólogo de libro de Berta Pedersen.

Entrada al cielo. Arte funerario  
popular de Ecuador

San Sebastián.

~~Nov. 2008~~

Elite — <sup>perpetuarse</sup> monumentos con inscripciones.

(no a perpetuarse sino  
perpetuarse memoria)

cemeterios, <sup>propiedades</sup> cultivos celebratorios. L muerte

(día de todos los muertos) — fiestas populares  
Día 2 muertos

Cápidas influenciada x ex-votos.

Altares, santuarios

Quote  
p. 9

Dentro L murado de Berta Pedersen sobre la  
cult. funeraria popular ecuatoriana, ineludible  
sobre todo con historia fuerza todo lo vinculado,  
al culto de los muertos. La muerte del bebé  
no debe ser llorada x los fieles x q' aquellos  
que pecaron van directo a ellos

ojo

Rituales de duelo a la niña muerta son de larga data  
en todo el continente americano y han sido uno de los ritos más  
representativos del arte del siglo xviii



- pintura, be rudo de azules

Fiesta Gitana e Sa  
de espau.

re ex fronte a jolezefi's

p. 9-10

Oratorios  
populares, puros  
apellas de niños  
ulscadas a la  
letrada i cases.

alta tasa de  
mortalidad infantil  
hombres de niños.

EVANGELIZATION, PROTEST, AND ETHNIC IDENTITY: MISSIONARIES AND INDIANS IN NORTHERN AMAZONIAN ECUADOR 1538-1898 <sup>1</sup>

Introduction.

The native people of the Ecuadorian Tropical Forest have had almost 450 years of contact with different representatives of a white Colonial and post Colonial societies. Through those years, the presence of missionaries among the native groups has been the most pervasive. Missions have been consistently organized as institutions whose main objective was, at least until very recently, to radically change the natives' world view and way of life.

Until the State became interested in the economic resources and the potential for colonization of its Amazon region in the 1940's, the missionaries practically maintained the monopoly of the task of "civilizing" the different native groups and integrating them into the larger society. The control missionaries had over the Indians greatly conditioned the impact of other "civilizing" agents and, in a sense, still does.

The Indians' responses to evangelization have varied greatly along these 450 years, from acceptance of a new religion, to passive resistance, to active rebellion and, very recently, to open criticism and attempts to control the action of the missions. This recent reaction by the natives has been also influenced by a critical change of direction experienced by some missions after Vatican Council II, when their previous evangelization strategies among native cultures were seriously questioned, and their future objectives radically redefined.

The general problem discussed in this paper is the interrelation between different missionary strategies of evangelization and the varied responses elaborated by the native population. The paper focuses on the ideological aspects of the contact, underlying the interaction between missionaries and Indians as a confrontation between two conceptual representations of the world. However, in order to understand the real meaning of this symbolic exchange, it is necessary to analyze the relation between the economic and social structure of the larger society, where the missionaries belong, and that of the different native groups.

As Ribeiro has argued in his work on the Brazilian Amazon, the Indians, when evangelized, are not confronted with several rational alternatives among which they can choose one, after a thoughtful critique of their own belief system (1973: 263). The ideological confrontation between Indians and missionaries is not a free intellectual exchange, but an important element in a situation of colonialism. The main goal of the missionaries was always to convert the Indians, by implanting the "seeds of civilization" and new forms of social relations. Consequently, the ideological practices of the missionaries always meant a denial of the Indians' own system of values and beliefs, the very basis of their ethnic identity. This is why the reactions of the Indians to evangelization have often been inspired, in different forms, by a reevaluation of their own cultural identity.

More specifically, the problem will be examined in an area of the Napo province in the Northern Ecuadorian Amazon. During Colonial times, and mainly for missionary purposes, this area was known as

the Governorship of Quijos. Several different native groups inhabit the region now: Quichuas, Cofanes, Sionas, Secoyas, Teetetes, and Huaoranis. Many more lived there in Colonial times, but have since then become extinguished. This paper will focus on the Napo Quichuas who live around Tena, the capital of the province, in the regions near Archidona, Sumaco, Avila, Loreto, and in the upper tributaries of the Napo river. To the East, this group starts to mix with the Canelos Quichuas (see Whitten 1981: 22). When the Spaniards entered this area, the group they contacted was known as Quijos. Their language was not Quichua and still there is almost no evidence of the process by which they became present day Napo Quichuas (see Oberem 1980). They still share with all the other Amazonian groups a Tropical Forest culture, living by shifting cultivation, hunting and fishing. However, a large number of Napo Quichuas are now also engaged in cattle raising and in producing commercial crops, such as coffee and cocoa, which they sell in the national market.

The missionary strategies analyzed here cover a historical period of approximately 350 years, and include the early attempts at converting the Quijos by the secular clergy, and the more powerful influence of the Jesuit order, who was given this area for the purposes of evangelization, as part of their larger mission which extended to Macas and Maynas, further South up the Marañón river.

Early attempts at evangelization and first rebellions.

In pre-colonial times, the Incas Tupac-Yupanqui, Huayna-Capac and Atahualpa had attempted to conquest the Quijos region but were not able, or willing, to subjugate them (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 11-14). The fact that the Quijos were never incorporated into the socio-economic and political organization of the Inca Empire explains in part the difficulties the Spanish encomenderos and missionaries had in their attempts to transform these Indians into a disciplined labour force, and to settle them into reducciones for the purpose of cathequization. Although the Quijos were able to keep their independence from the Incas, they maintained regular commercial relations with the highland groups, interchanging cinnamon and gold for arms, tools, cloth, and other highland products (~~Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 15~~ <sup>Jbid.: 15</sup>). Probably through their traders, the Quijos learned about the consequences of Spanish domination over the highland Indian population, and this accounts for their fierce armed resistance against the first Spanish expeditions into their territory. However, the coveted cinnamon and gold which the Quijos used to bring into the highlands, constituted a strong allurement for the Spaniards who, immediately after the conquest of Quito, started organizing expeditions in search of the Land of Cinnamon and El Dorado. The first attempt was that of González Díaz de Pineda in 1538. The difficulties of the jungle terrain and its rivers, and the number of men lost in the battles with the Quijos, forced Pineda to return to Quito (~~Rumazo Gonzalez~~ <sup>Jbid.: 37-38</sup> ~~1946: 15~~). He learned, however, that the land was populated by a large number of Indians led by powerful caciques, but that they were dispersed over an immense territory (Gonzalez Suarez 1970: Vol. 3, 69). In 1541, Gonzalo Pizarro was able to capture some Quijos as prisoners and, after horrible tortures, forced them to guide him

to the famous Land of Cinnamon. This turned out to be a great disappointment because the cinnamon trees were dispersed over a vast <sup>and</sup> rough terrain, and very difficult to exploit (Oberem 1980: 67). However, gold and cotton still continued to be an attraction for other Spanish adventurers, but subsequent expeditions were repelled by the Quijos. This contributed to the Quijos' reputation as "rebellious and unruly Indians" (Porrás 1974: 72).

For the next sixteen years, the Quijos were left alone, until 1558 when they were again contacted by the Spaniards, but this time peacefully, through a highland chief who was not only an ally of the Spaniards but also the brother in law of an important Quijo chief (Purazo Gonzalez 1946: 95-96). After long negotiations and an exchange of gifts, several Quijo chiefs invited the Spaniards into their territory. Gil Ramirez Dávalos was put in charge of contacting the Quijos. He took with him a Franciscan friar to evangelize the Indians. As an eyewitness of the negotiations, the friar reports that one of the caciques asked Gil Ramirez Dávalos for religious images and crosses "because his father had died as a Christian, and his mother was a Christian from the time Gonzalo Diaz de Pineda entered the Land of Cinnamon and they were baptized by Father Carvajal provincial of the Dominicans" (Quoted in Vargas 1977: 139-140).

Given the short time Pineda and other Spaniards remained among the Quijos, and the character of the other Spaniard expeditions, it is doubtful that the Quijos as a whole were even superficially Christians by 1559. However, they could have known about the "Whites' religion" also through their traders or through their relatives in the highlands.

To receive the Spaniards, the Quijos built houses all along the roads putting crosses inside (Gonzalez Suarez 1970: Vol. 3, 64). They also honored them with music and dances, and women and children carried crosses knowing that this was the symbol of the whites (Pumazo Gonzalez 1946: 95). Probably, they did this to please the Spaniards and to entice them into their area, because the Quijos thought that they could probably increase their commercial exchanges if the Spaniards established their own towns among them (~~Gonzalez~~ <sup>Ibid.:</sup> 86-87).

In May 1559, Dávalos founded Baeza, the first important town in the Quijos area. This event marked the beginning of the economic and political domination of the Quijos by the Spaniards through the establishment of encomiendas <sup>and</sup> repartimientos, as well as the more systematic attempts to convert them to Christianity (Porrás 1974: 70). In the document written for the oath ceremony, the day Baeza was founded, it is already said that the Spaniards should make a list of the peaceful native chiefs, so that along with their people they could be assigned the work of building the church, <sup>the</sup> houses and preparing the fields. They should also put their people at the service of the Spanish inhabitants (~~Porrás 1974:~~ <sup>Ibid.:</sup> 68). It is also ordered in this document that a mass should be celebrated "with all devotion and solemnity to impress the natives and to move their hearts" (Ibid.: 66).

Gil Ramírez Dávalos, as first governor of the region - known then as Governorship of "Quijos, Sumaco and La Canela" - gained a reputation among the Indians of being magnanimous and respectful of their land rights. ~~When he was forced to leave the~~ When he was forced to leave the office to Rodrigo Nuñez Bonilla, as second governor, the Indians

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complained to higher authorities (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 88). As a consequence, the Spaniards started to worry about the possibility of an Indian rebellion (Porrás 1974: 72). According to <sup>the chronicles</sup> ~~sources~~, Nuñez Bonilla actually created all the conditions which provoked the first general rebellion of the Quijos in 1562. He changed the location of Baeza, probably invading Indian communal lands (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 102). Unlike Dávalos, he did not order the cultivation of maize in the fields around the city and, consequently, the Spanish soldiers started stealing food, and also gold ornaments, from the Indians. Furthermore, the Indians were forced to make regular trips to Quito in order to bring heavy loads of food. Finally, Nuñez Bonilla started distributing the Indians to the Spaniards in encomiendas. Important caciques, with between 300 and 1.000 Indians under them, became dependent from the encomenderos. The Quijos, who knew already about the encomienda in the highlands, regarded it as practical "slavery" (Porrás 1974: 76-77) because it meant a considerable restriction of their freedom and the exploitation of their labor through force.

Not long after becoming governor, Nuñez Bonilla died in Quito and Captain Bastidas was put in charge as provisional governor. He tried to avoid some of Nuñez Bonilla's mistakes and, for the first time, introduced cattle and new crops into this area. In order to pacify the Indians, he granted privileges to the caciques and presented them with gifts of meat, shoes, gunpowder, wicks and lead (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 103-105). However, all his efforts did not succeed in preventing the general rebellion which took place in July 1562. The Quijos caciques joined forces to expell the whites from their territory, destroyed the bridges and barricaded the roads to prevent Spanish reinforcements coming from Quito; they attempted to kill Spaniards as well as highland Indian carriers, they burnt tambos (inns) and all the crosses located



on the roads, tambos and towns (Porrás 1974: 85). They attacked Baeza and burnt some houses but were repelled by Bastidas with silver bullets. Finally, Bastidas was able to calm down the insurrection by the usual method of pacifying the most important chiefs with gifts and privileges. Other caciques, specifically the famous Jumandi, cacique of the Sumaco Province, preferred to warn the Spaniards against entering his territory. Jumandi threatened the Spaniards with an army of 15,000 warriors, <sup>and</sup> went with his people to live deeper in the jungle (Pumazo Gonzalez 1946: 127), until he reappeared as the main leader of the second and most interesting of the Quijos general rebellions in 1578.

In 1563, Captain Bastidas was informed that Melchor Vázquez de Avila had been appointed governor of Quijos and granted several encomiendas. As he lived in Cuzco, Vázquez de Avila governed Quijos for fifteen years through his lieutenant governors (Ibid.: 112). Under no direct official control, the encomenderos and their soldiers felt free to exploit the Indians' labor and to treat them with extreme cruelty. Many Quijos died as a result of these abuses which included hunting them with dogs, confiscating their food, letting them to die of hunger, and mutilating Indian women who resisted the sexual advances of the Spaniards (Ibid.: 131). Confronted with this extreme genocidal situation, and out of frustration and despair, the reaction of some Quijos was self-destructive. There were cases of suicide, and it is reported that women killed their babies so that "they would not live through such miserable times" (Gonzalez Suarez 1970: Vol.3, 77-78). Other Indians fled into the highlands, because they preferred to live as slaves of the caciques in Quito than to suffer under the Spaniards (Pumazo Gonzalez 1946: 203).

During 1563, the lieutenant governors founded other towns in the area, such as Avila, in the land of Jumenci, Alcalá del Río on the Aguarico River a tributary of the Napo, and Archidona in a densely populated area called Los Algodonales, rich in cotton and specially in gold (Ibid.: 119, 125-126). Weaving and panning gold became the two main forms of labor through which the Spaniards exploited the Indians. In that same year, the Quijos who lived close to the rivers Misahuallí, Tena and Tollín - all areas near Archidona - fought against the Spaniards, but were finally forced to submit (Ibid.: 126).

The oppression of the Quijos was denounced by several officials (Ibid.: 203-204). The situation was so serious that in 1576 the King ordered a Visit of the Governorship of Quijos by the Oidor de la Audiencia de Quito Diego de Ortega. From Ortega's report it is clear that by 1576, the conversion of the Quijos to Christianity was still superficial. Two Dominican friars accompanied the Visitador to establish two religious communities of this religious order in the region, to attend to the evangelization of the Indians which, according to Ortega's report, had been "considerably neglected" (Porrás 1974: 96).

While Ortega was conducting the visit, the Vicar of Quijos "christened a great number of creatures" and Ortega helped him with gifts for the Indians (Ibid.: 97). They found a similar situation of neglect in Baeza and in Avila, where the Indians received religious instruction for the first time through the preachings of this Vicar. In a report to the King about the "sad situation of the Indians" another friar remarked that "the encomenderos force the Indians to spin and weave continuously and they have them so occupied in these tasks that it seems that in this land they have forgotten about

God....there are no churches, no ornaments, nor images, except old and smoked paper ones....and in order to live the Doctrineros (priests) must collaborate with the encomenderos. We can clearly see the bad treatment and oppression of these Indians because a large number of them had died, and others are dying everyday" (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 242-243).

It is quite clear that at this time, the missionaries who worked among the Guijos were an intricate part of the socio-economic system which exploited the Indians. The encomiendas in this area were not very productive for the encomenderos, due to the small and decreasing number of Indian tributaries. Consequently, the Spaniards did not pay the diezmos and other dues to the priests, who received a salary of 300 golden pesos from the Bishop, and the accustomed food and other offerings (camaricos) from the Indians (Ibid.: 186,228). According to Porras (1974: 100) the priests had no alternative but to adapt themselves to the whims of the encomenderos, or to die of hunger.

Not many priests were willing to go to these forgotten regions. We get an idea of the type of priests who went to <sup>the</sup> area from information given by Gonzalez Suarez about the priests working in another Amazonia Governorship further South: " Some of the priests who entered in the Governorship of Salinas were monks fugitives from the Convents in Quito, and two of them had been excommunicated. It was not easy for them to learn the language of the barbarians, and the evangelization was done through rude interpreters. Consequently, those poor people did not get anything out of Christian religion and they hated the external practices of religious worship because they were forced to attend through the Doctrinero's punishments" (1970: Vol.3, 91-92).

Given this picture of evangelization around 1576, it is obvious that when chronicles report that at this time "more or less half of the 16,509 Quijos dependent from the Spaniards were Christians" (see Oberem 1980: 85) it probably meant only that they had been superficially baptized in large groups or that the Spaniards counted as Christians those 6,803 Indians who were already tributaries in Spanish encomiendas.

Ortegón's "solution" to the evangelization was to create "doctrinas" (doctrines) some of which were assigned to the Dominican friars and others to secular priests (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 225-226). The Dominicans did not last very long in the area (Gonzalez Suarez 1970: Vol. 3, 92). In order to evangelize the Indians in the doctrinas, Ortegón had to introduce another Spanish institution, the reducción by which, Indians from different small communities or who lived in isolated dwellings were forced to congregate in one town. Unlike the highland Indians, who were settled agriculturalists long before the Spanish conquest, the Quijos were hunters and shifting cultivators. Consequently, they strongly resisted the Spanish attempt to settle them in reducciones, because this new form of social organization constituted a serious threat to their own reproduction as a group. It is important to underline the fact that the reducción also challenged the established power of the shamans, some of whom were important caciques having groups of extended families organized around them (see Oberem 1980: 274). The attempt to settle the Indians in reducciones necessarily contributed to the brake down of this form of social organization, and to diminish the social and political power of the shamans.

Discouraged by the fact that their encomiendas were not renewed for more than one life term, and by the scarcity of Indian tributaries many encomenderos began to leave the area. Those who remained became impoverished and indebted (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 185-186). Ortegón's visit contributed only to aggravate the situation of the encomenderos, both because of the expenses they incurred in entertaining him and his large retinue, and because of the fines Ortegón imposed on them for the abuses committed against the Indians. However, the worst consequences of this visit were for the Quijos who, ultimately, paid for all those expenses. The encomenderos forced them to spin and weave great quantities of cloth through forced labor (Ibid.: 185).

The increased exploitation resulting from this visit, plus the fact that Ortegón destroyed the dreaded dogs trained to hunt rebellious Indians, are mentioned by several writers as the most immediate causes which encouraged the Indians to engage in ~~the~~ the ~~rebellion~~ general insurrection against the Spaniards in 1578 (Gonzalez Suarez 1970: Vol.3, 76; Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 185).

The Quijos rebellion of 1578: the rebellion of the shamans.

While most of the previous uprisings of the Quijos had been organized locally by one group or cacique in protest of specific abuses by the Spaniards, the rebellion of 1578 was a carefully planned general uprising of all the Quijos to exterminate the Spaniards and to do away with white domination for ever. It was coordinated in conjunction with highland caciques and was planned to include the participation of the Omaguas, another large and powerful Tropical Forest group, well known for their reputation as warriors. Like many other ~~Indians~~

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Indian uprisings, it failed militarily due to the superiority of Spanish arms and strategy. However, the rebellion is interesting for what it reveals both about the dynamics of the Quijos social and political organization in a period of acculturation, and about the ideological factors of evangelization.

The rebellion was started by two famous shamans or "Pendes" which in their language meant "sorcerer" and "high priest" (see Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 198). These two shamans, Beto and Guami were respectively from the regions of Archidona and Avila. Both were already dependent from encomenderos (Ibid.: 187). According to Diego de Ortiguera's chronicle (quoted in Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 187-211) on which all the reports about this rebellion are based, Beto and Guami called all the caciques and their people to arms against the Spaniards. They succeeded in getting a great number of them to join the rebellion, not only because all the Indians hated the Spaniards, but also because the powerful shamans threatened them with "turning their fields into poisonous toads and snakes" if they disobeyed (Ibid.: 198). It is interesting to point out that people in this area still believe today that shamans have the power to kill people. After a ritual fast, Beto proclaimed that the "devil" had appeared to him in the form of a cow claiming to be the Christian god, and to be very angry with the Spaniards who lived in the region. This "devil" ordered Beto to kill all Spaniards, including women and children in order to exterminate them for ever. On his part, Guami claimed to have gone for five days into another world (probably under the effects of ayahuashca, an allucinogenic still used by all shamans in this area as part of their ritual) where the Christian god had equally ordered him to kill all Spaniards, to burn their

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houses, and to destroy their fields. The god had also chosen him to be "Supreme Rende" (Ibid.: 187, 198). This last statement is quite important, since the chronicler tells us that a power struggle developed between Moto and Guami, joined later by Imbate, an older shaman from another area. They met to decide who was the most powerful shaman worthy of leading the rebellion. The dispute seemed to have been solved by an alliance between Imbate and Guami and, later on, by appointing Jumandi, one of the most powerful caciques in the Quijos area, as commander in chief of the rebels. Before he joined, the shamans were successful in destroying and burning both Avila and Archidona, killing all whites and highland Indians who were servants of the Spaniards. The hatred of the Indians did not stop for mercy in front of priests or churches. In Archidona, for instance, they tried to burn the priest inside the church and, when he tried to escape, was persecuted and speared (Gonzalez Suarez 1970: Vol.3, 81).

After their initial victory, the shamans retired to Jumandi's lands to prepare the assault on Baeza following five days of ritual fast. This assault failed because, by this time, Baeza had received reinforcements from Quito and from a cacique from the highlands. The attack of more than 5,000 Quijos was repelled. (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 203). The Omaguas arrived after the rebellion had been crushed. Many Quijos escaped into the jungle, including Jumandi's son who reappeared in 1599 in connection with another attempted rebellion (Ibid.: 203, 214). Responding to the Spaniards' promises of peace, the Indians started to surrender, except for Jumandi and the shamans who were unable to escape for four months. Finally they were arrested and taken to Quito to be given an exemplary punishment. Standing in carts they

were paraded through the streets, they were tortured with hot irons and quartered, after which their heads and limbs were exhibited in the city streets. The highland caciques who had participated in the rebellion were exiled to the coast (Ibid.: 209-210). Although it took the Spaniards ten months to pacify the Quijos region, the punishments seemed to have impressed the Indians because they did not engage in any other general rebellion. However, the Spaniards regarded this rebellion as a threat, important enough to find it necessary to remind the Indians of the punishments in a fiesta celebrated in Quito in 1631, where they exhibited prisoners in carts, representing Jumandi and the shamans (see Oberon 1980: 89). This was a form of baroque symbolism which, along with the religious ritual, the Spanish authorities often used in an attempt to impress the Indians and gaining their submission.

An examination of this rebellion shows that, despite the early attempts by the Church to Christianize them, the Indians expressed a total rejection of the new faith, and a re-affirmation of their traditional religious beliefs. These beliefs were incarnated in the persons of the shamans who, among Tropical Forest groups, have the ultimate power to interpret and to make sense of ordinary experience. Rather than a direct ideological challenge to the shamans, Christian evangelization meant a threat to their power, mainly because the reducciones, as we have already explained, concentrated Indians in circumscribed areas, away from their traditional authorities and under the strict control of the Spaniards and the missionaries. The symbolic behavior and the discourse of the shamans during the rebellion represented the display of a very common shamanistic practice by which power is diverted from a powerful source, in

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this case the whites, by invoking their gods (see Lanternari 1974: 274-275, also Taylor 1961). The shamans tried to appropriate the power of the whites through the image of a Christian "devil" in the form of a cow, which was a new form of wealth introduced by the Spaniards. Besides, still today in their magical songs, shamans include names of saints, of powerful mountains, and of objects from the white world, all in an effort to reinforce their own power.

In 1578, Christianity seemed to have been regarded by the shamans as an additional source of power which was re-interpreted within the traditional framework of their own magical vision of the world. Furthermore, it is clear from the chroniclers' accounts, that the shamans were not only fighting against the Spaniards, but also among themselves. The changes in the traditional social structure, has unleashed an internal struggle for power, and an attempt to re-organize society along traditional lines. Consequently, the rebellion can be interpreted as a process of re-affirmation of traditional religious and cultural values. Ideological competition between missionaries and shamans is a reality in this area of the Amazon still today. However, in 1578, evangelization among the Quijos was still very superficial, and the role of the priests still too entangled with the worst aspects of Spanish domination for the missionaries to become effective competitors of traditional shamans. It will take years of painful work by Jesuits, and other missionaries, using well planned and consistent strategies of evangelization for this to happen.

After the insurrection was crushed, the situation of the Quijos grew worse. Forced to pan gold in water and mud for days, badly nourished and abused by the whites, the Indians started fleeing

the area in great numbers, now down river, towards Perú (Rumazo Gonzalez 1946: 238).

Deprived of their tributaries, the encomenderos also left the area. By the beginnings of the seventeenth century, the population of Quijos had decreased to 1649 Indians and a handful of encomenderos (Porrás 1974: 114). In order to increase their labor force, the Spaniards started buying so called "savage Indians" from other regions, who were sold into slavery by slave hunters on the pretext of Christianizing them (Oberem 1980: 99). This is the general condition the Jesuits had to confront when they entered the area of Archidona in 1660.

The Jesuits and the Quijos: Missionary strategy and Indian responses.

The Jesuits were interested to establish a mission in the Governorship of Quijos, and specially in Archidona, in order to have an easy access to their most important mission in Maynas, further South. Their entrance into Quijos was strongly resisted, not only by the Franciscan who were disputing jurisdiction over missionary territory with the Jesuits, but also by the secular clergy and the encomenderos of Quijos, both of whom regarded the Jesuits as too inclined to defend the rights of the Indians against local abuses (Jouanen 1941<sup>-23</sup>, Vol. 1, 436,473; Vol.2, 442-444). These disputes are explained, in part, by some aspects of the Jesuits' missionary strategies which conflicted with the political and economic interests entrenched in the area.

The Jesuits remained in Quijos for a total period of around 130 years. They entered Archidona in 1660-61, and stayed, with some years of interruption, until 1768 when they were expelled

from the Americas. They were allowed to re-enter in 1669, during the conservative government of García Moreno, when the Governorship of Quijos had already become the Province of Napo. Although during Republican times the colonial encomenderos and authorities had been replaced by merchants, patrones (bosses and landowners) and civilian authorities, the Jesuits continue to have similar problems with them. They were finally forced to leave the area at the end of the nineteenth century, when the country was under the liberal government of Eloy Alfaro.

What follows is an analysis of their evangelization strategy throughout these 130 years, focused on its different ideological aspects in relation to Indian culture and social organization, as well as on the social relations which mediated this ideological contact between missionaries and natives.

#### The Jesuits and the political economy of the Quijos area.

Unlike the secular clergy, too tied to the colonial system of domination, the Jesuits brought to Quijos - as they did to other areas of South America - their own independent and coherent program of evangelization, together with a new system of social organization for the indigenous population. Their main objective was to establish semi-autonomous settlements where the Indians would live under the protection and paternalistic care of their religious fathers, and where they would be educated and "civilized" through disciplined work and Christian teachings. Soon enough, these objectives put the Jesuits in direct competition with the encomenderos for the Indian labor force, and later on with the merchants who, in collusion with corrupted authorities, became the intermediaries in the forced sale of manufactured goods to the Indians (repartos forzosos).

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As the Jesuits eliminated the abusive charges the Indians were forced to pay for all religious services, they also managed to antagonize the secular clergy (Jouanen 1941<sup>-436</sup> Vol.1, 436).

During Colonial times, the relation between the Jesuits and the colonial administration was shaky at best, and often openly antagonistic. Their enemies repeatedly accused them of "inciting the Indians against the royal ministers" and of "disturbing public peace and order" in the region (Ibid.: 473). This situation changed drastically during the conservative government of García Moreno, when the Jesuits practically became the representatives of the State in the Napo province. The President appointed the Superior of the mission as a kind of interim governor "authorized to take all necessary measures to keep order and good civic and ecclesiastical government in the province" . He had also the power to punish the Indians with lashes and prison, and to call in the army in case of disturbances (Jouanen 1977: 33-34). After García Moreno's death in 1875, the power of the Jesuits in the region diminished considerably.

#### The Jesuits, native culture and social organization.

While in the heyday of European imperialism in other parts of the world "trade followed the missionaries", when the Jesuits entered the Ecuadorian Amazon, merchant capitalism, and other forms of pre-capitalist exploitation of Indian labor were already established practices, and they contributed to obstruct the protectionist economic policies of the Jesuits. But furthermore, these same policies meant a more serious threat to the Indians' own socio-economic and cultural continuity than the forms of exploitation they have suffered until then. Nucleated settlements, disciplined and regular work in and

around these settlements, plus strict regulations about attending religious services several times a week, constituted a negation of the Indians' way of life as hunters and shifting cultivators.

The Jesuits' conception of "hard work" as a form of spiritual redemption for the Indians, was an important ideological element in their evangelization program. Bottasso points out how, confronted with native people for whom work is not a form of capital accumulation, Europeans have always discovered in them the original sin of "apathy" and "laziness", as the source of all vices and depravity. To fight against this native idleness, the Europeans introduced in their colonies the idea of perseverance and devotion to work (1980: 221, 223).

Jouanen explains what the Jesuits' "civilizing task" meant for the Indians. "The work in town consisted in that each of them (Indians) had to build his own house, had to clear the jungle for his own chacra (field) and sow it. He also had to help in the construction of the church building, the Cabildo and the missionary's house. This compulsory labor was done two or three days a week and lasted for two or three hours each day; those who did not attend were punished" (1977: 36-37). The Jesuits regarded all these activities as "working for the common good" (Ibid.: 41), in which it was included the Indians' incorporation into civilization. The Indians considered those attempts at nucleating them in permanent settlements, and the obligation of performing regular labor, as a threat to their own livelihood. The missionaries themselves realized that, because of the type of work and the forms of religious worship required of them, the Indians were prevented both from cultivating their

chacras and from hunting (Ibid.: 86-87).

Unlike the Jesuits, preoccupied with the "common good", the merchants and other white patrones were seeking their own private interests. They advanced manufactured goods - often useless ones - to the Indians who had to pay for them in gold dust and twine (pita). To obtain these two products, the Indians had to go into the forest for indefinite periods of time, which they obviously used also to cultivate their chacras and to hunt. Eventhough they became indebted to the merchants for life, the Indians preferred this margin of "freedom", and, to defend it, they often joined with merchants and other whites in their violent campaigns against the Jesuits.

The conception Jesuits had about the natives and their culture was not different from that of other Europeans of their time. They brought with them strong assumptions about the hierarchical order of cultures, and about the absolute superiority of European civilization. These two axioms, as Clastres indicates, are the very basis of a form of ethnocide which is "practiced for the savage's own good" (1981: 57). According to Catholic theology, once the Indians were declared humans they were considered perfectible. Their redemption was possible if the sin of their paganism was eradicated, and if they could be civilized into becoming, at least, believable approximations to the only legitimate model of Christian Occidental man (see Bottasso 1980: 155).

The Jesuits' main goal in the Amazon region, like that of other missionaries elsewhere in America, was to substitute Christian religion for what they regarded as the "barbaric beliefs and customs" of the savages. One important method of conversion consisted then

in the repression and elimination of all those native beliefs and customs which were considered "pagan" and therefore "evil". These included polygyny, native burial practices and, of course, all individual and collective activities related to magic and shamanism. The objective of this form of evangelization was to reach the principle Lanternari describes as the tabula rasa (1974: 240-241), in order to introduce Christianity into a vacuum. This was attempted through the perfunctory repetition of prayers, the purely mnemonic learning of the catechism and other religious formulas; through the massive administration of sacraments, and through the practice of elaborate Catholic rituals in order to "impress" the natives with the power of the new religion.

The ideological basis and the systematic practice of this form of evangelization, now characterized as "traditional, doctrinaire and sacramentalist" (see Manaus: I ~~... do Concílio~~ 1981: 79) meant a denial and denigration of the Indians' own ideological practices and, therefore, a threat to their own consciousness and identity as a group.

Urbanen's explanation of the difficulties confronted by the Jesuits in their work of introducing Christian civilization in the Amazon area, offers some further clues about the Jesuits' image of the Indians and their culture. In addition to the zeal and abnegation of the missionaries, their civilizing task required: "...the time and space to achieve the profound changes in the habits, tendencies and mentality of the Indians. It was necessary to work in order that this people, who for centuries had been used to the barbarism and licence of a gross paganism, could receive evangelical law and live

according to its precepts; besides, it was essential to put all efforts in subduing and governing men who had just recently come out of their forest, with no sense of dependence, nor of law, except for their passions, and with no more general guidance than their own freedom, whim and fancy" (1941-43: Vol.2, 553).

In order to achieve this civilizing and evangelical goal, the Jesuits tried to intervene in all important aspects of native social and ideological practices. Poligyny was common among the caciques of most Amazonian groups contacted by the Jesuits, including the Quijos (see Pumazo Gonzalez 1946: 221; Gonzalez Suarez 1973: Vol.3, 227). The Jesuits regarded poligyny as a "vice and perverted" custom, and as the main impediment for the Indians' conversion. They opposed it with all their zeal and fervor, but the Indians reacted violently. Several Jesuits lost their lives in the attempt to eradicate it. (see Jouanen 1941-43: Vol.1, 105-106, 449, 457-458). In the town of Napo, around 1870, the Jesuit Vicar reported to have had an Indian jailed in chains for having arranged a marriage for his son, and also to have found a method, which he does not specify, to put an end to infanticides "so common in the Oriente province (Jouanen 1977: 90-91). As among many other Amazonian groups, the reasons for infanticide in the Quijos area were ecological. but, as we already mentioned, under colonial exploitation some parents allegedly killed their children out of despair.

The Indians strongly resisted the Jesuits' insistence that they bury their dead inside coffins and in the Christian cemetery. Still today, at least in the area of Tena and Archidona, Indians do not use the cemetery. Gonzalez Suarez reports that the missionaries had



great difficulties in ~~dis~~suading Christian Indians to allow their dead to be buried in the churches, "from where they got them out on the sly, as soon as the missionary was not looking" (1970: Vol. 3, 231). The Quijos used to bury their dead under their own houses, which was later burnt or abandoned (see Runze Gonzalez 1946: 222). Talking about the funerary rituals of Amazonian groups, Clastres argues that they have the objective of separating the souls of the dead from those of the living, to protect themselves from the evil emanating from the soul of the deceased, which can be a source of illness or even death (1981: 74-76). Evidence that the Jesuits never understood the Indians' own beliefs is given in the following report by a missionary referring to the Archidona Indians: "These Indians are so lazy and mean, that they do not let the priest know about a death in the family, so that he would not force them to built a coffin, so as not to bring the body from the jungle, so as not to open up a grave, and because they refuse to bring a little candle and a charity for the mass. They prefer to abandon the chacra (field), leaving the body there, or to remain there after having burnt the body" (Jouanen 1977: 29).

The missionaries' letters from the field show that the Jesuits were quite aware of the power of ritual among the Indians. It is clear that they used Catholic ritual in its most elaborate forms to impress the "vivid imagination of the savages" (Gonzalez Suarez 1970: Vol. 3, 145-146). For the celebration of Catholic festivals - especially for Corpus Christi and Holy Week - the missionaries used triumphal arches, flowers and jungle animals for decoration, elaborate processions, ceremonial chants, music and dancers (Jouanen

1941-43: Vol.2, 517-525). Pomp and solemnity were presented as attractions to gather people and to instill piety and respect (Jouanen 1977: 86, 176).

The manipulation of Catholic liturgy by the Jesuits in the missions can also be considered as part of their attempts to eradicate shamanistic practices. As the only other intermediaries with the supernatural, the shamans were the most serious competitors of the missionaries. Both shamans and priests acknowledged that competition as important, and explicitly used their respective versions of magic ritual power to convince or to threaten their followers. One episode between a Jesuit missionary and the shamans among the Cunivo Indians in the upper Ucayali (now Peruvian Amazonia) will illustrate this point. Explaining father Richter's difficulties in the evangelization of the Cunivos, Jouanen narrates: "To hinder the progress of the Gospel, the devil used mainly the hechiceros (shamans) who were many among the Cunivos. they started rumors to the effect that all who attended Christian doctrine would be bewitched, and that if they continued listening to the Father, an epidemic would enter town, followed by other calamities". Seeing that the shamans' preachings were quite effective in diminishing the attendance of women and children to church, father Richter found a remedy. "He gathered the people, and in order to show them that the hechiceros could not harm them, explained the effectiveness of holy water against the ensnarements of the devil, adding that he himself had escaped many dangers through this means and exhorting them to do the same". One shaman then made everyone know that in his house the spirit was giving oracles better than anybody else, news which attracted a large number of people. Father Richter discredited the

shaman by unmasking an old woman - the oracle - hidden in his house, provoking the laughter of the Indians. "In addition, the relics of Saint Ignace of Loyola were very useful against the pest of soothsayers and sorcerers. The sorcerers boasted of having remedies for all illnesses. Father Pichter made known to everybody that he had a better one, a relic from the Holy Patriarch. Many Indians believed the priest's promise, and Saint Ignace credited it with many favours and prodigies". (Jouanen 1941-43: Vol. I, 50-50).

Even today, after four hundred years of evangelization, shamans are always respected, often feared, and regularly consulted by most Napo Quichuas, both Catholics and Protestants. According to Bottasso, among the Shuar - another Tropical Forest group living in the Southern Ecuadorian Amazonia - the shamans not only persist, but have increased in number, even after years of schooling in the area, and the secularization of medical knowledge and practice (1980: 60-61).

Ceremonial behavior was also part of the evangelization strategy the Jesuits used in their attempt to turn the missionary into an authority figure, and to enhance his charisma. For instance, in 1871, the Vicar of the Napo missions reinstated an old custom of having the Indians to carry the priest on their shoulders from one town to another, in order to "teach the Indians the respect they should profess the missionary" (Jouanen 1977: 81,92). This was considered a "purely ceremonial" obligation, different from the "duty" the Indians had of carrying priests and nuns for six days in their trips from Baeza to Archidona, for which they were paid in cloth, according to custom (Jouanen 1941-43: Vol.1, 622). How much the Indians resented this humiliation, was shown during the celebration of the "Day of the Oriente", the 12th. of February, 1982, when Indians from the community

of Pano paraded through the streets of Tena, ~~the capital of Napo~~  
~~province~~. As members of the "Federation of Napo Indigenous Organizations"  
 - a political organization - they joined with other Indians to  
 present their own version of the conquest of the Amazon. In this  
 parade they enacted the famous trips they were forced to make  
 carrying priests and other whites on their shoulders. As an old Indian  
 woman explained in her speech: "I accompanied my husband on those  
 trips, and this is my way of telling the whites, I'm still angry"  
 (Author's field notes, 1982).

The image of the missionary as a "culture hero" and "martyr"  
 is often both a self image and a propaganda gimmick. Bottasso argues  
 that the early missionaries, including the Jesuits, were so convinced  
 of being the representatives of the only true God, and of the only  
 legitimate culture, that they never questioned their motivations  
 and objectives. Therefore, they confronted even the harshest personal  
 sacrifices with enthusiasm, and romanticized themselves and their  
 mission (1980: 4). Plenty of evidence of this self-image appears  
 in the missionaries' letters. However, in addition, the Jesuits  
 used this image as part of their paternalistic strategy of evangelization.  
 It was the counterpart of their conception of the Indians as "depraved  
 children", "incapable of self-guidance", and "in need of a strong  
 paternal authority". The Jesuits tried a form of "protectionist  
 paternalism" which, unlike that of the Josephins later on, was  
 anti-integrationist. The Jesuits wanted to prevent exploitation of  
 the Indians by outsiders, but to keep them under their strict control  
 and often harsh treatment of the missionaries. Suggestions to the  
 missionaries by Vicars of the Napo testify to that effect. They

recommended that Indians should not leave the areas of the missions without a letter of the priest, <sup>and</sup> they advised the missionaries to induce the Indians to build their houses around the church and near the missionary's house, in order that they could be kept under vigilance (Jouanen 1977: 176). The Vicars <sup>also</sup> ordered that punishments to Indians should always be made through the Indian authorities, so that the priests would not be accused of cruelty (Jouanen 1941-43: Vol.1, 625). All these protectionist strategies, which worked in the Jesuit missions of Paraguay, were not very effective in the Napo missions, for the reasons we have already explained. Just recently, when asked about this "paternalistic image", an old Pano Indian who experienced Jesuit evangelization, answered with a smile: "Each time I went to the mission, I always used to wear anything that could serve as a cushion under my pants" (Author's field notes, 1982).

The establishment of schools to educate and evangelize the children was the alternative strategy the Jesuits used to brake down Indian "rebelliousness" and "impertinence" in the bud, so as to avoid harsh punishment when children became adults (Jouanen 1977: 194). A Vicar from Napo defined the schools as "the cross and the Crown of these missions" (Ibid.: 101). They pretended to form the children in Christian religion, but also in "the proper sociable life of men in well established towns" (Ibid.). The actual consequences of this philosophy of education were ethnocidal in so far as they contributed to the desintegration of the Indian family, and to a blind acculturation of the Indian children. The Indian parents resisted by refusing to send their children to school and to doctrine, specially during those time periods when the whole family was in the forest hunting

and cultivating the chacras (Jouanen 1977: 175-176). Around 1890, the Jesuits and the nuns of the "Good Sheppers" who had joined them in 1888, took further measures establishing Boarding Schools, which even more explicitly had the intention of taking the children away from their families for ever. Jouanen explains: "these children showed great affection for the priests and did not want to go back and live with their families anymore" (1977:154). They had more difficulties in achieving the same results with Indian girls, obviously because of the role young girls play in the division of labor within the family, helping their mothers in the cultivation of the chacra and with household chores. In 1891, after a visit to the Archidona Boarding School, a Jesuit priest sent a memorandum in which he recommended not to speak Quichua to the children, but to use only Spanish in their teaching. He also recommended that when children reached a marriageable age they should be given a piece of land around town for a chacra, in order to form with them a "true Christian settlement" (Ibid.:175).

By 1894, the Jesuits' reports show that children's attendance to school and doctrine was almost nil, and the population of the boarding school was reduced by half. Only after the governor passed a decree forcing parents to send their children to town in the afternoons, school attendance increased, and the parents started to build their houses around town in order that their children would not have to cross dangerous rivers everyday. Soldiers were used to punish recalcitrant parents (Ibid.: 194-195).

Indian reactions and forms of resistance.

By the time the Jesuits established their mission in the Quijos area, the Indians had already lost the social and political organization centered around the caciques. More specifically, they have lost the war chief elected in case of attack by other groups or, like Juzandi, to lead a rebellion against the Spaniards. The shacans still had power, but had been deprived of their additional authority as caciques, which some of them had like Urcal and Ucto did in 1578 (see Oberem 1980: 225). The lineage chiefs had been replaced by the Indian justices, or varayocs (afterwards called "captains"), appointed by the Spaniards, and latter on by a civilian authority with the approval of the missionary. These imposed Indian authorities were used as intermediaries to manipulate the Indian labor force, and to force them to buy manufactured goods. They were also ultimately responsible for the attendance of the Indians to religious services, and for their performance of personal services in the priest's house (Jouanen 1977: 90). This system of administration geared to the atomization of the Indian population into small settlements, broke down effectively any possibility of a general organized uprising by the Indians, although their exploitation continued and even increased from the seventeenth century onwards.

There were numerous cases of individual or circumscribed violence against specific priests, who zealously attacked native social and cultural practices.

The only important attempt at an organized uprising against the Jesuits in the Quijos area, happened in Loreto in 1892. Allegedly in collusion with three whites, the Indians attacked and plundered

the mission, capturing the priests and beating them badly. The intention of the Indians was to take the prisoners down the Napo river to be set adrift in canoes, but they were prevented of doing it by a group of soldiers, who liberated the prisoners and managed to re-establish order in Loreto. Meanwhile, another group of Indians attempted an attack on Archidona, but was turned back by a military detachment sent by the government in Quito (Céspedes San Vicente 1894: 65-75). The Jesuits blamed the local whites for inciting the Indians to violence in Loreto, and the support the Indians found with the government in Quito, for their "persistent insolent behavior" (Jouanen 1977: 191-192). Even if this was partly true, indigenous participation in the uprising can only be explained by the fact that the Indians regarded the regime of the Jesuits as too exploitative.

After the Loreto uprising, many Indians fled the area for fear of reprisals (see Oberem 1980: 116). In 1893, the priests complained that those who remained "acted with insolence, and were disobedient, opposing all actions by the priests" (Jouanen 1977: 194). Although the rebellion failed, Oberem reports that as late as 1955, the Indians from Loreto remembered it as a success (1980: 116).

Deprived of the possibility of a general insurrection, and of any form of organized protest, the Indians' reactions took many other different forms, all of which represented a response to a situation of deep cultural crisis. This crisis was provoked not only by the more systematic imposition of an alien religion, but also by the routine occupation of their lands, the cruel exploitation of their labor, and the political and military oppression, in sum, by the new set of social relations imposed upon them by colonial and later on Republican systems of domination.



Confronted with the loss of their freedom in the Jesuits' settlements, the Indians responded with a form of psychological desintegration, showing deep depression and demoralization. Gonzalez Suarez reports that "they became nostalgic for their solitary forests, society grew tedious and, possessed of a deep melancholy, they remained silent for days and nights on end, refusing any contact or conversation; some died, others escaped to hide again in the mountains; women esterilized themselves. The change from nomadic to sedentary life was unbearable. Entire settlements disappeared overnight....." (1970: Vol.3, 147).

Passive resistance took other less painful forms. The Indians just declined to participate in the system, sometimes by refusing to feed the priest, who depended totally on the Indians for his survival (Jouanen 1977: 85) or by bringing the wrong kind of wood to build the priest's house or the church, or by using other similar methods of dragging their feet.

Soon the Indians learned how to manipulate the legal and political system imposed by the white administrations, to their own advantage. The system of licencias was one such mechanism. Licencias were permits the Indians could obtain to go into the forests, for three or four months, to pan gold or to scrape twine. Thus, they were legally excused from attending mass and the doctrine. The Indians used to prolong their stays in the forest and, in order to avoid being punished by the priests, they would bribe the Indian governor with gold or twine, into giving them a piece of paper with the proper excuses for the missionary. In a letter, a Jesuit missionary explains the consequences of this behavior: "In this way, the missionaries

were fooled, and the mission reduced to uselessness....if one asks some of them (Indians) why they don't attend mass, they answer boldly that they were on Licencia or, what is the same, excused of everything" (Jouanen 1977: 130).

However, the most frequent and radical form of passive resistance by the Indians was to flee into their forests. This reaction represented their protest against all forms of oppression, against forced evangelization and also against smallpox epidemics, it was the ultimate defense of their way of life and their ethnic identity. The missionaries attributed this behavior to the "innate savage instinct" of the Indians. Still today, many Mapo Quichuas continue to search for better living conditions in the few places left for them deeper into the forest. Now, demographers refer to this behavior as "migration", and some State agencies call it "progressive spirit of colonization of new frontiers".

NOTES.

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OUR LAND, OUR CULTURE, OURSELVES: THE FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AMONG  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN LATIN AMERICA

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"The word 'Indian' (is) to be something of which indigenous peoples should be proud"  
(report from CISA, Indian Congress for South America, quoted in IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40:95)).

Guatemala is the only remaining country in Latin America where the Indians still constitute the majority of the population. At the present time, the Guatemalan government's record of genocide and ethnocide against Indian peoples is the worst in Latin America. Many reasons can be found for this situation in the past and present history of Guatemala. The Indians interpret it as a direct result of their attempts to organize themselves, along with poor Ladinos, to struggle for their rights and to initiate a process of deep social change in their own country. The role Indian culture plays in this struggle is best explained in this statement given by a Guatemalan Indian woman in Geneva:

"The military seeks to destroy and shatter our cultural identity because the regime knows that our identity constitutes a part of our strength to resist and organize" (IWGIA Newsletter 1983 (35-36):118).

Francisca, like her compatriot Rigoberta Menchú (see Elisabeth Burgos-Debray 1984), value their culture not as a dead tradition to be shown in museums or in tourist markets, but as a contemporary tradition that questions the hegemonic process and threatens its dominance.

The Western commercial media, with their built-in bias to depict the Latin American Indians in stereotypes either as "terrorists" or as "victims", has almost ignored the Guatemalan case. There is evidence, of course, that in situations of internal wars Indian people and sometimes whole villages become

the victims of both sides in the controversy. But, it is also the case that nowadays thousands of Indian men and women in Latin America have made clear political decisions to actively participate in those struggles.

In this paper I have chosen to analyze some of the many other less violent, but not less significant struggles Indian peoples are presently fighting in the defense of their rights. Rather than going through a detailed description of specific cases, the paper concentrates on the examination of different human rights, how indigenous people interpret them, how are they being defended or violated, and on the structural and ideological contexts in which they are being discussed. Consequently, whenever possible, I have used published and unpublished materials produced by the native organizations, mainly from the Andean and Amazonian regions. The decision over the specific rights selected for discussion originates from my reading of that literature, as well as from my own work with native organizations in Ecuador, but does not intend to be exhaustive.

#### The right to land

"To take an indigenous person from his or her land is an act of violence. It attacks the very roots of his or her identity. It is a condemnation to extinction." (The Auxiliary Bishop of Sao Paulo, Dom Luciano Mendes de Almeida. Quoted in Survival International News 1983 (1)).

If there is one issue that unites all the Indigenous Nationalities of the Americas is the recognition that their most fundamental human right is the right to land. For Indian peoples, land is more than an economic resource for biological reproduction, it is indissolubly linked to their culture and history. The commodification and privatization of land tends to brake down indigenous forms of communal solidarity and control, erode the meaning of the fiesta complex, and hamper communal labor exchanges and reciprocity arrangements. The Indians' right to land, and the respect for their culture cannot be considered separately because they are the two main components of social relations within indigenous societies. But in Latin America today there are thousands of Indians forced to live as marginals in their own territories and in urban centers; others whose lives have been disrupted by persecution and repression; and still thousands of others who live in involuntary exile. All these Indians have lost their culture as a "whole social process in which men define and shape their whole lives" (Williams 1977:108). What they share, is the lack of a material basis for that culture to be fully realized as social practice. The denial to Indians of their full status as "citizens", or even as "persons" in the bourgeois sense, continues to be part of the

White dominant ideology as justifications to deprive them of their land. The awareness Indians have of this process is obvious in this quote from a Venezuelan, Piara Indian:

"The conquerors and colonizers who wish to snatch away our lands have to convince themselves that Indians are not real people. It is for this reason that the Piara say: You cannot defend the right to land without defending the right to culture and life. But there is no right to life and culture without lands. And so it is for this reason that land is so important - because in it rests life, and from it alone has risen our culture, our own civilization, our rights to language and our exchanges with other peoples and different cultures" (IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):68, emphasis in the original).

One of the main objectives of Colonial policies - which did not change substantially under Republican regimes - was to break down this indigenous bond between territory and social organization in order to dissolve the native groups, and to turn their members into an available labor force. Lands inhabited by native peoples were declared "no-man's lands" (tierras de nadie) or "public lands" (tierras baldias) and sovereignty was assigned over those territories according to the interests of the rulers. This form of expropriation continues into the present: the discovery of mineral wealth, the expansion of communications, the development of industrial technology, in sum, the expansion of monopoly capitalism are the new factors in the policies responsible for depriving the indigenous communities of the autonomy they once enjoyed. Nowadays, governments can manipulate population statistics to "prove" that a particular region is "underpopulated", without undertaking the more difficult task of calculating how much land is actually needed by the present and future native populations of those regions if they are to continue to have viable productive and cultural organizations of their own. This is a particularly urgent need in Amazonia, where colonization laws now allow the national States to grant alleged "public lands" to White and Mestizo colonists without much consideration for the native peoples' right to their aboriginal lands.

Throughout the history of Latin America, the right to re-occupy their original territories has been won by the native peoples through rebellions, warfare and land invasions. Certainly, some native groups have not abandoned this form of struggle. However, both the successful consolidation of State domination into the previously marginal areas of most Latin American countries, and the increasing presence of multinational corporate entities in those same regions, impel Indian people to confront these powers in the legal arena. Property titles, for



instance, become essential in the increasingly frequent legal battles native organizations have to fight against powerful multinational corporations. Juan Carlos Morales, a native of Costa Rica and ex-president of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples recently made the point at the United Nations in Geneva, that the lack of appropriate documentation to certify legal ownership of tribal lands invites invasions, displacement, and even the destruction of native populations. According to Morales, because the respective Constitutions of the Latin American States are based on Roman law, and in the French and North American Constitutions, they ignore the rights of the legitimate owners of the territory before the conquerors arrived (Kipu 1984 (15):9).

In the Ecuadorean body of law, for example, there are no specific provisions dealing with the situation of native populations. The Constitution, the Law of National Security, the Penal Code, and even the Law of Agrarian Reform and Colonization ignore the reality of the multi-ethnic composition of Ecuador (Comisión Económica de Derechos Humanos 1984: pp.104-105). Abstract equality before the law is guaranteed in the Constitution, but that form of equality does not ensure the rights of the Indian groups to be different nor does it protect their specific ethnic identities under the law.

Even in cases when specific laws are enacted to secure land and land titles for indigenous communities, politicians, landowners and State bureaucracies often connive to deny the Indians rightful protection under those laws. This point can be illustrated with the case of Paraguay. In the 1970's, national and international organizations denounced the abuses being committed against the Paraguayan Indians (genocide against the Aché was the most well known case). To appease the international scandal, in 1981, the State passed Law #904/81 the "Estatuto de las Comunidades Indígenas" to provide land and land titles to more than 200 Indian communities (with a total population of around 100,000). In the two years since this law was enacted, only two indigenous groups have received land, and no communities have received titles (Cultural Survival Quarterly 1983 (7) 4:56). Bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of funds, and the power of large ranchers and plantation owners who resent any form of expropriation by the State, seem to be responsible for this situation. The enactment of laws is no guarantee that the Indians' rights are going to be respected, because in Paraguay - as in other Latin American countries - they are not considered legally responsible persons by their own governments. The Instituto Paraguayo del Indígena (IPI) created also in 1981, within the Ministry of Defense, has not published the law in any of the Indian languages. Furthermore, despite repeated attempts

by Guaraní and Aché communities to get land titles, the IPI has decided "for their own good" that it will not title land to Indians because, "it might exacerbate factional disputes within communities" (Ibid.:57). The implementation of the law by the IPI, and the paternalistic arrogance of their excuses, not only ignores the Indians' desire for land, but also their right to autonomy and self-determination. Some Indian groups, intimidated by an unfriendly government bureaucracy conveniently located in the Ministry of Defense have abandoned title claims because they are perceived as politically dangerous, or have resorted to buying land. Therefore - as Holland notes - "Indians (are) forced to compete in the market place for land that was effectively stolen from them in the recent past" (Holland 1984:38).

Often, non-government groups working among the Indians equally disregard their traditional relationship with the land. Also in Paraguay, for instance, the South American Missionary Society has designed a settlement project for the Chaco Indians which could provide some economic security for their families. However, the emphasis is on individual titles and, if implemented as planned, this programme would ultimately destroy the communal basis of Indian society (Holland 1984:37). The ideological background of this project, designed by U.S. missionaries "for" the Indians, is the belief that the only possible incentive the Indians will have to work, would be that of "securing their own private homestead". In fact, most Latin American States have promoted the expansion of forms of production based on small or medium size individually owned plots, underestimating or disregarding as "non-productive" or "irrational" the communal forms of property and labor which are an integral part of the cultural patrimony of indigenous peoples. Consequently, these State and private policies undermine not only the Indians' right of subsistence from their own land, but they also violate deep philosophical principles of the Indians' world view, as it is evident from this quote referring to the Paí Tavyterá, one of the seventeen distinct indigenous groups which still exist in Paraguay:

"Land is held in common, and is the principal means of production granted by the Creator-God, to be used according to divine laws. The Paí Tavyterá Indians refuse even to consider the purchase of water or land, since neither can be privately owned... To purchase land therefore, would be the equivalent to buying a man... The land and the human body are one and the same thing, since once the Soul leaves the body it converts into soil. Thus 'we are at once the land, our ancestors, and our children'" (quoted in Holland 1980:204).

Indian people have been willing to sell their labor power whenever necessary and, especially, if cash wages could be used to

secure land and thus reproduce their way of life. However, in all the Americas, indigenous groups are strongly resisting the commodification of their land precisely because land is the basis of a dialectical relationship between production of resources and production of cultural meaning. One of the general resolutions in the last World Congress of Indigenous Peoples (Sept. 22-30, 1984) states that separating indigenous people from the land is "a form of repression" because "for many (of them) land is the seat of spirituality... the historical record of a people, the provider of food, clothing and shelter (and the) hope of the generations to follow" (IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):125).

At the present time, the demands of the Andean Highland groups over land rights concentrate on the effective implementation of the Agrarian Reform laws with the participation of the Indigenous Peasant Organizations in the appropriate decision making bodies. After 20 years or more of the enactment of Agrarian Reform Laws that have been partially implemented or not at all, the Andean Indians demand the right of self-determination by electing their own representatives to those bodies (Mesias Tatamuez, Ecuadoran peasant leader, Kipu 1984 (15):2). The exercise of this political right is perceived as the only guarantee of equity in the distribution of land, and of obtaining access to credit and technical assistance.

In Chile, the proud and independent Mapuches, who successfully resisted the Inca Empire and the Spanish expansion into their territory until the end of the XIX century, are at present seriously threatened by Pinochet's military dictatorship. The small gains that the Mapuches made during Allende's Popular Unity government in terms of recovering land and confirming their communal landholdings have all been reversed. In 1979, the Pinochet regime enacted the openly ethnocidal Decree law 2568 "for the division of the Reserves and the liquidation of the Indian communities" (quoted in Survival International News 1984 (7)). In an attempt to fight against the division of the Reserves, the leaders of AD-MAPU - the organization representing the majority of Mapuches - have made their demands public and have joined other groups in opposing Pinochet's regime. This resistance has been met with a systematic policy of government harassment and repression against Mapuche leaders and their organizations.

The right of Amazonian groups to land, already trampled by badly planned national colonization and development, is being increasingly threatened by foreign investment and exploitation of primary resources. The Indians oppose an "open door" policy of foreign investment because it frequently leads to the progressive expulsion of native groups from their territory, and it brings in diseases, alcoholism and prostitution. Indigenous organizations are concerned that, in responding to pressures of the

International Monetary Fund and other international organizations to pay their onerous foreign debts, the Latin American governments are going to embark in a hasty exploitation of their natural resources - particularly lumber and gold in Amazonia - with little consideration for the ecology, or the native peoples bound to be affected. Thus, the president of the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuadorean Amazon, recently denounced a multinationally funded project for the production of African palm which will negatively affect more than 40 indigenous communities in the North Amazonian region of Ecuador. In Peru, Evaristo Nuqukuq, the president of the Aguarunas, criticized Belaunde's government for repealing the law that guaranteed land titles to Amazonian Indians in order to "make exploitation of this region more attractive for foreign capital" (Kipu 1984 (15): 24). Both Venezuela and Brazil are confronted with massive foreign debts which have already led to an intensified search for primary resources. The new gold rush in the Brazilian Amazon is due, in part, to the increasing unemployment and social problems prevalent in the cities, which drive more and more poor people into Amazonia. Gold mines presently endanger the Cintas Largas Indians in Aripuna Park (Survival International News 1983 (1)). Recently, a decree by the Brazilian president has allowed mining on Indian lands and the use of Indians as labor (Schwartzman 1984: 81). The Waimiri and Atriori tribes of Northern Brazil are being threatened with extinction by another government decree which denies them sovereignty over their territory and supports tin mining by a powerful Brazilian corporate group. This is being done with the collaboration of FUNAI, the government organization whose official mandate is to defend indigenous rights (see Survival International News 1983 (3)). These same conditions apply to many other indigenous groups, the only difference among them is the particular resource being exploited in their respective areas. In Venezuela, the end of the oil bonanza has stimulated a number of rich city dwellers and corporations to invest in mining adventures in the interior (Colchester 1984:85). A similar situation is developing in Ecuador. In all the Amazonian Basin, hydroelectric projects, cattle ranching, logging, and giant commercial agricultural projects are equally threatening to even larger numbers of native inhabitants.

Government authorities are slow and reluctant in protecting Indian communities against any corporate interests involved in the development of Amazonia. However, when Indians organize to defend their rights against this type of "progress", they are regarded as "savages", "wild", and "fierce", by both the government and the media (Testimony by an Amarakaeri Indian from the Peruvian

Department of Madre de Dios. Survival International News 1983 (3)). All these accusations, of course, help to feed the national negative stereotype about Amazonian Indians which, in turn, contributes to the denial of their rights as citizens. Furthermore, foreign investment in the development of Amazonia is often accompanied by the militarization of the region, imposing more restrictions on the natives' rights to the free use of their own territory. It is a well known fact that today, the militarization of international borders means internal divisions and harassment for indigenous groups (i.e. the case of the Miskitos between Nicaragua and Honduras, and the Shuars between Peru and Ecuador). Besides, open discrimination against Indians is a frequent practice in "strategic colonization" projects developed by the army in border militarized zones, where land is offered to White and Mestizo colonists and where indigenous peoples are systematically excluded.

In countries such as Venezuela, Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, presently governed by Western-style democracies, the military ideology suspects Indian people of being a "security risk" or "a threat to national sovereignty". The apparent rationalizations for these views are, with regard to the first, the fact that Indian groups maintain kinship ties across arbitrarily imposed international borders. With respect to the second, the governments' misapprehensions that the Indians' demands for self-management and self-determination would mean the establishment of some kind of independent republics in the native territories. There is little evidence to sustain the military's suspicion that in case of international wars the Indians will put kinship ties above national interests or that they will betray their country. Principle 16, in the "Declaration of Principles of Indigenous Rights" (enacted in the 4th General Assembly of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples), makes the Indians' point of view on this matter quite clear:

"Indigenous peoples have the right, in accordance with their traditions, to move freely and conduct traditional activities and maintain kinship relationships across international boundaries" (IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):130).

The Indians find at least "curious" that, in the national ideology, they are at the same time rhetorically defined as "the first and most legitimate inhabitants of the Nation" and the first to be suspected of "selling their interests to foreign invaders", or of "becoming violent because there are Communists behind us". The Indians' own understanding is that for over the last five hundred years they have been the first to oppose foreign

invaders to their territories (see Venezuelan, Piara Indian statement in IWGIA Newsletter 1984 (40):70-72).

In Guatemala, a country dominated by successive military dictatorships obsessed with "world Communist conspiracies", the situation for the indigenous people is even more critical, as it was mentioned in the introduction. Every Indian is almost automatically considered a "subversive" and, therefore, a legitimate target for elimination by the army. In Guatemala, - as Holland (1984: 105-106) and others have noted - their distinctive costumes turns them into easily identifiable targets. Through a training program which, judging by the final results, one can describe as "destructive ethnography", the army was teaching its conscripts to identify Indian villages by the distinctive costumes of their inhabitants. Consequently, like in El Salvador after the peasant massacre of 1932, the Guatemalan Indians are abandoning their traditional dress, another precious source of their ethnic identity. It is a sad paradox that in some Andean countries such as Ecuador, many urban Indian leaders and intellectuals are again wearing their native costumes as a defiant expression of pride in their origins, and as a political affirmation of hope in a new dignified life, while in Guatemala the Indians have to abandon it to escape identification and death.

Even when parks, reserves, or Protectorate Zones are set aside for Indian people, no security is guaranteed to them, since the State's goals of development at all costs prevail over native rights. The case of the Xingu national Park in Brazil, criss-crossed by the Trans-Amazonian highway is the most well known example, but the same is happening in other places as well. Stephen Corry of Survival International has stated in relation to the Waorani of Ecuador: "It has been suggested that the real purpose of these 'conservation zones' is to prevent settlers from entering areas so that, when extractive industries (such as oil companies) wish to exploit them, they do not have to face the complicated task of removing the settlers first. Are they zones for conserving nature or oil company profits?" (Survival International News 1983 (1)). Schwartzman makes a similar argument for the case of Indian lands in Brazil. There, powerful federal government agencies, backed by the local police and the military, seem to be using the demarcation of Indian lands as an excuse to settle conflicting commercial claims among state, federal and private interests (Cultural Survival Quarterly 1984 (8): 80-81). Several analysts have recently pointed out that many reserves have had their original purposes distorted by turning native peoples into tourist attractions (see Cultural Survival Quarterly (8) 3).

## The right to cultural identity and self-dignity

### 1. The "noble savage" image

I have already examined some aspects of the way in which the dominant ideology about the Indians help in undermining their rights. Tourism has contributed to highlight some of these negative consequences. Tourism to the last frontiers, which until recently had been left as refuges for the native peoples, is becoming a multimillion dollar industry. Pushed out from their lands, enclosed in 'reserves', deprived of their traditional subsistence, some Indian groups have become dependent on the tourists' handouts, and are being subjected to grievous indignities. The last 617 members of the Maka tribe of Paraguay, for example, live in 335 hectare reserve, ironically in front of Asuncion's Botanical Gardens. A daily newspaper advertise them as "an extraordinary tourist attraction" (Quoted in Holland 1980: 18). As Holland noted in his diary, in order that the tourist "can confirm on film that he has tamed and touched the noble savage", "the Maka teenage girls strip off their T-shirts and pose, together with their parents, wearing the gaudiest of feather head-dresses, their faces daubed with lipstick warpaint" (Ibid.). The Indians are packaged in attractive ways by the new "ethnotourist" industry. They have become commodities, and picture tours continuously violate their right to privacy and the sacredness and secrecy of their religious and shamanic ceremonies. The frustrated and, often enraged, face of an Indian woman turning away from the camera is a common sight in the peasant markets of Latin America. The tourists alternate between their contempt or uninformed pity for the reality of the Indians, and a fascination for a close look at an idealized noble savage. What the tourists really get are fake hollow masks, because the material basis for those Indian cultures to flourish have already been destroyed.

In Brazil, postcards of happy looking Indians in the Xingu Park, painted and traditionally ornamented, decorate the tourist shops. For almost five years now, the Xingu Indians have violently objected to that image of themselves, and have denounced the allegedly "idyllic" nature of their reservation. In June 1983, they confiscated a plane that had landed illegally in their park, and demanded improved health care, competent management by FUNAI, and the resolution of long standing land claims (Cultural Survival Quarterly 1983 (8) 4:58).

How dangerous and misleading can these distorted images of the noble (or ignoble) savage become in real everyday life? The most recent example that can be cited is the report by the Vargas Llosa Commission of inquiry set up to investigate the death of eight journalists in the Indian community of Uchuraccay in the

Huanta province of Ayacucho. In his article for The New York Times Magazine (1983), Vargas Llosa characterizes the Iquichano people allegedly guilty of the deaths, as "isolated from the rest of Peru", "violent in temperament", "defenders of their customs and haters of outsiders", while the killings of the journalists were described as having "magical and religious overtones" with the wounds on the corpses being "ritualistic". Certainly, this kind of stereotyped reporting - presenting the Iquichano as a group of "ignorant and therefore less responsible savages" - coming from a famous White novelist legitimized by the government, does not help to understand a very complex situation of Andean Indian peasants caught in a guerrilla war. The Amnesty International report was critical of the Vargas Llosa Commission's results, and intended to set the record straight by drawing attention to the "savagery" of the security forces who set up and encouraged the Indian community patrols to kill all strangers arriving by road (Amnesty International report, quoted in IWGIA Newsletter 1983 (35-36):172-173). In Peru, the controversy over this case still continues. The army has been responsible for thousands of deaths and disappearances; some indigenous organizations continue to condemn the Shining Path guerrillas for their destructive actions in the Indian communities; and tourism to "isolated" Highland and Amazonian villages is still thriving.

## 2. Missionaries and the Indians' rights

The images through which the Indians see themselves as depicted by others for outside consumption, is not an exclusive problem of the Amazonian groups. In the Highlands of Ecuador, for instance, missionary organizations such as World Vision have been the object of recent complaints and denunciations by the Indigenous Peasant Federations. Why an agency which claims to be non-evangelical and concerned with the Indians' welfare and community development projects, can be the object of criticism and rejection by the alleged beneficiaries? How and why do these agencies violate the Indians' human rights? Blanca Chancoso, coordinator of the Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador comments on World Vision's foster parent plan by which Indian children get "adopted" by foster parents in North America. "In order to qualify you have to prove you are poor, you have to show off your poverty, this in itself is humiliating" ... "They (World Vision) are interested in pictures of misery, of dejected people with their faces covered with flies. They exhibit the misery of our countries spending 30% of their budget on television advertisements, just as if they were selling shampoo" (Quoted in IWGIA 1983 (34): 57). The commodity being sold here is not exoticism but poverty.



Even if some of these missionaries and foreign aid agencies were interested in dealing with the real causes of poverty, these would be difficult to photograph. Television, or the instant camera are not well suited to portray complex structural factors. What appeals to the donor or potential foster parent is the "cute" picture of an individual child, or the "instant" and the "dramatic", not a long history of everyday life drudgery and oppression. The result is misery pornography. From the receiver's point of view - in this case the Indians - the outcome is degrading and false. It de-contextualizes the problem of their poverty, whose causes lie with unjust landtenure structures, and hundreds of years of discrimination and neglect by the national States. These types of "band-aid" projects, which incorporate the North American notion of solving social problems by distributing money to individuals, help to create a "hand-out mentality" among the Indians, and to maintain the White dominant ideology by implicitly portraying the Indians as irresponsible parents or, at least, as helpless victims.

The Indigenous federations see World vision's presence and other similar projects by fundamentalist North American Missionary agencies, as an attack on their own cultural identity. In order to better understand these clashes between the indigenous peoples' rights and what the missionaries regard as their duties one has to probe a bit further into the specific ideologies behind the missionaries' policies, and their incompatibility with some fundamental principles of the Indians' world view, their social organization and vision of their own progress and development. Most North American Evangelical missions take with them, wherever they go, their own values of individualism, a Protestant ethic of work, and a clear separation between religion and politics. Their unreflected ideological premises of self-help and self-improvement permeate their aid and development policies. The stress on individualism is regarded by the Indigenous Federations as a direct attack on the rank and file communal organizations. The missions usually ignore them, and work with smaller groups of converts. This reinforces the already existing divisions between Catholics and Protestants, and creates an atmosphere of submission and apathy which, of course, the organizations see as dampening the development of indigenous protest movements. World Vision for instance, disregards these political implications; the Indians on their part demand their rights to political self-determination to be respected (Kipu 1984 (10): 19; IWGIA Newsletter 1983 (34):58, 66). Because fundamentalist missionaries tend to dismiss most aspects of indigenous cultures, they believe that the Indians' traditional production patterns do not make them "useful" or

"productive" citizens of the national society. The Indians cannot but notice the contradiction of adhering to the values and habits of a hard working proletariat in a society which destroys their resources and does not offer them significant employment opportunities. As Colchester notes in relation to the New Tribes Mission's work among indigenous groups in Venezuela: "The notion of self-determination held by the missionaries for the Indians implies nothing more than rigid conformity to a narrow system of values of fundamentalist criollo life-style. Self-development is synonymous with total acculturation and integration" (Colchester 1984: 129). Specific accusations against the negative impact of certain missions or development agencies on the Indian communities are important for the people involved, but can sometimes be too easily dismissed by the agencies claiming that they do not accurately reflect their general objectives or performance. The real problem is that the two sides represent two fundamentally different concepts about how society can be organized and how it should be changed.

### 3. The right to cultural autonomy and self-determination

The oppositional ideology being developed by the Indigenous organizations centers in the newly coined concept of "ethnodevelopment." Ethnodevelopment is defined as "the exercise of the social capabilities of an ethnic group to build a future, making use of the teachings of their own historical experience, and of the actual and potential resources of their own culture, in agreement with a project defined according to their own values and aspirations" (Quoted in Kipu 1983 (4):8). Indigenous culture is not considered static but, on the contrary, capable of generating autonomous innovations and creativity as well as being flexible enough to integrate positive values from other cultures. "Innovation and tradition are not contradictory tendencies in the reality of the indigenous nationalities" (Ibid.). Ethnodevelopment seems to constitute the dynamic core of the concept of "indigenous nationalities." According to recent statements by two Ecuadorean Indian leaders, "indigenous nationality" is not an anti-patriotic concept, nor a separatist one in political terms. All the Indians of Ecuador recognize themselves as citizens with the same rights and duties as any other Ecuadorean, but they fight for a multi-ethnic, multicultural State. As Indian citizens they demand equality, but reject cultural homogeneity under White domination. "Any form of integration must be a mutual one, the Whites and Mestizos should also learn to respect our culture, religion, and history, as we have come to learn theirs. Otherwise, integration is unilateral" (A. Viteri, Canelos Quichua

from Ecuador quoted in Kipu 1983 (4):5). Up to now, integration has always been unilateral because the dominant ideology has carefully chosen certain symbols, meanings, values, and practices from indigenous cultures to be incorporated into the national culture, and has discarded others. It has also deliberately dismissed, neglected, or selected for inclusion into the national historical heritage those aspects of Indian histories which confirmed whichever happened to be the current hegemonic structure.

The right to ethnodevelopment is closely tied to the right to a cultural identity. However, the question is being asked: which one is the indigenous culture that should be respected (see Bonfil Batalla 1984). After almost 500 years of domination there are no pristine indigenous cultures and, furthermore, indigenous societies are not homogenous. Internally, different individuals and groups represent different religions and political ideologies. The work of formulating a counter-hegemonic discourse is therefore a complex one, subject to contemporary power structures, political pressures, internal limitations, and diverse outside influences. It implies a historical examination of the traditions and the changes experienced by the different Indian groups. Obviously, some meanings and practices are reclaimed, others discarded. This process is not devoid of conflict, but it seems to be moving towards the recovery of an autonomous culture, free of imposed and alienating cultural forms. To develop this culture, the Indians demand a degree of independent decision making power, the material base to be able to carry through these decisions, and a forum for their effective political participation. Only when the State allows native peoples those conditions, they consider it will respect their human rights to a meaningful way of life.

The right to "be ourselves"

"I cannot defend myself in front of a judge in my own language. Then, what rights do I really have? (Ampam Karakras, Shuar leader from Ecuador, quoted in Kipu 1983 (4): 5).

Bilingualism in the courts and at all levels of the educational system, is a long way off in the Latin American countries. The native peoples are still defending a more basic right "to be themselves." One important symbol of the denial by the State of indigenous cultural identity is the proscription to use Indian names for their children. The fact that they have to choose from a list of Spanish names is a continuous reminder of their colonial past (Kipu 1984 (8):2). In South American countries such as Chile and Argentina, with predominantly White populations, the issue of human rights is usually discussed in

terms of individual rights. When Indians speak of human rights, they refer to their rights as specific cultural groups with their own languages and histories (Kipu 1983 (4): 1). Some States do not acknowledge these rights, neither in practice, nor in law. The most blatant case that can be mentioned in this respect is that of Brazil. Recently, the government has presented for congressional approval a new civil code that proposes to downgrade the status of Indians from "relatively incapable" (i.e., requiring an Indian agency to assist them), to "absolutely incapable." This new status will deny the Indians the possibility to be assisted by the Indian agency, and they would be deemed incapable of formulating their own views on their own interests. The State would be legally entitled to speak for the Indians on all matters. At the same time, the government has another project before congress which, in contradiction with the previous one, proposes the compulsory "emancipation" of the Indians from their status as wards of the State. As has been indicated by Robin Wright, with this law, the State intends to relinquish all responsibility vis à vis the Indians (Wright 1984: 78). In the words of a Brazilian Indian leader: "It (this law) would take away from us all possibilities and every weapon we have to protest the infringement of our rights" (quoted in Wright Ibid.). The dilemma of the Brazilian Indians symbolizes for all other Latin American Indians the difficult struggle still to be fought: the recognition of their right to be a people. For some of them, the main issue debated in the controversy between Las Casas and Sepúlveda is not a thing of the past.

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**“I ONLY THOUGHT OF RUNNING AWAY”: AN AMAZONIAN WOMAN’S STORIES  
ABOUT MARRIAGE AND ITS IMAGERY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Through the life-history narrative of a Napo Quichua woman from the Ecuadorian Amazon, this essay deals with the institution of marriage, primarily through the eyes of women. It focuses on this gifted storyteller's multiple discourses of identity, and on her memories of colonialism to explore how women have translated and internalized Roman Catholic missionaries' ideology on marriage and the meanings they derive from its relations with contemporary secular practices.*

[Ecuadorian Amazon, indigenous women's life histories, marriage, missionaries, women's identities]

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It is 1941 and the world is at war. Hidden behind a tree in the tropical forest of Amazonian Ecuador, a beautiful ten year old girl is afraid something terrible is going to happen to her, but she still doesn't know what. She has been sent away from the house, but she doesn't realize it is because her future in-laws have come to her house to ask for her hand in marriage. Soon she will be forced to leave the comforting world she has known and the refuge of her mother's love. She has no understanding of a foreign war or of the search for oil and rubber in her own land that is helping to fuel it. But these large events, however indirectly, played a role in this indigenous girl's

life and they appear as shadows and as haunting memories in several of the stories that now, as a mature woman, she tells about her life. The story of her arranged marriage is the one I have chosen to analyze in this paper.

In the period of the many years I have known Francisca,<sup>1</sup> the narrator, she has described to me several times, and always in vivid detail, this crucial event in her life-history. Moreover, in the process of explaining its meaning for her own life in the present, for that of her daughters, and not least for my own intellectual instruction and enjoyment as a listener, Francisca has felt the need to tell many other stories about marriage. Some are based on the rich traditional lore of her culture, on her own dreams and experiences, and others on the equally lustrous imagery of the Roman Catholic tradition, as it was translated to her by her elders, and as she herself reinterprets it with the skills of an accomplished theologian. I will share these stories with the reader at my own pace in the course of this paper, whose main objective is to make sense of the important institution of Napo Quichua marriage, primarily through the eyes of women.<sup>2</sup>

The version of Francisca's life-history narrative I will present here is the last one she narrated in 1996 while trying to explain to me her feelings of anguish over the ongoing problem of her youngest daughter's extremely abusive husband, and her misgivings about her youngest son's recent marriage to a non-indigenous woman. Both the increasing incidence of domestic violence among young married couples, and the problems created by new forms of inter-ethnic marriages, are just two of the many social changes the Napo Quichua, as well as other indigenous peoples in the Ecuadorian Amazon, are experiencing while they are yet again forced to redefine their own identities as they get incorporated further into the new modernity brought about by a globalized cultural economy. Although Francisca's story was delivered as one narrative unit, for the purpose of the analysis I will divide it into separate

themes and intertwine it with her own "explanatory" tales.

### **Portrait of the storyteller in its larger framework**

The Napo Quichua (who call themselves Napo Runa, or just Runa), belong to a long-established tropical forest culture of the Ecuadorian Amazon that they share in different degrees with thousands of other lowland Quichua. Traditionally all Napo Quichua were hunter-gatherers and swidden horticulturalists. Through the four hundred years of their contacts, first with the Spanish conquistadors, and later with the national society, they have adapted their subsistence strategies to deal with labor tribute, gold panning, and rubber tapping under an exploitative system of debt-peonage controlled by traders and patrons. This system came to an end by the middle of this century, but since then the Runa have accommodated and resisted large scale "modernizing" changes brought about by continued colonization, oil exploration, small-town urban growth, and the consolidation of the power of the state in the whole Amazon region, known as the Oriente. In the 1990s, the international concern with the fate of the Amazon rainforest has brought many foreign environmentalists and ecotourists into this area. Just a few marriages between Napo Quichua women and men to these foreigners have been enough to cause grave concern among indigenous women, and to provide a juicy topic for endless gossip and for more serious discussions about marriage practices.

Although the Napo Quichua had occasional contacts with the different priests that accompanied the Spanish conquistadors since the sixteenth century, and with the Jesuit Order since the seventeenth century, the present indigenous oral tradition about Christianity goes back to the last decades of the nineteenth century when the Jesuits, along with the Good Shepherd nuns, established a mission in the Tena-Archidona area until 1896, when they were expelled by a Liberal



government. In 1922 the Catholic Josephine Order, in collaboration with Dorothean and Murialdin nuns, founded a mission in Napo Quichua territory that remains to this day. Five years later, a few Evangelical Protestants entered the Amazon area and aggressively competed with the Catholic orders. Since then, the number of different Evangelical sects active in this area continues to increase, although their success in making new converts is not highly significant.

Francisca is a woman in her 60s, in her culture already considered a *rucumama*, or respected elder. Her husband is still alive, and of her three married daughters and two married sons she has now more than 22 grandchildren. She identifies herself with the other Quichua speakers from the Pano River area, which includes the small town of the same name located just a few kilometers from Tena, the capital of Napo province. In earlier times, several residential groups composed of a number of overlapping stem kindreds, known as *muntuns*, and usually named after a dominant male figure, would live together in clusters of houses in one settlement. In the last thirty years or so, due to out-migrations, land scarcity, and other factors such as an increasing preference for neolocal post-marital residence, there has been a tendency for atomization of these groups into smaller residential units whose composition varies considerably. By separating themselves into various settlements along the upper Napo River and its tributaries, the different *muntuns* acquired some distinctive cultural and linguistic features, which in time developed into mutual stereotyping and minor competitive rivalries, some of which become particularly accentuated and open in occasions of inter-*muntun* marriages, as was Francisca's, whose husband comes from the area of Archidona, the second most important town in this area.

The Napo Quichua reckon kinship bilaterally and, following Spanish custom, a child inherits both parents' last names. However, women depart from that custom by not changing their

names after marriage. The main kinship unit, the *ayllu*, may be defined as a social category composed of three-generation extended families. All members of the *ayllu* are considered consanguines, but in individual cases, distinctions are made between close or "true" consanguines (*quiquin ayllu* or *ayllu pura*) and distant ones (*caru ayllu*). The *ayllu* is the institution that establishes the boundaries of marriage regulations, which generally prohibit unions with close kin, and specifically, with all those classified in the first cousin class, known by the Spanish term as *primos-hermanos*. The early and persistent influence of Christianity on the Napo Quichua may be the obvious origin of this all inclusive taboo, since the Canelos Quichua, along with many Ecuadorian Amazonian groups, show a preference for cross-cousin marriage (see Whitten 1984, for the Canelos Quichua; Taylor 1983 for the Jivaroan groups; Rival 1996 for the Huaorani). Once a marriage has taken place, the parents of the bride and groom may reciprocally and respectfully refer to each other as *auya* (affines). However, because of the traditional preference for virilocal residence, a woman who becomes a *cachun* (daughter-in-law) is primarily treated as a subordinate Other by her in-laws and is required to show her respect by strict adherence to an asymmetrical kin-address etiquette, while the rules for the son-in-law (*masha*) are considerably more flexible.<sup>3</sup>

The ethnohistorical sources (Dickey 1924; Jouanen 1977; Orton 1876; Rice 1903; Porras Garcés 1955; Villavicencio 1984; Wavrin 1948.) provide ample evidence to confirm that, even before the Jesuits arrived in the Tena-Archidona area for the second time, the Napo Quichua had been at least nominally Christianized, were monogamous, and had a form of arranged marriage with virilocal residence that was similar in its structure and process to the one described by Francisca. In the oral tradition, these customs were used by the Napo Quichua to distinguish

themselves from other Amazonian groups such as the Zaparos, Achuar, and Shuar, considered "savages" because "they had many wives," although there is ethnographic and historical evidence of Napo Quichua inter-marriage with Zaparos and Canelos Quichua (see Muratorio 1991; Whitten 1984). The practice of brother-sister exchange marriage may have been quite common three generations ago. Hudelson (1981) reports it as a preferred form of marriage in the regions of Avila and Loreto, also in the Napo province, and there were a few cases in the area of Tena-Archidona around fifteen years ago. Celibacy is still considered an anomaly, although with more frequency now, young unwed mothers are found living with their parents without major conflicts since, unlike national custom, their children are easily incorporated into the family unit.

As in many other Amazonian, and Andean societies, (Shapiro 1984:26; Millones and Pratt 1990:18 ) traditional arranged marriage among the Napo Quichua entailed several stages in a process that could take two to three years to be completed. Its distinctiveness lay in the ritual involved in each of these stages, and especially in the elaborate character and symbolism of its wedding ceremony (*bura*). Even today, when traditionally arranged marriages are rare, and when some of its stages have disappeared altogether, the *bura*, in whatever new clothes, remains a reality for those who can afford its onerous costs.<sup>4</sup> It also continues to be an ideal couples and their families hope for, even after they may already have several children, and have gone through a civil and a Church ceremony. In an era of increasing inter-ethnic marriages, this outstanding characteristic of Napo Quichua wedding rituals singles them out as highly desirable marriage partners for other indigenous groups such as the Huaorani (Rival 1996:179-180). Paradoxically, very recently, it also has become a source of tension, and conflict, when Napo Quichua women marry otherwise "desirable" partners, such as North Americans or Europeans (locally called

“gringos”), who usually remain ignorant or indifferent to the real meaning and importance of Quichua marriage rituals.

It is not my intention here to look for the “true” origin of this ritual which makes the Napo Quichua rather unique among Amazonian cultures, but through Francisca’s stories, seen in the light of other ethnographic and historical evidence, I would like to explore two main sets of questions that have somewhat been overlooked in the studies of marriage practices in Lowland South America ( Shapiro 1984): the actual lived experiences and views of women, and the ideological impact of Christian missionaries as seen from the native point of view. Because of their early situation of contact and Christianization, the Napo Quichua’s oral tradition offers us a privileged vantage point to look at these issues in some detail. How do women feel about being “exchanged” or “sold” in situations of arranged marriage? How do they conform to or resist their culture and what price do they have to pay for these actions? What memories are transmitted in women’s oral tradition that are different from those of men? What do marriages tell us about the tensions and contradictions within Napo Quichua culture, or about its relationship with the dominant culture? More specifically, how have women translated and internalized into their own cosmology the Christian teachings on marriage and what meanings do they derive from its relations with “secular” practices?.

In dealing with Francisca’s life-history one is poignantly reminded of the already well researched and accepted fact in oral history studies and in cultural psychology, that the “sense of self is an essentially narrative phenomenon” (Stivers 1993:412) and that we construct a meaningful reality by telling stories about ourselves and listening to the stories others make about us. As Clifford Geertz has more elegantly put it, “from birth on we are all active, impassioned ‘meaning

makers' in search of plausible stories..." (1997:24). In the narrative about her arranged marriage, her escape from her affines' residence group, and her final desirable arrangement to live, with her husband, in her parents' house, Francisca shapes her memories of those particular events to forge them into a central element of her sense of identity. She carefully selects characters, scenes, images, and particular moments and emotions to dramatically construct herself as a rebellious persona. Like other more famous romantic heroines, she defies the ordinary, makes difficult cultural choices between forking paths, paying an onerous price for her decision, to finally emerge victorious from her ordeal as a protagonist of her own history. The power of Francisca's uniquely gifted personality shines through the meaning of her words and the tone of her speech, but her story, like those of other storytellers in her own culture, is literally filled with the voices -and silences-<sup>5</sup> of significant others, giving us insights into the fundamental sociality of the self, its situation into multiple discourses of identity (Smith 1993: 396; Moore 1994:140-144), and its immersion into the affectivity of social relations. But Francisca's voice also engages both past and present discourses of dominant others, thus requiring us to contextualize her subjectivity into the larger sociocultural structures and processes that affected her life. ✓

**Francisca's story: Of painful discoveries and betrayal.**

*When they see a girl who likes to carry firewood, to plant gardens, the parents of a man come and say: "This girl is good, I want her for my son." This is how they chose me. My husband's mother chose me. She said I was intelligent, that my parents were from a good muntun, intelligent and hard-working. So must the daughter be. They chose me when my breasts were very small. I lost my wisdom teeth when I was already with husband. I was away with my parents near the river Ansu. There they [her future in-laws] saw me and*

*there my father made the pledge(maquipalabra). They ask him not to give me to anybody else, but my father told them to come to the house for the formal asking, not to make it in a strange place.*

*That is how they came to the house for the tapuna (request), when I was very young. They insisted they wanted a woman from Pano and said they were going to take good care of me. They brought a big roasted monkey and some roasted fish. But my mother said I was still very young and they decided to wait. They kept bringing some food occasionally for a year. When I heard they were coming I always went to hide in the forest until they left. I refused to eat the food. I was afraid they would give me a nickname or make fun of me. I was looking down towards my house hidden behind a tree, and even then, I was thinking of running away. I knew they were talking about me but I didn't know what was going to happen to me.*

*After some time, when I was a bit older, they came to announce they were going to make the pactachina (ceremony for the fulfillment of obligations). The versiaru (drummer and singer) and the tucaru (violin player) came and all of them were dressed for dancing. Women and men came to the door dancing. I looked from my hiding place in the forest. I could see and hear them from there. They asked for permission (licencia) in the name of God. They entered the house and danced there. They shook hands with all the women and men and offered liquor from the big pots (quisas). They drunk all night and the next day they left.*

*Then, after a while they came again, with food, to say they were going to make the bura. They brought fish and game meat. They said: "We will start preparing the wedding; our son is already grown up and we want to give him a woman. We think we can find even a weed in the*

forest. This is what we came to tell you so you can call your people." Then my father said: "It is fine if you say so, but take into account we are not asking for a wedding. If you think your son needs a girl, we only have what we are given to eat and drink." And my mother said: "If you are going to love her, if it is true that your son is not going to beat her, if you are going to teach her well all the things she needs to know to be a woman, then I will give her to you." ✓

They [future in-laws] went hunting, and when they had the meat, they said they were ready to have the wedding, even if didn't know what food and drink they were going to offer. They also promised to go to the godparents' house with a bag (shigra) of meat. My father said to bring asua (manioc beer) and liquor. They said the place to go was in the Ansu. I wondered why they were taking me there. I did not understand anything of what they were doing. I thought that after the wedding they would bring me back home to live with my mother.

Then is when my grandmother, who was called Mariquita, and my grandfather, who was called Domingo, gave me advice saying: "Look little daughter, you are not old, you are just beginning to think a little, your breasts have not begun to show yet. They are giving you to a husband, you have to go with him as your mother asks you. Remember what your mother taught you: There you have to work, cook huayusa tea, clean the house even if you are a child. You have to wake up at night to prepare the huayusa tea, and once you have given it to drink to everyone, you should start cooking the manioc. If there is no food you should give them manioc with chili. You have to look for firewood, for leaves to cover the pots, for reeds to tie the leaves around the pots. You should look for these things everywhere you can. Don't even think you are going to come back home my child. In that far away place you are going to bury your bones, there you are going to die. Now you are released from my hands. I am

*not young to see you again, I am old my child. When you leave my side I am going to die crying. They are taking you to leave you there." I was very, very afraid. I thought I was going to live with my mother. I said in my heart: "I am not going to stay." While my grandmother was giving me advice, I was thinking: "How do I come back? How can I hide from them and return?" When we left home, knowing I wanted to come back, my mother gave me a basket and a baby to carry, so I could not escape on the way. It was very far away. We had to spend the night on the road. Early in the morning we crossed a river and pasture grounds. I said to myself: "Where are they taking me?" and could not stop thinking how to sneak away. I was carefully looking at the road, every detail of it to learn how to return. It was a very wide road built by the [oil] company, full of footprints, of shoes, of cows; all trampled by cattle, full of cattle shoes. The whites used to take out cattle through that road. They used to show me the shoes telling me that those were the ones used by soldiers, so I could recognize the footprints and be afraid of that road. When we were near my mother said: "Do not cry my child, do not be sad; I have brought you this far away; as we *runa* [people] say, I am "selling you," do not try to return because it is very far away. You see this road my child; it is like this because whites and blacks walk through here. It is the soldiers' road. They are going to take you to Quito, to the Coast. If you come back through this road they are going to kidnap you. They are going to give you onions to eat and stinking milk from the cows to drink. Do not try to run away. On the other road the rivers are very strong. You are going to die if you attempt to cross them." When I heard that I tremble with fear. She gave me this kind of advice all the way, but I cried and cried; I was shaking all over. I thought she was going to stay with me as she had promised; I was too young to understand. When I learned they were going to leave*



*me there until my death, I was desperate and then I decided I was not going to stay. They made the bura, and three days later, all the guests left. Only my parents remained for two weeks. My father-in-law brought a fat monkey, but I refused to eat. My husband's sisters took me to the river to bathe. My parents said: "She is getting used to it," but it was not true. They [the in-laws] promised to take me to visit my mother but they lied to me. After a month they had not taken me home. My mother-in-law was fierce. She threw my basket and my machete away so I could not follow her to the garden. She must be burning somewhere, now that she is dead. My father-in-law was good, he must be sitting next to God; he shared his own food with me. He would say to his wife: "You think this girl is old? What did Mariacu [Francisca's mother] told you when she gave her to you? Did you not have brains in your head? Where were your ears then?"*

Francisca starts her story by establishing her flawless kinship credentials and by certifying her meticulous socialization as an ideal Napo Quichua woman by her mother and grandmother (Muratorio 1997). She identifies herself as a woman from Pano, taking for granted that the listener "knows" this muntun as one who "naturally" produces desirable marriage partners. But most importantly, she claims to have inherited from her parents the two character traits most valued in her culture at that time: the reputation of a hardworking woman from her mother, and a critical intelligence and fighting spirit from her father. These two second character traits are not particularly valued by men as attributes of women, nor is it expected of them to be so endowed. By emphasizing these qualities from the start and claiming them as her own, Francisca is already sketching her portrait as a unique individual. She is also setting the scene for explaining, later on in her story, why her resistance to her marriage enabled her to be socialized also by her father, which

is rare for women in her culture, but a memory that Francisca treasures.

At the same time she specifically mentions that her husband's mother is the one who chose her, thus questioning established assumptions about the primary role of men in arranged marriage exchanges. Pano women may be "given away" by fathers or brothers, but they are certainly "assessed" and chosen by women. Napo Quichua women's reputations and sense of selfhood are primarily acquired through work (see Muratorio 1997). Consequently, only a woman is regarded as able to judge accurately and intelligently the subtleties involved in another woman's tasks, especially if she is going to be her daughter-in-law. Ideally, and particularly in cases of arranged marriages when the girl was very young, it was expected that she would be given a piece of land to start her own garden, and tenderly socialized by her mother-in-law in all aspects of women's work, through a smooth transition into her new life as a wife and mother. The reality, of course, is that the relationship between daughters and mothers-in-law is always quite conflictual, especially when the latter sides with her son in cases of marital violence, as it is usually the case. It is precisely because her mother-in-law did not live-up to those expectations as an ideal "affinal mother" to her that Francisca feels so bitter and betrayed about her decisive first few weeks as a new *cachun*. Not only did she have to confront unreasonable violence against her from a mother figure for the first time, but her mother-in-law's lack of generosity and indifference to her duties violated all the teachings of Francisca's mother, and even brought about the criticism of her mother-in-law's own husband, whose very words she remembers so vividly at the end of this section of her story.

Francisca's main regret about her marriage, however, is not about her "villainous" mother-in-law, whom she has conveniently sent to Hell not to see her again, but to have been given away when she was too young to understand or to have a say in the choice of husband. She has often

commented how her early marriage prevented her from going to school and learning to speak and write Spanish. "Otherwise I could have been a lawyer or a doctor," she has said to me many times. This is a complaint I have heard from several other women of Francisca's generation. Rather than having to do with their early marriages, the parents' attitudes about educating their daughters was directly related to their very realistic fear that, if they were sent to the nuns' boarding schools, they could be put to work as domestics in local white households, or even worse sent to Quito to work for whites and be totally lost to their parents. (Goetschel 1996; several documents in AGN). The same fear existed about the possibility that indigenous boys in missionary schools would be conscripted into the army and sent to fight poorly understood wars.<sup>6</sup> Although now primary schooling is compulsory, high school education for girls continues to be a contentious issue between women of different generations, and it still focuses around questions of sexuality and marriage.

The road Francisca and her mother traveled to reach her future husband's house is full of her haunting memories of white colonialism, in the images of the soldiers' and the cattle's footprints, as well as in the foreign and "disgusting" smells and tastes of onions and milk, which then, and even now, evoke the culture of whites. It is the road to violent acculturation that then figures prominently in Francisca's path to resistance. Against the richness of details in each stage of the process leading to her wedding, Francisca's silence about the three days of her wedding ceremony is even more poignant. It signifies her total rejection of her being physically and emotionally transferred into her husband's group and sets the stage for her escape. This is how the core of Francisca's story unfolds:

*I always had my clothes and my blanket in a bag ready to leave. I used to sneak silently*

*behind the house to plan my escape. I only thought of running away. I believed then that I could run like a gazelle, and I did. One day when my mother-in-law was firing some pots, I was going back and forth to the river taking my things one by one to escape. When she asked why I was going up and down I told her I had diarrhea and I needed to go. First I hid the machete and then a basket my father had given me. There I put my blanket, a bit of salt, the little gourd for the huayusa tea and the bowl my mother had given me when I was going to marry. I was of two minds: to escape through the company's road, but I remembered about the soldiers and the blacks and I was very afraid. The other road, had very high hills and many rivers to cross, but I decided to take it. Next morning, when all of them were fast asleep, I started to walk away through the difficult road and run faster and faster. A man helped me to cross the river. I had the basket on my head and the machete in my hand. I was running all the time. I did not stop, only once to see if anybody was following me. I went down a hill and climbed another. I stopped at the Huayusa hill to drink some water and then, after a long, long, walk, I entered my grandfather's land. My grandfather embraced me and cried: "Why have they given my granddaughter like this, so far away? Where are you coming from? How have you done this my child. Weren't you afraid of the puma, of the supais (spirits)?" A road that took three days I had run in only one. When I arrived home my father cried and regretted he had given me so young and so far away. I stayed home for some time, but my in-laws came again to look for me. They brought liquor, fish, and tapir meat, and they took me away. I escaped three times this way. Every time I run away. Up to then I had not slept with my husband.*

→ It is, of course, common and even expected that a girl who is married very young would ✓

cry in protest and try to run away to her mother at least once before she finally conforms and returns to her husband's group (e.g. see Dole 1974:19-29; Århem 1987:134). It is also the case that, despite the preference for virilocal post-marital residence, among the Napo Quichua, uxorilocality existed then as it does now.<sup>7</sup> However, I have not encountered another case in which this form of residence was brought about by a young girl's ultimate defiance of both her affines' and her parents' wishes and social pressures. Francisca simply wore them down by her stubborn resistance to conform to a cultural rule that, most often, puts in-marrying young women, even if temporarily, into the lowest social position in her society. Instead, Francisca forced her own husband to assume a subordinate status in her parents' house, since there was never a chance he would successfully compete for respect, affection, or status with her father, who was a well recognized leader.<sup>8</sup>

Although this crucial section of Francisca's story is full of feelings of bitterness about her lack of choice in controlling these early years of her life, now on hindsight, she sees her choice of resistance as a source of personal and cultural identity. Escaping through the "wild" difficult road rather than walking away more easily along the soldiers' one, symbolizes her determination to remain a Pano woman, even if a rebellious one, and her rejection of the forced path into white acculturation. This is a choice that she reiterates more explicitly when she refuses to go away and be tempted by whites into marriage infidelity. But before we follow Francisca's steps into that adventure, we need to explain the imagery surrounding the importance of arranged marriage in Napo Quichua culture.

### **The importance of marriage: the impossible paradigm**

The regulation and moralizing of the "uncivilized" nature of native sexuality was the



*Está mal*

Figura 4:  
 María Ermelinda. Costumbre indígena. El bautismo del huahua



*Fig 5  
 Según la  
 original*

**de huasicamas y trabajos de la tierra**

'Tiempos pasados' o 'tiempos antiguos' es una categoría que no incluye una secuencia cronológica completa y lineal, concebida en términos de una historiografía occidental, sino que representan una historiografía propiamente indígena que es selectiva, es decir entendida en términos de aquellos 'hitos' o períodos específicos de cambio social (Ver Hill 1988: 7) vividos y sufridos por los pueblos indígenas de la Sierra. Estos hitos históricos se distancian de las vivencias y prácticas del presente y evocan memorias de un pasado compartido: los Incas, la Conquista y la época de explotación en las haciendas.



**Figura 8.**  
Francisco Ugsha Ilaquichi. **La manera de tejer los Incarios**

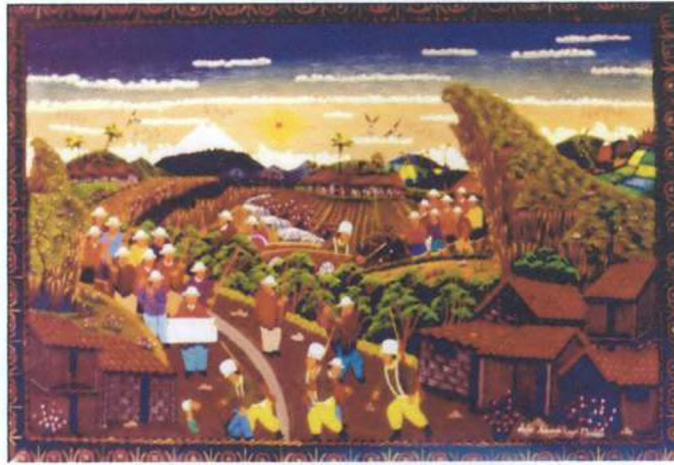


Figura 8  
Francisco Toaquiza. **Historia Antigua. Españoles esclavizan a indígenas**



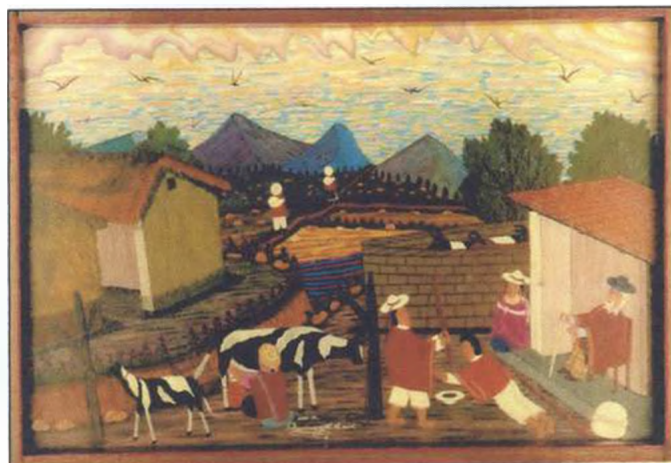


Figura 10  
Francisco Ugsha Ilaquichi. **La manera de tejer los Incarios**

Es interesante señalar aquí, por ejemplo que, más que “revivir el genio de sus antepasados panzaleos” (Ribadeneyra y Casares 1990:22), hecho etnohistórico que no figura en la tradición oral quichua de esta zona, las pinturas sobre los incas incorporan a éstos no como conquistadores, sino como figuras ancestrales de todo el mundo andino, ideología que encaja perfectamente en el ‘presente’ discurso político de las organizaciones indígenas.

Como bien lo ha señalado Portelli (1991), en la memoria social reflejada en la historia oral, los ‘errores cronológicos’, más que la precisión en la evocación de datos históricos, son los verdaderos reveladores de los significados de los procesos sociales que están viviendo en el presente aquellos que recuerdan.

A diferencia de la mayoría de las pinturas sobre los incas que representan el ritual de adoración al sol, la pintura de Francisco Ugsha (Figura 8) es, particularmente, interesante porque incorpora a mujeres incas en la cotidiana tarea del tejido. En esta categoría de ‘tiempos pasados’, incluyo también un marco pintado por Juan Luis Cuyo Cuyo, sobre la

Batalla de Pichincha, que representa a Sucre a caballo, junto con soldados y guerrilleros portando armas contemporáneas con la bandera actual del Ecuador y un león casi mítico mordiendo a la serpiente. La categoría 'tiempos presentes' es, por supuesto, aquella que podría verse como superponiéndose a la de 'pinturas etnográficas', pero aquí quiero hacer una distinción entre tiempo etnográfico entendido en el sentido antropológico tradicional, aunque controvertido, de 'presente etnográfico' (por ejemplo, las pinturas que representan labores agrícolas, casamientos, trabajos artesanales, etc.) y, un 'tiempo presente' que revela la dinámica de las prácticas sociales de la vida indígena actual, inmersas en relaciones políticas de poder y contestación. Con la evidencia recogida hasta el momento, es difícil asegurar si existe un número considerable de pinturas que puedan ser incluidas en esta segunda categoría. Sin embargo, es necesario darles especial atención porque representan algunos de los procesos sociales más importantes que están viviendo los indígenas de Tigua y de todo el Ecuador en este momento histórico: la creciente migración a la ciudad, la modernización, el desarrollo de las áreas rurales y la participación en las distintas protestas y levantamientos indígenas, como el de 1990.

Paet  
pueblos  
colega  
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Ver se  
si se  
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La única pintura que conozco de un paisaje totalmente urbano es el de Umberto Ugchilán y expresa vívidamente la celebración de una adaptación exitosa de los indígenas de Tigua a la vida urbana, a través de la representación de la venta de sus pinturas a los turistas en la feria de El Panecillo.

Lo mejor hay  
q' ver aquí  
si hay  
pueblos de  
este tipo



Figura 11

Umberto Ugchilán. Esta es feria artística indígenas de Tigua en Quito, Panecillo

Según mi opinión, esta es una de las pinturas más, reflexivamente, autobiográfica de todo el conjunto que he analizado. Es como una serie de espejos que, a través de las cámaras fotográficas tanto en mano de los turistas como de otros indígenas presentes en la escena, representa las distintas y complejas miradas interculturales en la vida urbana contemporánea.

Dos pinturas ilustran las relaciones de negociación de los indígenas con el Estado en una política de modernización y desarrollo: una es la de Francisco Ugsha que representa la visita del 'hermano' ex presidente Rodrigo Borja a la comunidad de Tigua Chimbacuyu que lleva la siguiente leyenda: "...esperamos su colaboración para mejorar nuestro taller y para el futuro de nuestros hijos". La otra, es la ya mencionada pintura del mismo autor que representa la presencia de otro ex presidente, Febres Cordero, en la misma comunidad con ocasión de la fiesta de Noche Buena (Ver Fig. 3), visita más formal que la anterior del ex presidente Borja, pero políticamente significativa, desde el punto de vista de una comunidad rural alejada como Tigua. No es usual que este tipo de comunidades reciban visitas presidenciales.

Los cuadros más explícitos sobre la protesta indígena son cuatro o cinco muy semejantes que parece haber iniciado Eduardo Cayo Pilalumbo y que encontré, por primera vez, en la exposición de MOA, aunque ahora también las vende en la feria de El Ejido. Todos los que conozco representan a un grupo de indígenas en el área rural confrontando a un grupo de policías. La pintura en la Figura 12 lleva atrás una narrativa que dice lo siguiente: "Los indígenas vienen de todas las comunidades para luchar por nuestro derecho y por la tierra. El policía maltrata a un dirigente de Tigua".

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Figura 12  
Eduardo Cayo Pilalumbo. **El policía maltrata a un dirigente.**

En un catálogo producido para la exhibición en la sede de la UNESCO, en París en 1997, la curadora Jean Colvin (1997) incluye la reproducción de una interesante pintura de Alfredo Toaquiza titulada “Los chamanes limpian a los diputados indígenas, 1997” que fue realizada para celebrar la elección del primer diputado nacional indígena, Luis Macas, en 1996. En esta pintura, el ícono urbano de El Panecillo, con su grandiosa estatua de la Virgen, es apropiado por el pintor y localizado como imagen central en un paisaje totalmente rural, poblado exclusivamente por indígenas, y coronado por la bandera del arco iris, símbolo por excelencia del movimiento político indígena andino.

En suma, la especificidad histórica de los temas tratados en esta última categoría de pinturas, es una evidencia más de la naturaleza histórica de la cultura indígena y de la creatividad de los artistas que las producen, y sitúa deliberadamente a los campesinos y pintores de Tigua como sujetos de su propia historia.

### **Las mujeres pintoras de Tigua**

Otro cambio importante que se hizo, particularmente, evidente en la exposición de MOA fue el número significativo de artistas mujeres que enviaron sus obras, un 17% de un total de 48 pintores. En las dos obras mencionadas sobre las pinturas de Tigua, escritos en los primeros años de década del 90, se menciona, por un lado, que las mujeres pintan “pero prefieren no aparecer como autoras y sus maridos firman por ellas” (Ribadeneyra Casares, 1990: 32). Y por otro, que “aunque la cooperativa (de Tigua Chimbacuyu) promueve que más mujeres pinten, algunos maridos aún se resisten a que sus esposas tengan un ingreso independiente” (Colvin y Toaquiza s/f). Si bien no tenemos evidencia independiente de estas razones psicológicas o sociales que impiden o impidieron a las mujeres un reconocimiento a su trabajo, mi experiencia pasada confirma el hecho de que las pinturas firmadas por mujeres casi nunca se encontraban en los mercados más tradicionales. De todas las pinturas presentadas en MOA, 18% eran de mujeres y la obra de dos de ellas constituía un 63% del total de la producción femenina de 59 pinturas. Tal vez este último hecho puede explicarse porque una de estas dos mujeres es la esposa de Eduardo Cayo Pilalumbo, quien llevó las pinturas a MOA. Sin embargo, cuando le pregunté sobre el caso, tan intrigante para mí, del número creciente de pinturas hechas por mujeres, su respuesta da una explicación más universalista al fenómeno. De acuerdo a Eduardo, la causa principal reside en el programa de educación de adultos que tuvo lugar en Tigua recientemente y por el cual las mujeres aprendieron a leer y escribir y, por lo tanto, a firmar su propio nombre. No es que antes no produjeran pinturas, sino que ahora las siguen produciendo con la diferencia de que pueden aparecer como sus autoras.

Todavía no dispongo de datos suficientes para analizar si los temas de las pinturas hechas por mujeres, como la de María Ermelinda (Fig.4) difieren significativamente de los representados por los hombres. Sin embargo, el solo hecho de pintar sus memorias culturales y de firmar sus pinturas significa, a mi juicio, una forma en que las mujeres indígenas de Tigua, también, mantienen su identidad cultural a través de expresiones artísticas que son autoetnografías visuales. Además, como se puede observar en El Ejido y a veces en las calles principales de Quito, las mujeres de Tigua han asumido el rol de comerciantes de sus propias pinturas y de la de muchos artistas hombres de varias de sus comunidades. Como otras mujeres indígenas de la Sierra, las de Tigua se han adaptado exitosamente al medio urbano a través de actividades en el sector mercantil de la economía.

## El mercado del arte de Tigua

El mercado del arte de Tigua es un proceso que merece un estudio minucioso. En este trabajo solo plantearé algunas preguntas y me atreveré a hacer unas pocas especulaciones. Si bien las pinturas enmarcadas comenzaron a venderse localmente, a negociantes especializados, hoy han alcanzado un mercado mucho más global, y no sólo porque son compradas por los turistas extranjeros. Las varias exposiciones internacionales ya mencionadas y otras más recientes en Europa (comunicación personal de Eduardo Cayo Pilalumbo), han colocado a estas pinturas en el ámbito del 'arte popular' internacional y han contribuido, significativamente, al alza de sus precios. Sin embargo, según mi conocimiento, no son todavía consumidas por la población indígena ni se las ve expuestas en las casas de la clase media blanco-mestiza, con la excepción de aquellas de algunos intelectuales con interés académico en 'lo popular' o de algunos antropólogos extranjeros (~~entre los cuales me incluyo~~) con especial interés en todas las expresiones culturales indígenas.

Las causas de estas pautas de consumo son obviamente múltiples y complejas. El reducido tamaño de una clase media indígena con suficiente dinero para comprar objetos de consumo superfluo, puede ser una posible explicación. Pero a ésta se podría objetar que aún indígenas pobres consumen objetos considerados 'conspicuos' en el mercado contemporáneo ecuatoriano. ¿Constituyen estas pinturas actos de memoria que los indígenas de clase media prefieren olvidar, o simplemente eligen otras estrategias para expresar memorias culturales compartidas? Por otra parte, el hecho de que la mayoría de la población blanco-mestiza no las aprecie suficientemente como para comprar y exhibir esas pinturas, a diferencia de lo que ocurre con el ya establecido y prestigioso 'arte colonial', o con las pinturas y esculturas de otros artistas ecuatorianos contemporáneos, se debe, a mi entender, a actitudes más profundas de discriminación étnica; a esas categorías sociales y culturales que subyacen en el mercado. Estas actitudes de discriminación estética no se aplican sólo a las pinturas. Se extienden a muchas otras expresiones artísticas indígenas consideradas 'artes menores' o 'artesanías' en comparación con las codiciadas expresiones del 'arte culto' arriba mencionadas. Un ejemplo de esta actitud se evidencia en el caso de una conocida casa de folklore y artesanías de Quito que le dio a un pintor de Tigua reproducciones de cuadros de reconocidos artistas latinoamericanos como Fernando Botero

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y Frida Kahlo para que los 'copie'. Aún en este caso extremo de influencia externa, irónicamente, las pinturas están firmadas por su autor indígena Juan Cuyo Cuyo, y llevan la inscripción: 'Arte famoso según Tigua', que mencioné anteriormente (Ver Fig. 2). Estos dos factores colocan a estas pinturas en un status muy especial en el dominio del arte: ¿son originales o son falsificaciones? A mi manera de ver, la calidad de las pinturas y su sola existencia demuestran una de las características principales del arte popular en todo el mundo, su capacidad de resignificar e incorporar elementos extraños para transformarlos en propios. Así como el Estado y el comercio blanco-mestizo ha comodificado la etnicidad indígena, en un vasto número de mercancías para el consumo turístico como la comida, la música, las danzas, las fiestas y los rituales de curación, también los indígenas han logrado comodificar expresiones y deseos del mundo blanco para su propia ganancia.

ser  
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colored  
Hampfeld  
arte

De hecho, ya muchos de los artistas de Tigua están capitalizando rápidamente en las nuevas nostalgias de los blanco-mestizos y los turistas por 'lo natural' y 'lo primitivo', 'lo ecológicamente correcto' y 'lo misterioso de los rituales indígenas de curación y chamanismo', a juzgar por el creciente número de pinturas representando esos temas que pueden encontrarse en los diferentes mercados.

ser

A modo de conclusión, quiero decir que los pintores de Tigua han demostrado su capacidad para crear expresiones culturales que alcanzan a una audiencia cada vez más compleja. En este sentido, sus pinturas constituyen poderosas narrativas visuales que contribuyen a un discurso más amplio de etnicidad emergente en el escenario de la política, el cual ha sido hasta ahora, el objeto preferido de estudio de los científicos sociales tanto nacional como extranjeros.

Desde la Conquista, condiciones materiales y sociales han representado serios obstáculos para que la población indígena ecuatoriana cuente hoy con una literatura etnográfica e histórica propia escrita por intelectuales indígenas. Más que otras expresiones de arte popular como la cerámica o el tejido, la pintura ha abierto, a los indígenas de Tigua, ese espacio de memoria social y creatividad cultural que merece un estudio más profundo.

difunden sus mensajes a nivel mundial a través del Internet y de otros canales de comunicación facilitados por las organizaciones no gubernamentales.

La respuesta a la segunda posible objeción, que la mayoría de las pinturas no expresan abiertamente actos de resistencia indígena a la opresión, nos sitúa en el debate ideológico sobre resistencia y acomodación que no puedo analizar de lleno aquí (Ver Abu-Lughod 1990; Brown 1996). Esta es otra de las falsas dicotomías que se han expuesto frente a la legitimación proporcionada por estudios más críticos de las muchas y diversas reacciones indígenas de las Américas a la dominación desde la época de la Conquista. Tanto en la vida cotidiana como en el mundo simbólico, los indígenas siempre han demostrado una considerable flexibilidad que ha combinado resistencia y acomodación para permitir su supervivencia (Mazzucato 1991). Como señala Fabian (1998: 69) con respecto a las comparables expresiones de arte popular en África, cada pintura específica puede no representar un imaginario de resistencia, pero es la cultura popular en sí misma la que "crea poder para resistir al poder". Es decir, el solo hecho que la creación artística para el mercado proporcione, a los indígenas de Tigua, un medio de subsistencia en el campo y en la ciudad, les permite sobrevivir como grupo y como cultura, a la vez acomodándose y resistiendo los procesos incorporativos de una modernización aculturante.

Para profundizar estos argumentos debemos analizar detenidamente el imaginario de las pinturas y su mercado actual, lo que haré en un momento. Pero primero quiero examinar un proceso cultural por el cual los indígenas de Tigua ya han demostrado su capacidad de resignificar y reformular los símbolos y discursos de la cultura hegemónica para transformarlos en propios. Este es el caso de su propio mito de origen que presentaré a continuación.

¿El marchand o el chamán?

De acuerdo a la 'historia oficial' del origen de las pinturas de Tigua, fue Olga Fish, artista y dueña de un conocido negocio de folklore quien, "motivada por la belleza de los tambores que se pintaban para las fiestas de Corpus y los Reyes, pidió a uno de los líderes indígenas de la comunidad de Huanu Turupata, Julio Toaquiza, que trasladara las pinturas a algo que se pudiera exhibir en una pared" (Ribadeneyra Casares 1990: 30).

nota 3  
ver otras publicaciones  
cambio de este mito  
en libro de Toaquiza



ver si está  
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Linda R. Acuña  
Sofía  
Nota  
Escrito  
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Toaquiza

Por haber participado, como antropóloga, en ese mundo del arte popular, oí esa historia muchas veces en distintos círculos. La evidencia del interés de Olga Fish en el arte popular de Tigua existe en una de las pinturas tempranas de Julio Toaquiza donde está representada la inconfundible figura de Olga con su cabello blanco y un bastón (colección privada). Tal vez estos datos son importantes para la historia del arte en Ecuador, pero lo que me interesa analizar aquí es el mito de origen alternativo que ya se ha convertido en parte de la tradición oral de la 'escuela de Tigua' y que he visto reproducido en castellano español en el catálogo producido con ocasión de la exposición de algunas de estas pinturas en la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) y en el museo de Pismo: Huetar en la Universidad de California, Berkeley. En este catálogo realizada por Sam Colvin, Alberto Toaquiza, hijo mayor de Julio, figura como co-autor (Colvin y Toaquiza s/f). La historia fue corroborada en un documento que los hermanos Cayo Pilalumbo mandaron para la presentación de sus pinturas en MOA (Cayo 1998).

Esta historia o mito de origen mantiene a Julio Toaquiza como héroe cultural e innovador de la tradición, pero cambia totalmente el móvil de su inspiración, de un agente extraño a la cultura quichua, a dos factores fundamentales en esa misma cultura, tanto de la Sierra como de la Amazonia: un sueño y la intervención de un chamán. De acuerdo a esta versión, Julio, un 'comerciante de antigüedades,' visitó a un chamán quien le dijo: "has sufrido mucho pero después de unos pocos años tendrás trabajo estable y permanente". Más tarde, [Julio] tuvo un sueño en el que un anciano entraba volando en su casa con un bastón, y parándose en su cama exclamó en alta voz: "Julio toma este bastón te va a traer una vida nueva". El anciano desapareció y el bastón se transformó en una paloma que a su vez se convirtió en la mano de Julio." (Colvin y Toaquiza s/f). Interpretando estos eventos como auspiciosos se que en 1973, Julio comenzó a pintar paisajes con las anilinas para teñir los ponchos y con un pincel de plumas de gallina atadas con alambre a un palito. Sólo una vez que Julio vendió su primera pintura en Quito por 120 sucres, entró en escena un comerciante de Quito' (¿Olga Fish?), quien le sugiere que comience a pintar en mureo plano.

En la versión del documento escrito a MOA, a Julio se agrega su hermano Alberto como fundador, pero se sigue confirmando el hecho de que Julio fue el maestro que enseñó el arte, primero a sus familiares y después a muchos otros miembros de la comunidad. La inversión causal como estrategia de incorporación de diferentes aspectos de la cultura

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dominante es típica de otras expresiones de protesta y acomodación indígena desde la colonia. El sueño y la intervención del chamán son, por otra parte, tradicionalmente quichua. Sin embargo, el bastón transformado en paloma, <sup>cañuel</sup> es un símbolo que aparece en la historia cristiana sobre el casamiento de la Virgen María con San José, que yo he encontrado en otra transformación de esa historia ~~narrada por una mujer napolitana~~ en la Amazonia ecuatoriana (Muratorio 1997).

**De la celebración a la protesta. Del presente al pasado.**

Cualquiera sea la versión del mito que ~~aceptemos como válida~~ (y no hay necesidad de elegir), ~~existe~~ suficiente evidencia ~~para afirmar que las pinturas enmarcadas en superficies planas~~ comenzaron en la ~~década del 70~~, que incorporaron el estilo y las imágenes representadas en los tambores usados principalmente para la fiesta de Corpus Christi, sobre todo los danzantes. Para los propósitos de este trabajo, mi análisis de los temas de las pinturas, desde entonces hasta la actualidad, se basa, por el momento, en el examen de un número relativamente limitado de pinturas: las de mi propia colección (30), las representadas en varias de las ~~tarjetas postales~~ que comenzaron a aparecer en los ~~mercados~~ de la ciudad hace ya unos años (30), las reproducidas en los libros y catálogos ya mencionados (80), y las 330 que ~~ingresamos a MOA~~ para la exposición en 1998, las cuales representaban a 48 pintores (37 hombres y 11 mujeres) de una sola de las tantas cooperativas de artistas que existen actualmente en Tigua. Además, en los últimos dos años he visitado varias veces la feria de El ~~puerto~~ donde se exhiben y venden cientos de pinturas y he conversado informalmente con varios de los artistas. Pero ~~estas~~ observaciones no cubren el resto de los mercados. Por lo tanto, la clasificación de temas debe ser, por el momento, tentativa.

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Mirando todas estas pinturas en su conjunto, ~~podemos decir que el arte de Tigua ha~~ experimentado un proceso de secularización semejante al de los retablos de Ayacucho y las tablas de Sarhua (cf. Isbell 1998). ~~Pero, de ningún manera, este proceso debe verse como~~ una secuencia evolutiva porque, por un lado, las fiestas religiosas son todavía un tema predominante y, por el otro, muchas de las pinturas expresan múltiples significados, como en el caso de la pintura de Francisco Ugarte donde se representa el acto político de la visita

del ex-presidente Febres Cordero a la comunidad Tigua Chimbacuchu con ocasión de la fiesta religiosa de Noche Buena.



Bien  
~~bien~~

Figura 3  
Francisco Ugsha Ilaquichi. Fiesta de Nochebuena

Dos cambios importantes han ocurrido en los últimos 25 años, aunque es casi imposible datar con fechas precisas sin una investigación más rigurosa. Primero, la inclusión de temas etnográficos de las prácticas de la vida cotidiana, tales como labores agrícolas y pastoreo de animales (a veces llamadas 'paisajes'), escenas de distintas actividades domésticas al interior de las viviendas, nacimientos, bautismos, matrimonios, y sesiones chamánicas de curación que incluyen eventos culturales como curaciones por chamanes Chachi de Santo Domingo de los Colorados y de la Amazonia.

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Fig 9

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Figura 6

Francisco Ugsha Ilaquichi. La manera de tejer los Incarios



Fig 7  
Rafael Triguera  
Adán y Eva

Figura 9  
Francisco Ugsha Ilaquichi. Cuentos de nuestros abuelos,

Le huancas y bueyos  
de la tierra.

Figura 5:  
Gustavo Toaquiza. **Corandero de Santo Domingo**

En segundo lugar, la incorporación de la memoria histórica en un estilo pictórico narrativo que mejor se adapta a relatar ese tipo de conocimiento para que sea recordado (cf. Blundell y Phillips 1983 y Fabian 1996). Estas pinturas pueden ser sub-clasificadas, siguiendo las nociones tradicionales de historiografía indígena, en tres categorías: 'tiempo mitológico', 'tiempo pasado' y 'tiempo presente', insistiendo que estas tres concepciones del tiempo no son mutuamente excluyentes sino que pueden coexistir en la misma pintura.

En la categoría 'tiempo mitológico' incluyo, por un lado, aquellas pinturas que evocan mitos y leyendas quichua tradicionales, como las referentes a los varios espíritus de los cerros y volcanes (recientemente representados con rostros humanos, la popular leyenda del rapto de la doncella por el cóndor y, por otro, las escenas bíblicas que representan, por ejemplo, el paraíso terrenal poblado de las figuras de Adán y Eva, animales míticos y ángeles, o el diluvio y el arca de Noé.

Blanca Muratorio

## The State, Missionaries and Native Consciousness

1767-1896

### A Century of Arbitrariness and Passive Resistance 1767-1870

In 1830, Ecuador was proclaimed an independent republic, headed by Juan José Flores as its first president duly elected by a constituent assembly. This significant event did not have important repercussions in the Oriente until several years later. In this vast province, the century that elapsed from the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767 until their return to the region in 1870, may be considered as a unity, both politically and economically. Throughout this period, the Napo Runa were subject to a venal civil administration which coveted the natives' tribute, and to a few ignorant and corrupt priests who visited the area from time to time. This situation prevailed even after 1830, for the Republican Government took no remedial steps. Instead, it created an administrative void in the Oriente because even the weak controls previously exercised by the royal bureaucracy vanished, and soldiers in search of fortune, traders, a few priests, and adventurers of all kinds "took over" the region. The state continued to draw surplus from the Indians in the form of tribute paid by them mainly in gold, equivalent to twelve pesos or six gold castellanos. Governors in the Oriente had relatively low salaries, which in Archidona they amply supplemented by the *repartos* (forced apportionments of goods) carried out at least twice a year. This practice consisted of forced sales of *tucuyo* (coarse cotton cloth made in the Sierra), thread, needles, and a large number of superfluous goods paid for with *pita* (agave) fiber and gold dust. Five *varas* (14 feet) of *tucuyo* were paid for with one gold castellano, or fourteen times their value. The Indians of Napotoa, Payamino, Aguano, Santa Rosa and Suno were

considered primarily "gold producers," and those of Archidona "pita producers" (Osculati 1854:102, 107).

Jameson (1858:346) estimates that around the 1850's, on completing his term in office a governor could have amassed a sum equivalent to some 6,000 to 8,000 pounds sterling; a "considerable fortune" in Ecuador at that time. When Jameson (1858:343) visited Archidona, the governor was an army lieutenant-colonel who had been sentenced to death for murder, but whose penalty had been commuted by the President of the Republic to banishment in the Napo for ten years. Although he was but acting governor, at that time the position of governor of the Oriente was generally bestowed on the "government's military friends" (Avendaño 1985:251). According to Villavicencio (1984:344), the entire region served "as a penitentiary for political criminals." Osculati remarked that Quiteños did not venture to visit the Oriente, "not even during the good weather season." He also argued that the major obstacle to the region's prosperity could be found in the government's disinterest, as it had awarded an economic monopoly to unscrupulous private interests (Osculati 1854:128). Posts in the Oriente were actually sinecures, with no differentiation in functions between authorities and tradesmen, thus depriving the Indians of all legal protection.

In 1847, Archidona was a small village where the governor was in residence. Ten years later, it had become a ghost town, and Tena was a new village where the Indians had just finished building the town hall (Jameson 1858:340-341). It is obvious that in the mid-nineteenth century, the juridical-political apparatus of government was absent from the Oriente. The few whites residing there could not survive without appropriating the Indians' surplus and without abusing their labor to extract gold and pita. It is not surprising, therefore, that one of the typical

Indian defense strategies was to vanish from a village immediately upon the white authorities' decision to settle there. This also explains the governors' frequent changes of residence between Santa Rosa, Archidona, and Tena, mentioned in historical sources (Villavicencio 1984:378). In certain cases, the Indians' flight was preceded by acts of violence, such as the murder of a priest in Archidona and a governor in Puerto Napo. These actions, however, were only localized uprisings easily quelled by the whites (Osculati 1854:102). One of the outcomes of 300 years of Colonial domination was the destruction of the indigenous socio-political organization that had made possible the joint and coordinated action of the different ethnic groups, as evidenced by the 1578 Indian rebellion (see also Muratorio 1982:66-67). Nevertheless, this protracted domination was never accepted as legitimate by the Napo Runa. According to Osculati, the natives who stayed in Tena-Archidona became "unsociable, insubordinate and thieving" (1854:107). Efforts to punish them provoked the same reaction they were intended to prevent: the Indians fled to their *tambus* (forest dwellings) located a walking distance of three or four days from the villages, returning only after three or four months when pressed by the need to obtain manufactured goods.

Although the Indians did still pay the priests in gold, tobacco and pita for prayers and weddings, they exhibited "great disdain" for religion, did not attend church, and showed no special respect for the secular priests (Osculati 1854:103-104). The church tried to justify its participation in appropriating the Indians' surplus by alleging its social duty to "civilize" them, and its religious mission to "evangelize" them. From the Napo Runa's point of view, the merits of these two ventures were not self-evident, but revealed instead the irrationality of the process of white domination: to ensure its legitimacy by destroying the culture and religion of the



dominated group.

Contrary to what most historical sources suggest, the absence of an open and joint resistance during that period does not mean that the Napo Runa were totally subdued, or that they were unaware of being exploited. One of the forms taken by this resistance is expressed, for example, in a song sung by an Indian when handing over his *camarico* (mandatory gift of animals and food) to the priest: "Take this, we bring you our goods, the fruit of our labor and our sweat, stuff yourself, you crooked rascal." (quoted in Jimenez de la Espada 1927-28:359-360).

Humor and irony in folk songs and dances as a form of protest against arbitrary power and authority are almost universal in peasant cultures, including the Andean.<sup>1</sup> This irreverence, that sometimes can be perceived only in the tone of voice and in the accompanying facial expressions, is a subtle form of resistance, quite significant also in Rucuyaya Alonso's story, particularly when he speaks of the authorities and patrons.

Flight into the forest to attain freedom--already called "emigration" by the whites in the mid-nineteenth century--and the Indians' lack of interest in being converted to Christianity, were two of the forms taken by Napo Runa resistance. This resistance became a serious problem for the government and its representatives in the Oriente. In 1846, in an attempt to solve both problems, the National Congress was forced to exempt the Oriente Indians from the "personal contribution." The text of the law (see Rubio Orbe 1954:37) exhibits some of the then current misconceptions held by the national government regarding those Indians, in comparison with the highland Indian peasants with whom they were more familiar<sup>2</sup>. The law assumes that, if only that particular tribute was removed, the Oriente Indians--including those not yet converted to

who has aged it while growing up, is able to work. It is he who must work and pay."

Moreover, in the Tena-Archidona area, the missionaries were never able to consolidate their domination through the political and religious hierarchies associated with the fiesta system, comparable to that which developed in the Sierra. On the one hand, the Oriente Indian communities were never established on a sufficiently permanent basis to keep up with a regular calendar of imposed religious festivities. On the other, the missionaries were unable to maintain either the necessary continuity of their presence in the region, or the spiritual control and native cooperation long enough to sustain a fiesta system. Although the Spaniards did impose on the Indians a form of native hierarchy of religious authorities, by the eighteenth century these had become amalgamated with the civil native officials (Oberem 1980:106). None of the Napo Runa whom we questioned on the subject, nor the archival material mentioned *priostes* (sponsor of religious fiestas), or the rituals commonly associated with the fiesta system as having existed in the area since the mid-nineteenth century, the approximate time limit of the oral history tradition available to us.<sup>4</sup>

From the point of view of the authorities and traders, the problem was that, despite their coercive power, the very nature of the extractive economy allowed the Indians a degree of freedom and self-determination that guaranteed neither the regularity nor the discipline of their labor. More drastic solutions were required in order to ensure such qualities in the Oriente Indian labor force. One of these solutions was provided by the experiment of a "theocratic government" in the Napo, under the tutelage of a conservative government in alliance with the missionaries of the Society of Jesus.

## **A short-lived Attempt at "Oriental Theocracy": God, Discipline and Development for the Indians. 1870-1875**

In the 1870s, García Moreno, then Conservative President of Ecuador, designed a relatively coherent government project to integrate the Oriente into a new national "order and progress" political regime. García Moreno's economic project aimed at modernizing the country by creating a communication infrastructure to mobilize the factors of production, do away with extreme economic regionalism, create the possibilities for expansion of the domestic market and the conditions to profit from the new opportunities offered by the international market. In order to train the necessary labor force, García Moreno advocated technical and scientific education, founded the Polytechnic School and hired European teachers, as well as doctors and lawyers to upgrade university education. This modernization was made possible by the government's rationalization and centralization of fiscal revenue, and by its efforts to stabilize the bureaucracy. But all this development took place within an autocratic political program intended to create the required social peace by way of an arbitrary repressive system and the asphyxiating ideological tutelage of the Catholic Church. The Concordat between the Vatican and the Government of Ecuador, ratified in 1863, was a political pact whereby the church provided an ideological superstructure to "moralize" the country, to create "political cohesion" (cited in Ayala 1982:140), to control education and culture, and even the most routine aspects of people's lives (Reyes 1966: 146, 152-153).

The Oriente, which until then had remained almost beyond the reach of the government, plagued as it was by corrupt merchants and by Indian "paganism," provided García Moreno with an exemplary challenge to test his concept of economic development based on "moral

regeneration." To this end, the President found his best allies in the Jesuits, and for the five years until his death, he assigned to them the role of legitimate representatives of the state in the Napo region. He therefore awarded them full powers as governors with authority to "take the necessary measures for order and appropriate civil and ecclesiastic government in that Province" (Jouanen 1977:33-34). This implied instituting and removing authorities, punishing crimes, opening up schools and decreeing laws. García Moreno's interests coincided with those of the Jesuit missions on two essential points: to blaze trails facilitating the entry of missionaries and nuns, and to evangelize and settle the Indian population so as to transform it through all possible means, into a "trustworthy" labor force.

By securing a Jesuit governance in the Oriente, García Moreno did not intend to prohibit extractive activities or trade, but rather to regulate, control and moralize them. The structural contradictions of this project, mainly in terms of the corrupt makeup of the merchant "bourgeoisie" in the Oriente and of its limited potential access to Indian labor, were evident soon after the Jesuits came into the area. The first decree issued by the Jesuit Vicar of the Oriente Province in 1879, stipulated the prohibition of selling on credit to the Indians, allowing them to pay their debts in cash, and the abolition of the liquor trade (Jouanen 1977:33-34). Both measures set off a conflict between the interests of the Jesuits, as evangelizers and representatives of the state, and the interests of the traders and Indians, whose "alliance"—although occasional and precarious--turned out to be mutually advantageous at that point in time.

The major cause for the opposing interests between the merchants and the Jesuits lay in the conflicting demands of two different economies: one extractive and the other agricultural. Both economies confronted shortages of labor which, in the best of cases, was reluctant and

evasive. The merchants granted *licencias* or leaves to the Indians exempting them from the *doctrinas* (evangelization strategy) so that they may engage in gold panning and scraping pita fiber. In addition, during that period the Tena-Archidona area was regularly visited by cinchona bark companies wanting to hire Indian families as labor (López. San Vicente 1984:18-24). Osculati, as well as other historical sources, show that the Napo Runa were "infinitely jubilant" to accept these *licencias* (Osculati 1854:106). They preferred "paying" for their right to move freely into the forest, rather than submit to the permanent supervision of the white merchants. In sum, the social relations of production required by this extractive economy did not interfere with the social organization of the Napo Runa based on the *mntun* (kin group) as a productive unit, nor with their land-use rights, or with their residential patterns (see Macdonald 1979:225-227). The Indians maintained control over their subsistence production based on shifting horticulture and on periodic hunting, fishing and gathering expeditions. Consequently, it was in defense of their own reproduction as a group that the Napo Runa made momentary "alliances" with the traders against the Jesuits. On the contrary, the missionaries wanted access to a "regular and disciplined" Indian labor force to build houses, convents, churches and schools. Their final objective was the establishment of agricultural and livestock settlements, a goal wholly incompatible with the prevailing economic organization and worldview of the Napo Runa. The Jesuits defined the *licencias* as "those routines characteristic of the Yumbos, whose passion for their idle and independent forest life borders on a savage fanaticism" (López San Vicente 1984:32). They also objected on the grounds that the abusive trade practiced by the whites against the interests of the Indians was "contrary to natural rights." Besides, the Indians' absences under the system of *licencias* deprived the mission of hands for work and of souls for

indoctrination, reducing it to "uselessness." Further, in their ignorance and ideological repugnance of forest life, the Jesuits believed that the Napo Runa used their licencias only for "sprees," "drinking" and "mischief" (Jouanen 1977:129-300); López San Vicente 1894:33), for beyond their paternalistic tutelage, any freedom had by the Indians was considered profligacy.<sup>5</sup>

The final outcome of this conflict between the missionaries, the merchants, and the Indians--loss of power by the Jesuits and their second expulsion from the area in 1896--was strongly influenced by the Indians' resistance to settle more or less permanently in villages, and to become a peasant or semi-proletarianized labor force. The other decisive factor was the invasion of the entire Amazon by industrial capitalism in search of rubber, a raw material produced mainly in this region from the late nineteenth century until approximately the first two decades of the twentieth century.

### *"Civilization" of the Labor Force*

#### **IDEOLOGICAL BASES**

The ideological foundation of Jesuit economic strategy rested on three major premises: the "moralizing" nature of agriculture, the "civilizing" capacity of religion and, the concept that the Indians were "perpetual children" requiring the severe but paternalistic protection of the missionaries.

One of the Jesuits' favorite mottos was: "The sword and the plow behind the cross, not in front of it" (López San Vicente 1894:60). In Napo, as they had in Paraguay, the Jesuits opposed armed violence because, according to them, it only served to "frighten away or irritate the savages." Hence, they defended their pacifist theocratic experiment with the conviction that

"civilization without religion is absurd, and religion without ministers to teach it, is senseless" (López San Vicente 1894:53). They saw in agriculture the "civilized" future of the Oriente, since it entailed settlements and villages, work performed on a regular basis, and the possibility of monitoring a labor force disciplined by doctrinas, unlike the extractive economy that allowed almost untrammelled Indian freedom.

The final aim of the Jesuits was to convert a hunting and gathering people into a European-style peasantry. Considering that the major obstacle against this purpose was the Indians' tambus, the Jesuits tried to turn them into farms. The Indians could go every day to their tambus for their jobs of planting and harvesting only if they returned regularly to their village homes, as required to meet any political or religious obligations. According to the missionaries, this pattern would make the Indians conform to the way "all peasants live in Europe and in the interior of the Republic" (López San Vicente 1894:35). The majority of the Jesuits were of European origin, used to a society that had been a predominantly peasant one for hundreds of years, in which villages were the social core of the countryside and towns the hub of civilization. Consequently, it was almost impossible for them to understand the rationale of the Napo Runa's tropical forest economy and social organization. Xavier Albó argues that Jesuit "civilizing action" towards the Indians of Peru in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which was similar to that followed by them in the Napo mission, suffered from a fundamental contradiction. On the one hand, the Jesuits wanted to maintain a rigid separation between Spaniards and Indians, while on the other, they adopted a Spanish-oriented model to acculturate them. This model assumed an underlying idea of religion and political order similar to that existing "in the towns of Castille" (Albó 1966b:400, 407).

The strategies used by the Jesuits to discipline the Indians as a labor force must be considered an integral part of the evangelization process, insofar as the missionaries thought of regular work as the best way to combat the original sin of "idleness" (see Muratorio 1982:59). Supported by García Moreno, the Jesuits were determined to be, and actually acted as the "natural defenders" of the Indians against the "abuses and swindles" they suffered at the hands of the merchants. One important mistake the Jesuits made about the situation in the Napo, however, was to assume that the abuses against the Indians were in many ways comparable to the slave hunts suffered by the Guaraní Indians. Even in the nineteenth century, Paraguay continued to be their missionary model, but it was not applicable in Tena-Archidona, where that ethnocidal practice of "recruiting" labor did not exist until the rubber boom era, and where the subsistence interests of the Napo Runa were at the time we are discussing, better "protected" by the traders.

Another of the Jesuits' main errors in judgment was to overestimate the "ignorance and frankness of the unfortunate Indians," and consequently to establish a harsh system of corporal punishment justified by the need of the "fathers" to correct "perpetually child-like peoples" for their "laziness" (López San Vicente 1894:49). The misconception of the Indians as beings incapable of reasoning, for whom punishment was "the only thing that moves them and excites their sensitivity and imagination" (López San Vicente 1894:50-51), pervaded Jesuit evangelizing action, in both the first and second mission periods (see Albó 1966a:303-308). In Jesuit sources the Napo Runa are portrayed as "lost and ignorant children" who, "being irrational," submit to the merchants' exploitation (Jouanen 1977:130-131). The main assumption was that the submission stance sometimes taken by the Indians as a survival tactic was almost an innate form



of behavior, and an immutable consequence of a passive personality. However, those same sources may be read so as to substantiate a very different interpretation of native behavior. It is clear that the Napo Runa responded to those Jesuit strategies with a clear assessment of their economic position, rebelling against the missionaries' paternalistic attempts to decide on their way of life, and resisting punishment by resorting to the law, by force and even with considerable humor. This latter form of subtle resistance is particularly evident in the oral tradition about the Jesuits handed down to Rucuyaya Alonso by his parents and grandparents. It is also evident that the Napo Runa understood quite well the bureaucracy of the local white government, the psychology of the merchants, and the prime cause of their conflict with the missionaries. They did use the licencias to manipulate all three powers on their behalf, of course, within the constraints of the economic structure with which they had to cope. On the one hand, they bribed the white authorities with gold to extend their licencias for longer time periods--thus flouting the missionaries. On the other, they sought the protection of the Jesuits against the ill treatments inflicted on them by the authorities, while at the same time pleading with the missionaries not to report these complaints to those same authorities (see Jouanen 1977:130-131).

#### **STRATEGIES TO DISCIPLINE THE LABOR FORCE**

Just as the Spanish conquistadors in the preceding centuries, the only way the Jesuits could gain access to the native labor force was indirectly through the Indian leaders, either natural or imposed, constituting what was known as "Runa government." However, this native government did not act as an autonomous body, and was almost nothing more than a political

and productive arm of the whites. These authorities, who in Tena-Archidona were known as *justicias* (justices) or *varas* (staff-holders), were elected among the dominant families within the muntun, and a son could inherit the position of his father as was true in Rucuyaya Alonso's case. Sometimes powerful shamans would be internally selected to the highest office (see Macdonald 1979:220). The white authorities and the missionaries used the *justicias* to marshal native labor for all kinds of jobs and services as well as for administering punishment to those who refused to comply. Owing to his authority within the kinship group, a particular Indian official could successfully play that role. That very same authority however, allowed him to also use the labor force of his muntun to pan gold or to prepare pita for the white traders, or to simply organize his group for flight into the forest. Consequently, from the missionaries' point of view, the *justicias* were not entirely reliable and punishment inflicted on the other Indians was almost useless. As an alternative, some missionaries suggested instituting what they thought of as "incentives," such as installing blacksmith's or carpentry shops in an endeavor to govern the Indians by turning them into artisans. Efforts to make them settle down also required that they clear land for crops around the villages. The missionaries themselves introduced cattle (Jouanen 1977:80) with the idea of "preparing a solid basis for the formation of community property and providing an allurement for the Indians so that they might be reduced to village life" (López San Vicente 1894:19). Another Jesuit report suggests that given the "indolent nature" of the Napo Runa, it was impossible to secure forced labor from them and that they should therefore be appropriately remunerated (Cáceres 1892:47). The payment was usually made in cotton cloth although in Tena-Archidona the Indians had to pay the missionaries for the masses and other religious ceremonies with four gold pesos or their equivalent in pita, or in food (López San Vicente 1894:

43). The Napo Runa could obtain all these goods only near their tambus, far from their villages. Despite this obvious contradiction between their economic and ideological demands, the Jesuits did not alter their tactics of trying to "reduce" the Napo Runa into villagers.

In summary, native resistance, plus the traders' hostility to the missionaries and the smallpox epidemics that broke out in Tena-Archidona--resulting from the very attempts to establish villages--compounded to hamper and finally to prevent the success of the Jesuits' socio-economic evangelizing strategies, which in themselves were ambiguous and contradictory.<sup>6</sup>

### **Decadence of the Jesuit Missions**

In the 1870s one of the most powerful traders opposed to Jesuit interests in the Napo was Faustino Rayo. He took undue advantage of his authority as governor to impose repartos on the Indians in exchange for gold and pita, until he provoked a widespread revolt in Puerto Napo.<sup>7</sup> Soon after the Jesuits came into Tena-Archidona, a conflict arose between the Vicar of Napo, Father Guzman and Rayo, who had become the spokesman for the merchants' interests. Rayo refused to comply with the new trade legislation imposed by the missionaries. He used the discontent pervasive among the Indians caused by all the hardships they had to endure in building Archidona, to support an attempt against Father Guzman's life, seemingly with the Tenas' active involvement (Jouanen 1977: 44-45). Jesuit sources themselves acknowledge that the main cause of the uprising and of Father Guzman's leaving the Napo mission were the tasks and punishments to which the missionary had subjected the Indians. On entering Archidona the new Vicar of Napo found it deserted; the natives had fled to the forest, taking with them "eight North-American machetes, a similar number of hoes, a little cotton cloth," and the dogs and

other animals (Jouanen 1977:80). To reestablish missionary authority, the new Vicar reimposed the custom of being carried on a litter by the Indians from town to town. He also punished those Indians allegedly guilty of the attempt against Father Guzman's life who had sought refuge in Puerto Napo. Reversing previous Jesuit policy, the Vicar himself entered into an agreement with the white traders whereby they were allowed to operate on credit, provided they charged fair prices, and to reside in Archidona, under the condition of submitting to Jesuit authority (Jouanen 1977:81).

Additional measures taken by the Vicar were an even more direct and profound violation of Napo Runa deeply held cultural values and principles of social organization. What they found particularly offensive was to be forced to bury their dead in the Christian cemetery instead of in their houses, and to suffer interference in their marriage alliances (see Muratorio 1982:60-62). In addition to other Jesuit imposed obligations, these new measures further fueled the restlessness and discontent among all the Indians of that area, consisting of about 1,000 in Archidona and some 500 in Tena at that time (Jouanen 1977:95). A smallpox epidemic in 1875 triggered the usual flight of the Indians. The most reluctant in returning to the villages were the Tenas, then considered by the Jesuits as the most rebellious. López San Vicente noted that "either because they had longer enjoyed the free forest life, or because they were more obstinate by nature than the rest, [the Tenas] refuse to return, brazenly replying that they will do so once the soldiers have already ousted the fathers" (López San Vicente 1894:28).

The conflict between the Jesuits and the traders worsened when the former used their influence with the President of the Republic to have Rayo removed from his official duties in Napo, and came to a head in 1875, when Rayo murdered President García Moreno in Quito.

Other political interests were also involved in the president's assassination, but their explanation is not relevant here (see Reyes 1966:156-159). Following the death of García Moreno, a free-trade decree allowed the whites to again operate in the Napo without any restrictions, but the Indians persistently rejected being governed by the missionaries. In 1876 they once again took the legal course of resistance, by sending a delegation of Indian officials to Quito to demand that the Jesuits be expelled "because they punish greatly," and that the Vicar be replaced by a single civil government for the entire province (Jouanen 1977:107). The Indian official from Tena directly confronted the Vicar to have him resign his office as civil governor (Jouanen 1977:109). These actions seem to have been successful, for shortly after, the new governor came to Napo accompanied by twelve soldiers and sixteen civilians. From that moment on, deprived of García Moreno's political and financial support and faced with the continued hostility of traders and Indians, the Jesuit mission's authority was weakened and its chances of expanding in the Oriente were seriously curtailed. According to the Jesuits, their personal circumstances became unbearable because even their most loyal Indians, such as the Ahuanos, turned against them (Jouanen 1977:113-114); López San Vicente 1894:30). A still weak state could not govern the Oriente without the missionaries' intermediary role, however, and soon the civilian government that succeeded García Moreno cooperated with the Jesuits, especially in their educational efforts. In 1891, the Governor of Oriente declared: "Harmony now reigns among the missionary Fathers and the civil authority," and exhorted the whites living in town to obey the missionaries (AGN March 1891).

García Moreno's experiment in establishing a "theocracy" in the Napo under the paternalistic tutelage of the Jesuits lasted five years. Attempts at regularizing and moralizing the

economy were thwarted by the makeup and composition of the merchant class: a combination of adventurers and former soldiers, many of them foreigners. These people never considered the Oriente as a permanent place to establish a well-organized civic society. This was not an instance of pioneer families opening up a frontier for colonization, which may account for the few references to white women or children in the historical sources of that period.<sup>8</sup> The "rough" nature of its extractive economy, and the "hostility" of the forest environment, were two important factors prevalent in the Oriente's initial attraction of men prepared to use violence and cunning in order to prevail against the Indians' unwillingness to work for them, and desirous of easy wealth and a quick exit from the area. In this respect, these "republican pioneers" were not very different from the first conquistadors of the land of Gold and Cinnamon. For their part, the Napo Runa rejected the "theocracy," not so much for ideological reasons, but because they felt that it was contrary to their material and cultural survival as an autonomous ethnic entity. Rationally choosing between two "evils," they allied themselves with the traders against the Jesuits to resist a forced and ethnocidal acculturation.

### **New Forms of Native Resistance**

Even though the Jesuits remained in the Oriente, from 1877 political control in the region returned to the civil authorities which, in the missionaries' opinion, "made of their government a trading agency" (Jouanen 1977:129) and reproduced "the obsolete system of licencias with more energy and frequency than before" (López San Vicente 1894:32). By the 1880's the mission went into its definitive crisis, and the Napo Runa employed other oppositional tactics exploiting the most vulnerable weaknesses that the missionaries shared with other whites in the Oriente: a

loathing for manual labor and a consequent total dependency on the Indians for their day-to-day subsistence. The Napo Runa refused to chop wood, make fires, cook for the missionaries, or sell them food, "until they die or go elsewhere" (Jouanen 1977:107). The effectiveness of this tactic towards achieving the Indians' goals, and the actual pain it caused the Jesuits, may be perceived in the following complaint: "Thus, our presence in the Napo was reduced to the very least, to having nothing to eat except a piece of manioc and plantain cooked as best we could. I repeat, manioc and plantain that we ourselves had to fetch and carry on our backs, with no little toil, from faraway *chagras* (swidden plots) abandoned by the Indians." (López San Vicente 1894:27).

On other occasions the Napo Runa worked poorly or reluctantly with the aim of hindering mission constructions. All of these various forms of sabotage and their escapes to the forest, sometimes even under the false pretext of "being afraid of the smallpox" (Jouanen 1977:111), constituted effective resistance tactics. They undermined, both actually and figuratively, the strength of the missionary system of domination. Besides, since these forms of passive resistance were not expressed as a public and open revolt, they were safer for the Indians to the extent that they did not provoke military intervention to keep them in check.

Notwithstanding the more than evident and persistent opposition of the Indians, the Jesuits were equally obdurate. In 1888 they brought the nuns of the "Good Shepherd" to Archidona to take charge of the girls' school. The nuns made the arduous one-day trip from Papallacta dangling from the backs of the Indians. The Vicar remarked: "There was a certain Indian prejudice against them: it has disappeared; they are now called "Huarmi Padres" (women fathers) (Jouanen 1977:148).

Rather than being prejudiced against the nuns for having had to carry them on their

backs, there was an underlying survival rationale in the Napo Runa's resistance against forced schooling and boarding schools for their children, given the importance children played in the productive process (see Muratorio 1982:65-66). This rationale is explained in a Jesuit source with the following quote: "They [the Indians] say: What do we want with the *quilca* [paper, education]; does the *quilca* give us monkeys, does it give us *huangana* [peccary]; does it give us *pishco* [bird]; does it give us *challua* [a type of fish]? It gives us none of this; therefore, why should we want the *quilca*? (López San Vicente 1894:78). The next generation of Napo Runa also continued its opposition to education considering it to be a form of forced, violent, and ethnocidal assimilation. From an Francisca Andi in 1985 I learned some of the reasons for that opposition: "The elders never wanted to put their children in boarding schools. They thought that if the boys learned to read, the white women would take them away as servants, and that if the girls learned to read they would go off with white men. They also thought that the whites taught them to read and write so as to draft them for war."

Although the central government continued to delegate to the Jesuits the task of educating the Indians, in 1884 it made a first attempt at integrating the Oriente into the nation's life through controlled colonization. To achieve this objective it sent a few whites to settle on the banks of the Napo. Deprived of all material support the hungry settlers began to steal from the Indians, and the experiment wound up in a costly failure for the state of 15,000 pesos. Something similar occurred during that same time period with the government's project of imposing a certain order in the Oriente through the army. The scantily supplied and undisciplined military detachment, rather than keep the peace, also took part in exploiting the Indians, especially by stealing food from them (Jouanen 1977:141-142). The regional authorities



themselves were compelled to send some abusive soldiers back to Quito, and when weapons were shipped to the Oriente, these were sometimes accompanied by a note warning the soldiers "not to waste ammunition on festivities" (AGN, July 1884).

As native resistance was hindering their educational and evangelizing efforts in the Tena-Archidona area, Jesuit zeal turned to attempts at pacifying the still "infidel" population of the vast Oriente province. But here their efforts were frustrated, not by the Indians, but by the economic forces and social tragedies unleashed by the rubber boom. For their part, the Tenas and Archidonas continued to denounce "the missionaries' punishments" throughout that period as Rucuyaya Alonso so proudly argues. In 1889 they brought their complaints before the Minister of the Treasury and the President of the Republic (AGN, letter from A. Llori to the Minister of the Treasury, Nov. 1889). The new activity of the rubber and cinchona dealers increased the demand for already scarce native labor, unleashing at the same time smallpox and measles epidemics that advanced from Iquitos to the upper Napo. The latter greatly aggravated the competition for labor, thus exacerbating the traditional conflicts among the traders, the Indians, and the Jesuits.

Father Rafael Cáceres, the Superior of the Ecuadorean Mission, decided to visit the Napo mission in 1891, and after having toured all the villages under his jurisdiction, set down in a "memorial" a number of recommendations intended to save the mission from the crisis. Considering the causes of this crisis already discussed, Father Cáceres' proposals, which included moderation in punishments, more ceremonial songs during masses, elaborate processions, and emphasis on teaching children in Spanish rather than in Quichua (Jouanen 1977:175-176) proved to be entirely utopian.

In 1892 the Loreto Indians violently rebelled against the Jesuit missionaries, with the intent of driving them out, but only managing to destroy the mission. From evidence in Jesuit reports it is possible to infer that the Tena-Archidona Indians had previous knowledge and had even participated in planning the rebellion (López San Vicente 1894:70). Just before it happened, for instance, the Indians tried to distance themselves from the missionaries and to remove their children from the mission's boarding school (Jouanen 1977:188-189). Nonetheless, in Tena-Archidona the rebellion was aborted because the forewarned government responded within a few days by sending a military detachment to restore order, thus causing the rebels to flee (López San Vicente 1894:69). Though the Jesuits were always complaining about the hostility of the governments that came after García Moreno's, in situations of conflict, the state continued to defend the missionaries and to exercise its repressive power against the Indians.

When addressing the native rebellions in the Oriente, historical sources rarely reveal the names of their leaders and even less so of their followers.<sup>9</sup> This is why it is particularly interesting that the López San Vicente's report on the 1892 revolt mentions the Tena leader who took an active part in the resistance, an Indian *teniente* by the name of Gabriel Andi, grandfather of Rucuyaya Alonso. It was from him that Rucuyaya Alonso received the oral tradition explaining the Jesuits' exit as a result of the conscious and active resistance of the Napo Runa, as he tells us in his life history. Furthermore, an account of a conversation that took place between a missionary, Gabriel Andi, and other Tena and Archidona Indians soon after the revolt, shows how also on that occasion the Indians were able to manipulate the conflict between the missionaries and the traders so as to clear themselves of their own involvement in the rebellion. Since they had actively participated in the very planning of the uprising, in this conversation the

Tenas and Archidonas reveal themselves as great masters in the art of "irreverent submission." Once more this proved to be an excellent resistance tactic used by the Indians in their dealings with the whites. Below we quote that conversation as it was told to another Jesuit:

Apologetically [the Tena Indians] said to one of the missionaries 'Father, you are our father... We are not to blame....N.N. (one of the white men) has tricked us. He is the one who spoke to us against the fathers, and told us not to come to the village, to stay in the forest, and to pay no heed to the fathers. He threatened us if we came...' The Indian lieutenant of Tena said publicly that he was called upon three times by the white man and since he did not want to heed his summons, the owner of Sabata himself went to seek him and induce him to show up in Quito to complain against the missionaries, as in fact he did, repeating what he had been suggested to say. And what is said by Gabriel Andi, such is his name, is repeated by the Indians of Archidona, likewise committed to the criminal revolt... (López San Vicente, 1894:70).

This obvious manipulation of the situation by the Napo Runa not only failed to be perceived as such by the Jesuits, but rather helped to confirm their conception of the Indians as beings "gullible," "easily seduced," and turned into "mere instruments" of the white traders (López San Vicente 1894:69-71). This attitude may only be explained by the ideological veil that obscured the Jesuits' perception of the Indians until the very end. To accept the likelihood that they had rationally participated in a rebellion would have amounted to also accepting that they were "adults" instead of "children," thereby recognizing the failure of one of the major

underpinnings of the Jesuits' pedagogical and evangelizing philosophy.

All the evidence points to the fact that the white traders played a significant role in the 1894 rebellion, in defending their class interests, and by providing the Indians with the necessary political connections in the central government, although as we already mentioned, these connections did not turn out to be very effective at the decisive moment. Historical evidence and oral tradition reveal, however, that the Napo Runa were conscious players in the rebellion. Their participation originated in a reasoned decision to maintain the freedom and independence required for their own survival. Although the rebellion was quelled, the Napo Runa still remember it as being decisive in ousting the Jesuits, and the Loreto Indians, as their very own success (Oberem 1980:116). Myth and history are intertwined here to become part of a resistance culture, symbolically incorporated into the ethnic identity of the Napo Runa.

The difficulties experienced by the Jesuits in the Napo were certainly part of a broader economic, ideological, and political problem: the relationship between the church and the state in Ecuador, which it is not my concern here. It is evident, though, that the joint action of the traders and the Indians in the Tena-Archidona area eventually precluded the mission's survival. After 1892, the fear of reprisals, plus further smallpox epidemics that broke out in 1894 and 1895, once again spurred the flight of the Napo Runa, and without their labor to repair them, the missionary houses went to ruin (Jouanen 1977:192-193). Finally in 1896, the Liberal government of Eloy Alfaro passed a decree expelling the Jesuits from the Oriente via Brazil or Iquitos, and prohibited them from returning either in a private capacity or as a corporation. The Jesuits abandoned the Napo mission in 1896; some of them left by way of Tiputini with the assistance of the civil authorities (AGN, Oct. 26, 1896). Officially, the Society of Jesus

relinquished the Napo mission before the Holy See in 1913, and it became the responsibility of the Archbishop's Curia until 1922, when the Josephine missionaries entered the area.

### **Ideology, Consciousness and Conflict**

As many scholars have demonstrated, the core of the production process in the Sierra was the hacienda. It was also the center of confrontation between the Indian peasants and the landowners (see Espinosa 1984; Guerrero 1975; Arcos 1984, among others). For the period under discussion, in the Oriente the missions were the equivalent of the hacienda in the Sierra. They came to be an arena for confrontations and class alliances that went beyond the evangelizing objectives of the Jesuit missionaries. Economic, cultural, and ideological reasons contributed to shaping the strategies and tactics used by each one of the parties involved in trying to control their opponents. Besides being one of the most powerful landowners in the Sierra, the church played an essential role in mediating and ideologically justifying the forms taken by peasant-landowner class relations. In contrast, in the Oriente, the Jesuits became direct parties to the class conflict as one of the two types of patrons competing for Napo Runa labor. At the ideological level, the white traders shared the Jesuit conception of the Indians as "lacking civilization and discipline." Unlike the highland landowners, however, the traders did not require the church to ensure such qualities of civilization and discipline in an Indian labor force used mainly in a gold and pita extraction economy. In the Oriente, it was precisely the Napo Runa's "savagery" and "unfettered freedom" that allowed them to go deep into the forest to secure those products. The traders, cum authorities resorted to the missionaries as "educators and civilizers of the Indians," only when the latter rebelled against the traders' self-interests, and

later on, when the very economy of the region required a more settled and regular labor force.

From the Napo Runa's point of view, their alliance with the traders was basically a convenient strategy, insofar as it enabled them to evade Jesuit influence by means of the *licencias*, or to confront the missionaries, either legally or violently. Furthermore, that alliance was never unconditional. When the traders, particularly the rubber dealers, threatened the Napo Runa's survival as a group, confrontation did take place, within the constraints imposed by the new economic and social conditions prevailing in the first two decades of this century. Trapped in their ambiguous role as both evangelizers and patrons, the Jesuits failed to understand the nature of this alliance, or ignored it, preferring to consider it one more evidence of the "blind and ignorant submission" of the Indians to the white man's power and incentives. Their conception of the Napo Runa was primarily thought out in racial terms, and in this sense, the Jesuits did not differ from the other whites. Their holistic view of the Indians as an "innocent and wretched race," or as a "savage race," lacked the necessary subtleties to distinguish the autonomous interests and cultural features specific to Indian behavior. Conversely, the rationale of this behavior became evident precisely in the fact that the Indians did not see "the whites" as a homogeneous racial category. In situations of conflict, they were able to differentiate those interests of the white priests which threatened Indian survival, and those of the white traders who, at that point in time, did not interfere with their own reproduction as a group.

Native resistance was generated mainly through the action of the elders, or *rucuyayas*. This is partly explained by the leadership position that they occupied within the kinship group. Moreover, in Napo Quichua culture, there are ideological elements and symbolic practices to which only age and experience can afford access, and which provide the deepest context of

meaning to understand the elder's resistance. In order to decipher the form taken by class confrontation in the historical period under discussion, however, I will now focus my analysis on other ideological aspects of this indigenous resistance and the whites' reaction to it. Then as well as now, the dynamics of class relations and conflicts in the Oriente--and also in a good part of Ecuador--must be explained by understanding the ideological overtones that condition ethnic confrontation in its complex interrelationship with the social relations of production.

The Jesuits' image of the Indians was fraught with ambiguities. It basically envisioned the Indians as irrational beings, who only reacted by instinct; beings with no culture to restrain those instinctive impulses, and consequently, as generic Indians<sup>10</sup> devoid of a specific ethnic identity. Xabier Albó, one of the few contemporary Jesuit social scientists to have thought out this problem, states it as follows: "The missionary mainly sought someone, not something. *The person rather than the culture.* The latter interested him only in terms of the former. He was directly interested in the Indian; and only indirectly in what was native, insofar as the cultural environment was the road to get to know, penetrate into, and respect the Indian as an individual" (Albó 1966a:295, emphasis added). This road was not traveled by the nineteenth century Jesuits in the Napo, where no serious attempts were made to understand the deep roots of Napo Runa culture. Albó (1966a:295) concludes that the official attitude of the Jesuits when speaking of the Indian person was "in general, one of respect and esteem". One can argue, however, that the positive virtues ascribed to the Indians such as "docile and submissive nation," "eagerness to imitate," "submissive to extremes" (Albó 1966a:296) reveals the fact that the Jesuits took the mask for the person. José de Acosta, whom Albó says has been called "a moderate Las Casas," is the only one who seems to have partially pierced this mask. In the mid-sixteenth century, de

Acosta described the Peruvian Indians as "mostly subtle and sharp and with no small ability to pretend and feign anything," despite the fact that on another occasion, he refers to them as "those beasts" (Albó 1966a:295). Although this image may be considered "positive" from the Jesuits' point of view, it characterized Indian peasants who had already settled in villages and were disciplined by the political, social, and religious controls typical of hierarchical societies. Instead, in the Napo, the Jesuits confronted horticulturists, hunters and gatherers, the so-called savage Indians, whose social organization and values--as noted by Taylor in his discussion of the Jívaro--confronted the white man with an image representing "the exact antonym of the major values adopted by the dominant sectors of Western society" (Taylor 1985b:263). ✓

On the one hand, the Napo Runa was considered "the good savage," submissive and peaceful, the child domesticated by hundreds of years of contact with the whites, and on the other, the "animal of instincts," "the auca" who might break out at any time through the superficial layer of domestication. The Napo Runa frequently expressed their resistance to exploitation and hid their hostility towards the whites with a protective and public disguise of docility and subordination. The gap created by these two ideological practices, superficially similar but in fact diametrically opposed, was an important factor conditioning both class relations and class conflict in the Tena-Archidona region. These evolved under the structural conditions created by the encounter of the three types of economies: extractive, agricultural, and hunting and shifting horticulture.

Because of their difficulties with Indian adults, the Jesuits emphasized the education of Indian children, considering them to be "the only positive hope for the Mission" (López San Vicente 1894:18). In the Napo, they followed the general guidelines of the educational policy



In comparison, this quotation confirms various aspects of an argument made by James Scott in his work on the everyday resistance of a peasant group in Malaysia: "That the poor should dissemble in the face of power is hardly an occasion for surprise. Dissimulation is the characteristic and necessary pose of subordinate classes everywhere most of the time--a fact that makes those rare and threatening moments when the pose is abandoned all the more remarkable." (Scott 1985:284).

When in addition--as was the case in Napo--a class society is ethnically stratified, that need for dissimulation among the subordinate groups seems to be more pressing, because of the absence of a shared culture providing the basis for potential communication between the classes. When cultural codes differ, the symbolic sanctions whereby one class can put pressure on the other in more culturally homogeneous societies, are ineffective.<sup>11</sup> Even those whites who showed some sort of interest in the Indian as a person, considered him a closed and hermetic individual, and his world, an almost impenetrable one. When the dominant class learned Quichua, it used the language as an instrument to subject and evangelize the Indian, and rarely as a medium for understanding the deepest meanings of his culture. Besides, until a short time ago, the Indians, and particularly the women, had no access to the subtleties of the Spanish language that might enable them to penetrate into the white man's world--a socially inaccessible world, in any case. Consequently, the seeming "external submission" and "exaggerated servility" were effective measures of self-preservation, reflecting the clear and realistic Indian assessment of the instruments of repression available to the whites. The ethnic barrier between whites and Indians conditioned class interdependence, since it intensified the distance already established by an unequal power relation through several rituals of avoidance. The absence of a shared cultural

language widened the social gap between the classes.

Going back to the above quotation by the Jesuit priest, it can be understood why the "hidden thoughts," the "evil-intended instincts," or the "irrational desire for independence" are the only reasons the missionary found plausible to explain the rucuyayas' resistance. The "innocence," "sincerity" and "lovingness" of the children are for him opposed to the deliberate "evil intents" and "dissembling" practiced by the elders. This interpretation reveals the constant ambivalent approach the missionaries had towards the Napo Runa--shifting between the "good and the bad savage," and likewise, the actual fear that "the auca" might reemerge, "contaminating" the already civilized natives and unleashing violent conflicts. Although in that period of the nineteenth century the Napo Runa were considered the most docile and acculturated Indians of all the Oriente, even the Jesuits realized that this submission was precarious in nature, though they failed to understand its deeper causes.

To conclude this chapter on the history of the Napo Runa, it is interesting to compare the Jesuits' image of them with that of another nineteenth-century European who was not involved in the conflict. Charles Wiener, the French traveler who visited the Tena-Archidona area in 1880, was particularly perceptive of certain ethnographic aspects that went entirely unnoticed by other travelers of the same period. Though Wiener shares with the Jesuits various elements of European views of his time about the savages, he is exceptionally critical of the civilizing action taken until then by the Europeans in connection with the Amazon Indians. He notes, for example, that the production of manufactured goods had replaced native handicrafts; that panning gold in payment for trifles had become the most important job for the natives; and that the Europeans "had not only neglected opening up the intelligence [of the Indians] to more

concrete ideas, but had even drowned them in liquor" (Wiener 1883:242).

In addition, Wiener is one of the few travelers of that period to transcribe his conversation with a Tena-Archidona Indian, who told him about his act of confession to a Jesuit priest. In this confession, the Indian uses sarcasm and humor as defensive weapons in the face of authoritarian irrationality. We already observed these same characteristics in the song sung by another Indian when handing over his camarico to the priest, and they are present in several of the stories told by Rucuyaya Alonso. The conversation reported by Wiener reads as follows:

A great Yumbo devil, called Muro-Atalpa, was coming out of the church one day:  
'You confessed yesterday,' I said. 'Yes (*Haré*),' he answered. 'And what did the father ask you?' The Yumbo broke out in laughter: 'He asked me if I had stolen. I said no. He asked me if I had gotten drunk, I answered: *Taita* (father), you know I'm drunk all year round, why do you ask me that?' Muro-Atalpa added: 'My grandfather was always drunk; I drink since I could barely walk, how can you want me not to drink now?' (Wiener 1883:243).

It is impossible not to read here Muro Atalpa's ironical tone with respect to the missionary, especially when Wiener also let us know that the Father's penitence for Muro-Atalpa was the forceful donation of four pounds of pita to the convent. A few lines further down, Wiener observes that the "Yumbos" are distinguished from the Sierra Indians by their humor: "They laugh at anything and nothing" (Wiener 1883:243). That "nothing" might well be just what the Jesuits never understood.

## Notes

1. In Bolivia, for example, there are famous songs and dances in which the Indians, disguised with black jackets and top hats ridicule the *tinterillos* (pettifoggers), the small bureaucrats who seek to take advantage with impunity of the alleged "stupidity" of the peasantry (see Muratorio 1977). Analyzing the frustrating circumstances of the Ecuadorian Indians, further aggravated after Independence, Oberem noted "A possibility of venting the feelings of hatred held back may be seen in the very widespread native custom of wearing the costume of a hacienda administrator or owner during their festivities, thus making fun of them by mimicking their attitudes and behavior" (Oberem 1981a:320-321). In Ecuador as well, the songs sung by the Chimborazo peasants during their *mingas* (shared community work) to harvest the crops in the patron's lands, often expressed protest at the percentage of the harvest claimed by the landlords, mockery at their physical or personality traits, and generally, a refusal to acknowledge the legitimacy of the system of domination (my field notes:1976-1979).

2. Espinosa (1984:167) suggests that the control and repressive apparatus employed by the Sierra landowner was not imposed in all its power until the early twentieth century but, relatively speaking, it was always more effective than in the Oriente.

3. Espinosa (1984:161-162) notes that indentured Indians (*conciertos*) of the highland estates moved over to "warm lands" for access to ecological strata of which they had been deprived by the dispossession of their community lands, and to avoid collection of the contributions. Nonetheless, these "warm lands" were located within the boundaries of the haciendas themselves. This allowed the landowners to use their power to bring them back and settle them in temperate and cold climates, the centers of cereal and livestock production. On the contrary, in the nineteenth century Oriente, the patrons frequently had to use the Zaparo Indians to try to bring out the Napo Quichua who

escaped into the forest, regarded as "no man's land." As in all peasant societies, sabotage, the bargaining over goods, and work-to-rule were also used in the Ecuadorian Sierra as forms of resistance against the landowners (see Espinosa 1984:167-168). With respect to the uprisings of the *conciertos* and *huasipungueros* (attached peasants) in the Sierra, Oberem (1981:320-321) suggests that these were more frequent from the early eighteenth century onwards. For a more detailed and complete discussion of the form taken by these and other native uprisings, see Moreno Yáñez (1895, 1987).

4. The absence of an institutionalized and church-controlled fiesta system in this area of the Oriente deprived the patrons of the ideological and moral control provided by the church to the Sierra landowners, especially to ensure payment of debts and other commitments that native laborers incurred with the patron (see Espinosa 1984:169-175). Both Espinosa and Arcos (1984:110-111) point out, however, that in the fiestas of the highland Indians there were also elements of "resistance," insofar as the masters had to "hand over" part of the harvest for consumption at the feast, and this could be considered at least a symbolic form of "appropriation" exercised by the Indians. In Tena-Archidona, the most important ritual feast that could cause Indian indebtedness was the marriage feast. But, it was held in the Indian settlements, and not in social and ideological areas controlled by the missionaries or by the patrons. On the basis of Jimenez de la Espada's evidence, Oberem (1980:252-254) describes fiestas with *priostes* (fiesta sponsors) and in connection with Christian celebrations, such as Corpus Christi in the Quijos region dating back to the sixteenth century, but the two cases cited refer to the Loreto and San José Indians in Jesuit times, and not to the Tena-Archidona area. Here there were other feasts besides the wedding, but these were neither subject to the Christian calendar nor under the church's administrative and ritual control. Whitten (1976:167) describes a similar situation for the "*jista*" (or feast) that the Canelos Quichuas organize twice a year.

5. This conception of freedom as "licentiousness" and the idea that towns were the focus of civilization and Christianity, were behind the policy of the reducciones introduced by Viceroy Francisco de Toledo (1569-1630). According to Albó (1966a:252-253), he was the Viceroy that compelled the Jesuits to accept the doctrina system within their missions.

6. Albó (1966a:270-289) points out, for example, the contradiction that existed between the doctrinas as an evangelization strategy--implying the continued presence of the priests in a settlement and their economic dependency on the stipends received from the natives--and the New Missionary Spirit, established in the Institute of the Society, specifically prohibiting the missionaries from settling down in one place or from receiving Indian offerings (Albó 1966a:263). In addition, although they had to evangelize within the Colonial government system, the Jesuits sought to maintain their independence vis-à-vis the civil and ecclesiastic Spanish authorities. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Jesuits tried to find a compromise between the two extremes of these contradictions. It is also relevant to point out here, that among the evangelizing Jesuits in the nineteenth century Napo, there was no equal to Father Bernabé Cobo, a historian and ethnographer of ancient Peru, nor was there an organizer of the stature of Father Diego Torres, who was the heart of the missions in Paraguay.

7. This attempted uprising was caused by a misunderstanding between the Indians and the authorities. One of Rayo's soldiers, who did not understand Quichua, had thought that the Indians wanted to kill him, whereas they had no intention of doing so. Rayo reacted by ordering that four Indians be punished with 200 lashes. In view of the unjust punishment, the Puerto Napo natives tried to kill not only Rayo and Father Guzmán, but also Father Fonseca and the other whites living in the villages. Faced with such a dangerous situation, Father Fonseca gathered together the whites armed with shotguns (Jouanen 1977:35). This episode reveals that the "alliance" between the white traders

and the Indians was precarious and strategic and that, threatened by an Indian rebellion, the whites sought an alliance with the Jesuits.

8. We have found infrequent references to white women for that period, and they do not give an idea that there was a stable family life. For example, an AGN document mentions a woman and her child abandoned by the husband; another records that a woman, mistreated by her husband, had to seek asylum in the Convent of the Mothers of the Good Shepherd (1886, 1887, AGN). These references are in contrast with the importance acquired by white female settlers early in the twentieth century. Many of them became powerful patrons a few years after arriving in the Napo.

9. The large-scale rebellion of 1578-79 where the names of the leaders: Beto, Guami, Imbate, Jumandi and others, are prominently mentioned is, of course, an exception.

10. Darcy Ribeiro (1973) uses the term "generic Indian" with reference to the Indians who have lost their specific ethnic identity after a process of forced acculturation. In the case discussed here, the term is used to refer to the Jesuit perception of the Napo Runa. It differed, for example, from that which was held at that time regarding the Jivaro who, according to Taylor (1985b:255), were perceived as a separate "nation" with a whole set of distinctive features and a specific cultural style.

11. Such is the case, for instance, of a small village in Malaysia discussed by Scott (1985:282-283), which exhibits ethnical homogeneity between rich and poor. Scott observes there that malicious gossip, nicknames, and rumors act as a sort of symbolic resistance that can be practiced by the poor class against the rich to obtain certain advantages. These symbolic forms of resistance could not operate in Tena-Archidona, where language barriers prevented this type of verbal communication, and where it was unthinkable that the whites' prestige could be affected by any opinions the Indians might have had about them.

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T H E   I N D I A N S   O F   C O L T A

ESSAYS ON THE COLTA LAKE ZONE, CHIMBORAZO (ECUADOR)

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C. JARA  
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T H E   I N D I A N S   O F   C O L T A  
ESSAYS ON THE COLTA LAKE ZONE, CHIMBORAZO (ECUADOR)

EDITOR

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THIS BOOK OF ESSAYS IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF

MARIA GUILLEN

and

MANUELA ASITIMBAY

## P R E F A C E

### PURPOSE OF ESSAYS

This volume of essays follows the preliminary report on the Colta Lake zone which was published in 1965 and entitled "Indians in Misery." The purpose of this volume is to explore in greater detail some of the facets of the culture, only superficially covered in the first report. A second purpose is to provide baseline studies which will make it possible in the future to gauge the extent of change resulting from the IERAC<sup>1</sup> - Cornell intervention in the zone.

The studies included in this volume are a result of investigations carried out under an applied anthropology program undertaken by Cornell University, in collaboration with IERAC, and financed by AID-Washington.

The personnel<sup>2</sup> of Cornell University set up headquarters on the Hacienda Colta Monjas in February of 1965. Colta Monjas, located on the western side of Colta Lake, is now the property of IERAC and is in the process of being parcelled in favor of the resident serfs and the five Indian communities that border the hacienda. Cornell's role has been to carry out anthropological investigations, advise IERAC on the social implications of agrarian reform and initiate small community development projects.

### THE ZONE

The Colta Lake zone, one of the most densely populated Indian areas of highland Ecuador, lies in the province of Chimborazo, about 30 kilometers southwest of Riobamba, the capital of the province. The zone is noted for being

- 1.- Ecuadorean Institute of Agrarian Reform and Colonization.
- 2.- The Cornell team consisted of two anthropologists: Dr. Eileen Maynard and Arcenio Revilla and one social worker, Ana Baéz de Revilla. Two graduate students from Cornell University, Scott Robinson and Carol Robinson, were also a part of the team during the summer of 1965.

"difficult" because of the extent of economic underdevelopment, illiteracy and resistance of its inhabitants to change programs. Cornell has worked almost exclusively with the communities on the western side of Colta Lake, which are Yanacocha, Hacienda Colta Monjas, Majipamba, León Pug, Guayllaló, Cebollar, Lirio and Balbanera. On the eastern side of the lake are located Pardo, Santo Domingo, Ashcucanina, Eastern San Antonio and Western San Antonio.

The economic resources of the area are insufficient to provide a livelihood for its almost 6,000 inhabitants. The plots of land represent an extreme minifundio, the average landholding being less than an acre. Added to precariousness of existence, are the vagaries of the climate; crop failures being frequent due to the cold, hail, frost and periods of drought followed by torrential rainfall. Due to the high altitude<sup>3</sup>, agricultural production is confined to potatoes, barley, quinoa, broad beans, mellocos, ocas and mashua<sup>4</sup>. Of secondary importance is the raising of livestock, including sheep, pigs, cows, burros and horses.

The scarcity of land had led to a pattern of forced temporary migrations of from 80 to 90% of the adult males. The migrants work from one week to four months at a time on the tropical coast and in various highland cities as carriers, day laborers, travelling merchants, etc.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although many of the Indians of the zone acted as informants, we want to especially acknowledge the aid of Manuel Bagua and Juan Remache who gave a great deal of their time in providing us with cultural data.

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3.- The altitudes listed in the preliminary report were in error. Upon checking with an altimeter, it was found that altitudes range from 11,600 ft. in the lower section (patio of the Hacienda Colta Monjas) to 13,450 ft. on the high plateau.

4.- Highland tubers.



We would also like to thank Jeannette Rosenberg, the Project secretary, who had the responsibility of typing all of the stencils and coordinating the report; and Mrs. Gene Fried who proofread the various essays before publication.

# I N D I A N - M E S T I Z O R E L A T I O N S

Eileen Maynard

## GENERAL PATTERNS OF INTER-GROUP RELATIONS

### GROUP IDENTIFICATION

The social organization of the Colta Lake zone is characterized by the existence of a modified caste system which dates from the Spanish Colonial Period when the large feudal estates with Indian serfs (huasipunqueros) were established and the free Indians lost the greater part of their lands to the Spanish conquerers. Today the dominant caste consists of lower or middle-class Mestizos. To simplify terminology, the word "Mestizo" in this report refers to an individual who does not consider himself to be Indian and is not considered Indian by others. Actually a large percentage of the dominant caste are classified as Whites by the Indians and identify themselves as Whites.

There are, however, three sub-groups among the non-Indians: Cholos, Mestizos and Whites. Although there is disagreement and ambiguity among the non-Indians, according to most informants, a Cholo is a person who racially is a mixture of Indian and Mestizo and who culturally is in an intermediate position between Indian and Mestizo. A Mestizo is an individual who is part Indian and part White and is culturally and economically superior to the Cholo. A White is supposedly of pure European ancestry and superior in every way to the other sub-groups<sup>1</sup>. The more sophisticated non-Indians, however, will tell you that there are no real Whites or that perhaps 1% of the population is actually White.

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1.- These definitions are confined to the zone. The classifications vary according to region, social class and ethnic group. In some sections the definitions are reversed: a Cholo is considered superior to a Mestizo. In other cases, Cholo and Mestizo are synonymous. An upper class person from Quito would probably not consider any of the non-Indians of the zone "White."



Because of his clothing, this Indian might be identified as a Mestizo outside of the zone.



Typical dress of a lower class Mestizo woman of the zone.

The individuals who will for the sake of convenience be referred to hereafter as "Mestizos" comprise the minority, 10% or less of the total population of the zone. They are generally literate or semi-literate, live in adobe houses with tile roofs which are located on the main streets, and dress in Western style clothing. Some of the women, however, dress in "cholo" fashion, that is in long full skirts, blouses and sweaters, and wrap a wool stole (chalina) around their shoulders and over their heads. A few of them wear a man's style felt hat, and many of the older women have long hair which they wear in braids. Most Mestizos wear shoes, the women using cotton stockings and the men socks. Nearly all of the men own one or more ponchos of better grade wool with collars. Occupationally the members of the dominant caste are storekeepers, artisans, petty officials, overseers of the haciendas, and owners of the small brick factories. Although, in general, the economic level of the Mestizos is higher than that of the Indians, most of them would be considered impoverished by American standards. The principal language of the Mestizo is Spanish, but nearly all of them speak Quichua as well.

The subordinate and majority caste consists of Indians who are said to be the descendants of the warlike Puruhaes who inhabited the present provinces of Chimborazo and Bolivar. An Indian is one who considers himself to be Indian and is so considered by the Mestizos. There are a few Indians who might be identified as Cholos or even Mestizos outside of the zone. These are the more acculturated Indians who wear Western style shirts and pants, shoes and socks or sandals, Mestizo type ponchos, and felt hats.

The great majority of the Indians are illiterate (70 to 100%, depending on the community)<sup>2</sup>, and live in huts of cancaqua<sup>3</sup> with thatched roofs. The mother tongue of the Indians is Quichua, although most of the men speak Spanish with varying degrees of fluency and with a distinctive pronunciation. The majority of Indian women

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2.- According to the 1962 Census, the literacy rate of the urban parishes of Canton Colta, which includes the Colta Lake zone, was 9.2%

3.- A volcanic earth containing clay which is cut into blocks.

speak only Quichua, but many understand Spanish. While the women retain the traditional Indian dress, a number of the men have discarded such typical items of Indian clothing as the white pants, sashes, and the flat stiff hats. Many of the men now wear Western style clothing, rubber or woven sandals, and felt hats; but a number continue to use the typical Indian poncho of homespun wool without a collar. The Indians are largely subsistence farmers, and approximately 80% of the men work outside of the area for temporary periods as carriers, travelling merchants and agricultural laborers.

When Mestizos are asked to describe members of the out-group, it is apparent that they have a stereotyped perception of the physical characteristics of Indians which does not conform to reality. According to them, Indian features are coarse and the skin color is brown. When asked to more specific, the Mestizos say an Indian has thick lips, a wide nose, straight black hair, small eyes, prominent cheekbones, and an absence of body hair. Although some of the Indians have physical attributes in accordance with the stereotype, a large number do not possess them. Actually the majority of the Indians of this zone are fairly light in color and their features are varied. There are many with thin lips, aquiline noses, large eyes, and wavy hair; and a few of the men have moustaches. Conversely there are Mestizos who have some or all of the physical characteristics ascribed to Indians.

In spite of the existing stereotypes, when asked to identify ethnic groups in a series of photographs of unknown individuals, the majority of both castes was inclined to use clothing as a criterion rather than physical features. For example, one photograph shows a young woman smartly dressed in Western style clothing, but with nearly all of the physical characteristics attributed to Indians. She was identified as White by most of the informants of the zone. A few said she was Mestizo, but no one classified her as Indian. It is apparent that identification of strangers is based more on clothing than on physical characteristics.



A local Indian kneels to receive the blessing of a "White".



Indian subservience is demonstrated by kissing the hand of the Mestizo.

Within the zone, caste affiliation is based on cultural patterns and knowledge of origin. Clothing is an important guide in the identification of Indian women, but there are Indian men who dress like Mestizos. House type, manner of speaking Spanish, and family names are other criteria; but none of these is completely reliable. There are a few Indians who speak good Spanish and live in Mestizo type houses. Certain last names such as Maji, Chuqui, Asitimbay, Lema, etc. denote Indian ancestry; but there are Spanish names like Remache, Guillén, Sánchez, Vendoval, etc. which are found in both castes. One can conclude that an individual is definitely Indian if he or she speaks only Quichua or dresses in traditional Indian clothing. In the case of a man who dresses like a Mestizo and is bilingual, to identify him one must know his cultural background, especially the mode of dress of his womenfolk, his manner of speaking Spanish, the type of dwelling in which he lives and his family name. As stated previously, the ultimate criteria are self-identification and the opinion of members of the out-group.

#### GREETING PATTERNS

The subservience of the Indians in relation to the Mestizos is not concealed from public view. It is all too apparent in the greeting patterns which reflect, symbolize and perpetuate the inferior social position of the Indians. The Indian is expected to take the initiative in greeting Mestizos, addressing them as "Patron" or "Your Mercy." If the Mestizo is an especially exalted personage representing "Mr. Government," the landed gentry or the overseers, the Indian may kiss his hand, but is first careful to place a portion of the poncho over the hand so that his lips will not touch the flesh of the Mestizo. An Indian will often shake hands, but even in this gesture of equality, he may before extending his hand, cover it with the poncho. It is not uncommon for a Mestizo to refuse to shake hands with an Indian, ignoring completely the outstretched hand of the Indian.



*Even when shaking hands with a Mestizo, the Indian often covers his hand with a piece of his poncho.*



*Many of the more acculturated Indians now shake hands in this more democratic manner.*



There is a special greeting introduced by the Spaniards which requires the Indian to say "Praised be" or "Praised be the Blessed Sacrament, Niño (or Amo)." The Mestizo then answers "Praised be." Niño which means "child" in Spanish was in colonial times a term of respect used in greeting the owners of the large estates, and this term is still utilized by the Indians in greeting Mestizos, especially the hacienda owners. For example, the ex-renter of the Hacienda Colta Monjas was often called "Niña Rosa." Amo or the Quichua corruption amu, meaning "master," is generally reserved for the mayordomos, the Mestizo overseers of the haciendas, but may be used with other Mestizos.

When the Indians do not use the greeting required of them, but say merely "Good Morning" to a Mestizo, the Mestizo may refuse to answer or say "I am not a mitayo, I am a White." An Indian from León Pug explained, "From childhood we have been accustomed to use such words as amu, niño and patrón with the Whites because they are superior. We cannot use señor or señora with the Whites or say 'Good Morning'. If we don't say 'Praised be,' they will not answer and this makes us ashamed. It is only in this area, from Riobamba to Guamote, that we cannot use these words. In Alausí, Ambato and Quito; we can say 'Good Morning, Señor.'"

If the Indian is acquainted with the Mestizo, he will still use such terms as Patrón or Your Mercy but may also use the given name of the Mestizo, always placing the respectful don or señor before the name. If the person is considered especially important, the Indian may call him Doctor. In the case of a woman she will be called señora or niña with her given name. The Indian will never address a Mestizo without using some kind of title.

A Mestizo, on the other hand, always calls and refers to Indians of his acquaintance by their given names, without the use of a title. I have never heard a Mestizo of the region use señor or don when addressing an Indian. Furthermore, the Mestizo uses the familiar "tu" ("thou") form with all Indians whether they are acquaintances or strangers. The Indian is expected to utilize the more respectful "usted" ("you") form with the Mestizo, but may inadvertently use the "tu" form of the verb because of ignorance of grammar.

## INTER-GROUP REFERENCES

The Mestizos of the Colta Lake zone never utilize the more deferential terms for Indians such as indígenas or naturales. Indians are referred to as indios or if the Mestizo wants to be more affectionate, he may use the diminutive indiecitos. An Indian man is sometimes called a runa or a longo, and an Indian woman a dofia or longa.

There is also a group of terms used to insult and degrade the Indians, such as verdugos (hangmen), verdes, rocotos, roscas, and mitayos. Verde means "green" in Spanish and rocoto is a round chili pepper which is sometimes red in color with green spots. According to Dr. Eudofilo Costales<sup>4</sup>, these terms refer to the Mongolian spot, the implication being that the presence of this physical characteristic is indicative of the inferior racial origin of the Indian. The word rosca meaning "spiral" also probably refers to the Mongolian spot. Mitayo comes from the Spanish Colonial Period when many of the Indians were forced to work as slave laborers (mitayos), especially in the mines.

The Indians call themselves naturales or indígenas in Spanish and runacuna (men)<sup>5</sup> in Quichua. An Indian whose economic status allows him to wear a better grade of clothing, or one who is more acculturated, is sometimes called tuto or criollo. The respected Mestizos are referred to as amucuna (masters) or blancocuna (Whites).

There are also a number of deprecatory terms for Mestizos such as tzala, fiero and cholo. Again according to Dr. Costales and Indian informants, tzala in this context means "adventurer" or "an outsider who is not welcome." Fiero is a Spanish word meaning "cruel," "ugly" or loosely "a person who beats Indians." A cholo in the opinion of the Indians is a person whose racial origin is a mixture of Indian and Spanish. By using the term cholo, the Indian seeks to deprecate the Mestizo by implying

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4.- Judge of Canton Colta and a member of the Casa de la Cultura of Riobamba.

5.- Runa means "man" and cuna indicates the plural form.

that he is not really anything, neither Indian nor White. A chola woman who braids her hair and wears the full skirt (centro) is called a mindala. For a low class Mestizo man, the Indians use the term yangayanga amu which means a "worthless master" or "one without power."

#### INTER-GROUP ATTITUDES AND THEIR EFFECTS

In general, the Mestizos regard the Indians as animals and treat them accordingly. They speak of the ignorance, irrationality, drunkenness and lack of cleanliness of the indios. One local Mestizo defined an Indian as "a person of an inferior race" and one with "low blood."

What is particularly disheartening, however, is the presence of negative attitudes towards Indians even among the more educated Ecuadoreans. The following is an example of the prevailing attitude of many Mestizos. An Ecuadorean from the Office of School Construction of AID-Ecuador visited the zone to help plan the building of a school. This man has been the recipient of various scholarships, had visited the United States and other countries, and was supposedly knowledgeable in techniques of community development. In the streets of Riobamba, while waiting to see an official, we discussed the feasibility of utilizing community labor in the construction of the proposed school. An Indian was sitting on the curb in front of us. The Ecuadorean pointed to the Indian and said: "Do you think this animal is capable of constructing a school? We will send in trained carpenters and masons to build the school and direct the labor. We will use the Indians for such tasks as carrying the materials. The Indians are animals. If they weren't, they would have improved themselves in the last 400 years, but look at them, they still live like their ancestors." If Ecuadoreans in such status positions believe in the inherent inferiority of the Indian, one can well imagine the attitude of the local Mestizos.

The negative attitudes are not just verbal expressions but are manifested in the behavior patterns as well. Being considered more animal than human, the Indian is overworked, maltreated, humiliated, ignored, or taken advantage of as the situation demands. The following scene was witnessed by the writer on the Hacienda Colta Monjas. An Otavalo Indian was selling woolen scarves and stoles. A group of local Indians was bargaining with the Otavalo and one of the former decided to buy a scarf and wrapped it around his neck. The Mestizo wife of the overseer of the hacienda joined the group and decided she wanted the scarf for her husband. Without a word, she grabbed the scarf from around the neck of the Indian and ran off with it. No one objected; it was the natural course of events.

In offices, stores or buses; the Indian is the last to be attended and can expect only perfunctory service at best, given grudgingly or condescendingly. On the buses, he is made to move to the back or must even sit on top to make room for Mestizo passengers. Always it is the Indian who can wait for hours, days or years to be paid, to be attended to, or to receive his legal rights. His time is of no value. Even some of the members of the Ecuadorean Institute of Agrarian Reform (IERAC) whose aim is to improve the lot of the peasant population of Ecuador have this attitude. An example of this occurred on the day the serfs of Colta Monjas received their provisional titles to their huasipungos (parcels held in usufruct). The IERAC team was to arrive at 10:00 A.M. The Indians had been up since dawn preparing food to celebrate the day of their liberation. The huasipunqueros of the nearby hacienda of El Hospital were also waiting for the team. They had prepared an elaborate program with the help of the teacher and a five course dinner for the IERAC officials. They had also built arches and hired a band. All were waiting in desperation for the arrival of the team. Finally at 5:00 P.M. the officials appeared at Colta Monjas in a state of advanced intoxication and the huasipunqueros received their titles as the sun was setting behind the hacienda. It seems that the team had been drinking with various dignitaries all morning in Riobamba, and the fact that the Indians of three haciendas were waiting for them was of little importance.

The Indian is also understood to be the servant of the Mestizos whether he is in their pay or not. Any Indian who happens to be available will be ordered to fetch items and carry equipment. A few of the engineers and agronomists who have visited the hacienda have used the Indians as carriers as though they were their native bearers on an African safari.

Even those Whites or Mestizos who feel some sympathy for the Indians, are inclined to treat them as mental deficients or children. Once during a meeting of a group of Indians from Colta with the members of a government organization, the Director wanted to impress us with his liberal attitudes. Turning to the Indians, he changed to the "tu" form and addressed the Indian leader who was 53 years old, as "my little son." He used simple phrases and homey illustrations. In all honesty, it must be admitted that the Indian responds favorably to this type of treatment. It is at least an improvement over being insulted or ignored, and symbolizes a benign paternalism.

It is safe to say that no Mestizo of the zone interacts with an Indian in the same way he interacts with members of his own caste. There is no belief in the dignity of the Indian as a human being who is entitled to at least a minimum of respect. The behavior and attitudes of the Mestizos in regard to the Indians have served to degrade the Indian and develop a profound inferiority complex which multiplies the difficulties of any program designed to raise the social and economic level of the Indians of the zone.

The idea of inherent inferiority has been so ingrained in the Indians that some of them refer to themselves as animals or half-brutes. This is especially true of the more isolated Indians of the high plateau who have lived for generations under the feudal system, and whose responses have been conditioned by years of inhuman toil and degradation. They stand with their heads bowed, afraid to speak, allowing the Mestizo to speak for them. This is not as true of the Indians of the free communities around Colta Lake or of those of the Hacienda Colta Monjas. These Indians have had more contact with the outside and will not accept with resignation the more flagrant forms of abuse.

The Indian attitudes towards the dominant caste are more difficult to determine as an Indian is more reluctant to express his true feelings about the Mestizos as a group. It is clear, however, that there is a deep resentment of the Mestizos who live from the sweat of the Indian, but because of the realities of the power structure, the Indian is helpless to do much about it. It is chiefly when under the influence of alcohol that the latent antagonism appears and erupts into violence. This, however, usually takes the form of displaced aggression, that is against members of their own caste, which may explain to some extent the preponderance of intra-communal and inter-communal rivalries in the zone. Only rarely is physical aggression directed against Mestizos because of the fear of reprisal.

According to historical accounts, between 1764 and 1921, there were ten major Indian uprisings in the province of Chimborazo, but most of them occurred in Guano, Guamote, and Columbe. The Indians of the Colta Lake zone were apparently involved only in the uprising of 1871 described as follows:

"According to Dean Proaño, because of the abuses perpetrated in the collection of a tax known as the 'diezmo', the Indians of Yaruquies, Punín and Cajabamba rose up, committing excessive and horrible acts of violence. They killed in a barbarous manner the tax collector of Yaruquies, Rudecindo Rivera, and hung his corpse on a post on the shores of Colta Lake. The Indians then reunited and fell upon the town of Punín, burning down houses but respecting the church. The parish priest of Punín, Dr. Nicanor Corral, having confidence in the respect and affection that the Indians had for him (being their benefactor) imprudently climbed the hill to contain the rebels and was gravely wounded. It is said that the few policemen sent from Riobamba to subdue the Indians were killed and their bodies desmembered. Prior to these events, the Indians in Cacha had named as King a young, intelligent, and valiant Indian whose name was Fernando Daquilema... he had previously refused to accept the honor. In an exptemporaneous ceremony, they crowned the King and Queen. With great solemnity they placed the

mantle and crown of the image of St. Joseph from the chapel in Cacha on the King, constructed a thatched hut to be used as the royal palace, and appointed the royal servants. They also organized a cavalry regiment and initiated their campaign against the Whites. Soldiers sent from Ambato finally arrived and quelled the rebellion. The King and Queen, along with about 200 Indians, were imprisoned. The King was tried and sentenced to death by the Council of War. He was executed in the public plaza of Yaruquies in front of the 200 Indian prisoners. After climbing the execution platform, the King with great serenity and resignation directed an emotional harangue to his people. He admonished them to never again rebel nor try to revive the ancient sovereignty, the luck was always with the Whites. He then was executed. President García Moreno had sent a communiqué from Quito ordering that the Pretender not be shot, but the order arrived too late. In 1872 the President, through the intercession of Bishop Ordoñez, decreed a general pardon for the rebels."<sup>6</sup>

Another uprising of serious consequences, commonly referred to as "The Massacre by the Calvary Febres Cordero," occurred in the Colta Lake zone in 1928 or 1929. There are various versions of the event, one of them<sup>7</sup> being that the Indians on the left side of the lake rose up in protest against a new government tax and also, some say, against the abuses of the authorities in Cajabamba. The cavalry regiment "Febres Cordero" was dispatched to the zone where they took up headquarters on the Hacienda Shamanga, near Pardo. When it became apparent that they were going to be attacked, the regiment retreated to Cajabamba to await orders from Riobamba. They were told to quell the rebellion and returned to the zone. It is said that the Indians hid among the titora reeds and "were shot down like ducks. Others were tied up like dogs and in a state of agony were taken prisoner." The Indians of Pardo, Santo Domingo,

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6.- Julio Castillo Jácome. La Provincia del Chimborazo en 1942. Riobamba, 1942. P. 165-166.

7.- Unverified.

Ashcucanina, San Antonio, and Tungurahuilla participated in the uprising. No one knows the number of Indians killed in the massacre, the estimates varying from 30 to 800. One informant, who was an official at the time, said that they received orders to dig holes to bury the dead so that the number killed was large, but unknown. The Indians of Yanacocha, Colta Monjas and Majipamba fled with their animals to the hills near Lirio and Guayllaló where they remained until the army left the zone.<sup>8</sup>

Besides participation in the above uprisings, the Indians of the zone have been involved in a number of conflicts, but these reflect suspicion of outside intervention and a narrow world view rather than hostility to local Mestizos. When the railway was completed in 1901-1902, the Indians were afraid of the locomotive, believing it was the incarnation of supay (the devil) because it belched smoke. Fearing an uprising, President Eloy Alfaro sent a group of soldiers to prevent trouble and to explain to the Indians that the locomotive was merely a machine which had to be fed wood like a fire in order to function.<sup>9</sup>

The Indians of Colta were also involved in protests against the enumeration of the 1950 census, and because of fear of physical violence, the census data is incomplete for the zone. It is further claimed that when the area was mapped by the Instituto Geográfico Militar, it was necessary to send in armed soldiers to protect the cartographers.

Despite Indian reticence, there are some interesting beliefs that provide insight into Indian attitudes regarding Mestizos. It is believed that the spirits of Colta Lake will punish any Mestizo or White who has maltreated the Indians if that person should happen to pass by certain places on the lake shore during the night. There is also a local legend concerning the origin of races. According to the story, when God was in the process of creating man, he put his first product into an oven, but took him out

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8.- Source of data: Dr. E. Costales. D. Escobar and various Indian informants.

9.- Source of data: Dr. E. Costales.



too soon. God was unsatisfied because this man was underdone and so too light in color. This was the first white man or "Gringo." He then baked another man, but left this one in the oven too long and he came out black. This was the first Negro. Finally he baked a man to perfection and said "This man is just right, neither too dark nor too light, but more yellow in color." This was the first Indian.

In relations with the Mestizos of Colta, the Indians are not completely submissive. They do complain openly of the treatment by individual Mestizos and may even present claims against them. This is especially true in cases involving land disputes or the seizing of clothing or animals by the overseers for trespassing on the haciendas.

There is mutual recognition of good between the members of the two castes. For example, a Mestizo may readily admit that a particular Indian is honest, hard working and truthful. I have heard a few Mestizos praise the moral values of the Indians in comparison to those of their own caste. An Indian will respect and even have affection for the few Mestizos who treat him with consideration and generosity. One of the overseers of Colta Monjas is liked by the Indians and is the godfather of an Indian of the hacienda.

### EXPLOITIVE PRACTICES OF LOCAL MESTIZOS

#### LOCAL MERCHANTS

The majority of the Mestizos of the immediate area earn at least part of their income in commercial activities. They are the owners of the small stores that dispense such items as flour, sugar, candles, soft drinks, cigarettes, soap, etc. Their main source of revenue, however, derives from the sale of a cheap cane liquor (aguardiente), and the fabrication and sale of a fermented corn beer (chicha) which forms an integral part of Indian social relations. In order to attract Indian customers, they brew a chicha potent enough to produce almost instantaneous intoxication. Ideally the main ingredient of chicha is corn, but the commercial beverage contains a minimum of corn and a maximum of unrefined sugar. To produce the necessary "kick," two toxic ingredients are added, ammonia and the flowers of

the huantu tree (*Datura sanguinea*). These unscrupulous practices are not only detrimental to the health, but have on occasion caused the death of Indian customers. Although the manufacture of commercial chicha is supposedly controlled by law, government inspectors find extortion a lucrid enterprise and so chicherías<sup>10</sup> continue to flourish in the zone.

In their capacity as merchants, many of the Mestizos find it profitable to sell such staples of the Indian diet as barley and potatoes on credit. In the months before the harvest, from March to June, the Indians are desperately in need of these products and are consequently at the mercy of the merchants. Lacking the necessary cash, they are forced to buy on credit and the interest varies from 3.3% a month to as much as 100% on a long term basis. In order to guarantee payment, the Indian signs a formal contract or leaves an article of clothing as collateral.

Another financial activity of the Mestizos is that of moneylending which amounts to outright usury. Various economic emergencies arise among the Indians such as illness, funerals, baptisms and marriages that necessitate the immediate acquisition of cash. The sponsorship of religious fiestas requires the expenditure of considerable sums. Few Indians possess sufficient savings, or livestock which can be sold to acquire cash, and so cannot meet these necessities without recourse to borrowing. The local moneylenders of Majipamba, San Antonio, Balbanera, Sicalpa and Cajabamba capitalize on the exigency of the situation by charging exorbitant interest rates, usually amounting to 10% a month and compounded on a monthly basis. In this case, the Indian must have a guarantor as well as sign a contract. In general, these loans are for a period of six months. If the debtor cannot pay at the end of the stipulated period, he leaves an article of clothing or gives an animal to the moneylender to defer payment on the loan.

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10.- Places where chicha is sold.

One of the most flagrant exploitations is the system of moneylending known as the encimada. In this case, an Indian goes to a moneylender to borrow, let us say, 2,000 sucres (\$108). The Indian must mortgage his land to receive the loan. At the time of the harvest, the Indian is required to turn over half of his crop to the moneylender to pay the interest on the loan. He still must pay back the amount of the loan in cash.

Added to the above are the exploitive practices of the wholesale merchants who invade Cajabamba every Sunday for the weekly market. When the Indian descends to the fair with small quantities of agricultural produce or livestock to sell, he is accosted by the wholesalers who grab the merchandise, inspect it and they pay the Indian an amount below the market value of the product. The Indian usually does not object from fear of receiving physical punishment.

In the stores of Sicalpa, Cajabamba and Riobamba; the Mestizos are generally attended first. When finally waited on, the Indian can expect only indifferent service and is often cheated out of an ounce or two in the weighing of his purchases. The literate Indian who realizes that he is being cheated and objects, is told to get out and take his business elsewhere.

A case can also be presented for the Mestizos. This group as well is the victim of the social system, it is exploit or be exploited. The aspirations of the Mestizos are higher in regard to education, housing, diet and clothing. In order to fulfill these needs, it is often necessary to resort to unscrupulous practices. One of the Mestizos in Yanacocha is a mason by trade, but cannot find enough work to support his wife and six children. He is one of the few Mestizos who mixes socially with the Indians. Out of necessity he has had to fabricate and sell chicha and feels somewhat guilty about this. He explained his situation in the following words: "As I am poor, I have to look for ways to maintain my wife and children. I have a small store where I sell cigarettes, soft drinks, candy, etc. I also sell chicha, but I must say in all sincerity that I do not add ammonia like the others. When the barrels are new, I admit I put a little leavening in the chicha

to make it stronger. This is not bad, is it? From chicha I earn about \$1.52 a week. To make ends meet, I also fish in the lake and sell a string of fish, if they are large, for 26 cents. For this, I was summoned to Quito to explain my activity to the Hunting and Fishing Club. I told them frankly that this was necessary in order to feed my family . . . . I am the only one who has been reported. They say nothing to the Indians who also fish. . . . The Indian is always the enemy of the White, and the Indian eats at the expense of the White. Anyhow, we are all brothers."

#### LOCAL LANDOWNERS AND OVERSEERS

The largest estate in the zone is the Hacienda Colta Monjas which up to May 1965 had twenty-two serf (huasipunquero) families.<sup>11</sup> As an hacienda of the Junta Central de Asistencia Social, a government charity organization, the Indians have suffered relatively less exploitation than those on privately owned haciendas. The serfs of Colta Monjas have in general larger plots of land (in usufruct) than the Indians of the free communities and some of them have land in the more productive sections of the estate. They also receive rights of pasturage and are allowed to gather straw and tatora. As serfs, however, they were required to remain on the hacienda, working four days a week at a daily wage of 15.6 cents. Furthermore, part of their obligation to the hacienda was the huasicama service whereby two serf families served on a rotation basis as servants in the houses of the renter and the resident overseer (mayordomo).

The major complaints of the huasipunqueros concerned the low wages and the delay in paying the wages. It was customary to pay on a yearly basis, but the Indians have waited as long as eight years for the settlement of their accounts. From the wages were subtracted the value of the produce supplied them by the hacienda and the cost of animals lost while working as shepherds. The serfs also

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11.- In May the serfs received provisional titles to their parcels from IERAC and thus were formally liberated from the huasipungo system.

paid a lawyer whom they hired to represent their rights and gave something to the Work Inspector who was required to be present at the settling of accounts. After all the deductions and extra expenses were paid, the serf received a mere pittance and might even have been in debt to the hacienda.

The main victims of exploitation by the hacienda have been the neighboring Indian communities. It is still common for the mayordomos to seize an article of clothing of an Indian found trespassing on the lands of Colta Monjas, especially if he or she is gathering weeds or engaged in some other activity considered destructive to the hacienda. Also stray animals are taken into custody by the overseers. To regain their property, the Indians have to work a certain number of days for the hacienda or pay a fine. Indians who must pass through the hacienda to pasture their animals must work several days a year for the hacienda. The ayudas, Indians who pasture their animals on the hacienda, work one or two days a week for Colta Monjas. The neighboring Indians thus represent a source of free labor for the hacienda. The mayordomos who impose the sanctions for trespassing often benefit directly, as they may use the Indians to cultivate their own plots or pocket the fines.

One of the overseers of the hacienda has been especially harsh not only with the free Indians, but also with the serfs attached to the hacienda. He has been accused of administering physical punishment and of being abusive and unjust to the Indians. Last June, for example, he seized eleven sheep belonging to one of the serfs. The sheep were grazing on the shores of the lake and the mayordomo claimed that the huasipunquero had no right to the use of this section of the hacienda. The fact of the matter is that this part has been traditionally used by the serfs and the official map of Colta Monjas clearly delineates the lake shore as huasipunquero land.<sup>12</sup>

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12.- Field notes of Scott Robinson, June 24, 1965.

For an appreciable interval, this overseer ceased to take advantage of the Indians for fear of not receiving a parcel of land under the Law of Agrarian Reform. After his right to a parcel was pretty well assured, he again resumed his exploitive activities. In the field notes of the project (November 18, 1965)<sup>13</sup> one finds the following commentary: "After a relatively peaceful period in the relations between the mayordomo and the Indians, once again difficulties have arisen as a result of the continual abuses committed by the overseer against the hacienda Indians and those of the neighboring communities. This week we have received frequent petitions from the Indians asking us to intervene in cases involving the arbitrary seizure of articles of clothing as a punishment for having gathered weeds to feed their guinea pigs." Even some of the sharecroppers had been sanctioned for taking weeds from the plots they cultivate on the hacienda. "During all of these difficulties, we have interfered as little as possible, limiting our intervention to giving advice to the Indians on the normal procedures for recovering their clothing. It was impossible, however, to cross our arms and do nothing in the case of one of the sharecroppers who was fined 100 sucres (\$5.20) for having taken a ridiculously small quantity of weeds from his own huasipungo. In this case we were able to settle the problem in an amicable manner with the overseer."

After this difficulty, another sharecropper from Majipamba, who has been cultivating a parcel of land on the hacienda for twenty years and is now working part of the land of the mayordomo on a sharecropping basis, was told by the overseer that he no longer had any right to farm the parcel. "When we asked the mayordomo the reason for such an inflexible decision, he said it was because of the audacity and bad behavior of the Indian. He further declared that since the parcel was now his, he had a right to do what he wanted with it." Arcenio Revilla then told him that IERAC had not given him provisional title to this parcel for the purpose of exploiting the Indians and that the sharecropper had more right to the land than he because he had been working it for twenty years, not for four years as in the case of the mayordomo.

13.- Field notes of Ana Baéz de Revilla, Nov. 18, 1965.

One of the more flagrant injustices perpetrated at the expense of the Indian communities occurred in 1935, when the renter at that time, Major Luis Benigno Gallegos, seized a part of the communal lands and titora of the communities of Majipamba and Yanacocha, annexing this property to the Hacienda Colta Monjas.<sup>14</sup> This action not only deprived the Indian communities of land and titora, but resulted in the expenditure of large sums of money by the communities to lawyers and officials in a futile attempt to recuperate the lost property.<sup>15</sup> The serfs of Colta Monjas have had the use of the seized area along with the adjoining titora, and this has caused intermittent fighting with the comuneros of Yanacocha. Internal strife has also resulted because the use of communal property has at times been based on the amount contributed by the comunero to the legal disputes involving the lands usurped by Gallegos. This has led to the resentment of those who were unable or unwilling to meet the quotas imposed by the Cabildos (Town Councils).

It is claimed by the Indians that when they tried to defy Gallegos by cutting the titora in the sector usurped by him, they were grabbed, tied up and left all day on the hacienda without food. Recently we were having coffee with one of the Indian leaders in the building which now serves as a kitchen for the investigating team at Colta Monjas. The Indian remarked on how things have changed, that he was now drinking coffee in the same room where the Indians has been maltreated formerly. The idea of socializing on the hacienda represented a form of social justice in the eyes of this leader.

Many of the Mestizo owners of the medium-sized properties farm their land on a sharecropping basis. The law specifies that the proprietor shall furnish the seed and any other materials necessary for production and the sharecropper must turn over half of the harvest to the owner.<sup>16</sup> In this zone, the sharecroppers have to supply

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14.- For details of this case, see the report "Indians in Misery."

15.- On Feb. 6, 1966, IERAC finally settled the controversy by dividing the disputed sector into three parts: Majipamba and Yanacocha each received 250 meters and the ex-serfs 440 meters.

16.- Article 96 of the Law of Agrarian Reform.

the seeds, tools, etc. as well as give 50% of the harvest. During the harvest the owners visit their lands where they are fed and waited on by the Indians. Later the sharecroppers deliver the produce to the house of the owner.

Some of the proprietors treat the sharecroppers as serfs, forcing them to serve as huasicamas in their homes. We became aware of this situation when one of the pupils of the school had failed to attend classes for several weeks. The Director of the school discovered that the child's parents were sharecroppers and that the family had gone to Riobamba to serve in the household of the owner.

A few of the Mestizo owners of medium-sized properties are in the process of dividing their lands for sale. A number of abuses have resulted from these land sales. In one case an Indian from Majipamba purchased half a cuadra (about an acre) from the owner of a small hacienda bordering the community. The transaction occurred five years ago, but the Indian has never received the official documents indicating that he possesses legal title. All of his petitions to obtain the required proof of ownership and registration of the property have been ignored. The Indian claims that the Notary Public in Cajabamba has destroyed or otherwise disposed of the original documents.

In another case, an Indian whom we shall call Juan Asitimbay had worked on one of the medium-sized haciendas in the capacity of huasipunquero since inheriting the huasipungo from his father. Eight years ago the owner died, but Juan continued to be attached to the estate. Under the ex-owner, he had had the use in usufruct of two cuadras, but the heirs reduced his huasipungo to one cuadra of poor land. When the owners heard that under the Law of Agrarian Reform the serfs were to be granted title to their huasipungos, they took away Juan's one cuadra and changed his status to sharecropper and paid him five sucres (about 26 cents) a day to work as a peón for one of the heirs. Juan came to us one day in tears to complain of the latest actions of the owners.



"In August they are going to throw me out because they are selling the property. In the time of the deceased patrón, we earned 50 centavos (2.6 cents) a day and when a new serf entered the hacienda, he had to sign a contract in order to indicate that he had been 'bought' by the patrón. Five years ago they raised the wages to 1.50 sucres (7.8 cents) a day for men and one sucre (5.2 cents) for women. Two years ago they began to pay me five sucres. I have a small house on the property of my patrón. When I heard that they were going to sell the property, I went to Quito with my wife to learn the truth from Patrón Enrique. He told me that I had to get out of the house in August, as they were selling the hacienda. He said he would give me 1,000 sucres (about 52.00 dollars) which is like offering me one sucre (considering the years of service to the family). I hope you can intercede to help me."

Under these circumstances, Juan who is now middle-aged would have no way of earning a living or a place to live. The members of the Cornell team talked with several of the heirs who live in Cajabamba and Riobamba in the hope of working out an amicable solution before presenting the case to IERAC. The family in Cajabamba seemed most sympathetic and declared it would be an injustice to Juan to throw him off the hacienda after several generations of his family had served their family. We then went to talk to one of the heirs in Riobamba who flew into a rage upon seeing Juan and screamed that he was nothing but a "lazy, useless indio" and that we could take the case to IERAC; the Indian would get nothing from the family. Up to the present time the heirs have refused to abide by the laws which would insure Juan of his rights. The law affecting the ownership of the huasipungos is retroactive to the time when Juan was a huasipunguero and so he is entitled to legal possession of his former huasipungo. The case is now pending in the legal office of IERAC in Riobamba.

## THE LOCAL CLERGY

There are two local priests who serve the zone, one in Sicalpa and one in Cajabamba. Since the local priests do not receive a salary, they must rely on the fees charged for performing religious ceremonies and on contributions of their parishioners to support themselves and for the maintenance of the churches. As Mestizos, the priests are inclined to react very much as do other members of their own caste in relation to the Indians. They may verbally express their compassion for "the poor indiecitos", but this sentiment is not always reflected in their actions.

The fees charged for the performance of religious rituals are generally not realistic, considering the scarce economic resources of the Indians. Nearly all of the Indians believe that a religious ceremony is a necessary part of the various rites of passage and because of the expense involved, they are often forced into debt.

Fees for baptism vary from 10 to 20 sucres (\$.52-1.04) depending on the economic circumstances of the godparents. It is said that the parents and the godparents are obligated to work one day for the priest in tasks connected with the upkeep of the church, and in this case, the priest charges less for the baptismal ceremony.

The nuptial mass is more expensive; the priest receives 100 to 200 sucres (\$5.20- 10.40) and added to the expenses are a chicken for the priest and various gifts to the sacristan. Before the wedding, the future Indian bride must serve in the house of the priest for several days. This service is to teach the Indian girl domestic tasks and provide her with religious instruction. Although a few priests in the rural parishes have been charged with taking sexual advantage of the Indian girls during this pre-nuptial service, to my knowledge neither of the two local priests has been accused of this practice.<sup>17</sup>

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17.- In a neighboring parish, when an Indian bridegroom discovered that his bride was not a virgin, the girl claimed that the priest had taken advantage of her while she was serving in his house. The priest was formally charged, but claimed that the girl was lying and so was released.

The presence of a priest at a burial costs a minimum of 30 sucres (\$1.56) and added to this is a small fee for the right to be interred in the cemeteries of Sicalpa and Cajabamba. In one case, an Indian from Colta Monjas paid the priest 80 sucres to preside at the burial rites for his deceased wife. The priest did not appear and refused to refund the money. For a mass to celebrate a religious fiesta, the priest charges from 30 to 45 sucres (\$1.56 - \$2.34).<sup>18</sup>

The tax levied by the Church called the premisa involves the collection of agricultural produce from every family owning land. In June, the collector (premisero), who is a Mestizo, accompanied by an Indian to carry the produce, takes a huacho (furrow) of potatoes and broad beans from each family. If the crop has already been harvested, the collector selects the best produce. Should a parishioner object, he is told that no member of the family will be baptized, married or buried with the rites of the Church unless he fulfills his obligation of the premisa. It is said that the produce is taken to the house of the premisero and that he keeps the best and gives the rest to the priest.

In all honesty, it must be admitted that neither of the priests lives in anything approaching luxury. The main expenditures connected with the rites of passage and religious fiestas involve the purchase of alcoholic beverages and produce, payment of musicians, etc., rather than fees to the Church which represent a small percentage of the total expenses. The Mestizo dispensers of chicha and the moneylenders are the individuals who profit most from the Indian fiestas. The priests do not discourage fiestas, but they do preach against the excessive consumption of alcohol.

The Bishop of Riobamba is one of the more liberal prelates of Ecuador. He is interested in improving the welfare of the Indians of Chimborazo and has supported agrarian reform. To show his sincerity, the Bishop has divided up various Church properties, including the Hacienda

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18.- For more details on the costs of the various rituals, see the essay "Rites of Passage."

Monjas Corral, for the benefit of the peasants; fomented cooperatives; and initiated radio schools to teach literacy and disseminate educational information to the communities of Chimborazo. Unfortunately, not many of his attitudes have filtered down to the rural clergy.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

The local power structure is dominated by the Mestizos who live mainly in the cantonal and parish capitals, Cajabamba and Sicalpa respectively. No Indian holds an official post in the regional government nor is represented in any way in the local government. Very few Indian leaders (cabecillas) have the power to settle intra-communal disputes. The local authorities neither encourage decision-making by the Cabildos of the Indian comunidades nor support the judgments of these semi-autonomous institutions. This undermines the power of the Cabildos and often causes schisms within the communities.

The attitudes of the Mestizo officials are easily explained. The authorities such as the political lieutenant of the parish, the political chief of the canton, and the police commissioner are poorly paid. The more the Indians rely on them to settle controversies, the higher is their revenue because they can impose fines on the parties they judge to be guilty. Although legally these fines must be turned over to the municipality, it is not uncommon for these officials to pocket at least some of the money. Also to receive favorable treatment and as part of the expected behavior pattern, the Indians will give money or produce to the officials. It is not uncommon to see these authorities going home with a sack of eggs, a guinea pig, or a chicken under each arm. Needless to say, their decisions may be influenced by the amount of money or produce received from the contending parties.

To increase their meager income, the local officials disregard the laws by charging for services which are a part of their duties, or overcharging for services which have a specified fee. This occurs especially when an Indian needs copies of birth or death certificates or other legal documents. Another illegal practice is that of charging one sucre per comunero who votes in the elections of the

Cabildos. Those Indians who do not attend may be fined from five to ten sucres. Some of the local authorities use any pretext to fine the Indians and if they do not pay the fines or take produce to the houses of the officials, they may imprison them or the cabecillas.<sup>19</sup>

The most arbitrary abuse of authority occurs in connection with the mingas (collective action projects). The mingas are usually for the purpose of constructing or repairing public works. Most of them can be labelled "forced." because the Indians must participate under the threat of being fined or imprisoned. One of the most effective means of assuring cooperation is to take away a piece of clothing and force the Indians to work in order to regain their property.

On January the 10th of this year, two men representing the authorities of Cajabamba arrived in Majipamba in a truck. Carrying whips, they climbed over the fences and entered the Indian yards. They took articles of clothing or any other object readily available, loaded these items onto the truck and returned to Cajabamba. The next day, the Indians had to work in the plaza of Cajabamba to get back the items taken from them.

Few of the mingas are in direct benefit of the Indian communities. Most of them involve projects in Cajabamba or Sicalpa and no Mestizo is required to participate. There have even been mingas in which the Indians have been forced to work on the private properties of the authorities, receiving chicha in exchange for their labor. As one of the mingas resulted in the death of two Indian girls, it will be considered in detail in the following section.

#### THE CASE OF THE DEATHS OF MARIA GUILLEN & MANUELA ASITIMBAY

On Monday, November 8, 1965, 128 Indians from the community of Majipamba participated in a minga to repair buildings on the Hacienda Gatazo. These buildings are being used by the Ecuadorean army engineers (Battalion Chimborazo) as headquarters for the construction of the highway Riobamba-Cajabamba. The specific minga project consisted in removing tiles from the roofs.

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19.- For further details on the behavior of local officials and the illegal fees charged by them, see the essays "Leadership Patterns" and "Rites of Passage."

It is claimed by the Major in charge of operations in Chimborazo that he ordered the Lieutenant in Gatazo to hire thirty men to remove the tiles. The Lieutenant then talked to the Political Lieutenant of Sicalpa, the Political Chief of the canton, and the Police Commissioner. Apparently the Political Lieutenant offered, for the sake of friendship, to secure the Indians gratis for the army. It is probable that he wanted to impress the Lieutenant with his cooperativeness and so told him it would not be necessary to hire laborers; he could call a minga of Indians from Majipamba. It is interesting to note that Gatazo is located in the parish of Cajabamba. Majipamba is in the parish of Sicalpa. The Indians involved in the minga were not working in their own parish.

The Political Lieutenant ordered the Indian leaders of Majipamba to send a member of every family to the minga. When the man of the family is absent or otherwise occupied, it is necessary to replace him with another member of the family. The leading cabecilla of Majipamba refused to cooperate. According to the Indians, the Political Lieutenant threatened them with a fine of 50 sucres (\$2.72) and seven days in jail if they did not participate in the minga. Considering the lack of cooperative spirit in Majipamba, it is quite unlikely that the Indians volunteered their services. A few, however, may have participated willingly because they were under the impression that the minga was in benefit of the Military Junta which is popular among many of the Indians, because of agrarian reform projects initiated under this government.

As Gatazo is located about ten kilometers from Majipamba, an army truck was used to transport the 128 men, women and children to the work site. Shortly before 5:00 P.M., part of the Indians were loaded into the truck and taken back to Majipamba. Because of the large number to transport, it was necessary to make two trips. The second load consisted mostly of women and children. According to the Indians, there were approximately 70 herded into the truck, but the Army claims that there were only 48. Due to the heavy rainfall, a tarpaulin was placed over the back of the truck. On the slopes approaching Balbanera, about a kilometer from Majipamba, some of the Indians in the middle of the truck began to suffocate. Those located near the outer

edge tried to get the attention of the driver by pounding on the side of the truck with their agricultural tools. Finally one of the draftees who accompanied the Indians realized the situation, jumped out of the truck and ran in front to signal the driver to stop. By that time, at least two of the Indians were unconscious and another eighteen were suffering from symptoms of asphyxiation. It is claimed that water was thrown on the victims in an attempt to revive them.

They were taken to the clinic of the Gospel Missionary Union in Majipamba where they were attended at 6:30 P.M. by Dr. David Adkisson and his wife, but two were dead on arrival. According to Dr. Adkisson, eighteen-year-old Manuela Asitimbay Chimbolema and eleven-year-old María Guillén Lamar had been dead about an hour. A girl of fourteen, Lorenza Lamar Chimbolema, was hospitalized and released the following day. After an examination of the dead girls, the cause of the deaths was attributed to carbon monoxide poisoning. The mucous membranes of the victims were a brighter pink than normal, an indication of carbon monoxide poisoning, and the survivors complained of nausea and severe headaches.

The news of the deaths spread rapidly through the community, and in a short time the patio of the clinic was filled, with many of the Indians hanging over the fence. The father of Manuela who is a travelling merchant was working outside of the community, in the province of Bolivar. The mother declared that he would beat her when he returned for allowing the girl to participate in the minga. María was a favorite of her father and when he arrived at the clinic and saw his dead child, he collapsed from the shock.

The Lieutenant arrived in a short time to confer with the Doctor. He also tried to calm the Indians and told them that the minga had not been for the Military Junta. He then went to inform the parish and cantonal authorities of the deaths. Various relatives of the victims were also present. The Lieutenant bought two coffins costing 150 sucres (\$8.15) each and gave one family five sucres and the other six sucres to buy candles and chicha. When the families asked for more, one of the local officials told

them that the Lieutenant had been too good; that if it had been an hacendado, he would have sent them away with a good, swift kick. Sometime previously, this same official had asked the Indians of Majipamba to harvest his barley in exchange for giving them chicha.

On Tuesday afternoon, several Indians from Majipamba informed the Cornell team of the tragic events. Two members of the team went to visit the families of the dead girls. The relatives complained that they could not bury their dead (under the law) until an autopsy had been performed and that they did not have the money for this.

On Wednesday morning, the members of the Cornell team went to Riobamba to talk to various officials about the case and to see if some sort of compensation could be paid to the families of the victims. The first official we talked to told us it would be fruitless to hire a lawyer. No one person was responsible for the deaths and under the law, the responsibility would be considered negligible. Furthermore, as this was a military dictatorship, no judge would rule against the Army. He advised us to try to seek a settlement by talking in a friendly manner to the army officials involved.

We then talked to the Civil and Military Head of Chimborazo, who said that the case came under the jurisdiction of the Battalion Chimborazo and that he could do nothing. We would have to talk to the Major in charge of operations in Chimborazo, and if this failed, it would be necessary to write a formal letter to the Colonel in Quito, who is the official head of the Battalion. The Civil and Military Head, however, is in charge of the political lieutenants of the various parishes of the province, so we asked him to order the political lieutenants to be more responsible in their direction of the mingas. He said he would do this, but did not seem in the least bit shocked or perturbed over the deaths resulting from the forced minga in Gatazo.



After this, we went to Gatazo to talk with the Lieutenant. With him was an army physician who had been called to perform the autopsy. The Lieutenant immediately became defensive and denied any guilt on his part or on the part of the Army. He claimed that the Indians themselves were to blame because they were irrational; they had refused to get down from the truck when told they were too many persons for one load. He also stated that water had been thrown on the victims, which Dr. Adkisson had told him was bad. (In later conversation with Dr. Adkisson, he said that this was not true. To throw water on a person who is asphyxiating will do no harm, but there was no evidence that this had been done. The clothes of the victims were not wet on arrival at the clinic). The Lieutenant felt that he had been too good and the Indians were taking advantage of him. He had paid for the coffins out of his own pocket and furthermore had been kind enough to summon an army physician to make the autopsy. He expressed no sympathy for the bereaved families and no regret over the deaths.

While there, we saw the truck in which the accident had occurred. The exhaust pipe was located on the side and in such a way that the gas flows upward. The truck was originally an American army vehicle meant for amphibious use and the exhaust pipe had been shortened for land use. The danger from the placement of the pipe was obvious. When the back part of the truck is covered, the gas flows into that part of the vehicle.

We suggested that the Army should pay an indemnization to the families of the dead girls. The Lieutenant said that we would have to come back that evening to talk to the Major.

On the way back to Colta Monjas, we stopped to talk to the Political Lieutenant of Sicalpa who had called the minga. He was obviously frightened and upset by the event. He maintained that he had in no way threatened the Indians and was surprised at the large number who had participated in the minga. He said that it must have been the cabecillas who had told the Indians that they would be fined and imprisoned if they did not cooperate. He stated that he expected to lose his appointment at any minute and that Majipamba was finished as far as mingas were concerned.

After giving him a short lecture on the injustice of the forced minga in which only Indians are required to participate, we departed.

That evening, two members of the Project returned to Gatazo to talk with the Major. The meeting consisted of a round table discussion in which eleven army men participated; the Major, two captains, the Lieutenant, the Doctor, the driver of the truck, and several draftees. In the first few minutes of the discussion, the army officers attempted to dominate the members of the Project. When asked about paying an indemnization, they protested vehemently. One of the captains declared that if they paid, it would be an admission of guilt. The Major finally softened and said that he had requested the Lieutenant to get thirty men for the work and had not expected the participation of women and children. He felt that "for humanitarian reasons," the Army should pay a small compensation to the families. He asked the members of the Project to talk to the parents of the dead girls and find out how much they wanted and then report back the next morning at 9:00 A.M.

The following morning the mothers and other relatives of the dead girls were brought to Colta Monjas in the project vehicle. They said that the Police Commissioner and the Political Lieutenant had been angry with them because they didn't have the money to pay for the autopsy. We told them that an army doctor was going to perform the autopsy. The mother of Manuela was crying, saying that the dead girl had been the main support of the family, as she, the mother, was crippled in one arm so that the girl had to do most of the household tasks and pasture the animals.

When asked how much they wanted in compensation, the relatives said that they had no idea and asked us to suggest a sum. We told them it was up to them to name the quantity they desired. Finally the brother of Manuela suggested 10,000 sucres. We said that this was not realistic, that probably the most they could expect would be 1,000 sucres each. They agreed to this without objection.

We then took the mothers and two of the male relatives to Gatazo. The Lieutenant had not changed his attitude. He began to berate the relatives, saying that the deaths had been caused by their own irrationality and that he had been too good to them. He said we would have to wait for the Captain who would be there in a few minutes and went off with the Doctor to perform the autopsy. We waited about an hour and a half and finally left, as the burial was to take place after the autopsy.

In Sicalpa we learned that the autopsy was being performed in the cemetery and so took the relatives there. The Doctor, the Lieutenant, and the Police Commissioner were in the cemetery. The mourning relatives and friends were outside the gate. Arcenio Revilla was granted permission to enter and watch the autopsy, but was forbidden to take photographs. The Captain finally arrived in a jeep and entered the cemetery. During the autopsy, a Mestizo came over to our car and asked us to take him to a carpentry shop to get a saw. I asked him why he wanted a saw and he said it was to cut open the craniums of the corpses. The crying and wailing of the mourners outside of the gate continued all during the autopsy.

The army physician stated that the cause of the death was carbon monoxide poisoning. Instead of giving the relatives a monetary compensation, the army men bought them a barrel of chicha and considered the case closed.

#### COMMENTARY ON INTER-GROUP RELATIONS IN THE COLTA LAKE ZONE

Inter-group relations in the Colta Lake zone represent an extreme form of repression of a subordinate group vis-à-vis a dominant group. The extent of exploitation and discrimination suffered by a subordinate group depends on a number of variables including derivation of the social system, degree of economic and interpretational dependency, self-image, and the degree of isolation.

Indian-Mestizo relations are rooted in historical factors: in the survival of the feudal pattern of the patron-serf relationship which dates from the Spanish Colonial Period, and a belief in the racial inferiority of the Indian which accompanies and provides the rationalization for the continuance of the pattern. Prejudice and exploitation of the Indian group are not, therefore, deviations, but are rather an accepted part of the social system. The Mestizo who discriminates against the Indian, is merely playing a role expected of him according to the social norms of the zone.

Discrimination against Indians exists to a high degree throughout Ecuador, but, in general, is more pronounced in the area of Chimborazo from Riobamba to Guamote, which includes the Colta Lake zone. The question arises: why has the feudal pattern with its discriminatory practices persisted in its extreme form in this zone when it has been modified in other areas of Ecuador?

Unfortunately historical data which would provide us with an insight into the process of change in inter-group relations is not available. It is obvious, however, that one of the variables in the maintenance of discriminatory practices has been the lack of economic resources in the zone. Land and other sources of wealth are scarce commodities. The large and medium-sized landholdings are owned by absentee landlords. The Indians have been left with minimal plots which have been divided and sub-divided through inheritance and do not even provide subsistence let alone excess produce for sale. This means that the Indian is dependent on the Mestizo merchants and moneylenders when emergencies arise that necessitate the acquisition of credit or ready cash.

Combined and related to economic deprivation is the low self-esteem of the Indian group. Centuries of degradation have left psychological scars which any organization whose goal is to improve the socio-economic welfare of the Indian must eradicate before they can succeed.

Another psychological factor resulting from extreme exploitation is the accumulation of repressed aggression. Luckily for the Mestizos, the release of aggression is usually found in petty quarrels within the in-group, leaving the Indians divided within and between communities, compounding the difficulties of community development. The Indian finds relief from repression, feelings of inferiority and monotony of daily living in high alcoholic consumption and in the general fiesta pattern. This, in turn, further impoverishes the Indian and keeps him dependent on the Mestizos.

The increase in temporary migrations is bringing more cash into the communities and should lessen Indian dependency on the Mestizos, but this is so far not the case, because the Indian utilizes much of his excess income on alcohol and fiestas rather than in saving to meet emergencies or for improvement of his standard of living. This is due to the retention of traditional value patterns and his inferior position with its psychological consequences from which the Indian cannot escape when he returns to his community.

Under these circumstances, one would expect a high rate of permanent migration, but the Indian of Colta is still emotionally attached to his family, his land and his community making it difficult to free himself from the bondage of the social system in his native territory.

The Mestizos of the zone are also in a precarious financial situation because of the scarcity of economic resources. One of their main sources of income derives from the exploitation of the Indians and so they feel threatened by any measure which would break the Indian bond of dependence. The Mestizo also suffers from an inferiority complex derived from his intermediate social status and the belief that he is biologically debased by having "Indian blood in his veins." In order to maintain his self-esteem, he must perpetuate the myth of his superiority over the Indian. This is achieved by retaining the symbols of the feudal system with its special greeting patterns, etc.

The conflict between the two castes has another facet, that of fear of the subordinate group which is in the majority. The Indian, therefore, must be kept in a subservient position by forcing him to behave submissively, punishing him for insubordination, granting him no responsibility, and perpetuating internal rivalries to prevent the development of Pan-Indianism.

The Indian of Colta is also dependent on the Mestizo for an interpretation of social, economic and political events. His high degree of ignorance, which includes a narrow world view, makes it difficult for the Indian to judge the truth or falseness of rumors and makes him a gullible target for propaganda. The Mestizos are only slightly more knowledgeable than the Indians, and often purposely distort the truth to their own advantage. For example, any organization or individual whose purpose is to aid Indians is labelled "Communist" by the local Mestizos. The Indian has no idea what Communism is, only that it is something bad, and so has no way of determining whether the accused is really a Communist, or whether he should cooperate for his own benefit.

Because of historical factors and the accessibility of transportation facilities, the Mestizos have managed to live in close proximity to the Indians. Contact is thus frequent between the groups, making it difficult for the Indian to avoid exploitation.

A number of Indian groups in Ecuador have achieved at least partial emancipation through changing the variables causing exploitation. The Otavalo Indians of Imbabura, for example, who because of a lack of land turned to weaving and merchandising, have gained economic independence. As a result, they suffer less discrimination and have discarded the feudal pattern in relations with Mestizos. The Mestizo merchants have also prospered from the higher economic level of these Indians because of an expanding market in consumer goods. The Otavalos are also changing their value patterns. Now education and the acquisition of material goods are becoming as or more important than the sponsorship of fiestas and the consumption of alcohol. This is especially true of the community of Peguche.<sup>20</sup>

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20.- From the field notes of Christian Rasmussen, (Peguche, 1965).

Indians living on the periphery of Quito, for example, in the parish of Zámbara are also economically independent because of working in Quito as wage laborers and artesans. There is also a low rate of illiteracy among these Indians due to the existence of schools for a long period of time and a greater interest in education. Here one finds a certain amount of discrimination, but exploitation is minimal in comparison to Colta.<sup>21</sup>

The case of the Salasacas of Tungurahua is quite different. This Indian group has managed to minimize exploitation not only by being economically independent, but by keeping out outsiders through maintaining a reputation of being "fierce." There are only a few Mestizos living marginally in the area of the Salasacas and for this reason, exploitation within their territorial limits is virtually non-existent.<sup>22</sup>

In summary, the high degree of exploitation and discrimination suffered by the Indians of the Colta Lake zone is due to the existence of a social system which maintains the feudal pattern, a high degree of economic and interpretational dependency, low self-esteem, and the inability of the Indians to isolate themselves from the dominant group. To alter the pattern of Indian-Mestizo relations in Colta requires:

- 1) A decrease in the economic dependency of the Indians through a redistribution of land, developing additional sources of income, forming a savings and loan association, and providing technical assistance and credit for agriculture and the raising of livestock.
- 2) Providing other sources of income for the Mestizos, making it less necessary for them to exploit the Indians. For example, the establishment of small industries in Cajabamba would increase the economic level of the Mestizos and Indians. To alter Mestizo attitudes towards Indians will take a generation of reeducation.

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21.- From the field notes of Bjarke Frøeland (Zámbara, 1965).

22.- From the field notes of Eva Krener (Salasaca, 1965).

- 3) The education of the Indians in schools especially adapted to their needs with bilingual teaching, vocational education, etc. These schools should not only lessen the interpretational dependency of the Indians on the Mestizos; but should equip the Indians to secure higher-paying occupations, inculcate them with a sense of pride in ethnic origin, and change some of the traditional value patterns which impede progress.
  
- 4) Changing the type of Mestizo serving in the local government and raising the salaries of these officials. The national government should exercise more vigilance over the behavior of these officials. Indians should be given offices in the parish and cantonal government, and the Mestizo officials should strengthen the Indian Cabildos by forcing them to make decisions and then they, the officials, should respect these decisions.



## R I T E S   O F   P A S S A G E

Arcenio Revilla C.

Through the passage of time and the process of acculturation it is only logical that certain aspects of the rituals pertaining the rites of passage have undergone modifications. The ceremonies here described refer only to those practiced at the present time in the Colta Lake zone. Baptism, marriage, and funeral ceremonies are considered obligatory for everyone and are basically religious in character, forming part of the rites of the Catholic and Protestant churches. Although the overwhelming majority of the Indians are Catholics, there are a number of converts of the Gospel Missionary Union, a Protestant fundamentalist sect with headquarters in Majipamba. For this reason, both versions of the ceremonies will be described. The hair cutting ceremony is not religious in nature and is practiced by both groups in the same manner.

### BAPTISM

#### SELECTION OF GODPARENTS

The godfather is chosen by the father of the newly born child who requests that the person selected be the marcaj taita, that is the one who "marks" or carries the infant during the baptismal ceremony. Many times the godparents are selected a month or two before the birth of the baby. In this case, the pregnant wife accompanies her husband in the petition to the godparents. They carry gifts of a bottle of puro (aguardiente), roasted guinea pig and bread to the house of the future compadres. Among the Indian there is no such thing as refusal of the petition. It is different when the proposed godparents are "Whites" who look down on the Indians. If, however, the "Whites" feel they may gain from the relationship in the form of receiving free labor and the Indians bring them chickens and eggs, they will accept immediately. Many of the Indians have "White" compadres, but the majority prefer that the godparents of their children be Indians from their own community.

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- 1.- The compadres are the godparents of your children. As the relationship is reciprocal, the godparents also call the parents of their godchildren compadres.

## REGISTRATION OF BIRTH

The second, third, or fourth day after the birth of the baby, the godfather, accompanied by members of the family, goes to the parish capital to register the birth. When this is not possible, the father of the child carries out this obligation. First it is necessary to inform (Sanidad) Health Service and make out the required form. This service is gratuitous to the "Whites", but not to the Indians. The employee of Sanidad has a store-bar where his office is conveniently located. The Indian is obliged to buy a bottle of aguardiente. If he does not meet this prerequisite, he is refused the required paper and so cannot register the birth.

The Indians pay ten sucres for the bottle of watered down liquor and begin the drinking pattern which accompanies this type of event. Poisoning may also result from this purchase, as the Mestizos mix toxic ingredients such as lime in the liquor to make it more potent. Now with the paper in hand, the Indian group makes its way to the office of the registro civil where they are required to wait hours until the employee condescends to attend them after paying ten sucres. When the Indians wishes to be waited on more promptly, he gives eggs to the employee of Sanidad and to the registrar.

Once the birth has been duly inscribed, a process which generally takes the entire day, the godfather and his companions with a bottle of liquor in hand return to the community to report that they have accomplished their purpose.

The Indians who are Evangelists have to endure the same "Way of the Cross" to inscribe the birth with the exception that instead of buying a bottle of liquor, they give six sucres to the employee of Sanidad. If, however, one of the "Gringo" missionaries accompanies the group, the employee charges nothing, because it is illegal to do so as he receives a salary for his work.

## BAPTISMAL FIESTA

While the godfather is registering the birth, the family of the newly born child prepares a small fiesta for the following day when the baptism in the church will take place. They have selected the finest guinea pigs, have brewed chicha or bought it in a local chichería, and also have purchased cigarettes and perhaps a chicken. The liquor and the food will be served to the godparents and other guests after their return from the baptism.

The duties of the godparents are to buy clothes for the infant and fill a basket with sugar, bread, noodles, cigarettes, and a bottle of aguardiente. They also must give money to the mother for their godchild.

Most baptisms take place on Sundays in the parish capitals (Sicalpa or Cajabamba). The godparents and relatives dressed in their best clothes arrive about eight in the morning. They show the priest the birth certificate and pay him ten sucres. The priest then sends for the sacristan who aids during the ceremony and must be paid three sucres. It is the custom for the godmother to carry the baby from the house to the church.

After the baptismal ceremony begins the slow ascent of the godparents and their companions to the community. There is always someone in the group with a bottle and so the drinking begins. On leaving Sicalpa, there is a cluster of chicherías owned by "Whites" called Cunojpogio which has become virtually an obligatory stop. After about two hours delay here, the baptismal party proceeds homeward, stopping again in Balbanera to drink more chicha in the Mestizo bars of the village. By the time they reach the house of the parents of the child, they are pretty well inebriated. The father, and the mother who is still in bed, are waiting to receive the infant. The godfather who has carried the baby from the church, hands the child to the father along with the money mentioned previously. If the infant is a male, he is supposed to give two hundred sucres, but only one hundred sucres in the case of a female. This illustrates the attitude of the inferiority of the female. At this moment, also the godparents give the basket of food and liquor. The father

then hands the godfather a bottle of puro and thanks him for what he has done for the child. The mother then repeats the act with the godmother. With this liquor they continue drinking until late at night. If the parents invite the godparents to stay, they accept, otherwise they go home to rest in order to return the following day which is called "the second day" or the "Good Morning." During the second day of the fiesta, they discuss the events of the previous day and drink until everyone is intoxicated and then the celebration terminates.

Among the Evangelists, the baptism takes place a month after the birth or is sometimes postponed until the child begins to walk. The motive for the delay is to make it possible for the mother to be present at the ceremony. The baptism itself consists of a simple ceremony in the chapel. The minister reads from the Bible and counsels the parents and godparents. He baptizes the child with the words "in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost." Afterwards there is a small fiesta at which food, but not liquor is served.

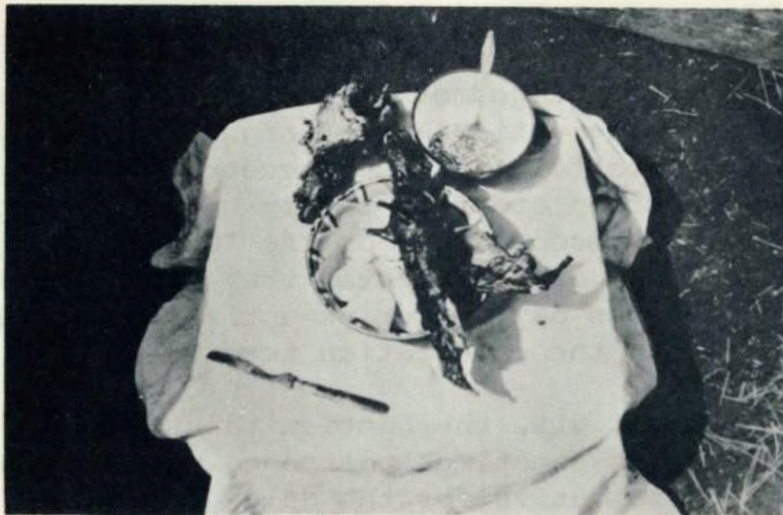
Among both religious groups, the compadrazgo relationship is highly respected. When the godchildren are older, the obligations of the godparents are to counsel and guide them as if they were their own children.

#### THE FIRST HAIRCUT OF THE BOYS

Boys receive their first haircut, which is called ajchatarotuchina<sup>2</sup>, at two to five years of age. It is the duty of the godfather of baptism to preside over the first haircut of his godson. The child is sent by his parents to the godfather's house, taking cooked guinea pigs and potatoes. After the godfather accepts the "typical dish", the boy returns to his house to notify his parents, who then set the day and hour of the haircut.

The first haircut always takes place on Sunday, in one of the Mestizo-owned barbershops in Sicalpa or Cajabamba. Normally a haircut cost two sucres (10.4 cents), but the first haircut costs five sucres (26 cents) and is paid for by the godfather. The hair is cut in the usual Western fashion and does not differ from the haircut of the Mestizos.

2.- In some places in Peru it is known as rotuchi or quitañiqui.



Typical festive dish of roast guinea pig, boiled potatoes and a sauce of chili peppers.



Typical end of a fiesta, carrying home a drunken relative.

The godparents and the parents are present at the first haircut and immediately afterwards, the father of the boy gives a bottle of aguardiente to his compadre. At the same time, the godfather gives a number of gifts to his godson, including a hat and other articles of clothing. This is to demonstrate his affection and continued willingness to aid in the raising of his godchild. After that, the group goes to drink chicha and liquor in one of the chinquanas (bars). The only persons present at the beginning of the drinking are the parents and godparents, but they are soon joined by relatives and friends. In the afternoon they return to the parent's house where food has been prepared for the godparents and the other guests. The relatives and neighbors who take part in the fiesta donate food, chicha, liquor and cigarettes to the celebration. It is expected that these gifts will be returned in kind at some future date and under similar circumstances. This system of mutual aid is known as randinrandimpa<sup>3</sup>.

## WEDDINGS

### INTRODUCTION

The act of marriage establishes a bond of profound respect between the two families involved. Even if up to that time relations have been strained between the families, marriage alters the situation, bringing about a relationship marked by stability which is reinforced by the cultural mores. According to the Indians of the zone, one must take into account the economic, romantic and sexual aspects when contracting a marriage. The ideal partner is one who is "good," "honorable," not a heavy drinker and above all a hard worker.

It is significant that in this zone one rarely finds a child born out of wedlock. In checking the civil register for the last five years, not one birth among the Indians has been listed as illegitimate, which confirms our observations. We know of only two cases of illegitimate births and these have resulted from relations between Indian women and Mestizo men.

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3.- In other Andean countries, this is called ayni or kelli.

To become a don or doña, that is, to be married, one must first be of the right age. In general, the marriageable age is from fifteen to twenty for both sexes. Marriage changes an individual's status from youth to adult; after marriage one is expected to be responsible with obligations in the home and to relatives and to the community.

#### COURTSHIP & PREPARATION FOR THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Courtship begins when the boys and girls are about fifteen years old. When a boy likes a girl, he begins to make jokes in her presence and "tease" her until she realizes that the boy is interested in her. The boy tells his friends who belong to the same age group of his intentions so that they too can tease the girl about this particular boy. The girl also tells her girl friends who then begin to aid her so that she can be married as soon as possible. The courtship is kept a secret among the unmarried youth and in consequence, the parents may not know what is happening.

There is no specified place to initiate a courtship; it can be on the road, in a fiesta, at a wedding or baptism, or on a trip to the weekly fair in Cajabamba. The custom of trial marriages, called servinacuy or huatamacuy, which is common in Peru and Bolivia, does not exist in this zone.

The courtship progresses gradually with the boy and girl getting to know the character of one another. They are seen together on the road or at the fair where the boy will invite the girl to have a soft drink or ice cream. When this stage is reached, both the boy and the girl are teased by friends and relatives. By now the parents are probably aware of the situation. When this happens, the suitor must speak with the girl's parents. Accompanied by his parents, relatives and friends, he goes to ask for the girl's hand. When the boy and girl decide between themselves to become engaged, they ask the boy's parents to petition the girl's parents. In this case, the visit is kept a secret and besides the boy, only the girl and his parents know: when the visit to her house will take place.

The committee that goes to petition the girl's parents takes presents of chicha, aquardiente, cigarettes, bread, guinea pigs, cookies and soft drinks. Among the Evangelists, only food and soft drinks are given. At the propitious moment, that is when everyone has had a few drinks, the boy's father begins the petition by saying "as is customary, all of us must form our own home. We have come to ask for the hand of your daughter that she may marry our son." After a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the union and on the respective merits of the boy and girl, the decision is made. If the parents of the girl and boy feel that the union will be advantageous, they will set the date for the civil ceremony. Either set of parents may object to the match, but this does not occur frequently. Sometimes the parents will oppose a union because of previous quarrels between the families. If the boy and girl are still determined to marry, they may elope, which is called "stealing the girl."

On the day of the civil ceremony, both families go to the parish capital to obtain the birth certificates of the boy and girl. This is done in the office of the Civil Register and costs twenty sucres (\$1.04). The Head of the Civil Registrar then marries the couple, charging a fee of 120 sucres (\$6.58).

After the civil marriage, the girl goes to live in the house of the boy's parents. Among the Evangelists, the girl remains in the house of her parents until after the religious ceremony, which takes place a week later. The Indians who are Catholics may wait as long as a year for the religious ceremony.

To pay for the expense of the church wedding and the three day fiesta which follows, the boy and his parents must save up enough money. Often the boy will go to the coast to work for several months until he has earned enough money to bring back food and clothing and to meet other expenses of the fiesta. When the boy and his parents cannot accumulate enough money, they are forced to go to the Mestizo moneylenders of the zone, who charge them an interest of 10% a month; they are usually obliged to mortgage their property to obtain the loan required to pay for the marriage rites.



Before the religious ceremony, the bride-to-be serves from two weeks to a month in the house of the parish priest. This, according to the priest, is to teach the girl how to pray, but in reality is a form of exploitation. The girl has to perform household tasks such as cleaning, cooking, etc. without pay; must sleep in a corner of the corridor, and is not given any food. Her relatives and girl friends bring her her breakfast, lunch and supper. Since all acts of cooperation are repaid, on the second day of the wedding fiesta, called the jatariche, the girl returns the food to those who brought her meals while serving the priest.

### THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

The marriage ceremony in the church takes place at eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. Indians must be married on Sundays, but Mestizos may marry on any day of the week. Before the wedding, the priest and the sacristan must be paid certain fees and given various gifts. The priest receives one hundred sucres for the mass, eighty sucres for the "prayer rights," twenty-eight sucres for announcing the bans, a chicken costing thirty sucres, two liters of aguardiente (20 sucres), twenty-two eggs, and a quantity of barley (40 sucres). The sacristan is entitled to two bundles of straw, two guinea pigs and a contribution in money. The total cost of the nuptial mass amounts to more than 300 sucres (\$15.60).

After the mass, the priest marries the couple at the altar railing. The godparents of the marriage take their places on either side next of the bride and groom. The couple exchanges rings and receives the blessing of the priest. A special cloth is placed over the shoulders of the couple and they are "tied together" with a cord which is symbolic of their union.

When the parents of the couple are not the godparents, they stand at the door of the church to serve liquor to the departing guests. If the parents are the godparents, then some other close relative performs this function. The Mestizos also follow this custom, except that champagne rather than aguardiente is served. In the wedding ceremony of the Evangelists, bread and bananas are the gifts to the guests.

The bride and groom and the godparents, among both Catholics and Protestants, wear special costumes for the wedding, which are rented from the Mestizos. The costumes of the groom and godfather rent for from 50 to 55 sucres, those of the bride and godmother for 40 to 45 sucres. The special dress of the groom and godfather resembles a clown's outfit. The pants and shirt are of polka dot material and they wear a special cape which is gray in color and has a border of gaily-colored stripes around the collar. The bride and godmother dress is a black skirt (anaco), a white blouse, a pleated black cape, and a black hat.

After the religious ceremony, the wedding party goes to the plaza, where a band, contracted in Cajabamba or Calpi, is waiting and begins to play when the bride and groom appear. Sometimes they begin playing on the steps of the church when the wedding party leaves. The wedding party then proceeds to Conugpogio, the locale of five chicherías, about 500 meters outside of Sicalpa. There everyone stops to drink and the bride and groom have to dance. If the bride refuses to dance, her legs and arms are whipped with nettles until she consents to dance. The relatives continue to ply the couple with drinks so that they will lose their reserve. The band, which consists of four or five musicians, accompanies the wedding party and is contracted for three days at a cost of 180 sucres. They play continually at Conugpogio and on the road and are given food and drinks at frequent intervals.

At about 3:00 P.M. the wedding party leaves Conugpogio for Balbanera where they continue to drink and dance to the point of fatigue. They then make their way to the house of the bride's parents, dancing on the road to the accompaniment of the band. At the house of the bride, her parents "bless the couple" by giving them chicha, aguardiente, and cigarettes and by making them dance and eat. Later the bride's parents fall on their knees, kissing the hands and knees of the bride and groom and the godparents. They say the "Our Father" and pray that the couple will be happy.

At about 7:00 P.M. the wedding party goes to the house of the groom where they are served supper and there is more drinking and dancing. After supper, the godparents select four men to guard the door of the hut where the couple spends their wedding night. The guards then prepare the bed and the couple is "imprisoned" inside of the hut until the next day. The guards keep watch on the door to see that the bride and groom do not escape and to assure they won't be bothered by anyone. Sometimes they tie a dog in front of the door, so that they can join in the dancing and drinking, but always with an eye on the door. They say that it is necessary to guard the door because someone might steal the bride and tie the groom to the bed. The guests begin to leave to go home so that they can return early the following day to continue the fiesta.

Monday, the second day of the fiesta, is the day of gifts or jatariche, the day of rendinrandimpa. At two in the morning, the godparents wake up the bride and groom to continue the fiesta. The band plays various typical songs, and canelazos<sup>4</sup> and chicha huevo<sup>5</sup> are served. At eight o'clock, the rest of the guests arrive, bringing gifts of chicha, aquardiente, guinea pigs, chickens, eggs, bread and soft drinks. A few give the bride and groom money or animals (sheep or pigs). The couple takes into account all of the gifts and who gave them, in order to repay the guests in kind on some future occasion. The godparents and parents give money and animals to the couple.

After the "gift ceremony", the four guards make the couple enter the hut where they slept the previous night. Now follows the jatariche or "making the couple get up." A special drink called ponche is prepared, made of chicha, eggs and sugar. The drink is passed to the couple inside the hut who then invite each guest to the door of the hut where they are served ponche and bread. This is the moment "to celebrate the innocents", which consists in some of the guests' falling into traps laid previously by

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4.- A hot drink made with boiling water, aquardiente, sugar, lemon and cinnamon.

5.- Hot chicha with eggs added.

the guards. The traps are holes with water which have been covered with straw. When a guest falls into a trap, this causes great hilarity among the rest of the people present.

At noon, lunch is served and afterwards, the godparents begin their counseling of the bride and groom. They say "You are now don and dofia (in imitation of the Mestizos) and have responsibilities and obligations. You have to respect each other and the rest of the people, bring up your children well, and make a good home." All of the married guests, especially the older ones, join in the counseling and tell the couple what they have learned from their own experience. The rest of the afternoon is spent in dancing, drinking and conversing.

The parents of the bride, who have not been present all day, arrive at 7:00 P.M., bringing cooked guinea pigs and chickens. The bride receives the gifts and then distributes them among the most important members of the wedding: her husband, parents-in-law and godparents. This is also the time to repay the people who brought her food when she was serving in the priest's house. She gives those her fed her at that time guinea pigs, chicken, chicha and aquardiente.

Later the groom sends a half a sheep to the wife's parents. The sheep is carried by one of his close relatives on top of his head. He dances on his way to the house of the bride to the accompaniment of trumpets and the shouts of his companions. The men who accompany him stage a mock bullfight in which the relative carrying the sheep is the bull and the companions are the toreadors. When they arrive at the bride's house, the meat is distributed among the guests, the choicest pieces are given to the parents and their near relatives. The distribution of meat<sup>6</sup> is followed by drinking and dancing until late at night.

The third day of the fiesta is less important. Only the relatives celebrate by dancing and conversing. In the afternoon the musicians are sent away and the fiesta ends.

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6.- Formerly the gift consisted of a leg of beef, but due to poverty, they have substituted a half a sheep.

## RESIDENCE PATTERNS

The customary residence pattern immediately after marriage is patrilocal, that is, the couple lives with the husband's parents, but there are cases of matrilocal residence. It may be that the parents of the bride have a larger house and so are better able to accommodate the couple. The ideal, however, is for the couple to live with the man's parents until they can save enough money to buy a lot or until they receive an inheritance from one of the parents.

It is considered preferable for the nuclear family to live separately as soon as possible for the peace of the family. There are frequent clashes between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The girl resents being given orders by the mother-in-law. Every action of the daughter-in-law is observed and criticized, making life miserable for the girl. For economic reasons, however, the couple is often forced to continue living with the parents.

While freeing themselves from parental dependency, the man works for temporary periods outside of the zone and the woman remains at home helping her parents-in-law or her parents with the agricultural and household tasks. When there is sufficient money it is customary to construct their house in the parental patio or on a cultivated field they have inherited or on a purchased lot.

The pattern of descent is bilateral, that is paternal and maternal relatives are considered equally important. It is, however, the paternal last name that is carried down from one generation to the next. When a woman marries, she retains her maiden name, without adding the name of her husband. Often the name becomes feminized. For example, Rosa Huamán may become Rosa Huamana. Relatives are recognized through the third degree of kinship and marriages are forbidden between relatives, but these restrictions are not always followed.

## BURIAL CUSTOMS

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE BURIAL

When a death occurs, the first step is to obtain the required paper from Public Health before registering the death. As in the case of births, it is necessary to buy a bottle of aquardiente in the store owned by the employee of Public Health in order to get the paper. The Mestizos are given this paper without paying. After this the death is registered in the office of the Civil Register where they pay five sucres. Here, the Indian must bring gifts of eggs in order to be attended promptly.

Then the relatives of the deceased go to the house of the priest to ask him to accompany the corpse to the cemetery and to pray at the graveside. There are three prices: for the right of burial costs 80 sucres, the presence of the priest costs 20 sucres more, and a mass 50 sucres; making a total of 150 sucres (\$7.80) for those who want the complete rites. According to the priest and the people, "the more one pays, the less will be the suffering of the soul and the shorter the road to heaven." After they have concluded the arrangements with the priest, he lends them a black cloth to put over the coffin and a silver cross which is carried by the leader of the funeral procession. These items are to aid the deceased on the road to heaven. If the relatives of the dead person are poor, they will not have the benefit of these holy symbols nor the presence of the priest at the burial.

Because the Indians want the best for their dead, they do everything possible to obtain the money, even if it is necessary to go to the moneylenders or sell their animals. However, due to the system of mutual aid, the relatives and friends of the bereaved family help out with money, food, liquor and cigarettes.

The type of coffin purchased in Cajabamba depends on the economic circumstances of the family. The cheapest coffin, called "the national coffin," costs 50 to 55 sucres and is very crudely constructed, being of eucalyptus wood and without a lining. Better quality coffins are priced from 120 to 200 sucres.

## THE WAKE

The wake takes place the day that the death occurs and in the house of the deceased, where the family, friends and neighbors gather. After the death, everyone cooperates in preparing food and drinks, which are served during the early hours of the evening. The mourners sit in silence, remembering how beloved was the deceased and lamenting his absence. Around ten o'clock, the person present who is most familiar with the required prayers leads the prayer session, the prayers being in both Quichua and Spanish. At midnight, they begin the traditional "games of the wake" which include "the priest," "the rabbit," "chirlos", "the cat," and "threshing." The Indians explain the necessity for the games "as a custom so that the soul will go away content and the mourners will be less sad."

The game of "the priest" consists in imitating everything that the priest does during a religious fiesta. A man is selected to play the role of the priest and is lent a woman's dress (anaco) for the purpose. The mock priest is first paid to conduct the fiesta. He then says the mass, leads the procession, and gives his blessing, taking a drink of liquor every now and then.

Another game with religious overtones is played immediately after and is called "the feast of St. Michael." A man is selected who can be easily fooled. He is dressed up like a saint and told to sit like an image without moving. The people approach him as if to kiss his hand, but instead bite him, causing him to cry out. During all of these games, the women are the spectators who joke and laugh, but do not participate directly.

The game of chirlos is played with dice. Two men throw the die (huayro) six times and on each throw, the one with the highest points loses and receives a number of blows on his arm according to the number on the die. The blows are given by the winner, using two fingers. Sometimes the blows received by the loser are so numerous and given with such force that bleeding ensues or else he cannot move his arm for several days. The die has a point and if it should fall with the point up, the person who threw the die has to give a determined number of blows to all of the men present. In order to hasten this requirement, he designates others to help him.

The purpose of chirlos is to erase all of the offenses (real or intended) committed against the deceased. The soul of the deceased will forgive everything. Also when a person receives a blow in the arm, he will ask that the soul be pardoned so as not to suffer on the road to heaven.

In the game known as "the cat," they blindfold a man and another strikes a tin can. The blindfolded man tries to grab the can which is moved in different directions to keep him from locating it. The person walks around with his arms open, touching the walls of the house and sometimes grabbing a guest, which results in laughter and joking.

In the threshing game, they imitate the process of the separation of the barley grain from the spikes. One plays the overseer (mayordomo), another the thresher, and a third person the owner of the hacienda or the patron. A little barley straw is thrown on the floor and everyone stamps on the straw "until the grain has been separated." Now the barley must be weighed. Some of the guests become sacks of barley and are lifted up by their hands and feet and thrown on the floor as one would throw a sack of barley. The mayordomo then counts the number of sacks, that is the pile of men who have been thrown on the floor. The roles of the mayordomo and patron are played with great realism; they insult and whip the workers. At the end of the game the mayordomo notes the names of those who have worked and then they go outside to "call the widow," shouting that the patron is going to give her a suplido<sup>7</sup> ("Viuda, socorutta hapinaman shamunguichic amo succorrucunmi.") This game terminates the wake, as now the new day is dawning and preparations must be made for the burial.

#### THE BURIAL

The priest determines the time of the burial, it can be either in the morning or afternoon. The family places the clothing of the deceased in the coffin and various other items such as bread, máchica<sup>8</sup>, guinea pig, chicha, aguardiente, water, cigarettes, money, a whip and anything else the deceased was fond of in his lifetime.

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7.- A suplido is produce given to the serfs of an hacienda, the value of which is subtracted from their yearly wages.

8.- Barley flour.





*The Indians of Colta leaving food for their dead in the cemen-  
tery of Sicalpa on All Souls Day.*



*The upper part of the cemen-  
tery in Si-  
calpa which is reserved for the Whites  
or Mestizos of the parish.*

The cemetery is located in Sicalpa, the parish capital, about four kilometers from the zone. Because of the distance, the funeral cortege has to make several stops. The first stop is Balbanera where the coffin is placed in front of the door of the church which houses the image of the Virgin of Balbanera. Here the church bells are rung and the family kneels at the side of the coffin, praying and weeping. They drink chicha or aguardiente and then proceed on their way, stopping at various intervals to pray for the soul of the deceased.

When they arrive at the church in Sicalpa, they call the priest for the blessing and to say the mass, if this has been arranged. The coffin is then taken to the cemetery followed by the weeping mourners. The weeping becomes more pronounced at the moment of burial when they say their last farewell to the deceased. They embrace the coffin and then dirt is thrown over it.

The cemetery is divided into three sectors. The lower part is for the poor, the middle section for the Cholos and wealthier Indians, and the upper part, which has vaults and niches, is where the Mestizos or "Whites" are buried.<sup>9</sup>

The mourners return to the community, drinking along the way at the various "rest stops." At night, they are served food and then go home to rest for the lavatorio which takes place the following day.

#### THE LAVATORIO

At about two or three o'clock in the afternoon on the day after the burial, the family of the deceased goes to the lake for the bath or lavatorio. This is necessary in order to "wash away the sins committed against the deceased and to make sure that the soul proceeds on its way to heaven." The lavatorio is considered practically

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9.- The cemetery in Sicalpa is inadequate for the needs of the zone. This problem will be resolved by a donation of land by IERAC from the Hacienda Colta Monjas. This land will be used as a cemetery to serve the communities of the Colta Lake zone.

obligatory for the close relatives of the deceased such as the husband, wife, children, and siblings. The water is extremely cold, but this does not seem to bother the Indians. They enter the lake completely nude, carrying gourds or basins with which they throw water on each other. They also cover each other with mud so it will be necessary to rebathe and some fall into the water. This all provides entertainment for the spectators standing on the lakeshore.

After the lavatorio, the mourners go to the house of the family of the deceased to play chirlos and drink. At night they have a small fiesta at which are gathered together widows, widowers and a few bachelors to see if they can arrange marriages. Some writers on Indian customs have maintained that on the night of the lavatorio occurs the jupinacuy or "perpetuation of the species" which involves promiscuous mating. Such is not the case in this zone. The Indians say that the purpose of the fiesta is to counsel the widowers and bachelors about getting married and to try to pressure them into becoming engaged. The counseling is done by the cabecillas and elders. Neither the newly widowed woman, the widowers and bachelors present, nor any guest engage in sexual relations as part of the fiesta.

The person who is widowed should wait at least two months before remarrying. Anyone who marries before this period has elapsed, is severely criticized by society. Usually the surviving spouse remains in mourning for a year after the death.

## GODPARENT RELATIONSHIPS

### INTRODUCTION

Catholicism introduced the baptismal rites and in consequence the godparent relationship between godparents and godchildren, and the compadre relationship, between godparents and the parents of the godchild. The parents of a newborn infant are anxious to have the baptism performed as soon as possible "in order to receive God's blessing and so that the child will grow up to be a good person." Also, through the baptismal ceremony, the child automatically becomes a Christian.

The compadrazgo relations begin immediately after the ceremony, with the godparents being incorporated into the family as the spiritual parents of the child. The system of compadrazgo establishes kin obligations between individuals who are neither consanguineous nor affinal relatives and is thus an extension of the kinship bonds. This form of fictive kinship not only affects the persons directly involved, but extends to close relatives. For example, the siblings of the godparents and the siblings of the parents of the child also become compadres.

The obligations of the godparents do not cease with the baptism. They must officiate at the first haircut if the godchild is a boy and are also the godparents for the confirmation or "second baptism" which is a "reaffirmation of Christianity." If the child should die before the age of ten or twelve years, the godparents are obliged to buy the coffin and contribute to the expenses of the wake and the burial. Many times the godparents of baptism are also the godparents of the marriage of their godchild, but this custom is changing. For economic reasons, the godparents may refuse the petition and in consequence, other individuals are asked to take over this responsibility.

Other forms of compadrazgo exist in the zone, but these are of minor importance and do not involve future obligations nor establish kinship relations between families. There are, for example, padrinos (godparents) of a new house, a bread doll, etc. The motive for these temporary relationships is to secure aid for the fiesta required for a housewarming, etc. and the relationship terminates at the end of the fiesta.

#### SELECTION OF COMPADRES

In the first place, the compadres should be a married couple, although there are cases when unmarried adults have acted as godparents. The compadres should also be persons who are known and respected, who set a good moral example and are good workers. Elderly couples may be selected who meet the qualifications, which also include "having a little money." It is preferable for the godparents to be non-relatives or distant relatives, but sometimes members of the family, even siblings, are

asked to be padrinos. In the latter case, they are not called compadres, but have the same obligations. The great majority of godparents are chosen from among the Indians of one's own community. Occasionally, Mestizos from Balbanera, Sicalpa, Cajabamba, or an Indian community are selected, and will accept because of the benefits of the relationship. The Indians will often work free for their Mestizo compadres and give gifts of produce or animals. On the other hand, the selection of Mestizo godparents gives the Indian status and may be advantageous in problems involving Mestizo authorities.

As regards religion, Catholics select Catholics for godparents and the Evangelists select Evangelists. It is also important that the compadres be from one's own cultural milieu and not strangers from another cultural group. Once my wife and I were godparents of baptism for an Indian child, but this was after living for almost a year in the zone. It is considered preferable not to have the same godparents for all of one's children because the one couple will not be able to comply with all of the obligations. Prevalent in the selection of godparents is the economic factor, the parents wanting security for their children and for themselves.

The godparents of the marriage ceremony are usually chosen by the parents of the bride and groom. This is especially true if the couple is economically dependent on the parents. When the couple is given more liberty in making decisions, they will select the godparents, but only after consulting their parents. In cases when the couple is more independent or the marriage is not approved by the parents, the bride and groom will choose the godparents. They generally ask a young married couple or a recently married couple with whom they have been friendly for a number of years. The padrino is often a friend of the groom, the two of them having travelled together and worked on the same jobs on the Coast or in Quito.

## RELATIONS BETWEEN COMPADRES

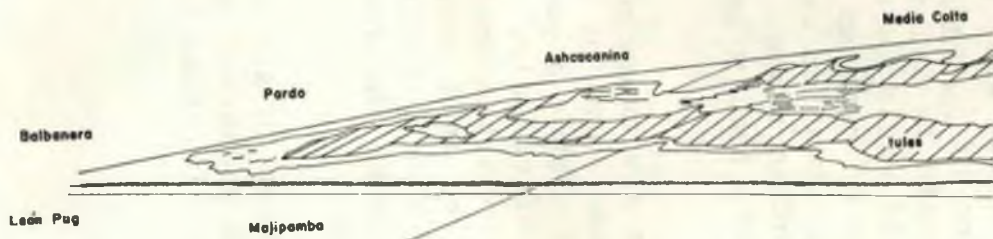
Relations between compadres are characterized by mutual aid and respect. Occasionally, during drunken sprees, these relationships may break down, when one insults the other, but such quarrels are always resolved later. The Indians involved will ask forgiveness of one another and promise never to quarrel again, blaming the incident on the liquor consumed.

Compadres always greet each other with great respect and this is even more true of godchildren and godparents. Godparents will advise their godchildren or compadres when there are problems, especially domestic difficulties, and the advice given is usually accepted. The respect for the bonds of godparenthood are such that marriage is forbidden between one's children and one's godchildren.

In cases when a godchild is orphaned, ideally the godparents are obligated to raise the child, but this is seldom necessary. Under the extended family system, the grandparents or siblings of the child will take on this responsibility. In the relations of compadrazgo, the godparents are not asked to educate or maintain their godchildren. To ask for such aid would be shameful. It is expected, that the godparents of baptism will assist in the first haircut and the confirmation ceremony. The same is true of the godparents of marriage. Domestic problems will be solved within the family before asking aid of the padrinos.

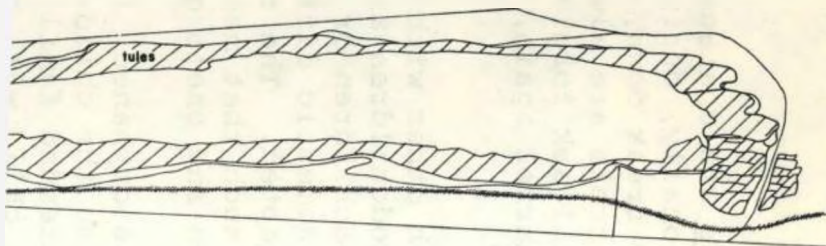
If, however, the godparents are aware of the difficulties of their godchildren and volunteer moral or economic aid, this will be gratefully received. When a godchild dies, the godparents are the first to offer help. Even the death of the godchild does not break the bonds of compadrazgo. The godparents of the dead child are still considered compadres and if they have fulfilled their obligations, they will be asked to be the godparents of the next child born to the family.

In summary, it can be said that in all of the rites of passage with their concomitant godparent relations, the underlying theme is one of mutual aid, that is, the traditional system of "randinrandimpa."



EX - HACIENDA COLTA MONJAS

San Antonio



Yacocoche



## T H E I N D I A N S A N D T H E T U L E S

Scott S. Robinson\*

Much has been written about the absence of social justice and just plain economic deprivation in the Andean rural regions. Not enough empirical analyses of the critical social problems extant have been carried out in a systematic fashion and on a broad and representative scale. This type of work is only beginning. Consequently, policy makers who must make important decisions of a social and economic hence political, nature affecting these areas are hampered by a dearth of reliable information. What follows is an attempt to fill this lacuna by means of analyzing in detail the structure of one aspect of a subsistence Indian economy. In this way, I feel, some insight may be gained into one feature of the more general pattern of Indian social relations. This study, then, is designed for those who require accurate knowledge of the present when designing institutional changes for the future.

Colta Lake, one of the largest bodies of fresh water in highland Ecuador, is located in central Ecuador's Chimborazo Province, approximately 30 kilometers to the south of Riobamba, the provincial capital. The lake's altitude is about 11,000 feet, or 3,300 meters<sup>1</sup>, and measures roughly 1.2 miles (2 kilometers) in length and .25 miles (.30 kilometers) in width at its widest point. Approximately 26.4 ft. (eight meters) is the greatest depth reported by a Peace Corps surveying team. Two species of fish inhabit the waters, one a bottom feeding variety and another quite isomorphic to carp. The Indians fish with spears and nets, catching at most a meager string of fish which sells for about sixteen cents.

The population of those communities<sup>2</sup> which border on the lake is nearly 4,300<sup>3</sup>. Because the land tenure system, the distribution of rights in land, is polarized between the haciendas and the small landholdings or chacras of the Indians, the demographic pressure on the resources remaining

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Close-up of the tatora reed, planted in Yanacocha.

open to exploitation, such as the lake and its shore, is intense. But if, as I submit, patterns of land tenure structure the social relations and productive processes of those who both work and own the land<sup>4</sup>, then it is clear that what follows is a description of a problem merely ancillary to the crucial issue, namely, reforming the present inequitable land tenure system.

#### THE TULES

The tule reeds or titora (scirpus lacustris, sp.) are tall water reeds growing a short distance from the shore of Lake Colta. The reeds form a ring around the inner circle of open water. Where farming does not extend to the very lakeshore, there are communal and private pasture lands, especially on the western side. The product derived from the reeds and pasture, however, has been incommensurate with the efforts expended and emotions aroused among the Indians. But it has been the titora in particular which has been the object of extensive and expensive conflicts.

Along the western shore, the titora is divided into two distinct and equal-sized strips- one on the south belonging to the Hacienda Colta Monjas and its northern counterpart exploited by a group of Indians from the Indian commune of Majipamba. Indians on the eastern shore living in Ashcucanina, Pardo, Media Colta and San Antonio until recently harvested reeds from individual plots. However, the amount of cutting exceeded the creation of a new supply through natural growth or artificial cultivation. Today, the scant titora remaining is harvested communally. In addition, frequent nocturnal raids to the other side of the lake are made on the hacienda and huasipunquero (serf) titora plots by means of rafts whose owners cut and tow the reeds home under the cover of darkness.

The matter of which is east and which is west was decided by a Ministry of Social Welfare delegation when it visited the region in 1961. An imaginary line was extended from a building in Balbanera at the lake's northern end to the chapel tower in San Antonio in the south-eastern corner of the basin. This boundary is socially recognized by the Indian population, although there are those of both sides who question the equity of this artificial barrier.

While most totora grows naturally, seeding itself, some cultivation does take place, especially by the citizens of Yanacocha on the south-western shore. There, a minifundio of totora plots has been created by preparing a small plot which must be at or near the level of the lake's water surface. The small parcel is plowed and turned over thoroughly, with care taken to prepare a moist environment similar to that employed in rice cultivation. Holes 16-24 inches (40-60 centimeters) deep are scooped out of the mud by means of a crude bar and totora stalks are transplanted in groups of three. The plantings are spaced about 8 inches (20 centimeters) apart; gradually, the totora fertilizes itself and the remaining area in the plot fills in with reeds. In Yanacocha all but approximately 150 feet (50 meters) of shoreline reeds are cultivated in this manner.

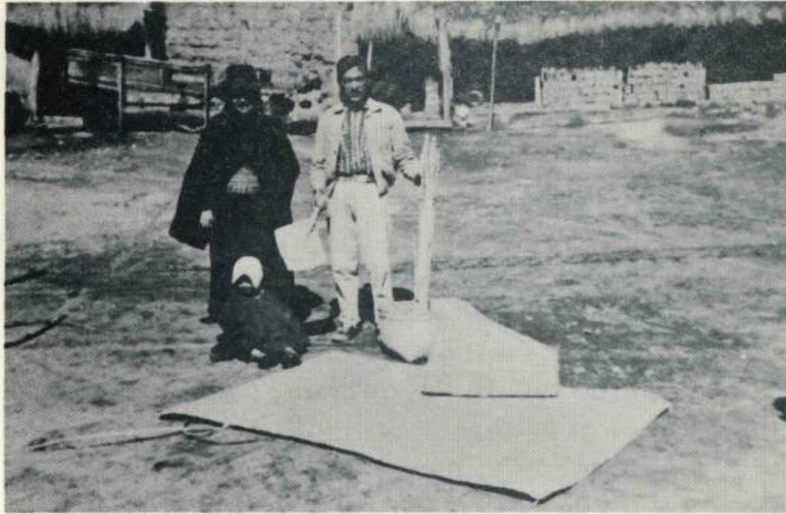
#### THE TOTORA CYCLE

Indians harvest totora throughout the year, but it is during the summer months from June to August that most harvesting takes place. Only Indians cut or weave totora although "Whites" or Mestizos do purchase it for animal fodder and fuel for the cooking fire. Totora cutting varies, of course, with the needs of the harvester. If the Indian needs fodder and/or fuel for his animals and cooking needs, he will cut the tules on his water plot on a staggered basis, reaping on the average two complete cuttings a year. The reeds are employed, in addition, in the weaving of mats or esteras. The proportion of reeds going to the former ends greatly surpasses those used for the latter. The need for fodder and fuel is a constant one, while the sale of woven mats only supplements and never comprises a family's income. For those who do not own sections of the offshore reeds, and they are in the immense majority, it is possible to rent plots from any of the huasipunqueros of the Colta Monjas hacienda. And because the demand for renting totora parcels is high, given the limited supply, it is often necessary to purchase the reeds by the burro-load from those who either own their plots or rent them from the hacienda.

In six hours of steady work, an experienced tule cutter may line up on the shore 30 bundles of reeds to be carried by burro or humans to the Indian community (comuna) or any other destination. Each bundle contains approximately 120 stalks and measures nearly 16 inches (40 centimeters) in diameter. Five or six bundles mounted on the back of a burro sell for \$.13 - \$.16 (2.50- 3.00 sucres); a human being may carry up to four bundles on his or her back and they often do. The same price is paid for by the load regardless of the means of transport. These prices are constant whether paid to the renter of the parcel by a buyer standing on the shore or by a cutter, who must do the work himself.

Huasipungueros who rent out their huasipungo reed plots charge \$.54 (10 sucres) the brazada or one length of the outstretched arms. The rental fee normally covers a six month period, during which time one or two cuts from the plot may be made up on the original condition of the stand. Reed parcels are also rented on a yearly (12 month) basis; the price varies between \$5.35 and \$10.70 (100 and 200 sucres), with the final price determined by the extent of exchanges the two parties may agree to make. For example, the buyer of the tules may lend his yoke and oxen to the owner of the parcel during the plowing season in return for a lower price. If this is the case, and it often is, with other items being substituted for oxen, the rent will be around \$5.35 (100 sucres). It is clear from the foregoing that the buying and selling of totora is not accomplished on a strictly cash basis, for the money system of exchange is far from dominating the myriad transactions among Indians. The reeds are a case in point.

Indian men and women enter the lake on balsa rafts purchased on the coast for \$2.70 (50 sucres) and brought to Colta by truck or on the top of railroad cars. Each raft consists of three balsa logs lashed together with rope. A raft may last up to five years; varying, of course, with the amount of use it receives. Not only do women often cut totora while perched precariously on the flimsy rafts, but they also plunge into the cold lake waters to wrestle the bundles of reeds which have been floated to the water's edge and up onto the shore. Both men and women have a special ragged dress for cutting and hauling totora from the lake, a task involving considerable energy and hardship.



*The family of Manuel Bagua displays various articles made from totora; mats, a fire fan and a basket.*



*Burros eating totora, Majipamba.*

All totora is dried after cutting including that which is fed to livestock. Once the tules have been transported from the lakeshore to the Indian chozas, the family spreads the reeds in parallel rows. All available land is used for drying the reeds, particularly after the family garden plots have been harvested and lie fallow for a number of weeks. Totora to be made into esteras is dried up to one month depending upon the amount of sun available. The reeds used in the mats must be long and are usually the result of a whole year's growth, whereas the others are cut as needed. After drying, the long reeds are tied together into bundles which are stacked along the sides of the Indian homes until the man and his wife have time to weave the mats. Bent tules go for fuel and the tender shoots, only partially dried, are employed as livestock forage. For those reeds which must dry thoroughly, caution is taken to prevent the absorption of moisture during the drying process, as this causes the porous, fleshy pith of the reed to rot. Rot of course reduces the quality and, subsequently, the price of the woven mats.

#### WEAVING ESTERAS

Both husband and wife weave mats. The weaving and marketing of esteras is sporadic, dependent upon immediate family needs, and there is no one who dedicates himself full time to this end. The children learn to weave at the age of 8 or 9 and may assist in weaving if one of the adults is not available. The members of the Mirlo family are the foremost totora weavers among the hacienda huasipunqueros. They make mats which measure 3 feet by 4.5 feet ( 1 by 1.5 meters), which they sell by the dozen in the Riobamba market. Moreover, informants, primarily members of the Mirlo family, reported no magical or ritual behavior associated with any aspects of the estera production process.

The weaving is begun with the women selecting the number of reed stalks which will form a width of five and one half times the length (foot lengths) of the woman's foot. In the case observed, 69 stalks were laid out side by side--all previously cut to the desired length. The women then select the stalks to be used for the weft of the mat; these are not pre-cut to any length for they are

broken off by the weavers after being woven into the warp. Both husband and wife, in the case observed, kneel at the weft's center at the bottom of the warp. Using an ordinary naturally rounded stone to pound the woven stalks, they begin to work toward their respective edges of the warp, weaving the weft stalks two at a time under two warp stalks. The "Mirlo" family practices a simple two-by-two weave, but this is not general for the entire region, because a simple one-over-one weave is common in Majipamba. While the man is weaving and pounding his way toward his edge of the new mat, the woman turns and selects a new weft strand. They commence weaving again, beginning a little to the woman's side of the center. While the woman is selecting another stalk, the man is nipping off the ends of the weft stalks. When the weaving is completed, the man works his way slowly around the edge of the entire mat, turning and weaving the ends under. It is always the male who performs this task, according to informants. The border weave consists of grasping three stalks in the hand and turning all three under while weaving one on top of the other. It takes approximately one hour to complete each mat. But, as was mentioned, weaving is sporadic, being taken up between other chores or during inclement weather. More accomplished weavers in the region may produce 6-7 mats a day, about 36-40 a week, while less skilled artisans may produce only 3 mats a day.

The marketing of the mats takes place all year round, although the price varies according to the season. Few Indians have any form of fixed production and marketing schedule. Marketing is done when money is needed. Most esteras are taken by ordinary buses which charge \$.05 (one sucre) to Plaza Dávalos or Plaza de San Nicolás in Riobamba. During the winter (November through February) the esteras are sold in the Riobamba market for \$3.00 (55 sucres) a dozen. The Majipamba mats, on the other hand, sell for \$3.20 (70 sucres) a dozen at this time; they are generally larger 3.7 X 5.7 feet (1.10 X 1.70 meters) and of better quality because they are more tightly woven. Even the huasipunquero mat weavers recognize the greater technical achievements of their neighbors. During the remaining months of the year, the mats are sold for \$1.87 (35 sucres) a dozen by the huasipunqueros and \$3.00 (55 sucres) a dozen by the Indians of Majipamba, 100 of



whom weave. The esteras are almost always sold by the dozen, although individual sales are made with each mat receiving \$.24- .27 (4.50-5.00 sucres) depending upon size and quality of weaving.

In Riobamba Indians sell esteras directly to the consumers as well as the travelling salesmen who take them elsewhere for eventual sale. These middlemen, usually Mestizos, always purchase by the dozen, and during the winter months the price they pay is as low as \$2.14 (40 sucres). But from July to November wholesale prices so to speak, go up to \$3.00 (55 sucres) the dozen. Indians from Majipamba also barter their mats for agricultural products in communities on the edge of the Colta basin; barley, corn and beans are exchanged for specified amounts of esteras. Even those citizens of Majipamba without tule parcels purchase totora for esteras from others for barter elsewhere. Informants stated they prefer to barter for food products than sell mats in Riobamba Saturday market.

Differential supply throughout the totora cycle causes an inelasticity of demand during the summer months, the period when the Indians most need hard cash in preparation for the harvests and September fiesta. Consequently, price variability is disadvantageous to the Indian producer and he would rather barter with neighbors of his own kind for products he needs than sell to a Mestizo middleman.

No mat weaving was observed in Yanacocha, where the bulk of the totora is gathered from small, artificial plots adjoining the lake on the southwestern corner and extending southward along the bottom of the gorge for a short distance. Yanacocha tules are consumed domestically, primarily because the lots are too small to support any commercial production of mats. Of all lakeside communities exploiting tules, only Yanacocha is truly characterized by totora minifundio.

While as mentioned above approximately 100 of the 265 Majipamba families weave mats, there are only a minority of the huasipunqueros (45% of the families) who do so. They are: Antonia Cepeda, Pedro Maji, Pedro Cepeda, Manuel Cepeda, Manuel Cepeda "Shilete", Nicolás Magi, José Magi, Manuel Gallegos, Manuel Pinde, and the "Mirlo" (Chimbolema)

family-- Manuel, Alejandro and José. Of all of these heads-of-households, it is only the extended "Mirlo" family which weaves on a year-round basis.

#### LIVESTOCK AND THE TOTORA

Indian livestock consumes as fodder the great majority of harvested tule reeds. In fact, most animals, especially burros, cows and horses, depend mainly upon totora for subsistence, their owners often purchasing totora from others, usually huasipunqueros, not for mat weaving but for needed forage. That this is so results from the barrenness of the lakeshore pasture land, which has been overgrazed for so long that it is now almost useless as a source of animal food.

Possession of livestock, consequently, makes necessary diligent efforts to acquire great amount of totora to supplement the animals' meager grazing forage. In Majipamba about 100 of the 265 families own burros, the latter being more of a subsistence necessity rather than a prestigious symbol. On the other hand, a cow, a team of oxen, and/or horse contribute prestige to their owners as well as consuming considerable quantities of forage mostly totora.

Because there are better grazing lands on the hacienda lakeshore property, huasipunqueros lease rights to the use of their totora plots in return for needed cash they cannot earn in any other way because of their work obligations on the hacienda. This fact alone has led to the establishment of a pattern of complex commercial and barter arrangements within a context of subsistence agriculture.

#### OTHER INDIANS WITH TULES

Elsewhere in Highland America, the Uru Indians, who live on the shores of Lake Titicaca and the Desaguadero River, build boats of totora, "a kind of bulrush that grows in the shallow margins of the water", and with hand-fashioned nets go fishing (McBride 1921; 3). Urus also employ totora (probably already dried) in house construction, using mud as a mortar. Unfortunately, while it is known that totora is an important item in the Uru material culture, no systematic description of these people is available.

Another subsistence society exploiting tule reeds is that group of Tarascan Indian communities surrounding Lake Patzcuaro in western Mexico's Michoacan state (Foster 1948: 113-114). Those who devote themselves to making esteras and ornamental petates (fans for fires and fireplaces) are fishermen forced to seek other sources of income during the rainy season. Both the tenure pattern and the production process in the Patzcuaro region are analogous to those in Colta.

As the milpas on the shore extend juridically into the water and encompass the offshore reeds, not just anybody may harvest the totora. An individual may purchase rights to one cut (corte) that averages ca. 200 bundles for 200 pesos (\$16 at present prices). In addition, share-cropping of the tules occurs: the owner receives 1/2 the finished product in return for usufruct of the owner's plot. This latter arrangement is absent in Colta, where the reeds are economically more significant, hence socially more important.

In the shallow lakeside waters, tule reeds are cut and tied into bundles of 700-800 reeds called manojos. One reed is wrapped around each bundle three times and tied in order to secure it. Thus, the bundles are somewhat standardized in size. After the bundles are carried ashore, they are spread out on the ground and dried for a week or more, then retied and stored in the Indian houses until used. Foster states that tules are not employed as a fuel or a fodder as in Colta.

When weaving mats, the dried reeds are moistened somewhat as well as the ground underneath the work area. A small rounded stone is used to flatten the tule at the point of contact with the other tule being woven across it. A pattern of two over two is woven, forming a herring bone design on the mats. At the edges, both warp and woof are doubled back under, as in basket making, and cut off. Exactly the same pattern and process may be seen in the Colta esteras.

The size range among the Patzcuaro products is greater than in the Colta region. Mats vary from 1 X 2 meters down to tiny estereras the size of a dustpan. Larger mats are used for sleeping by both Indians and Mestizos as in Colta. Indians sleep directly on the mats while Mestizos usually have a straw-filled mattress separating them from the mat. In Patzcuaro two large mats can be made in one day, bringing 12 pesos at present prices (\$.96). Each large mat requires 1/2 of a bundle of reeds which are sold at 2.00-4.00 pesos (\$.16-.32) a bundle. Thus, one weaver can clear 8.00-10.00 pesos (\$.64-.80) a day. But in the Patzcuaro region as in the Colta district, there are few, if any, who devote themselves to mat-weaving on a full time basis.

Foster's comment on tule weaving among the Tarascans is certainly relevant to conditions in Colta:

"Since capital equipment is limited to a small, rounded sonete which can be grasped in the hand, petate making is a possible occupation for the very poor; since the return for work is not high there is a definite correlation between poverty and petate making." (1948: 113)

In the Colta region, however, since weaving is such a widespread phenomenon, there is, by implication, much more poverty than Foster describes in and around Tzintzuntzan.

#### THE HACIENDA AND THE TOTORA

Possession and hegemony over the reeds looms large in the Indian's eyes. There are two factors which complicate and exacerbate any equitable solution to the "totora problem"-- the Indians' ignorance and disunity, and the existence of hacienda lands along the shore. It has been, however, primarily the western shore where conflict and litigation have occurred. Intra-community disputes impede any unified effort to regain those land which have changed hands if not outright ownership. Unethical lawyers encourage inter-community conflict and ill-will. Lakeside Colta Monjas lands, once communal property, are utilized by the huasipunqueros who exploit their rather large parcels of reeds in the manner already described; much to the envy of their neighbors.

Control of the Hacienda Colta Monjas lands did not always imply possession of lands along the western shore. It is only since 1935 that this has been the case<sup>6</sup>. From that time to the present, each huasipunquero has harvested reeds or rented out the same from a plot granted to him by the hacienda. The serfs are really amphibious farmers, for they cultivate and harvest crops both on the land and in the water, although the latter figures little in the total agricultural process. Each of their assigned plots originally measured 25 brazadas along the uneven shore line (see map). Late in 1964, the hacienda mayordomo reduced the size of the totora huasipungo arbitrarily from 25 to 20 brazadas each. The dimensions of the respective reduced parcels are shown in Table I.

TABLE I

HUASIPUNGUEROS & SIZE OF HACIENDA COLTA MONJAS TOTORA

HUASIPUNGOS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASSIGNED WIDTH</u>	<u>EXTRA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
José Magi C.	40 mts.	10 mts.	50 mts.
Manuel Cepeda Ll.	40	--	40
Nicolás Magi	40	--	40
Pedro Magi C.	40	--	40
Manuel Cepeda L.	40	--	40
Pedro Cepeda	15	--	15
Luis Cepeda Z.	25	--	25
Alejandro Chimbolema R.	40	--	40
José Chimbolema M.	40	--	40
Manuel Chimbolema P.	34	--	34
Manuel Auquilla M.	26	--	26
Manuel Mendoza H.	37	--	37
Lorenzo Remache	29	--	29
Manuel Llacsha	40	--	40
Gregorio Llacsha	40	7	47
Manuel Pinde	40	--	40
Manuel Chimbolema G.	37	--	37
Alejandro Chimbolema M.	33	--	33
Manuel Chimbolema Ll.	40	10	50
Manuel Chimbolema	40	19	59
José Bacuy	40	--	40
Vicente Cepeda	20	--	20
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>822 mts.<sup>7</sup></b>

The above table provides only an approximation of the true extension of each totora plot because the widths of offshore parcels vary as well as the shore line itself, where the parcels have traditionally been measured. No accurate offshore measurements have been made, due to the tension and anxiety surrounding the crucial feature of the totora complex-- the parcelization of tule plots or lack thereof.

Inaccurate measurement partially explains the small parcels assigned to Pedro Cepeda L., Luis Cepeda Z., Manuel Auquilla M., Lorenzo Remache and Vicente Cepeda. The topography of the shore has, no doubt, caused some of the minor variations in the measurements together with the measuring instruments themselves. But some major discrepancies remain unexplained. I suggest that hostilities between the above huasipungueros and the mayordomo as well as with their own kind have contributed to this unequal distribution of property. An indication of this is the sentiment prevalent against Vicente Cepeda, a man who has more land than any other and who has refused to contribute to the huasipunguero totora legal defense fund.

Vicente Cepeda lives off the hacienda lands in Huantokingri next to his wife's family home. He seldom visits the hacienda house and corral, and in addition controls the most and the best of any of the huasipunguero plots. Envy and often hostility are directed toward him by others for these reasons. And it is because of his semi-isolation from the principal group of huasipungueros that his totora plot is and is thought to be rightfully a small one. Yet there is no evidence that José Magi C. or Manuel Chimbolema, similarly, exploiters of large plots, are necessarily favored by the mayordomo or the landlord. Both Magi and Chimbolema are well-liked and widely respected, and this disparity in parcel size apparently does not materially affect social relations. None the less, the real basis for totora distribution remains an enigma.

## YANACocha AND THE TOTORA

Ever since 1935, when the former renter, Luis Benigno Gallegos, usurped the Indians' communal shore lands and tule reeds for the Hacienda Colta Monjas, the citizens of Yanacocha have attempted on several occasions to have returned to them what was originally in part theirs. Manuel Chuqui Naula, President of the Yanacocha Cabildo for the past 15 years and an important local political figure for the past 30, has been most active in the lengthy and costly dispute. Beginning in 1962 Manuel Chuqui and his supporters within the commune (the majority of the comuneros) solicited the proper officials for a grant or sale of shore lands to the inhabitants of Yanacocha.

Early in 1963, José Chimbolema and Pedro Magi, the spokesmen for the Colta Monjas huasipunqueros, due to their age and socially recognized wisdom, hired a lawyer to defend huasipunquero interests in the face of Chuqui's threats and petitions. Their object was to secure title to the plots they were then exploiting. One of the legal documents resulting from the litigation contains a statement by José Chimbolema M.

"In my capacity as representative of the twenty-two huasipunqueros of the Colta Monjas manor of the property of the Social Assistance Council, situated in Canton Colta in the Province of Chimborazo, I have since November of last year been imploring, requesting and begging for protection against the pretensions of Manuel Chuqui Naula, President of the Commune of Yanacocha, who is attempting to obtain by whatever means possible the lands we occupy and which we have had possession of since the time of our ancestors, since we have been serving as serfs on the manor from generation to generation and occupying the lands on the shore of Colta Lake."  
(1963: 1)

There was considerable animosity between the two disputing groups which occasionally expressed itself in small scale, night-time raids against huasipunquero homes. A minority faction within Yanacocha led by Manuel Sánchez and comprising about 30 heads-of-households sided with the serfs<sup>9</sup>. By so doing they naturally assumed the combined effort could not only defeat Manuel Chuqui, but also gain some access to the shore pasture and tule reeds. There are many runas (Indians) who would like to see Manuel Chuqui diminished in stature and, subsequently, in power.

The huasipunqueros and the Sánchez faction contributed more than \$1,230 (23,000 sucres) to the legal battle that ensued. Manuel Chuqui extracted an unknown amount of funds from his constituents by means of ramas (acquiring funds from the commune by taxing all family heads a set amount). Table II indicates the amounts contributed and spent by the huasipunquero-Sánchez faction.

TABLE II

CONTRIBUTORS AND AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED TO THE TOTORA LEGAL

FUND

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Manuel Chimbolema G.	\$101.00 (1,885.00 sucres)
Manuel Chimbolema I.	64.00 (1,200.00 sucres)
Manuel Auquilla	61.50 (1,150.00 sucres)
Nicolás Magi	53.50 (1,000.00 sucres)
José Bacuy	64.00 (1,200.00 sucres)
Manuel Chimbolema	51.00 ( 960.00 sucres)
José Magi C.	64.00 (1,200.00 sucres)
Petrona Magi Pedro	64.00 (1,200.00 sucres)
Manuel Cepeda	53.50 (1,000.00 sucres)
Manuel Mendoza	59.00 (1,100.00 sucres)
Gregorio Llacsha	8.00 ( 150.00 sucres)
Manuel Llacsha	8.00 ( 150.00 sucres)
Manuel Chimbolema II	64.00 (1,200.00 sucres)
Alejandro Chimbolema M.	64.00 (1,200.00 sucres)
Manuel Pinde	43.00 ( 800.00 sucres)



<u>NAME</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Pedro Cepeda Lema	\$ 64.00 (1,200.00 sucres)
Manuel Cepeda Lema	59.00 (1,100.00 sucres)
Alejandro Chimbolema R.	59.00 (1,100.00 sucres)
Eloy Cepeda	59.00 (1,100.00 sucres)
Vicente Cepeda Lema	2.75 ( 50.00 sucres)
Lorenzo Remache	<u>53.50 (1,000.00 sucres)</u>
Subtotal --huasipunguero	
contributions . . . .	\$.1,119.70 (20,945.00 sucres)
Contributed by Manuel Sánchez	
and his constituents . . .	<u>107.00 ( 2,000.00 sucres)</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,226.70 (22,945.00 sucres)</b>

The agreement arrived at between the Sánchez faction and the serfs specified that the latter would cede four brazadas of tules to those from the commune who had contributed to the legal defense fund. Three huasipunqueros did grant the Yanacocha group usufruct of 120 varas (one vara equals .80 mts) of totora for one year; but after three months the mayordomo of the hacienda, Enrique Jara, intervened to withdraw the harvesting rights of the Yanacochans with, it is said, the tacit consent of the huasipunqueros. Of course, the serfs de facto had no right to cede the section of reeds to Yanacocha, although de jure the plots did belong to them. Nevertheless, the huasipunqueros were allegedly in league with the Sánchez group to gain full title to the properties and the mayordomo's action only made more delicate an already tenuous relationship between rival groups of Indians.

The huasipunqueros were not wholly united in their litigation with the Ministry of Social Welfare which held title to the disputed lands. As Table II indicates, three huasipunqueros were reluctant to make significant financial commitments-- Gregorio Llacsha, his son Manuel Llacsha and Vicente Cepeda L, already mentioned. The remainder of the serfs wished to reduce the amount of reeds possessed by these three. They subscribe to the notion of "to each according to his contribution", for 5 or at the most 10



*A burro loaded with tatora, Majipamba.*



*Indian of Majipamba carrying the balsa raft used in gathering tatora in the lake.*

brazadas of reeds are sanctioned for the three dissenters, once redistribution occurs. However, the huasipunqueros have yet to enforce any negative sanctions against the three as a means of seeking communal consensus, probably because any sanctions imposed lack the power to make them effective. Still there is the problem of why the serfs allowed the mayordomo to reverse the agreement with Yanacochans of Sánchez' persuasion after both had invested great sums in a costly legal battle.

The situation is a volatile one. Although the shore lands and reeds had at one time been property in common, the huasipunqueros and the Sánchez contingent who attempted to acquire usufruct of the lands only sought clear title for themselves, not the whole community. Even arrimados (landless adult males) on the hacienda, Eloy Cepeda for example, contributed with that end in mind. Manuel Chuqui Naula also had the same objective. Factional lines became circumscribed with clarity. But when the mayordomo intervened, Manuel Chuqui was quick to tell Sánchez et al, "I told you so", and so the Sánchez Yanacochans want either totora usufruct rights or their contributions returned. Relations among all groups have become noticeably cool.

Parcelling the Hacienda Colta Monjas lands fairly among alleligible parties will reduce the conflict to insignificance. It is land, not reeds, that is really dear to the Indians. None the less, group solidarity, so necessary for communal endeavors, has been eroded, and future cooperative schemes must come to grips with past and present social rifts.

#### MAJIPAMBA AND LEON PUG

According to an account of the Majipamba-León Pug totora dispute on file in the Department of Communes of the Ministry of Social Welfare, León Pug has always enjoyed access to the lakeshore and the tules. This report is dated March 6, 1961. However, this information is contrary to what is commonly reported in Majipamba--namely, that León Pug has never had rights nor access to the lake reeds. In 1941, the study states, the inhabitants of Majipamba tried to usurp the communal lands from León Pug. León

Pug cabecillas (community officials) complained to the Provincial Governor, and this was the beginning of a quest for a resolution of the totora dispute which to date remains undecided.

Pedro Vendoval, President of the Majipamba Cabildo (Council) at that time, sought to give 8 meters of totora to every Majipamba family. In order to do so, communal lands were usurped and the citizens of Majipamba opened a ditch to impede the access of the inhabitants of León Pug to the disputed territory. León Pug's cabecillas requested an equitable distribution of the communal lands to both communities so as to leave them mutually satisfied. As a result of the pressure from Majipamba, the people of León Pug petitioned the Ministry of Social Welfare to become a juridically constituted commune.

In December of 1941 the Ministry of Social Welfare dispatched an official to the Colta region who was commissioned to organize the two adjacent and disputing communities into communes. León Pug became a commune that same month, but Majipamba did not become so until a year later. The official reported that a boundary between the disputants could not be drawn since León Pug did not border on the lake, whereas Majipamba did.

Precedence, in the form of bribing officials, casts doubt upon the objectivity of this official's submitted report. In the summer of 1965, I observed another visit to the area by two officials of the same Ministry who were also commissioned to bring about some settlement to the totora dispute (24 years of name-calling, litigations, petitions, even bloodshed, had not provoked a definitive and equitable settlement)<sup>10</sup>. The members of the Majipamba Cabildo, at that time led by Vice-President Juan Remache, bribed the two representatives in order to exact a report and judgments in their favor. The outcome of this visit will be discussed below.

Late in 1961 Majipamba initiated a civil suit against León Pug in order to gain total usufruct of the totora and shore pasturage, for citizens of León Pug would enter the lake with impunity to cut tules whenever possible. Quotas were collected by both communities Cabildos to cover

the subsequent legal expenses. Majipamba won the civil suit. The latter community's Cabildo then formed and distributed parcels of reeds in proportion to the amount contributed by each comunero. As elsewhere in highland Indian communities, totora land is communal in ownership but exploited by private individuals. The pasture remained communal but subject to the use of Majipambeños only.

Because not every family could contribute to the fund, many (approximately 88 families) were left without totora. They must purchase their tules elsewhere-usually from the hacienda huasipunqueros. An official from the Ministry did attempt to rationalize the reed parcels once formed, but without significant results. There remain many have-nots in Majipamba, and internal squabbles and tensions abound.

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF TOTORA IN MAJIPAMBA (May 1, 1966)<sup>12</sup>

<u>AMOUNT OF TOTORA</u>	<u>NUMBER OF FAMILIES</u>
16 varas	1
15 varas	2
14 varas	1
13 varas	1
12 varas	2
10 varas	49
8 varas	4
5 varas	117
No totora	<u>88</u>
TOTAL:	260

In 1962 León Pug, having lost the suit, continued to contest the civil judgment. The citizens of Majipamba persisted in attacking inhabitants of León Pug on the hillside and along the shore of the lake. Fernando Guamán, the widely respected and sagacious president of León Pug's Cabildo, has been diligent in seeking a peaceful and just settlement of the litigation.

The issue remained latent until August 5, 1965 when representatives of the two Cabildos and their lawyers signed a document in the offices of the Ministry of Social Welfare. This paper specified the conditions for creating an equitable distribution of the pasture and totora. A ditch was to be dug dividing the two communal properties. And through the offices of the Ministry, totora seedlings were to be requested from the owners of the hacienda-- the Social Assistance Council. The agreement did not delineate, however, the precise position of the boundary where the dividing ditch was to be dug. The dispute persisted to the financial benefit of mediating officials and the economic detriment of the Colta Indian population.

#### TOWARD A RESOLUTION OF THE TOTORA PROBLEM

What is written above does not take into account the Agrarian Reform Institute's (IERAC) distribution of titles among huasipunqueros nor its assumption of direct control over the hacienda. The former occurred on May 16, 1965 and the latter on December 14, 1965. The most difficult problem facing the Institute by their own admission was the fair distribution of shore pasture land and totora parcels to the four claimants-- former serfs, and citizens of Yanacocha, Majipamba and León Pug.

Intervention by the Institute came early. On February 6, 1966 the Subdirector of the Institute arrived accompanied by a civil engineer, a representative of the Department of Communes of the Ministry of Social Welfare and various other minor functionaries. The Institute, acting upon the recommendation of one of its staff members at one time assigned to the hacienda<sup>11</sup> decided that the disputed section would be divided into three sections with each claimant except León Pug receiving a share. It appeared that no amount of persuasion and diplomacy could induce Majipamba to cede a small portion of its totora to its northern neighbor, León Pug. After lengthy and emotional discussions that same day, however, the recently elected Cabildo of Majipamba finally conceded 50 meters of pasture land on the north to León Pug.

That Majipamba at the same time was gaining about 250 meters of excellent pasture and a decent stand of tules from the hacienda, was not readily understood and the citizenry threatened to oust the Cabildo for collaborating with IERAC and/or the Communists. Indeed, the emotion generated by this inter-community rivalry will be long in abatement. Opposition to Juan Remache has provoked his removal from the Cabildo to be replaced by an individual more favorably disposed to Majipamba's interests; at least this is the conclusion suggested by the action taken.

Yanacocha, in turn, received about 250 meters from the hacienda, although Manuel Chuqui Naula attempted to usurp a little extra from the ex-huasipunqueros. Some abusive comments were exchanged at the lakeside between former serfs and the Yanacochans of Chuqui Naula persuasion. Apparently, the Sánchez group was by design to be frozen out of the newly acquired section by the Chuqui faction.

Ex-huasipunqueros received 440 meters in toto to be divided among the twenty-two, leaving 20 meters of pasture land and totora for each family. Moreover, 12 others, including arrimados and others who had made contributions to legal funds, received 5 meters each. In addition, on former hacienda property near the highway and bordering on Majipamba, a cemetery (100 X 90 meters) was staked out. Another half an hectare was granted to the Evangelists missionaries for a chapel they intend to build.

León Pug really won only a Pyrrhic victory; no totora was included with the 50 meter cession from Majipamba. But IERAC intends to provide tule seedlings for sowing and cultivating as is done in Yanacocha. Where these will come from has not yet been determined.

In summary and as a result of the recent redistribution of pasture and totora, Majipamba has gained approximately 250 meters of pasture and tules from the hacienda (giving them a total of 1,430 meters of lakeside land); the ex-huasipunqueros and arrimados and friends now exploit a total of about 530 meters from the hacienda, Yanacocha has acquired about 250 meters of both pasture and totora; and León Pug has 50 meters more of pasture (giving them a total of nearly 590 meters of lake front), but no totora.

## CONCLUSION

Disproportionate as its economic return is to its social significance, totora exploitation nevertheless remains an integral part of the subsistence economy of those communities bordering on Lake Colta. This significance, therefore, rather than actual economic benefit, provokes a readiness to protect one's hegemony over the tules at all possible cost. This emotional attachment, moreover is inherently disruptive of any modus vivendi between conflicting groups such as Indian communes, no matter how seemingly permanent this may originally appear. That this is so stems from the region's overwhelming demographic pressure superimposed on what has become through centuries of exploitation a very slim resource base. Legal and extra legal disputes will continue unabated until either means of population control are established (which appear unlikely at this time) or extensive resettlement of Colta region inhabitants elsewhere takes place. In addition, it is assumed that efforts to rationalize the legal status of Indian communal lands will be made with haste for the rights and claims of all.

The latter proposal is not intended to contradict but to supplement the changes in the land tenure system on the Hacienda Colta Monjas.

The eastern shore, on the other hand, already decimated of totora, due to overcutting, has yet to be considered for tenure changes; but there the people dependent upon totora are fewer than those on the opposite shore. These changes will not relieve, in themselves, the pressure on the resource base. The Indian's intense attachment to his land presents an almost insurmountable obstacle to the implementation of any proposal for change, including land tenure reform. But adherence to one of the more pragmatic principles of applied anthropology-- that of capitalizing upon traditional patterns of authority extant in order to modify the same--may spell one of the few alternatives open to the social planner responsible for such an endeavor.



As the above evidence indicates, there is a respect for administrative authority not in keeping with the amount of abuse and exploitation the Indians have received, often at the hands of this same authority--either governmental or ecclesiastical. Although these two symbols of the national power structure possess a mutually beneficial interest in preserving the status quo in Indian communities, they do not realize, I feel, that present conditions will not long obtain. But a minimum of foresight is sufficient to awaken even the most casual foreign observer to the fact that any future modus vivendi will become increasingly ephemeral. The history of the intense, expensive and increasing number of legal disputes involving the totora is an index of this probable outcome. And to whatever extent selfish ends guide the traditional authorities, it will require a painful process of removing their cultural blinders before they perceive that perpetrating the present conditions will in the not so long run be self-defeating. What is needed is a stimulus to assist them in overcoming their inertia for the ultimate benefit of both traditionalists and Indians alike. This stimulus must come from within the power structure itself or from external sources. For it is rare that an oppressed populace elicits sympathy from its masters through words alone.

As the Indian population increases, the inhabitants of the Colta region will compete more and more ruthlessly for scarce resources. Such things as water reeds, pasture lands, even garden plots will be so thoroughly exploited that diminishing returns in time and effort may convince some Indians, but by no means all, that their lot will best be improved elsewhere. This point is rapidly approaching and for some it has already arrived. The question then becomes: where will they go? And what will happen when they get there? But what if they are willing and have no place to go?

## NOTES

- 1.- Conflicting altitude estimates lend only an approximate status to this figure. The 10,785 feet cited elsewhere and the 11,300 read from a missionary's altimeter average out to ca. 11,000.
- 2.- The several communities, in clockwise order, beginning at the northwest corner of the lake are: Balbanera, Pardo, Ashcucanina, Media Colta, San Antonio, Yanacocha, Hacienda Colta Monjas, Majipamba and León Pug. The latter does not border directly on the lake but is situated about 300 meters west of the Pan American Highway.
- 3.- This figure is rounded off from Indians in Misery, Table III.
- 4.- While this essay does not express any definite theoretical position,, it is assumed that as the power balance surrounding the land tenure system shifts from the traditional land-holding classes to the Indian small holders, agricultural production will first decline until Indian consumption patterns reach a level commensurate with their desires; and then production will increase for the external market if the proper incentives are provided.
- 5.- Corrected to present prices (1966) after personal communication with Prof. Foster.
- 6.- cf. Indians in Misery, Appendix III, pp. 160-163.
- 7.- Before redistribution, the Hacienda Colta Monjas possessed 1030 meters of shoreline with 822 of the same assigned to huasipunqueros and the hacienda controlling and exploiting the balance, 208 meters. Before redistribution, the hacienda mayordomo, sold totora by the cutting to Indians and pocketed the receipts. This partially explains his behavior in 1964 when expanding the hacienda shore of the totora, he enhanced his meager income.
- 8.- cf. Indians in Misery, Appendix II, pp. 150-157.

- 9.- cf. Indians in Misery, p. 153.
- 10.- cf. Ibid., pp. 72-76
- 11.- cf. Ibid., p. 163.
- 12.- Data collected by Arcenio Revilla.

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# F O L K M E D I C I N E & S O R C E R Y

Ana Baéz de Revilla

## INTRODUCTION

In order to better understand the following report, it is necessary to review briefly the philosophy pertaining to the origin of medicine. In Western culture, the nature of man is considered to have both material and spiritual aspects. For this reason medieval medicine was a balance of these dual attributes of man. Illnesses were caused by either natural or supernatural elements. The natural etiology was the patrimony of the academic knowledge accumulated by the Greeks. The supernatural aspects originated in the belief that illnesses were sent by God. This belief has persisted among our peasant population in the idea that illnesses are punishments for one's sins. The agents of illness are devils or malicious spirits who enter the body of the patient.

Modern folk medicine is thus the product of these accumulative interpretations, which originated in antiquity<sup>1</sup>.

The Greeks were the first to disregard the role of the gods, daring to pursue the sacrilegious in their elaboration of new concepts of the origin of the universe and of illness in particular. They formulated the idea of the four humors of the human organism: blood, yellow and black bile, and phlegm. According to Pythagoras, illness was a result of the disequilibrium among these four elements.

The Hellenes demonstrated that from natural experience, one could forestall the course of ailments. The thinking of various Greek scholars changed the course of medicine. Hippocrates believed that the world could be classified according to natural phenomena, and Aristotle developed the idea that anatomy should be based on the dissection of human bodies.

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1.- Data on the origins of folk medicine are taken from: Argentina Aceves and Dr. Aguirre Beltran. Procesos de Integración. Quito, 1961. P. 171-173.

The Greeks went further in the classification of plants according to their curative powers. They further formulated the idea that the treatment of illness should take into consideration two types of remedies, hot and cold (this idea of hot and cold still forms an important part of the curative practices of the zone) and that pus was necessary in the treatment of wounds.

In the Middle Ages, medicine again was dominated by the idea of the interference of divine providence, with the concomitant beliefs in miracles, faith and charity. Later the Arabs introduced into Spain a philosophy of medicine similar to that of the Greeks. The Spaniards, subsequently brought to America the combination of the Greek-Arabic and magical religious traditions of medicine as a part of the Conquest.

The traditional medical concepts of the Indians were based on supernatural beliefs. Illnesses were attributed to invisible beings with super-human powers. Up to the present time, these magical religious beliefs persist. Now, however, the Indians feel that illnesses also may originate from emotional and environmental causes or from a dislocation of organs. Thus one finds in present folk medicine a mixture of the supernatural and the ancient scientific or proto-natural beliefs.

#### CAUSES OF THE SURVIVAL OF FOLK MEDICINE

The majority of the Indians of the zone continues to cling to their traditional beliefs in regard to the causes and cures of illness. They rely on self-diagnosis based on symptoms such as fever, diarrhea, vomiting, and the presence of pains in various parts of the body. The Indians do not take into consideration those negative general factors which affect the health such as the lack of hygiene and inadequate nutrition. They rely mainly on herbs for curing and on their local specialists who are known as curers or sorcerers.

The retention of folk beliefs is due mainly to the lack of diffusion of information on modern methods of prevention and curing. There are no medical centers whose role is educative as well as curative. Furthermore, the high rate of illiteracy combined with ignorance, due to the lack of adequate educational facilities in the zone, makes it difficult for the Indian to comprehend new ideas concerning modern medicine. Also, his poverty impedes the utilization of clinics and hospitals where the charges for medical service and drugs are beyond the Indians' economic means.

The only clinic of the zone is that of the Gospel Missionary Union in Majipamba. This clinic was founded in 1953 and is headed by an American doctor with a great deal of experience and a sincere desire to help the Indians. However, the clinic functions to cure illness and does not attempt to dispense information on preventative medicine. Furthermore, it is mainly the Protestant converts who utilize the clinic regularly. The other Indians of the neighboring communities generally use its services only as a last resort, that is when a patient is gravely ill. Sometimes this is on the advice of the curers when they consider a case to be hopeless.

#### CAUSES OF ILLNESS

##### BAD AIR

Illnesses are attributed both to supernatural and natural causes and sometimes to a combination of both factors. The most common cause of illness, according to the Indians of the zone, is bad air (mal aire), which is described as a malignant air which enters the body to produce indisposition and pains in certain parts of the body or general weakness. One often hears that a person caught bad air in the hills while working in the parcel, gathering straw or herbs, or pasturing the animals. Sometimes this illness attacks one in the moment of arrival in the village to consult an authority, or when going out in the cold from the warmth of the hut. The men who return from working on the tropical coast may have fits of shaking from severe chills (probably malaria) and know that the cause is mal aire. In any of these circumstances, the initial cause is traced to a high body temperature followed by a draft of noxious air which instead of merely passing by the person, enters the body to produce illness.

The concept of bad air is traditional and very common. For instance, an Indian of 84 years told me that his grandmother died of mal aire. He had heard this from his parents, and probably the woman herself was convinced that she was suffering from bad air.

Another origin of illness is the "wrath of the hills" which "convulses" certain individuals who have displeased the hills, causing pain and bitterness. To placate the wrath of the hills, it is necessary to offer presents.

### SORCERY

People who are disliked may contract illness from their enemies through special mechanisms known to sorcerers hired for that purpose. Illness caused by sorcery is a form of revenge resulting from inter-community or intra-community quarrels between families. Sometimes for economic motives, members of the same family will utilize sorcery against one another. Sorcery is often reciprocal, the opposing parties both contracting a sorcerer to harm the other person, or as they say, to "cure" their enemy.

One of the methods used to bring about the illness of an adversary is for a person suffering from bad air to go to a curer, who makes up a bundle of herbs which he passes over the body of the patient. The illness is supposed to enter the bundle. The contaminated bundle is then wrapped up in a cloth to disguise its contents and deposited in the middle of the night in the house of the enemy. The unsuspecting victim will walk on it, absorb the bad humors found inside the bundle and thus fall ill. A curer, Manuel H.M.<sup>2</sup>, told me "I am no fool. How many times I have wanted to do the same and how many patients have desired the bundle to do harm, but I have always thrown the dirty mess a long ways away."

2.- This well known curer assured me that although many people have wanted to harm him, he has never used his curing powers to practice black magic because "I believe in God and Jesus Christ and the Most Holy Mother."

Another method of sorcery which is even more efficacious is to obtain the urine of one's enemy. This is accomplished through deception, by telling the intended victim that you need a sample of his urine for a cure. The urine is then taken to a sorcerer who uses it to harm the person. Clothing or other intimate possessions may also be used for the same purpose.

The Mestizos as well as the Indians believe in sorcery. A Mestizo woman told me the following: "Once I was walking up the road of the Hacienda without realizing that a woman who wanted to harm me was in back of me. When I entered my house, this woman gathered up the hot earth where I had walked and took it to a sorcerer 'to have me cured.' After this my feet began to ache something terrible. What did I do? I went to an Indian who knows his business and who attends only to those Whites he knows because he lacks confidence in others. He told me: 'A woman who is against you has taken the earth of your footsteps to a sorcerer.' At that moment I remembered that someone had been following me and had greeted me. After that I did everything the curer told me and so regained my health."

"The same thing happened to me again, One day an acquaintance asked me to lend her ten sucres, that it was a case of emergency. I had fifteen sucres in my hand, a ten sucre and a five sucre bill. I gave her the ten sucre bill. Within an hour she came back to return the money, using the pretext that now she didn't need it. I thought this was strange. Why should she return the money so soon? From that moment I began to have pains in my arms- horrible pains. My husband told me: 'Why did you lend the money? Perhaps you don't know about the bad intentions of these neighbors?' I had to go to the Indian curer in Majipamba. He used almost the same cure as the Indian in Riobamba and I couldn't complain. He did well by me."

The same informant also told us of what happened to her sister. "My sister lives in Riobamba where she has a business. She ships produce such as onions to Guayaquil. Her husband also works. Therefore, they are not poor and this makes a woman envious. My sister went to Guayaquil on business and when she was out of town, this woman who was envious of her went to a sorcerer to find out how she



could harm my sister. The sorcerer told her: 'Go to her house and bring me a pair of bloodstained panties that she forgot and left under the bed.' It was true my sister was menstruating and didn't have time to wash the panties and so put them under the mattress. This evil woman went to the house on some pretext or other and took the panties. My poor sister returned from Guayaquil with spots all over her body and a terrible itch. She got worse and worse. Finally we went to a curer who asked her: 'What's missing in your house?' My sister replied, 'nothing.' The curer then said: 'A pair of underpants stained with blood which you left in your house before going to Guayaquil is missing.' My sister then remembered that that was true, but she had forgotten all about it. After spending a lot of money she was finally cured, but her body is dry from so much curing."

Sometimes an individual does not seek the services of a sorcerer to harm an enemy, but asks the intercession of the saints. An Indian from Majipamba told us that many of the Indians, especially from San Antonio, have the custom of having masses said to the miraculous St. Gonzalo of Ambato. These masses are for the purpose of harming an enemy. "When they pay for the mass, they say nothing to the priest about their true intentions. They make up some reason so the priest will not be angry when he says the mass. During the mass, they talk to St. Gonzalo saying 'Look, St. Gonzalo, I paid for the mass for you to harm such and such a person.'"

#### THE EVIL EYE AND FRIGHT

When children become ill, their illnesses are attributed either to the evil eye or to fright (espanto). One time while I was visiting the house of an Indian in Majipamba, the daughter of the family was carrying the infant son of my informant on her back. I tried to admire the baby when I noticed that the daughter was upset and tried to turn, so that I couldn't see the infant. My informant said, "For the love of God, don't eye my son. The older people say that when the child of an Indian is good-looking, the Whites don't like that and cast the evil eye on the child. This happens among the Indians also because of envy. The Whites as well as the Indians cast the evil eye on the infants that Taita Dios (Father God) desired to make like jewels."



Two local plants used for curative purposes.  
Above the Santa Maria and below the Huantu  
tree.



The evil eye is considered a special mechanism of sorcery in which evil spirits are invoked to harm children. It is believed that a penetrating look of a person who desires to harm a child and who says "alhabita munangui" (I like the little jewel), may start an irritation or cause illness of the eyes and that the pretty child becomes ugly.

When a child is feverish and bothersome, the Indians surmise that he or she is suffering from espanto. Espanto is the psychological impact suffered by a child after having seen or heard something strange. It may be that the child, especially when asleep, has seen an ugly figure or heard a loud noise. This upsets and frightens the child, causing fever, vomiting and diarrhea.

To ascertain what caused the fright, a bundle of herbs which includes manchary yuyo<sup>3</sup>, santa maría, marco and tzote is passed over the body of the patient (this is called "cleansing") and then hung over the doorway of the house, facing inward. The bundle is left for a week and whatever issues from it determines what caused the espanto. For example, if hair resembling a dog, a pig, or a person is growing from the bundle; they know the source. If water comes out of the bundle, then water was the cause of the fright.<sup>4</sup>

Other causes of illness among children include mal aire, cough, the grippe, fever and pneumonia.

### FOLK CURES

#### THE CURERS

When ill, the first recourse of the Indian is to diagnose his own illness and then to utilize those herbs with which he is familiar to cure himself. He may also consult the pharmacists in Cajabamba and take such well known remedies as aspirin, Alka-Seltzer, etc. The more serious illnesses require the services of a curer (curandero).

3.- Manchary in Quichua means "fright" and yuyo "tender."

This is an herb found in the zone which has heart shaped leaves and fuzzy stems.

4.- Informant- Juan Remache.

Majipamba has four curers and Yanacocha three. There are also specialists who assist at births, five in Majipamba, (one of whom is a sorcerer) and two in Yanacocha. San Antonio has a large number of curers and midwives. When the ministrations of the local curers prove futile, the Indians may seek the services of a curer in other areas.

One of the ex-huasipunqueros recently lost his son Pedro, who was thirty years old. When we went to console him, he told us: "When Pedro fell ill, we took him to curers here and in San Antonio and Pardo. Their remedies did him no good. Then we went to Ambato, taking candles, to have a mass said to St. Gonzalo, asking that he get better. After that he went to Llumán to see the curers who they say are good. They told him he had been harmed by the sorcery of his enemies. They steamed his body with the vapors of certain herbs. This cost 350 sucres. He only got worse so he went to Santo Domingo de los Colorados (famous for its curanderos) and spent 1,000 sucres to no avail. I had to borrow 850 sucres which must be paid little by little. I also owe money to the family of my daughter-in-law for the burial."

The Hacienda Colta Monjas has no curers or midwives. The resident Indians use the services of specialists in Majipamba and Yanacocha. In the case of births, if it is impossible to obtain a midwife, the older women of the hacienda will assist at the births. Rosa Chimbolema told me that when her baby was born, her husband went to Yanacocha to look for Mama P., but before she could come Mama Baltazara arrived. "It was she who delivered my child, may God pay her."

#### BAD AIR

To cure mal aire, the patient is first asked by the curer how he feels, where he went at night, and what remedies he has taken. Then a small young guinea pig, preferably black in color, is passed over the body of the patient for a period of about fifteen minutes. All during "the cleansing," the spirit of God, the Blessed Virgin, the souls, etc. are invoked. In the company of the patient, the curer takes the guinea pig out to the patio, where he cuts it open alive. While the animal is squealing in pain, he takes out the

viscera. When the animal finally dies, the insides are examined to determine what part of the body of the patient has been affected by bad air or has caused the illness. For example, if the blood of the guinea pig is concentrated in the neck, liver, kidneys, etc., it means that these organs are full of blood and must be "decongested."

The curer then tells the patient where he contracted the illness: in the hills, in the lake, etc. The guinea pig used to diagnose the locale of the bad air is roasted, and along with cooked potatoes and sauce, is placed on a clay dish and left in the hills or where ever the illness was acquired, for the wind to carry away the mal aire. The gifts of food also serve to propitiate the spirits of the hills or lake so that they will cease to be hostile to the patient. At the side of the dish, is placed the bundle of plants which has also been used "to cleanse" the patient. The bundle is composed of the following plants: huantu, santa maría, marco and tzote.

Another cure for mal aire involves the use of the white thorn plant. The thorns are pulled out and the plant left to dry. A poultice is then made from the plant, the urine of a young child and the milk of a donkey. This mixture is also dried a little and then placed on the part of the body affected by the bad air. This must be done in the late afternoon, because at midnight, the poultice is wrapped in a cloth and left where the person caught mal aire.

There is a special diet for the patient which consists of white cola with the addition of a little lemon juice, sugar and Alka-Seltzer. It is recommended that the patient eat the whites of two eggs for breakfast, lunch and supper. According to the Indians, eggs have the power to extract illness from the body.<sup>5</sup>

#### SORCERY

The curer who provided the data for this section emphasized that the patient should never reveal any of the cure or else his illness would return with greater force.

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5.- Data gathered by Antonio Lema.

Various invocations are used by the curer which are difficult to understand because they are murmured in a low voice. It is clear, however, that the invocations are directed to God, the saints and the spirits of people who were loved. Also animals are invoked: "fearful sickness of sheep," "fearful sickness of the bird," etc. It is obvious that the curer calls upon the aid of everything that is important in their system of values.

Several candles are then passed and repassed over the body of the patient. The curer lights one of the candles and waits for "the tears to fall" (the drops of wax.) When a number of the drops have accumulated, he studies them in order to determine the motivation of the enemy who is trying to harm the patient. For example, the curer may discover that it was "from envy." To cure the patient, flowers of the huantu tree are passed over the body, the power of which is more effective if accompanied by cigarette smoke.

The Mestizo woman mentioned previously who was cured "of her footsteps," told me about the method used by her curer:

"On the first visit, the Indian who attended me asked for a pack of cigarettes, candles, two bottles of aguardiente and eggs. When he lit the candle, he knew immediately the cause of the illness, telling me they had used the hot earth of my footsteps to harm me. He passed the candle over my entire body and did the same with white huantu. While he did this, he called upon the souls to help him. He then rubbed my whole body with aguardiente from one of the bottles. The other he drank himself. A little of the liquor fell on the floor and the curer lit it and made me put my feet on the spot. You won't believe this, but it didn't burn me. He also passed two eggs over my body and then I had to eat them with salt, cinnamon and a little sugar. After that I felt marvelous. I had to go back three times, and he charged fifty sucres for each visit."

When the same person was cured of sorcery caused by the woman who returned the ten sucre bill, the curer was from Majipamba and the cure was similar, but with a few variations. He did not make her step in the flaming aguardiente, but she was prohibited from shaking hands with anyone for three weeks. (I remember that during this period she kept her right arm hidden under her stole, When we tried to shake hands, she excused herself by saying she had a crippled arm. ) She was also forbidden to bathe for a month and after the month had elapsed, had to bathe in very hot water which had been boiled with myrtle. Her mother told her she would get rheumatism from bathing in hot water in the cold of Colta so she only did this once.

### ESPANTO AND THE EVIL EYE

To cure espanto (fright) and prevent illness from the evil eye, they use the seeds of the cabalonga, which are put in small bags. Those containing male seeds are carried on the back and those with female seeds on the chest. It is better if one also adds to the seeds ground cinnamon, alucema and rosemary. If the seeds grow, it means there are small seeds inside which are harboring the espanto of the child. "This is the reason why cabalongo protects the child from illnesses."

Another cure for espanto consists in the curer's invoking the spirits of God, St. James and St. Gonzalo and the souls in purgatory and then reciting three "Our Fathers." The body of the child is cleansed with the santa maria herb which extracts the illness. The herb is then thrown away someplace where the wind will carry it away, along with the espanto. (This probably explains why we have seen bundles of herbs on the hills where there are strong currents of air). After that, the patient is bathed in rosemary water and two persons spray holy water on the chest and back simultaneously "in order for one espanto to take away the other espanto. It is better to do this on Tuesdays and Fridays."

## THE CURES OF M. H. M.

M.H.M., a well known curer in the zone, learned many of his cures in the eastern tropical region of Ecuador where he once worked as a travelling merchant. "I did not learn to cure from my parents. I have the head for such things and liked to learn everything when I was a merchant. One must cure with the aid of Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin. First I ask them to come and help me, and afterwards my brain is ready to know what is going to happen to the patient and to recommend what remedies are good for him."

Arc illness.- According to the curer, there are two kinds of arcs, the white arc of the night and the rainbow of the day. The white arc is composed of shining circles that move over the ground and there are male and female arcs. When a male arc collides with another male arc and catches a man who is nearby, it means death to the victim. The same is true for a woman if there is a collision between female arcs. If, however, a male and female arc collide and a person is caught, then the illness is curable.

"First I put my faith in God and then I give the patient a refreshing drink which calms the fever and phneumonia. This drink consists of ~~the~~ mashed roots of white nettles and a handful of green lentils which are put together to boil in the same water. After an half hour or an hour, the pot is taken off and put to one side. In the meantime, two guinea hen eggs (green in color) and two eggs of the cactilla pigeon are beaten and then added to the boiled mixture which has now settled and been strained. One also adds snails which have been crushed and sifted. The patient must drink this mixture every half hour in a small cup. But before taking the remedy, the patient 'is cleansed' with two eggs and a black guinea pig. After seven days of treatment, farewell to pains in the back and to a general indisposition."



"The arc of the day (the rainbow) is even more bothersome. It extends across the length of the lake and has various colors: yellow, purple, and red. They say that it especially follows persons dressed in bright colors. Persons who have been caught by the rainbow are really in trouble because hairless rapogas, tiny pigs and lizards form in the belly. The only thing that can cure them is confidence in my God and an effective purgative which I give them. The purgative is made from mashed ledo plant which is put into lukewarm water and then a package of fruit salts and sem leaves are added. The last two ingredients may be purchased in a drug store."

"This purgative is very healthy and should be taken after eating a light meal such as chicken broth at night. At midnight the pigs inside begin to squeal from the cathartic. I forgot to mention that in all of these preparations, one adds green, red, and yellow tinctures to combat the colors of the rainbow and to finish off the animals in the belly. One takes another glass of the remedy at midnight and in the early morning, one loses everything from the belly. The animals that come out ought not to be seen by anyone, but buried far away. The people call this process 'to abort.'"

It is said that the rainbow affects menstruating women who sit in the zone of the rainbow. According to this concept, they can conceive by the rainbow and the resulting children are repugnant or albinos. Albinos they say are "children of the rainbow."

Coldness of the blood.- "When the blood of a woman is cold, discharges result which are due to weakness of the blood and so one must feed it. For this, one prepares a drink made of quayusa leaves, monkey's tail ( a plant), walnut leaves and various tropical plants. The ingredients are boiled and when taken from the fire, the remedy is red in color. The drink is mixed with almíbar and sugar which has been well strained and taken twice a day; the first time after fasting. The blood then remains quiet."

When the opposite happens, that is, when menstruation is delayed, it is because "a womb ball" is forming. When not treated in time, an operation is necessary, but it can be cured without an operation. The treatment consists in taking every day a liquid made from valerina, a liana which can be obtained in Alausí. "It is necessary to crush the plant and put it in water which is just beginning to boil. Then one removes it immediately from the fire and lets it stand. When it is cold, you put it in a bottle and take it every morning along with a tablespoon of honey from bees. With this the patient has only to wait until menstruation comes."

Attacks.- "It is necessary to obtain valerian in the páramo. One crushes this and also the seeds of the mishmo, both male and female, and a small bit of sea avilla also from the tropics. After all of this is ready, you add broken up pieces of blessed bread<sup>6</sup> so the spirit of God will aid in the cure, it is that difficult. The drink must be bottled and the sick person must drink a small glass everyday before breakfast. If the illness is just beginning, the patient can be cured, but if it is very much inside, it is too late. No remedy is going to make the person better."

Colic.- Colics come from disorders of the liver or vesicle; or from stomach colds. If the cause is the former, one can be cured with lianas of saragossa, male and female, from the tropics. These are crushed and placed in two liters of water to cook. When taking the remedy, one adds two drops of lemon juice. The preparation is also used to cure colics caused by cold, except that one adds a shot of aguardiente and takes the remedy at night in order to sweat a little, but it is necessary to dress warmly,

Swollen stomach.- When the stomach is swollen and one has pains, it is good to take camomile tea mixed with a young child's urine<sup>7</sup>, blessed bread that has been crumbled and sugar.

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6.- Bread that has been blessed by the priest.

7.- Urine is believed to eliminate poisons from the organism.

Diabetes.- One cooks a fox of the páramo, taking off the gall of the liver. To this concoction is added the blood of the fox which must be collected at the moment of killing the animal. When the patient takes the remedy, the following ingredients are added: San Rafael wine or another liquor, ground-up heart of the turkey buzzard, black coloring, ground cinnamon and allspice. The remedy is taken once a day.

Another cure for diabetes consists in drinking a tea made from milk and two tropical plants: quayusa and huaviduca. The people also say that this drink makes women fecund.

Eye cures.- There is a plant in the zone called chiricique which bears a fruit from which the juice is extracted. Ten drops of this juice are mixed with ten drops of glycerine and the resulting remedy is put into the irritated eyes. "Here nearly everyone has bad eyes because of the strong winds and the smoke, or because they have seen what they ought not to have seen. From this comes the punishment of Taita Diosito<sup>8</sup>, or the anger of the spirits who do not want you to see those things. If it is cataracts, this is an illness of old age and there is no remedy. A doctor has to operate."

Earache.- Earaches have two causes: colds and the introduction of foreign objects into the ears. When the cause is a cold, one must obtain a plant which is sold in Yaruquies, called mulle. From this plant is extracted a wax which is heated and put into the ear with a piece of cotton. One can also take a tea made from borage, along with an aspirin for the pain.

If, however, the earache is due to the introduction of "an animal" or some other dirty object in the ear, one buys a balm in the drug store which is a green viscous liquid that expels foreign bodies.

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8.- "Father God", using the diminutive.

Toothache.- "In other places I have heard that it is good to chew bitter things like eucalyptus leaves or capulin leaves because these cause the death of the animals that sting the teeth. This could be, but I advise you to put the following, with a piece of cotton, in the hole of the tooth: 30 drops of a mixture of hot water and mashed ajengible vegetal. This is enough to kill the microbe. It burns a little because it is stronger than anything."

Wounds.- In the eastern jungle, they sell a pomade called caraña plaster. You have to mix this with bear and llama grease and put the remedy on the wound, but being careful to unite the two edges of the broken skin with the preparation and then putting on a plaster "to make the union." It also helps to put lemon juice on the wound. This cure is also effective for sprains, lumbago and cramps.

Tumors.- First it is necessary to have a penicillin injection in a drug store. (The curers do not give injections). After this one puts a cream on the tumor made from egg yolk, lard and sugar. Over this one puts gauze and a plaster. This softens the tumor and heals the wound rapidly.

Tumors may also be cured with a pomade made from janayuyo ( a local herb), vaseline and mutton fat which has been filtered. This preparation is also used to cure pimples, eczema and any other skin eruptions. Before putting on the pomade, it is necessary to wash the skin with a liquid made from matico and rosemary. The last step is to put on the pomade along with "sulphur flower" which is sold in the pharmacies and quickly dries out the skin. "It is best not to touch the skin with your hands or anything else like a chicken feather."

Fever.- First one should bathe oneself in cool water in a place where there are no drafts in order to take away the heat. The medicine consists of a cooked mixture of white thorn plant and white melba. To make the remedy "more cold," a child's urine and donkey milk are added.

Malaria.- This illness requires the drinking of a bitter liquid three times a day. The drink is made from barbecue sauce, sea avilla and various mashed up liana plants from the jungle that give the drink its bitterness. A teaspoon of the extract in a glass of water should be taken before each meal.

Swollen legs.- Where the swelling ends on the legs, the curer puts a stripe of ink with a pen to prevent the advance of the swelling. Then a drink is prepared of chicha huasa and samanqa, which is purchased in San Jacinto de Archidona. The samanqa is crushed and boiled in camphorated water. Also a part of the cure consists in putting hot compresses on the swollen legs. This cure should be continued daily.

Backaches.- "When a person gets a backache, it is said that he has the cuiche. This means he has been the victim of the anger of the spirits of demons who have kicked the poor man in the back when he was in the hills." To cure the malady, a drink is made from warm water and the toe nails of the cailas (a specie of frog). While the frog is still alive, its belly is cut into two parts and placed on the spot which is aching. The patient then takes an aspirin.

#### OTHER CURES IN THE ZONE

##### ILLNESS

##### REMEDIES

Stomachache

Tifillo water, camomile, caballo chupa, corzonera, malba blanca.

Rheumatism

Rub the affected part with black nettles and with hot melted mutton grease and camomile flowers.

Tumors

Huantu flowers, azadas and tagma which have been pounded and mixed with hot lard. This is made into a plaster and placed on the tumor.

ILLNESSREMEDIES

Heart trouble	Liquid made from duck and <u>yuyo</u> , swallow tea, and massages of the chest with alcohol.
Kidney trouble	Liquid made from corn tassels, taken before breakfast.
Swellings	<u>Chilca</u> leaves soaked in hot fat are placed on the swelling.
Worms	Verbena water with valerian.
Irritatio	A plaster made of fried cabbage is put on the stomach.

CARE AT CHILDBIRTHPREGNANCY

Pregnancy is accepted as a perfectly normal state and so there is no particular anxiety or restrictions connected with it. Usually the husband counts the months and determines the approximate date of the birth. The pregnant woman does not follow any special diet nor wear different clothing. However, it is customary to pull the sashes even tighter than normal. Dr. Adkisson of the Gospel Missionary Union Clinic attributes many of the difficulties in giving birth to this practice. It is unusual for the parturient woman to go to the clinic unless she is having trouble. The Doctor says that many times the infant is in an abnormal position in the womb and must be turned around. This may be due to the tightness of the sashes which prevents the fetus from developing in a normal position.

The pregnant woman pursues her ordinary domestic tasks except that two months before the baby is due, she does not lift heavy burdens and tries not to bend down too often to pick up objects from the ground. She continues to walk long distances as usual because it is believed that this will make the birth easier. Because of this, it is not uncommon for a baby to be born on the road or in the

pasture lands. Once a woman gave birth while pasturing the animals in the section of the Hacienda Colta Monjas known as "Paredes." For this reason, the child was named Pedro Paredes.

### CHILDBIRTH

Once the labor pains begin, the favorite midwife is called. If, however, it is nighttime, the midwife usually refuses to come unless there are complications. The first task is to prepare a drink made from a local herb called lote yuyo which is supposed to hasten the birth. The parturient woman is placed on a large cloth. She takes hold of one end and the midwife takes the other end for the purpose of rocking the woman from one side to the other. This is believed necessary to put the baby in the center of the womb.

The woman is "cleansed" with eggs to take away any bad air which might be present inside of her. The eggs are then cooked for her to eat. Next a guinea pig is passed over her body and cooked. The parturient woman drinks the broth of the guinea pig to give her "more strength to push." She is also given ground up chicken gizzard, which is believed to have the power to cause the prompt expulsion of the infant, and it is also customary for her to drink a liquid made from broad bean roots which is considered to be very nutritious.

At the moment of birth, the midwife cuts the umbilical cord with a kitchen knife and ties the knot with a cotton thread. Instruments used are never sterilized, but are wiped off on any piece of cloth which happens to be handy. The midwife alone attends the newly born infant. She bathes the baby in warm water and dries him with a towel. She then disposes of the umbilical cord and the placenta, by burying them in the dirt floor in a distant part of the house. The Indians say that there is no value attached to the placenta. They sometimes give it to the dogs to eat. This is contrast to some other parts of Chimborazo, where the placenta is buried under the hearth, which is considered a sacred place. This latter custom makes it impossible to persuade the Indians to use a raised stove.

## POSTNATAL CARE

The mother is not bathed after the birth, but is given a broth made by the midwife. This ends the duties of the midwife. The mother gets up in a week unless there are complications. She is then bathed in a special water that contains capulin leaves, siq-siq, and kishur. This is supposed to help rehabilitate the mother and harden her body. She is also made to perform an exercise so that the visceral organs will return to their normal position. According to the midwives, "all of the intestines have fallen from the force of the birth." The exercise consists in lying flat on the ground and raising up the legs. The chest, abdomen and waist are massaged to put the internal organs back into place. The woman is advised not to expose herself to the sun or air and to rest for a month.

For six to eight days after giving birth, the woman eats a number of special dishes. If the family can afford it, she will eat chicken, but is generally given guinea pig broth with potatoes and noodles or a rice soup containing mutton.

## SCIENTIFIC NAMES FOR VARIOUS LOCAL PLANTS<sup>9</sup>

- Alucema - alhucema (?) *Lavandula vera*.  
Caballo chupa - *Equisetum*.  
Espino blanco - *Cereus sepium*.  
Guayusa - *Symplocos alstonia* or *S. Nuda*.  
Huantu - *Datura sanguinea*.  
Huaviduca - *Piper tumidum* or *P. piluliferum*.  
Lote yuyo - *lutuyuyo* (?) - *B. obovata*.  
Malba - *malva* (?) - *P. Odoratissimum*  
Marco - *cantua quercifolia* or *Ambrosia elatior*.  
Matico - *Eupatorium glutinosum*.  
Melva - *Althea officinalis* or *Althea rosea*.  
Mulle - Molle (?) - *Shinus molle* L.  
Santa maría - *Pyrethrum parthenium* or *matricaria parthenium*.  
Siqsiq - *Arundo nitida*.  
Verbena - *Verbena chamedriaefolia*.

9.- Luis Cordero. Enumeración Botánico. Madrid, 1950.



Malaria.- This illness requires the drinking of a bitter liquid three times a day. The drink is made from barbecue sauce, sea avilla and various mashed up liana plants from the jungle that give the drink its bitterness. A teaspoon of the extract in a glass of water should be taken before each meal.

Swollen legs.- Where the swelling ends on the legs, the curer puts a stripe of ink with a pen to prevent the advance of the swelling. Then a drink is prepared of chicha huasa and samanqa, which is purchased in San Jacinto de Archidona. The samanqa is crushed and boiled in camphorated water. Also a part of the cure consists in putting hot compresses on the swollen legs. This cure should be continued daily.

Backaches.- "When a person gets a backache, it is said that he has the cuiche. This means he has been the victim of the anger of the spirits of demons who have kicked the poor man in the back when he was in the hills." To cure the malady, a drink is made from warm water and the toe nails of the cailas (a specie of frog). While the frog is still alive, its belly is cut into two parts and placed on the spot which is aching. The patient then takes an aspirin.

#### OTHER CURES IN THE ZONE

##### ILLNESS

##### REMEDIES

Stomachache

Tifillo water, camomile, caballo chupa, corzonera, malba blanca.

Rheumatism

Rub the affected part with black nettles and with hot melted mutton grease and camomile flowers.

Tumors

Huantu flowers, azadas and tagma which have been pounded and mixed with hot lard. This is made into a plaster and placed on the tumor.

ILLNESSREMEDIES

Heart trouble	Liquid made from duck and <u>yuyo</u> , swallow tea, and massages of the chest with alcohol.
Kidney trouble	Liquid made from corn tassels, taken before breakfast.
Swellings	<u>Chilca</u> leaves soaked in hot fat are placed on the swelling.
Worms	Verbena water with valerian.
Irritatio	A plaster made of fried cabbage is put on the stomach.

CARE AT CHILDBIRTHPREGNANCY

Pregnancy is accepted as a perfectly normal state and so there is no particular anxiety or restrictions connected with it. Usually the husband counts the months and determines the approximate date of the birth. The pregnant woman does not follow any special diet nor wear different clothing. However, it is customary to pull the sashes even tighter than normal. Dr. Adkisson of the Gospel Missionary Union Clinic attributes many of the difficulties in giving birth to this practice. It is unusual for the parturient woman to go to the clinic unless she is having trouble. The Doctor says that many times the infant is in an abnormal position in the womb and must be turned around. This may be due to the tightness of the sashes which prevents the fetus from developing in a normal position.

The pregnant woman pursues her ordinary domestic tasks except that two months before the baby is due, she does not lift heavy burdens and tries not to bend down too often to pick up objects from the ground. She continues to walk long distances as usual because it is believed that this will make the birth easier. Because of this, it is not uncommon for a baby to be born on the road or in the

pasture lands. Once a woman gave birth while pasturing the animals in the section of the Hacienda Colta Monjas known as "Paredes." For this reason, the child was named Pedro Paredes.

### CHILDBIRTH

Once the labor pains begin, the favorite midwife is called. If, however, it is nighttime, the midwife usually refuses to come unless there are complications. The first task is to prepare a drink made from a local herb called lote yuyo which is supposed to hasten the birth. The parturient woman is placed on a large cloth. She takes hold of one end and the midwife takes the other end for the purpose of rocking the woman from one side to the other. This is believed necessary to put the baby in the center of the womb.

The woman is "cleansed" with eggs to take away any bad air which might be present inside of her. The eggs are then cooked for her to eat. Next a guinea pig is passed over her body and cooked. The parturient woman drinks the broth of the guinea pig to give her "more strength to push." She is also given ground up chicken gizzard, which is believed to have the power to cause the prompt expulsion of the infant, and it is also customary for her to drink a liquid made from broad bean roots which is considered to be very nutritious.

At the moment of birth, the midwife cuts the umbilical cord with a kitchen knife and ties the knot with a cotton thread. Instruments used are never sterilized, but are wiped off on any piece of cloth which happens to be handy. The midwife alone attends the newly born infant. She bathes the baby in warm water and dries him with a towel. She then disposes of the umbilical cord and the placenta, by burying them in the dirt floor in a distant part of the house. The Indians say that there is no value attached to the placenta. They sometimes give it to the dogs to eat. This is contrast to some other parts of Chimborazo, where the placenta is buried under the hearth, which is considered a sacred place. This latter custom makes it impossible to persuade the Indians to use a raised stove.

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## L E A D E R S H I P P A T T E R N S

Eileen Maynard

### THE CABILDOS

The only communities below the level of a parish capital having official self-government are the communes (comunas) which are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Comunas of the Ministry of Social Welfare. The comunas of the Colta Lake zone are: León Pug, Majipamba, Yanacocha, Guayllaló, Pardo, Eastern San Antonio and Western San Antonio. In yearly elections, the residents of the comunas, the comuneros, elect their governing body, called the Cabildo, which consists of a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, síndico and vocales<sup>1</sup>. At the yearly elections held in December, the political chief of the canton<sup>2</sup> or the political lieutenant of the parish<sup>2</sup> must be present and is responsible for sending a list of the electees to the Department of Comunas for the approval of this government agency.

Ideally, the Cabildo is a semi-autonomous body empowered to settle internal disputes, formulate regulations, initiate public works for the benefit of the community, and sanction transgressions. Actually, the power of the Cabildos in the zone is minimal due to the indifference of the comuneros, factionalism, and lack of support of the local Mestizo authorities. The communities which have been organized into comunas have generally done so for the purpose of receiving legal recognition of their rights to held communal land and totora, that is to guarantee protection against the encroachments of outsiders. Beyond this, the comuneros have little interest or understanding of the legal role of the Cabildo.

- 1.- For details on the constitution and the duties of the various members of the Cabildo, see Indians in Misery, p. 54-62.
- 2.- A canton is somewhat equivalent to a county in the U.S., and a parish to a township.



*The Political Lieutenant supervising the election of the Cabildo in Majipamba.*



*Arsenio Revilla, member of the Cornell team, organizing the first election of a governing committee among the ex-serfs of Colta Monjas.*

Only a small number of comuneros usually participate in the elections which are sometimes hurried affairs. The parish or cantonal official arrives in the comuna and asks the acting members of the Cabildo or others to round up some Indians for the election. Under these circumstances, the Indians have had little time to prepare a list of candidates and so this is done extemporaneously. Those who are gathered are asked to approve or disapprove of each suggested candidate by voice vote. If there is a faction in the community which opposes the candidates, the way of demonstrating disapproval is to ignore the election or refuse to vote. A more aggressive faction, therefore, can elect a Cabildo which does not represent the majority of the comuneros. The dissenting group then ignores the request or regulations of the Cabildo and may even form an opposition group in order to sabotage the activities of the Cabildo. The Cabildo is usually powerless to enforce its decisions because it does not have the support of the comuneros or the local government officials.

Under these conditions, it is extremely difficult to initiate programs of community development. If the Cabildo is in favor of the construction of a public work, it will receive no support from the indifferent or antagonistic comuneros. The only major functions of the Cabildo seems to be those of executing orders of the local Mestizo authorities, such as the calling of public mingas, and the carrying out of litigations involving land disputes between communities.

#### THE LOCAL MESTIZO AUTHORITIES

The three representatives of the national government who have the greatest amount of contact with the Indians are: the executive officers of the canton and parish, the political chief and the political lieutenant respectively; and the police commissioner of the canton. The first-named are appointed by the executive branch of the government and are under the control of the Ministry of Government. The political chief is directly responsible to the governor of the province. His main duties are to keep order and to enforce the laws in canton Colta. The political lieutenant is subordinate to the political chief and his duties are similar, but on the parish level. Both

of these officials have the power to call public mingas and to levy fines within their respective jurisdictions. The police commissioner of the canton acts as a judge of criminal cases of minor importance and may levy fines or imprison the parties he deems guilty of an offense. Major criminal cases are referred to the intendente in Riobamba, the capital of the province.

Colta also has a cantonal judge who tries only civil cases, such as land disputes, divorces, etc. The present judge of canton Colta is an indigenista who claims, and there is no reason to doubt his word, that in Colta the Indian receives justice when he presides over cases involving litigations over land ownership. Other minor officials with whom the Indian has reason to be acquainted are the registrar of births and deaths, the registrar of property, and the notary public.

The officials exercising the greatest power over the Indians are the political chief, the political lieutenant, and the police commissioner. They often use their powers in an arbitrary fashion to fine and imprison and to interfere in communal affairs, usurping the authority of the Cabildos and ultimately that of the Department of Comunas. For example, they intervene in the distribution of totora and other communal property and levy fines against the community or the Cabildo for not keeping the streets clean or for throwing refuse in the highway.

Several years ago, the Cabildo of Majipamba received orders from the Department of Comunas to equalize the distribution of the communally-owned totora. Some families had as much as 15 meters while others had none. When the Cabildo attempted to reduce the amount of totora of those with more than five meters, the families involved each paid the political lieutenant twenty sucres (\$1.10) and so kept their excess totora. The Cabildo was powerless to carry out the order of the Department of Comunas, in spite of the fact that this organization possesses higher authority.



A recent case illustrates more concretely the role of local Mestizo authorities in communal matters. In January of this year, the comuna of Majipamba still had not elected a new Cabildo. There was at the time no political chief nor political lieutenant to preside over the election. The members of the Cornell team asked the acting political chief to be present at the election and even offered to bring him in the project vehicle. He, however, said that he was too busy and authorized us to take his place, insisting that it would be legal. In the election, the leading cabecilla and former vice-president, Juan Remache, was elected President of the Cabildo.

On February 6th, IERAC, the new owners of the Hacienda Colta Monjas, decided to put an end to the long-term dispute over the lakeside lands and tоторa of the hacienda, which had been usurped from the comunas of Majipamba and Yanacocha by an ex-renter of Colta Monjas. It was decided that the most equitable solution would be to divide the disputed sector in favor of the ex-huasipunqueros of Colta Monjas and the communities of Majipamba and Yanacocha. The two communities would receive 250 meters each of lakeside pasture land and tоторa.

Another long-standing controversy which had resulted at various times in physical violence involved the limits of lakeside communal lands between the communities of Majipamba and León Pug. In order to settle this dispute, Juan Remache and the other members of the Cabildo of Majipamba were persuaded against their better judgment to cede 50 meters of the communal pasture lands on the shores of Colta Lake to León Pug in exchange for the 250 meters of pasture land and tоторa from the hacienda. Majipamba would thus gain 200 meters.

Present at the transaction were a legal representative of the Department of Comunas and the Director of Agrarian Reform of IERAC. The lawyer from the Department of Comunas drew up the official acts required for the alteration of the communal lands, and they were signed by the Cabildos of León Pug, Majipamba and Yanacocha. The new boundaries between the comunas and the hacienda were then marked by a civil engineer from IERAC.

This transaction resulted in the activation of an opposition group to the Cabildo of Juan Remache. This group, headed by Pedro Vendoval, became openly antagonistic and threatened Juan Remache with physical harm and to burn down his house. They accused him of selling the 50 meters to León Pug. None of them recognized the fact that Majipamba had gained in the transaction; of greater importance psychologically was the loss of territory to the hated enemy, León Pug. They placed a formal denunciation of Juan Remache in the office of the Police Commissioner, demanding that he return the money given him by León Pug. They also called for a new election of the Cabildo.

The Police Commissioner sided with Pedro Vendoval and his group, and began to harass Juan Remache. The cantonal authorities declared that the Cabildo of Juan Remache was not legal, and the official who had authorized the election refused to take responsibility. A member of the Cornell team explained the transactions of February 6th to the Police Commissioner, emphasizing the legality and the benefits to the comunas and to the peace of the zone. The Police Commissioner refused to accept the explanation and continued to support Pedro Vendoval.

A new election was called in Majipamba in the presence of the newly appointed Political Chief and the Political Lieutenant of Cajabamba. This time the opposition was clearly in the majority and the followers of Juan Remache refused to vote. This ended the Cabildo of Juan Remache and Pedro Vendoval was elected President.

After talking in Quito to the Head of the Department of Comunas and to the representative who was present at the transactions involving the new division of lands, it was decided that the new Cabildo would be accepted as legal unless they tried to use force in nullifying the acts which had changed the boundaries between Majipamba and León Pug. It had been rumored that Pedro Vendoval and his group was threatening to do so by filling in the ditch marking the limits.

The Department of Comunas, however, declared that the Cabildo of Juan Remache was legal at the time of the signing of the acts granting Majipamba 250 meters of hacienda land and ceding 50 meters to León Pug. Because of the false accusations levied against Juan Remache, the Department of Comunas sent two official letters to the Police Commissioner of Colta, urging him to accept the new boundaries and to support Juan Remache whose actions had settled the dispute between Majipamba and León Pug. The reaction of the Police Commissioner was one of incredulity in the validity of the letters and he still insisted that Juan Remache was a "bandit." The result has been to foment more factionalism in Majipamba and to threaten the peace by supporting a Cabildo that wants to provoke anew the controversy with León Pug.

On April 6th, Juan Remache was charged by the new Cabildo with not turning over the legal papers of the Cabildo. Furthermore, the comuneros of Majipamba had not responded to the calling of a public minga and Pedro Vendoval's group laid the blame on Juan Remache, saying that he had gone from house to house telling the people not to cooperate in the minga. The latter accusation was denied emphatically by Juan Remache. On the same day he was thrown into jail by the Police Commissioner of the Municipality. The Cornell team immediately secured his release, but it was apparent that the authorities did not comprehend or refused to comprehend that the motivation behind these accusations on Juan Remache was pure vengeance on the part of the members of the new Cabildo.

It is little wonder that the majority of Indians disregard the Cabildos and go directly to the police commissioner or other Mestizo authorities to settle disputes. If the Cabildo does make a decision, the losing party will often go to a Mestizo official, bearing gifts, and this official may reverse the decision of the Cabildo. The attitude of the local officials is understandable in view of the fact that they can increase their miserable incomes by levying fines and accepting produce. Until the Mestizo authorities encourage and support the Cabildos, these bodies designed to provide self-government will remain powerless and the Indian will never learn the responsibility of leadership.



*Fernando Guaman, the long time president  
of the comuna of Leon Pug.*



*Pedro Maji, the first president of the ex-serfs  
of the Hacienda Colta Monjas.*

Another case in which the Cornell team became involved demonstrates the behavior of the local authorities in relation to individual Indians. This time an elderly Indian from Majipamba was jailed in Cajabamba by order of the Police Commissioner, accused of defaming the character of one of the counselors of Cajabamba. The facts of the case were never very clear, but it seems that the daughter-in-law of the Indian gave birth to a child who was stillborn or who died immediately after birth. The Political Lieutenant implied that perhaps this was a case of infanticide and that they had not registered the death as required by the law. According to the family, the grandfather paid the Political Lieutenant a fine of 500 sucres (\$26.00), a tremendous sum for an Indian. A complaint was made to the Political Chief who demanded an investigation. The Police Commissioner then called in the grandfather who was frightened. In his confusion, instead of using the name of the Political Lieutenant, the Indian said it was the Counselor who had accepted the fine. He was immediately jailed. The members of the Cornell team talked to the Police Commissioner, explaining that the Indian was an old man who was confused and asked that out of compassion he be released. The Police Commissioner agreed to this and to have a later meeting with the Indian along with the proper witnesses in the presence of the Political Chief in order to clarify the case.

### THE ROLE OF THE CABECILLAS

#### CHARACTERISTICS & POWERS

An Indian leader of the zone is called a cabecilla whether or not he holds a formal office in the Cabildo. The communities which are not comunas have one or more informal leaders who are known as cabecillas. There are also cabecillas in the comunas who are not members of the Cabildo. Generally, however, the members of the Cabildos and especially the President, are considered cabecillas. Occasionally, an Indian leader does not want the responsibility of office or is forced to relinquish the position of president because of opposition of the Mestizo authorities or because he is accused of monopolizing the presidency. In these cases, he acts in an extra-official capacity, guiding the activities of the Cabildo from behind the scenes or in a lesser office.

A man attains the status of cabecilla not by any formal act of recognition but by concensus of the Indians of the community or of a group of Indians of the community. There is therefore, some disagreement as to who is "really" a cabecilla. For example, the followers of Juan Remache would insist that he is the only cabecilla in Majipamba and deny emphatically that Pedro Vendoval is a cabecilla. Similarly in Yanacocha which also has an opposition group, led by Manuel Sánchez, the followers of Manuel Chuqui Naula, the President, would not recognize Manuel Sánchez as a cabecilla. Sánchez' group, however, would consider him a cabecilla and might or might not recognize the right of Chuqui Naula to be called a cabecilla. A cabecilla is then an Indian man who is considered to be a leader by the majority of the community or by a significantly large segment of the community.

The cabecillas acquire leadership through service to the community. Most of them are middle-aged, have served formerly as alcaldes<sup>3</sup> and/ or hold or have held positions in the Cabildo. They have also played the roles of counselor and arbitrator and some have worked actively for the betterment of the community. They are men "who know how to speak well" and are fairly fluent in Spanish. They are, therefore, capable of representing the community in dealings with Mestizo authorities and act as intermediaries between the community and the authorities. The cabecillas are also supposedly "more rational" and progressive and are concerned over the welfare of the community. A real cabecilla must usually be a man of courage who is able to accept the consequences of responsibility. He may have to bear the blame and so the punishment for any disorders within the community. He is often threatened by the authorities or by the Indians of another community when inter-community disputes occur. Often a cabecilla has enemies even within his own community so that he may be the victim of verbal or even physical abuse. Many of the more influential cabecillas have spent time in jail.

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3.- Previous to the formation of Cabildos, leadership was in the hands of a regidor and his assistants, the alcaldes. These were mainly religious offices, the alcaldes being in charge of sponsoring various fiestas.

A cabecilla must also be willing to sacrifice his own economic security for that of the community. In inter-community disputes, the cabecillas often have to pay some of the legal expenses and provide "gifts" for the officials out of their own pockets. It has even been necessary in certain cases for the cabecillas to mortgage their own property to negotiate loans to meet the expenditures of litigations.

There seems to be little correlation between wealth and leadership. Juan Remache, for example, is poor in land and animals while Chuqui Naula is fairly affluent by Indian standards. The sponsorship of religious fiestas which requires the spending of large sums of money is a way of gaining prestige, but a man who sponsors a religious fiesta does not necessarily become a cabecilla.

The sphere of influence of the cabecillas is extremely restricted. On the right side of the lake, only Manuel Chuqui Naula, who has a following of about 139 families out of 169 in Yanacocha, can be considered a powerful leader. Even Chuqui, however, is limited in the influence he can exercise over his followers. He could, for instance, persuade them to petition for parcels on Colta Monjas and support the Agrarian Reform, but ran into opposition when he tried to collect quotas for the construction of a public laundry facility. Chuqui maintains his hold through personal magnetism and an ability to play politics. It is quite significant that Yanacocha suffers less persecution by the Mestizo authorities in the form of forced mingas, etc. than does Majipamba because of the stronger leadership and relatively greater unity in Yanacocha.

A good cabecilla can settle quarrels within the community, thus making it unnecessary to resort to the services of the Mestizo officials or hire a lawyer. Intra-family quarrels, usually involving husband and wife or mother-in-law and wife, and inter-family feuds caused by thievery of produce or animals, are sometimes settled by the cabecillas. The method of negotiation consists in calling in the opposing parties and their families and discussing the problem. The discussion is accompanied by convivial drinking while the cabecilla mediates the dispute. Most quarrels, however, are arbitrated by the local Mestizo officials, especially the police commissioner, who fines one or both parties.



*Manuel Chuqui Naula, the President of Yanacocha, explains the problems of the Comuna.*



In order to better understand the background of a cabecilla, two of the outstanding leaders of the zone, Manuel Chuqui Naula and Juan Remache Guillén, were asked to tell us something about their lives. Brief autobiographies of these two cabecillas follow.

#### MANUEL CHUQUI NAULA

"They say I was born on the same day and at the same time that President Eloy Alfaro died. I have my birth certificate." (He showed me a paper indicating that he was born on October 25, 1912 in Yanacocha.) "My father was Vicente Chuqui and my mother María Naula. My parents had seven children who died. The first to live was María and after María, I was born and then Vicente and Antonio. My father had a small parcel of land, but not enough to support the family. For this reason, I never attended school and so do not know how to read or write. I had to help my father who was a merchant. I accompanied him on his journeys to Bolívar. It was while travelling with my father that I learned to speak Spanish. My father could only speak Quichua. At home I helped my father with the agricultural tasks.

When I was around twelve years old, Manuel Manyá, the cabecilla of Yanacocha and the father of my friend Toribio, sent me to work for twenty centavos a day on the Hacienda Puela, near Baños. My work was carrying stones to make cement. This was where I acquired the nickname 'El Bronce' ('The Bronze One'). One night, as a joke, while I was sleeping, they tied me to a large bronze caldron, putting a rope around my waist and then attaching it to one of the handles of the caldron. When I awoke I didn't realize what had happened and went to urinate, dragging the caldron with me. From that moment they began calling me 'El Bronce.'

After that I worked for a short time in the construction of the road to Guaranda, receiving nine sucres for two weeks work. I then returned to Yanacocha to work in agriculture. I wasn't until 1945 that I began to work as a travelling merchant, buying crockery in the large stores in Quito and taking it up north to sell.

I first held office in the Cabildo in 1939 as Secretary, and in 1940 was elected President and have served as president every year since that time. I was an alcalde in 1943 which cost me between 500 and 1,000 sucres. Now there are no alcaldes in Yanacocha, My father served as alcalde menor and alcalde mayor.

My struggle to regain the lands taken from Yanacocha by Gallegos began in 1944 when Velasco Ibarra became president of Ecuador. I attended a course in Quito on May 28 for huasipunqueros and comuneros where I learned various things about being a cabecilla- how to make demands for the benefit of the community, the necessity for a school, etc. There were leaders from all over Ecuador attending the course.

In my attempt to reclaim the land from Colta Monjas, I spent personally 30,000 sucres (\$1,560.00). My lawyer was Gonzalo Oleas. In the fight with Asistencia Social to parcel the hacienda, I collaborated with Juan Remache. This started a series of problems with Martínez, the administrator of Colta Monjas, who denounced me to the authorities as a Communist, saying I was trying to steal the hacienda. He threatened to kill me with the aid of the huasipunqueros. Because of him, I was thrown in jail four times. Once on the streets of Riobamba, he punched me in the nose, causing the blood to flow, and then hauled me to jail. Fortunately, the nephew of Gonzalo Oleas was the intendente and I was released. In 1963, along with six other from Yanacocha, I was taken by the Army with my hands tied behind my back to the garrison in Riobamba. This was because of the accusations of Martínez. I was held prisoner from Monday to Saturday. Yes, I was treated well. We were given good food, good coffee for breakfast, a good lunch and supper as well. Because of my struggles over the rights of the community, I have nearly died three times with hemorrhages caused by shock.

I married for the first time when I was eighteen. My wife's name was Petrona Cepeda. My first child was not born due to a miscarriage. After that, Antonio, Manuel and José were born. In 1943 Petrona died of typhoid fever and I was left with three small children. José was nine months old, Manuel 2 1/2 and Antonio 6 years. I was



Juan Remache, a cabecilla of Majipamba, and his wife Juana.

without a woman only three days because my patrón, the father of Gonzalo Oleas, called me to Riobamba along with my mother-in-law María and my sister-in-law Antonia. He said I must marry immediately and he urged Antonia, my wife's sister, to marry me. She did not want to, it was by force. My patrón said it was necessary for her to marry me because of the children and that I was a rational man who knew how to speak well. We then went to Cajabamba by train where my patrón acted as witness in the civil ceremony. Within a week, Antonia wanted to leave me because the people were saying it was not right to marry one's brother-in-law. After that she was more content. We had nine children, but only four are living: Alonzo, Pedro Vicente, Antonio, and Rosa María who was born last December. I have two sons named Antonio.

I received the lot and house where I live as part of the inheritance of my father-in-law. My older sons are now married and no longer live with me, only my mother-in-law. Antonio lives on a parcel I gave him. José and his wife lived with me up to a year ago when he bought a lot, and Manuel lives with his in-laws. What I want for the future is to see all of my children educated. (All three of his older sons are literate and two of his younger sons are now in school), "and a chapel for Yanacocha."

#### JUAN REMACHE GUILLEN

"I'm not sure of the date of my birth, but I am now 53 years old. I was the sixth child born to my parents, Mariano Remache and Mercedes Guillén. Gregorio, Juana, and Sebastián were born after me. Now there are only five of us living.

My father, though poor, was highly respected. He was like a judge and was called on to divide lands after a death. He also held the post of alcalde. Yes, he would be considered a cabecilla.

I can't remember very much of childhood. I do remember that we suffered a year of hunger when it was necessary to eat polvillo<sup>3</sup> like the pigs. After the Evangelists opened

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3.- Polvillo is rice which has been ground with the husks and sold to feed pigs.

a school in Majipamba, Dr. Mosquera, the priest in Sicalpa, put a school here and I attended for two years. My father then took me out to work. I must have been about eight years old when my father became a huasipunquero on the Hacienda Huacuna. There he had a cuadra of land and I pastured the sheep for the hacienda.

When I was twelve years old, I worked in the construction of the Pan American Highway, earning 50 centavos (2.6 cents) a day. At fifteen, I began to work on the coast as a carrier in Guayaquil and as a peon on various farms. For two years, I worked from place to place, trying to earn enough to eat.

Finally I secured a huasipungo on the hacienda of Rosa Chiriboga (adjacent to Majipamba). There I had a cuadra and had to work only one or two days a week for the hacienda. Every six months I served as huasicama for a month in the house of the Señora Chiriboga in Riobamba. She has always been good to me. Even now, though I am no longer in her service, she sometimes takes me with her on trips because she is a widow and alone.

I married Juana Bagua Huacho and we had ten children, but they have all died. I now have a solar of land as an inheritance from my father-in-law. It is very little because the land was divided among four children. I do not have any property of my own. This house and lot belong to my father-in-law who lives with us.

I began to serve the community after getting married. I was then elected secretary of the Cabildo. This was when my brother-in-law Alejandro Casagallo was President. I held the position of Secretary for many years because I could read and write. This was during the disputes with León Pug. All the other communities were against us. We hired Gonzalo Oleas as our lawyer and León Pug hired his brother Neptalí Oleas. We wanted to parcel the pampa on the lake shore as Yanacocha had done. Because the lawyers were brothers, they came to an agreement. We lost the right to parcel, but León Pug did not get any totora.

Now they say Gonzalo Oleas only wants to defend the rich and not the Indians.

I have been President and Vice-President of the Cabildo two times. I was an alcalde the year after I married, but it cost too much money so I never wanted to be alcalde again.

As a cabecilla, I was involved in the attempt to get Asistencia Social to parcel the Hacienda Colta Monjas. This was before the Law of Agrarian Reform. Dr. Neptali Oleas was our lawyer and he hired an engineer to map the hacienda and make the plans. This costs us 4,000 sucres (\$208). When Dr. Oleas came with the engineer, the huasipunqueros attacked them with sticks and stones, so we had to pay soldiers to accompany them. The bodyguards charged 30 sucres (\$1.50) a day.

I have been taken prisoner twice. The first time it was because I took some Indians from Majipamba to work on the road to Pallatanga. The police came and grabbed me from my house, bound my hands and feet and put me in jail in Cajabamba from Friday evening through Sunday. They said I had no right to take the workers and that there were some tools missing.

The second time I was taken prisoner because of the plans to parcel the Hacienda Colta Monjas. The ex-administrator denounced me and Chuqui Naula as Communists for wanting to buy the hacienda from Asistencia Social. I was weaving a poncho when two cars of soldiers arrived. They had already grabbed Chuqui and six others from Yanacocha. I was the only one taken from Majipamba. They put us in the garrison in Riobamba. We were not maltreated. We were fed three times a day and allowed to walk in the patio. My wife followed me to Riobamba and lived in the streets, waiting and begging them to release me. I was in the garrison a week.

Now I earn a living by working my small plot and weaving mats from the tatora. I am a rezador and the priest says it is my duty to teach the catechism to those who want to get married. I have a book in Quichua which I bought in Riobamba with all the questions and answers. The future bride and groom come to my house from seven to nine at night and return early in the morning. It is difficult to teach them the catechism. I don't charge

anything, but I have to tell the truth. I do accept gifts such as a bottle of aguardiente. As I told the priest, it takes many hours of my time and I can't do it for nothing.

The people also come to me to divide the land which must be parcelled in an inheritance. For a day's work, I charge five to ten sures which is nothing. They come to me to settle disputes as well. I tell them that it is better to buy chicha and drink together than go to the Police Commissioner to be fined. When someone steals something, I try to find the guilty party. It was better before. We had a Police Commissioner who told the people they had to do what the Cabildo ordered, but the present one only wants to take money from the Indians."

#### SUMMARY

Leadership on the community level consists of the Indian cabecillas and or the Cabildos whose leadership is based on prestige. The degree of prestige, however, is not great enough nor extensive enough to give the cabecillas or the Cabildos power to influence the destiny of the community or to mitigate most intra-communal disputes.

The lack of strong leadership in the zone has resulted in a power vacuum which has increased the authority of the Mestizo officials. The latter, of course, are partially responsible for this situation as they discourage the development of Indian leadership through harassment of the cabecillas and by ignoring the decisions of the Cabildos. The power of the Mestizo officials is coercive in nature. Their legal right to imprison and fine along with a lack of vigilance by higher authorities gives them almost unlimited power over the Indians which is often used in an arbitrary fashion.

The weak leadership among the Indians presents a barrier to community progress because few Indian leaders can command enough followers to carry out works of collective action in benefit of their respective communities. Further weakening the power structure is the tendency to form splinter groups that utilize their energies in opposing one another rather than in benefit of the collectivity. Since the Cabildos are powerless to combat the factionalism,

the rival groups within a community may strive to achieve dominance by bribery of officials or by levying charges against members of the other group. This is a vicious cycle in which community progress is sacrificed to petty quarreling and Mestizo officials, acting as mediators, enhance the rivalries and increase their revenue.



# CELEBRATING A HEAVY-INDUSTRY TRIUMPH

Carol Fortney

## WOMAN'S DRESS

From the skin of the woman's dress begins with



They vary from a type of cap sleeve to almost sleeve  
length, while those worn by children and infants of outlying  
areas are short-sleeved or sleeveless. The dress  
is the result of some of the first work done in the  
area and was given to the people of the area  
to wear. It is a simple dress and is made of  
the same material as the dress worn by the  
people of the area. It is a simple dress and is  
made of the same material as the dress worn by the  
people of the area.

# C L O T H I N G   &   W E A V I N G   T E C H N I Q U E S

Carol Robinson

## WOMEN'S DRESS

From the skin out, the women's dress begins with either a coarse white cotton camisa (long blouse) or the long dark wool anaco. The camisas are hand sewn of handwoven or factory-made bleached or unbleached cloth usually purchased in the Riobamba (Saturday) market or in Sicalpa on Sunday. Sleeves are set in at right angles with a diamond-shaped gusset underneath for better fit and durability. The women of many families sew their own camisas, especially those for the young girls. Seams are quite narrow and rolled toward the outside of the garment then covered and held fast by cross stitches of colored wool. If not made at home they are bought ready-made and machine sewn with the seams turned to the inside and the edges left unfinished.

Camisas open down the front just enough to be pulled on over the head, and this opening as well as the round neck are embroidered simply and colorfully with bright wool yarn. Long-sleeved blouses are also embroidered at the elbows and the cuffs. All the blouses are long, descending to between the calf and ankle and therefore serve as underskirts. They are either plain at the hem or scantily embroidered.

Sleeves on the Indian blouses of the zone are short. They vary from a type of cap sleeve to almost elbow length, while those worn by cholos and Indians of outlying areas have three-quarter or wrist-length sleeves.

If the camisa is worn, the skirt worn with it is the waist-high wrap around chulla anaco in dark blue, black, or natural brown, of about one and one half varas (approximately one and one quarter meters) in length, and one vara in width. This skirt is woven in one piece, generally on a backstrap loom, but sometimes on the upright loom. It is a particular crepey type of plain-weave wool

cloth woven especially for the anacos and called simply "anaco". Plain wool cloth more loosely woven and much cheaper, called bayeta is sometimes used by the very poor. Chulla anacos are loosely bunched at the waist with the opening on the right and are held in place by the long Indian cloth belts, or fajas.

In place of the camisa and short skirt a long sleeveless sort of tunic, the yanandi anaco, is worn. This is the more ancient and indigenous form of dress found in variations throughout the Andes. It is a shoulder-to-ankle length garment woven in one long strip then cut in half and sewn by hand down the middle. The bottom strip is referred to as the anaco and the top half is called the quinshushi, even though the two halves are sewn together into a single garment. A woman wraps the entire piece around her with the opening at the right side and the extra width drawn around to be back of the right shoulder. The corner and the bunched overlap are then pulled over the shoulder to the right front of the garment and there fastened with a quaqua tupu, or baby stick pin. Likewise the left back is joined to the left front across the shoulder.

With either type of anaco a woman always wears an apron, or changalli of anaco or bayeta cloth. The changalli is the same length as the anaco, but only covers the front half of the body in width. The hems of both sides and the bottom are generally hand stitched with colored cotton thread, which provides a simple decoration. Both sides are worn folded over and toward the center front at the waist into loose hanging pleats.

Next a woman wraps one of the small multicolored cotton and wool huahua chumbis' ("baby belt") around her waist several times—over the apron and either the chulla anaco or the yanandi anaco, and covers it with the very wide mama chumbi. The second belt is woven with a wool warp and a weft of cabuya fiber, which makes it quite stiff and durable.

Since it is a warp-faced rib weave, only the colored wool of the wide belt shows. Traditionally the belt is red with narrow bands of green and white (or local variations; green and magenta checks) at both sides. The cabuya shows only at the extreme edges as the weft doubles back for each row. Over these two, the third belt, a huahua chumbi with braided cords is wrapped and tied. Colors for the smaller belts vary according to the wearer's taste and are often very gay. The finer ones usually have a white cotton weft with a mixed warp of white cotton and multicolored wool, while a coarser variety of all wool features a predominantly yellow, red, and black color scheme. The narrow belts are from one and one half to almost three inches wide, and the wider ones about four or five inches. Also, the narrow belts are much longer than the wide ones. They will go four or more times around the waist while the wide ones overlap only once and a half.

Over her shoulders as a shawl a woman places a plain rectangle of bayeta, narrowly and sometimes decoratively hemmed. The garment itself is called a bayeta or a tupullina and is usually of the same dark color as her skirt. At times it is bright magenta, green, purple, red, or blue. Sometimes two or even three bayetas of different colors are worn together. They are fastened in front with a large metal tupu (anciently silver and now steel, brass, or copper) which may be hung from a bright cord or string around the neck if the woman is wearing a camisa and therefore does not need the two small tupus, or it is tied by a cord to the two small shoulder tupus.

Neck jewelry consists of a choker type of necklace of several strands of brightly colored glass, plastic, or other cheap beads. Long strings of similar but smaller beads looped through the pierced ears form earrings. The huashca, as the necklace is called, is put together by each woman according to her desire after buying beads of several colors and small coins in one of the market places. The several strands are strung with a regular repeat of colors in the same or similar pattern for each strand. Special necklaces for fiestas and other occasions for fancier dress are made with small silver (and silver-colored) coins strung among the colored beads.

Orejas or ear jewelry, are also strung by the woman as she pleases, but are usually red for the most part with narrow bands of other colors at the bottom, and another band or two nearer the middle of the strands with a few colored beads at the very top. Generally four strands of very fine beads are worn from the ear to the shoulder length or almost knee length. Often the four strings are joined at the bottom with a single silver coin or other small metal object. At the top each pair of strings is joined to a single one and the front one pulled through the ear and tied to the other at the back.

For young girls or women wearing especially heavy, long orejas, a loop of string is sometimes drawn up from the hole over the top of the ear to help support the weight of the beads without strain on the ear lobe. Orejas descending very far below the waist are sometimes tucked into the belts at the waist and "bloused" over the top of the belts to permit movement of the head.

Bracelets and rings are frequently worn too. The bracelets, or manillas, are also of cheap bright beads usually smaller than those used for necklaces. A single long strand of many colors is wrapped several times around each wrist, forming a tight wristlet about two inches wide. Rings of steel are worn more for superstitious, curative or preventive purposes than for purely ornament. This means that several are worn at a time on each hand to increase their power. Glass "jewels" are usually set into rings of copper and brass, which demonstrate the more decorative aspect of these metals.

Women part their hair across the middle of the head from ear to ear, then part the front half down the middle toward the nose and comb each front half to the side of the face where it hangs loose. The back part is combed together at the nape of the neck into a "tail" and bound with a length of braided cord. It is then wrapped with a narrow multicolored cinta (very like the huahua chumbi) from top to bottom and back up again to just past midway, where the remaining length of cinta is wound to make the fattest part of the hairdo and secured with the cords at the cinta's end.



*These Indian men have retained the more traditional clothing of the zone.*



The part of the hair that shows is often bleached reddish brown from the continuous-since-childhood use of cabuya for shampoo plus the use of what they call black soap. Each time the hair is washed this hard brownish stuff is lathered into the top and loose sides and left on as a paste to lighten the hair to the desired "yellow". On top of the hairdo a hat is placed, the style depending on how much a woman wants to pay and how "Westernized" she wants to appear. The older, more traditional woman's hat is flat-crowned and straight-brimmed, the the back turned up slightly. It is made of heavy felted white wool further whitened by the addition of finely powdered starch. These hats are purchased with white ribbon encircling the base of the crown and white strings drawn up from the ribbon to the top of the crown. The edge of the brim is also bound with white ribbon.

A woman usually replaces the white ribbon with two grosgrain or flat braid ribbon. The underneath band is often pink or magenta and the top one black or navy blue, with the two undermost ends extending out from the brim by about four inches and the top ends by about two. From under the ribbons to the center of the crown the many separate white yarns may also be replaced by colored ones. These are pulled up and secured to a small button at the very top.

The other styles resemble men's Western-style fedoras and often have some kind of decorative ribbons or bands around the base of the crown. This newer type of hat is worn by both men and women, and both show preferences for dark browns, greens, blues, and greys.

Shoes are rarely worn by women. If they are, they are either cheap plastic nationally-made sandals, or more often, alpargatas (also called oshotas) made of old rubber tires. Young girls are dressed exactly like their mothers, but with less jewelry and less often with the Western type of hat. Frequently a little girl wears only the camisa inside the house and around the yard.

## MEN'S DRESS

A man's clothing is much simpler than a woman's. He wears fewer and less complicated garments. Completely dressed, a man wears cotton pants, a cotton shirt, one or two ponchos, depending on the weather, and a hat. Optional items are a neck scarf, or bufanda, and shoes. Often a shepherd's stick the asial, is also worn slung over the shoulder.

The coarse cotton shirt (camisa) and pants (calzones) are bought ready-made at the fairs, as are the hat and shoes if worn. Shirts lack buttons and buttonholes when purchased, but do have a narrow band of colored cloth stitched just to the left of the front neck opening. They are of heavy handwoven or factory-made white or striped cloth and are machine sewn. The construction is quite simple. No fit or shaping is done except for the small gusset inserted under the arm and the sleeves gathered to the cuffs. The sewing is crude and hasty.

Calzones are also simply constructed with narrow seams and hems and little or no shaping. The pants legs widen at the crotch and the front and back seams from the crotch to the waistband are slightly curved. Individual fit at the waist is achieved by overlapping the open fly front as far as possible. Slight shaping in the seat is attempted by some "tailors" by a large double gusset on a diagonal from the sides of the waistband to one third of the way down the back seam. The pants legs are wide and short, extending only to mid-calf.

Often factory-sewn American-style cotton pants are worn by the younger men. The older ones retain a still different type of finer, whiter cotton shaped with double gussets from the center front and back to the crotch, and completely hand sewn. These calzones feature a waistband that does not need to be overlapped, but which is instead held closed in back with a colored wool cord and drawn closed in front with a length of cord that can be adjusted. There is no sewn fly opening. The edges of the front gussets serve as the fly sides.



Two kinds of wool ponchos are woven and worn in Colta: those made of cloth called gualuto, woven on the backstrap looms; and those of herqa, woven on the upright looms. Gualuto is recognized as being plain weave, or 1 / 1, while herqa is a right-handed twill weave, 2 / 2, with the diagonal rib extending upward to the right. Herqa is also usually woven with a narrow black stripe widely and evenly spaced throughout the warp. With either kind of cloth the poncho is made of two lengths of material hand sewn up the middle with an opening left for the head. They are between 1.1/2 to 2 varas in length and a little narrower than they are long. The selvages themselves serve as the finished edges and the ends are hand stitched with heavy cotton thread, usually twice across the bottom, about 1/2 inch up so that a very narrow and irregular fringe is created as the poncho is worn and washed.

The cloth, purchased from the market or the local weaver, is a natural, (excepting the black stripes) off-white color but may include up to 50% natural brown or "black" wool. If this is the case, it is generally the weft that is dark, and since more warp than weft yarns show, the color tends more toward light than dark. Such a poncho dyed a dark color will not differ greatly in appearance from those of dyed white ones, but is cheaper because of the lesser value of the dark wool. Usually the natural white cloth is dyed, but may be worn as purchased by those who cannot afford to send it out for dyeing. The most common colors for cloth ponchos are dark red. Also worn frequently are rose, purple and navy blue. When two ponchos are worn, the dark blue one is generally beneath one of a brighter color. Sometimes the heavier Otavaleño ponchos are also worn.

To help combat the bitter cold of the paramo, men place sheepskin "chaps", or zamarros over their calzones. These garments are made from two full skins, usually white but also dark brown to natural black. They are cut and simply shaped as large trousers without a waistband and with a front piece extending upwards for protection from saddle pommels. A cord from front and back serves to hold them up.

Western fedora-style felt hats with narrow brims are now replacing the traditional flat hard white hats described under women's clothing. The white hats worn by men are usually without ribbons and strings, and minus the binding around the edge, the rim more quickly becomes softer and more flexible. This gives the hat as worn by men quite a different appearance from the same hat as worn by women.

Other items of apparel not worn by all men are shoes, belts, and neck scarves. Rubber tire sandals or tire-soled cotton-topped sandals are worn at times. The all rubber ones are locally made and bought, while those with woven cotton tops and straps are from Quito. If belts are worn they are leather "western" types. Woolen neck scarves, bufandas, are worn out on the paramo as protection against the cold winds. Colta men wear their hair short.

Unlike the ordinary dress worn at Colta, the wedding garb of the men receives more attention than that of the women. A woman wears the usual clothing with as much of it new as her family can afford.<sup>1</sup> The man, on the other hand, must wear a special poncho over his ordinary one. This wedding poncho is of alegre (happy) colors of several bands of multicolored stripes alternating with bands of solid color, generally red. Wedding ponchos are much finer than the others and are further distinguished by a narrow colored fringe sewn to all four edges. The fringe usually includes a tiny woven band of different colors by which it is attached to the poncho.

For his wedding a man should also wear shoes (generally the alpargatas from Quito) and a fine straw hat. The hat is of toquilla, of "Panama" hat fame, and shaped like a fedora with a small brim. His shirt and pants are the usual style, but very new.

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1.- The wife does however, wear a special pleated black cape. For more information on the special wedding dress see, essay "Rites of Passage."

## WEAVING TECHNIQUES

The ball of wool yarn that the woman spins and winds is called the mishma. In Quichua olcana means winding the bobbin and pushcar refers to the same process. The stick that is used to wind the bobbin is called a sicsi, on which the little wheel or whorl of marble or bone, the perorito, is placed one third of the way up from the bottom. The staff to which the clean wool is bound before spinning is called the quango caspi.

To prepare the warp (urdimbre) of the backstrap loom, two-ply or single yarn is wound around two upright poles set at a distance fixed by the length of the particular article to be woven. These sticks are called tacti and the stick that measures the whole distance is known as the toba. Also, between the two upright sticks are placed two little sticks or small poles, each called a hobol. On this arrangement of sticks the warp is wound.

Beginning with a knot on the little pole to the left of the weaver the yarn is passed across the outside of the right little pole and around the right stick, across to and around the left stick, in and around the left little pole back to the left stick, on around the right stick past the right little pole, in and around the left little pole, in and behind the right little pole and out to the right stick. From here the process continues until the correct width (based on the number of warps) is reached and the sticks from the loom are inserted in place of the warping sticks. The left little pole is replaced by a cabuya cord that holds the overlapped loops together until the article is finished. At this point the cord is withdrawn and the tubular woven piece pulled apart into one long strip of cloth.

Two kinds of ponchos are woven in this region: qualoto on the "hand" looms (backstrap) and herga on the "foot" looms (upright). A large ball of yarn for a qualoto poncho is worth about forty sucres in the market and three are needed for each poncho. A poncho of herga brings one hundred sucres in the free market already dyed. It costs 80-90 or more sucres to make. The herga poncho as woven generally measures three and three quarters in length. It is cut in half and the two sides sewn.



*Traditional dress and hair of the Indian woman of the zone.*



*Fernando Guamán of León Pug demonstrates the use of a local spinning wheel.*

Ponchos of qualoto, woven by hand, cost one sucre per vara to weave and a medium size is three varas. On the other hand, ponchos of herga, woven on the upright loom and smaller size also cost one sucre a vara to weave. The handwoven (backstrap woven) poncho is called a maquiruana in this region.

To weave an anaco one ball of yarn is needed that weighs four pounds and is worth eighty sucres. For bayeta, three to five pounds are used, and for a qualoto poncho six pounds. Caupona is the name of the highly twisted yarn in Quichua. Single and two-ply yarns are both highly twisted.

The cost of dyeing wool, or rather, already woven goods are the following in Guano, a nearby town: poncho; dark pink- seven sucres, red- seven sucres, blue- twelve sucres; bayeta- two varas always 3.50-4.00, any color. Anaco- fourteen sucres for the long one and seven sucres for the short. The apron costs three sucres for any color.

According to a weaver from the area, each group of twenty pairs (parejas) of warp yarns forms a measurement of width known as a numbay. He had just woven a qualoto poncho five numbay and ten parejas wide. From one fleece one pound of washed wool is obtained, and it would have to be a large fleece, which would be worth 12-15 sucres in the market. Six fleeces go into a qualoto poncho, or up to ninety sucres worth of wool, so the finished article is priced accordingly.

The foot loom or Spanish loom consists of the following pieces: pulleys (poleas), batten or beater (batidora), batten (antepecho), seat (asiento), lamms (contrapedales), cloth beam (recogedor), roller beam (cargador), warping beam (enhuelo), shuttle (lanzadora), bobbin (bobina), harnesses (marcos), heddles (lisos), bobbin spool (carrete), reed (peine), temple (templador), pedals (pedales), and other parts of the frame itself. Reeds and string heddles are often purchased in Guano where they are made. About four varas a day can be woven easily on this loom. Generally four pedals and four harnesses are used. Twill weave is done on this loom, which means depressing two pedals at a time in a fixed order.

The hand loom is a series of sticks, all of which have particular names in Quichua. The pole to which the warp is lashed is called the ahuana. This is a horizontal stick that is tied to two vertical (posts in the floor of the house or the ground of the patio). These sticks are of very hard chonta wood. The cashua is a flat stick made by the carpentry shop in Cajabamba. It is the equivalent of the batten or beater of the upright loom; therefore, serves to pack in the weft after it is slid between the alternate warp yarns lifted for each row. The support for the tied warps is provided by a cross stick or illaua. The shuttle is called a fugador (Spanish). The templor, or templador (also Spanish), holds the already woven cloth to the proper width. The atamba is the belt or backstrap that passes around the weaver's back and the means by which tension is placed on the warps. The little pointed bone, shuyti, serves to separate the alternate warp yarns being brought up for each row. The stick closest to the weaver and outside the warp is the pichu caspi.

There are three varieties of cashuas- the large one is used for all the weaving until the last twenty centimeters. From there the medium cashua is used for ten more centimeters, and the small cashua for the last ten. In two days one anaco can be woven, or one half of a gualoto poncho. Half a day is needed for a mama chumbi, and one day for a bayeta.

# F O R M A L   E D U C A T I O N

Nestór Solís Y.<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Considering the fact that the majority of Ecuador's population is rural and that a large percentage<sup>2</sup> of the rural segment is composed of Indians, more emphasis ought to be given to the socio-economic problems confronting the peasant and especially the Indian population. The Ecuadorean government should be concerned not only with urban education, but also with the special educational needs of the Indian population in order to bring this important ethnic group into the mainstream of national life.

It is well known that the Colta Lake zone is predominately Indian. Less well known, however, are the details of the cultural milieu and the myriad problems facing the inhabitants of this zone. Colta is rich in human resources, but these resources have never been fully developed and in fact, are in danger of being lost unless measures are taken to promote the general welfare of the Indians of the area. Without doubt, the salvation of the inhabitants lies in education. Specifically, the future development of the zone depends at least partially on the continuance and growth of the Colta Cornell School, established primarily to meet the educational needs on the western side of Colta Lake.

## THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

### ORGANIZATION OF FORMAL EDUCATION

The public schools of Ecuador are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. In the capital of each province, the Ministry maintains an office whose personnel administers the educational system of the province. In Chimborazo, the provincial office is located in the city of Riobamba.

- 1.- Director of the Colta Cornell School, located on the Hacienda Colta Monjas.
- 2.- Although there are no precise figures, it is estimated that Indians comprise about 40% of the total population of Ecuador.



Nestor Solís, Director of the Colta Cornell School, teaching first graders to count.



Every county (cantón), or extensive geographical entity, has an inspector whose duty is to visit each school in his area at least three times a year. His objective is to carry out the goals of the Ministry through supervision of the teachers and by making suggestions for the betterment of the school.

There are also inspectors of physical education whose mission is to promote sports, gymnastics, etc. The province of Chimborazo has twelve school inspectors and six physical education inspectors. Cantón Colta has one of each type of inspector.

Unfortunately, the jurisdiction of an inspector is often too extensive, containing too many schools for one person to supervise. This makes it impossible for him to adequately direct the educational activities in all parts of a county. Also, schools located in isolated areas, away from the main highways, are visited only rarely. In some cases, the inspectors themselves are neglectful of their duties and not capable of stimulating or orienting the teachers under their supervision.

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The percentage of children of school age (6-14) who are attending the schools of the zone is extremely low, and in consequence, the rate of illiteracy (about 90.8%) will remain high.

TABLE I

#### ESTIMATED SCHOOL AGE POPULATION OF THE ZONE

<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>SCHOOL AGE POPULATION</u>
Ashcucanina	49
Balbanera	54
Cebollar	101
Colta Monjas	20
Guayllaló	71
León Pug	69
Lirio	51
Majipamba	177

COMMUNITYSCHOOL AGE POPULATION

Pardo	88
San Antonio	235
Santo Domingo	56
Yanacochoa	<u>129</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1,140</b>

TABLE II

NUMBER OF CHILDREN REGISTERED IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE ZONE, 1964-1965

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>R E G I S T E R E D</u>												
	<u>1st grade</u>		<u>2nd grade</u>		<u>3rd grade</u>		<u>4th grade</u>		<u>5th grade</u>		<u>total</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>F</u>		
Majipamba	30		15		2		2				49	49	
Pardo	27	10	15	6	10	4	6		6		54	21	75
San Antonio	15	4	11	1	7	1	2				35	6	41
Evangelical School (pupils from zone)											20		20
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>158</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>185</b>

16.2% of the school-age population was registered in the schools of the zone.

TABLE III

NUMBER OF CHILDREN REGISTERED IN THE SCHOOL OF THE ZONE, 1965-1966

	<u>R E G I S T E R E D</u>												
	<u>1st grade</u>		<u>2nd grade</u>		<u>3rd grade</u>		<u>4th grade</u>		<u>5th grade</u>		<u>total</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>F</u>		
Colta													
Cornell	35	3	16	2	6						57	5	62
Pardo	27	10	15	6	10	4	6		6		54	21	75
San Antonio	12	3	10	1	7	1	2				31	5	36
Evangelical											24		24
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>6</b>		<b>166</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>197</b>

17.3% of the school-age population is now registered in the schools of the zone.

The reasons for the low rate of school attendance are rooted in the ignorance and economic misery of the zone. The people do not as yet comprehend the value of education and very little pressure is brought to bear on the parents to send their children to school. The poverty of the Indians is directly related to low attendance. Children are considered economic assets in the roles of shepherds and even day laborers, and are needed to carry out household tasks. Also, many of the parents cannot afford to buy educational materials, such as texts, notebooks, etc, or the clothes they feel the children should have to attend school. In some schools the teachers require that each pupil have a special uniform for the celebration of Independence Day (May 24th). This custom does have the advantage of obliging the parents to provide a new outfit for their children at least once a year.

Because of the poverty of the zone, teachers very rarely ask for contributions to carry out special projects or demand that their pupils be well-dressed or wear shoes. They do, however, require a minimum standard of cleanliness.

As there are no complete public grammar schools in the zone, few Indians graduate from 6th grade. Most of the children who complete grammar school are Mestizos whose parents send them to school in Cajabamba, the capital of the cantón. The Mestizos will make any sacrifice to secure an education for their children. The Indian parents, on the other hand, lack motivation or are too poor to send their children to school in Cajabamba.

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF STUDENTS OF THE COLTA LAKE ZONE ATTENDING SCHOOLS

IN CAJABAMBA

<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>NUMBER OF STUDENTS</u>
San Antonio	10
Balbanera	7
Pardo	2
Majipamba	2
Yanacocha	2
León Pug	<u>2</u>
TOTAL:	25

Besides the 25 children of the zone attending grammar schools in Cajabamba, there are 13 girls who have completed 6th grade in the Sewing School.

One of the excuses often given for not attending the school in Cajabamba is the distance. Actually, children in many other parts of Ecuador walk greater distances to receive an education.

TABLE V

APPROXIMATE DISTANCES OF COLTA LAKE COMMUNITIES FROM  
CAJABAMBA

<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>DISTANCE FROM CAJABAMBA (IN KILOMETERS)</u>
Balbanera	3
León Pug	3
Majipamba	4
Colta Monjas	5
Yanacocha	6
Pardo	4 1/2
San Antonio	6
Lirio	6
Guayllaló	9
Cebollar	10

Children begin attending the schools of the zone when they are seven years of age or older, it not being unusual to find fourteen-year olds entering school for the first time. The age of initiating studies depends on the economic and domestic roles of the children in the family. Very few Indian girls attend school, because they are considered inferior to the boys and it is felt that the future role of the girl as homemaker does not require formal education. Besides this, the girls are needed in the home to care for animals, take care of younger children, spin, wash clothes, cook, etc.

Many parents hesitate to send their children to school because they lack confidence in the ability of the teachers. Apparently some of the former teachers in the zone were careless in the execution of their duties and set a bad example for the children.

#### SCHOOLS OF THE ZONE

The only communities of the Colta Lake zone having schools are the Hacienda Colta Monjas, Majipamba (Evangelical School), Pardo and San Antonio. Using the size of the community as the criterion, every one except Colta Monjas meets the prerequisite for the establishment of a school, each having at least thirty children of school age. The fact remains, however, that the parents on the whole do not yet consider education a necessity, and so have not petitioned for the establishment of schools in the communities lacking this service. It is only natural that the authorities of the Ministry of Education give preference to those communities which solicit schools and cooperate in providing accommodations such as classrooms and living quarters for the teacher. It would be highly unwise, not to say dangerous, for the Ministry to send a teacher to found a school in a community which has not requested one. In such a situation, the teacher would have to contend with the indifference or even antagonism of the people, and might be forced to use police intervention to obtain pupils.

#### DROPOUTS

One of the main problems facing the teachers of the zone is the high rate of dropouts during the school year. According to the teachers, the reasons for abandoning school are:

- 1) Lack of economic resources.
- 2) Lack of motivation.
- 3) Change of residence.
- 4) Mental incapacity.
- 5) Physical incapacity.

6) Illness.

7) Death.

In Colta Cornell School, located on the Hacienda Colta Monjas and serving the Hacienda Colta Monjas and the communities of Majipamba, León Pug and Yanacocha, the statistics of school abandonment are as follows:

TABLE VI

DROPOUTS IN THE COLTA CORNELL SCHOOL

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>NUMBER OF STUDENTS REGISTERED</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>NUMBER OF DROPOUTS</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>% OF DROPOUTS</u>
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>		<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>		
1st	35	3	38	8		8	20%
2nd	16	2	18	1	1	2	11%
3rd	6		6	2			33.3%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19.3%</b>

The reasons for the twelve dropouts were:

- 1) Left school to look for work (3 cases).
- 2) Illness (3 cases).
- 3) Did not like school (1 case).
- 4) Transferred to the afternoon literacy class (1 case).
- 5) One due to fear of meeting his father on the way to and from the school. This child was living with the older brother because of family problems.
- 6) Registered but never attended class (2 cases).
- 7) Cause unknown (1 case).

In the other schools of the zone the rate of dropouts was as follows for 1964 and 1965:

TABLE VII

## DROPOUTS IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE ZONE

SCHOOL	YEAR	REGISTERED			ATTENDANCE			DROPOUTS			% OF DROPOUTS
		M	F	total	M	F	total	M	F	total	
Pardo	1964-65	54	21	75	48	17	65	6	4	10	13.3%
	1965-66	56	19	75	50	19	63	6	6	12	16.0%
Majipamba	1964-65	49		49	38		38	11		11	22.4%
San Antonio	1964-65	35	6	41	31	5	36	4	1	5	12.2%
	1965-66	42	12	54	34	8	42	8	4	12	22.2%

Sometimes the teachers themselves are responsible for pupils' abandoning their studies. One of the main objectives of a teacher in a zone such as Colta should be to try to relieve their Indian students of inferiority feelings which are a result of the subordinate position of the Indian group. Some teachers forget this vital goal, and instead of trying to help the Indian children, attempt to further degrade them with reminders of their inferiority.

The adaptation of children to the educational milieu depends greatly on the maintenance of good relations between the teacher and students. There are still teachers who consider the Indians an inferior race, if not subhuman. This attitude does not instill security and confidence in the students. Often they wound the children's feelings by using an offensive vocabulary to maintain discipline and to secure greater attention, under the pretext that this is necessary because of the lack of preoccupation of children and parents in the educational process.

Perhaps what is needed are teachers who come from the zone, and in consequence, would have a better comprehension of their mission through and an acquaintance with the customs of their own people. They would, therefore, supposedly treat the Indian students better and so obtain greater progress. Sometimes, however, when this has been tried, the results have been the opposite: that is, the Indian who returns to his community in the capacity of a teacher, feels alienated and superior, and thus reacts very much as do many of the Mestizo teachers. Probably

more effective would be the creation of a special normal school for teachers who are to work in Indian zones, with a curriculum which would include sensitizing the future teacher to Indian needs, the teaching of Quichua, etc.

The Colta Cornell school has, besides two regular teachers hired by the Ministry, an Indian from Majipamba who assists the first grade teacher. This has the advantage of facilitating the transition from Quichua to Spanish. When an Indian child is confused, the Indian teacher can explain in Quichua, lessening the child's embarrassment. Also, the presence of the Indian teacher lessens the child's feeling of being in a strange environment where he is not understood.

In the Pardo and San Antonio schools, the children are forbidden to speak Quichua in the school in order to force them to learn Spanish more rapidly. This is not true of the Atahualpa and Colta Cornell schools, where the children are not reprimanded for speaking Quichua. In fact, the educational methods include some bilingual teaching. To facilitate reading skills, a Peace Corps Volunteer with training in linguistics, the Director of the Colta Cornell school, and an Indian teacher are preparing a reader in Quichua for use in the first grade.

#### ABSENTEEISM

The rate of absenteeism is another of the problems of education in the zone. The following statistics indicate that the rate of attendance in the Colta Cornell school ranged from 61.9% to 69.4% during the first five months of the school term.



TABLE VIII

RATE OF ATTENDANCE IN THE COLTA CORNELL SCHOOL (1965-66)

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>REGISTERED</u>	<u>AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING</u>				
		<u>THE SCHOOL</u>				
		<u>NOV.</u>	<u>DEC.</u>	<u>JAN.</u>	<u>FEB.</u>	<u>MARCH</u>
1st	38	20.52	26.52	26.73	26.73	25.65
2nd	18	13.00	12.10	9.20	9.3	13.00
3rd	6	5.2	4.4	6	2.4	2.3
TOTAL:	62	38.72	43.02	41.93	38.43	40.95

The major cause of absenteeism in the Colta Cornell school was illness in the family or illness of the children themselves. Illnesses are frequent in the zone due to the climate, lack of hygiene, malnutrition and the adding of toxic ingredients to the alcoholic beverages. The greater part of the time, the fathers work outside of the zone, leaving the mothers to attend to all of the family obligations. If the mother falls ill, the children must perform the family tasks, such as pasturing the animals, taking care of the younger children, etc.

Prolonged illness among the children themselves is frequent, because of their lowered resistance. During a measles epidemic, twelve were absent from school a month. Five were out of school from two to four weeks because of eye infections.

Another major cause of absenteeism is the need to use the children to pasture the animals. When the parents are engaged in agricultural tasks, the children must care for the family animals. Attendance in school is dependent on the agricultural calendar. November and December are the planting months, February and March the time for hilling and weeding; in May, the grains begin to sprout and must be cared for. The months of vacation (August and September) coincide with the harvest. In conclusion, there are many

days throughout the year when agricultural tasks take precedence over school attendance. During these times, the children must pasture the animals to free their parents to work in the chacras, or else the children themselves must aid directly in the agricultural activities.

Another obstacle to regular attendance is the custom of the boy's accompanying his father on journeys outside of the zone. When the father leaves temporarily to work, he sometimes takes along one of his sons to help him and to learn to adapt to living and working in the cities. If the father works in Chimborazo or in a nearby province, the boy may be absent from one to three weeks at a time. When the father works on the coast, the child will be out of school from one or two months. All of the schools of the zone with one exception, must contend with this problem which interferes with the advance of education.

The one exception is the Evangelical school "Atahualpa", where children from outside the zone are boarded throughout the week. The students are under the constant supervision of the teacher and the missionaries. The 24 children from Majipamba who are day students attend regularly because the parents are more highly motivated in regard to educating their children and want them to receive the religious instruction which is the main objective of the school. Also, the students who attend the school are in general older and thus more responsible.

The public schools do not have the advantage of constant supervision that the Evangelical school enjoys. The public school hours are from eight to twelve in the morning and from two to four in the afternoon. The children often arrive late because the mother has not fixed breakfast on time or because the children have to perform household tasks before leaving. Also, the parents as a rule are not particularly concerned about promptness. Out of fear that the children will leave school if forced to keep a strict schedule, the teachers accept these irregularities.

## SCHOOLS OF THE ZONE

### SEBASTIAN DE BENALCAZAR

The school known as "Sebastián de Benalcázar", which functioned up to this year, was probably the oldest school in the zone. It was founded about fifty years ago by the Catholic Church with the objective of counteracting the Adventists who were beginning to infiltrate the Colta Lake area. It was located in Balbanera and classes were held in private houses or in the chapel. Later the school was sponsored by the Municipality of Colta and finally by the Ministry of Education.

In 1960, the Ministry of Education moved the school to Majipamba, where the locale consisted in a rented room in a Mestizo house. The classroom was small and inadequate and located next to a store that dispensed chicha and other alcoholic beverages. There was only a tiny patio for recreational activities and the classes were constantly being interrupted by the drunks from the chichería. Some of the parents were concerned over the bad example being set their children, and in 1965, the school was moved first to a house in León Pug, and then to a larger house in Balbanera.

The Ministry of Education paid forty sucres (\$2.08) a month rent for the use of the house in Balbanera and provided desks and other equipment. At the beginning of this school year, there were only about eight children from León Pug regularly attending classes. In October 1965, the school was incorporated into the newly established Colta Cornell school, located on the Hacienda Colta Monjas. The teacher and his students were transferred to Colta Monjas.

### ATAHUALPA (MAJIPAMBA)

Although the exact date of the establishment of the Atahualpa school is not known, it is also quite old having been founded in Majipamba by the Adventists. Between 1948 and 1953, the school was closed, but was reopened in 1961 by the Gospel Missionary Union.



*The new school in San Antonio on the eastern side of the lake.*



*A former storeroom serves as the first grade classroom of the Colta Cornell School on the Hacienda Colta Monjas.*

The school has its own building which meets the requirements of adequate space and hygiene. The locale has three large and comfortable classrooms, living quarters for the teacher, latrines and running water. Atahualpa is essentially a boarding school, having students from Pulocate, San Antonio, Caliata, Troje, Huacona, Panza, etc. There are also day students from the community of Majipamba. Those pupils who live all week in the school pay a small monthly fee: twenty sucres (\$1.04) in the lower grades and sixty sucres (\$3.12) in the upper. Most of the older students work to pay their board and room by embroidering cloth, making peanut butter, shredding coconut, etc.

The teacher is a graduate of Modern Humanities and a Sewing School. She is in charge of all six grades, but is aided by one of the missionaries, and in the upper grades by an Indian student. Besides the regular curriculum, which includes religious instruction, the students have various projects, such as the raising of chickens and rabbits, and the school is planning to install manual arts equipment.

#### SANTIAGO DE QUITO (PARDO)

This school, located in the community of Pardo on the northern shore of Colta Lake, is six years old. It has its own locale which consists of one large classroom measuring 15 meters by 6 meters, living quarters for the teacher, and a kitchen for the preparation of breakfast and lunch for the students. The school also has latrines, a well with a pump, and a school garden.

The Pardo school was constructed by the government with the aid of community labor and the technical assistance of the Andean Mission. The room constructed for the use of the teacher is at the present time serving as a clinic. A physician from the Andean Mission visits the school once every two weeks.

A teacher who is not a normal school graduate, with the help of a young girl, teaches all five grades. At the present time, the regular teacher is attending a course to raise her professional qualifications, and has left a girl trained in sewing to replace her.



*The school of the Protestant missionaries in Majipamba.*



*The school in Pardo on the Northern end of Colta Lake.*

### SAN ANTONIO DE LAGO (SAN ANTONIO)

This school, located in the community of San Antonio on the eastern side of Colta Lake, was founded about thirty or forty years ago by the Municipality. Approximately seventeen years ago, it became a government school and functioned in the chapel or in private houses. The school now has its own locale constructed last year by the Provincial Council of Chimborazo with labor provided by the comuneros, and is located on communal land. Besides a classroom, 15 by 5 meters, San Antonio de Lago has a kitchen for the teacher and a sports field.

As yet, the San Antonio school lacks water, latrines, adequate equipment, and a kitchen and dining room for a school lunch program.

### COLTA CORNELL (HACIENDA COLTA MONJAS)

This school was founded in October 1965 by the Ministry of Education at the request of the personnel of Cornell University who are conducting a program of applied anthropology in the zone, with headquarters on the Hacienda Colta Monjas.

At the present time, two rooms of the hacienda quarters serve as classrooms. These rooms were made available by the ex-renter and later by IERAC when this institution took over Colta Monjas. The first grade functions in a former storeroom which has a dirt floor, one window and a thatched roof. Although the classroom is large, it is cold and damp and so is not a healthy atmosphere for children or teacher. The second and third grades are taught in one of the rooms of the main house of the hacienda. This room is small, but has more adequate lighting and is relatively warm and dry.

It is hoped that by the beginning of the next school year, the school will have its own locale, built with \$3,000 from the funds of the Cornell contract with AID-Washington, \$500 from IERAC, and technical and material aid of the Municipality of Colta. The land for the school is to be donated by IERAC. To insure future maintenance of the school, IERAC has promised to give an extra three hectares of cultivatable land and an eucalyptus forest.

This will provide permanent income for the school and produce for the school lunch program.

Due to the poverty of the students, Cornell and CARE have provided necessary educational materials such as texts, notebooks, pencils, etc., and a cook, food, and utensils for the school lunch program. Colta Cornell has a school garden on land belonging to IERAC and cultivated by tools given by CARE. CARE has also donated a Cinva-Ram machine for making blocks, and a masonry and carpentry kit. Still lacking is a water system for the improvement of hygienic conditions among the school children and the staff.

The school staff consists of a director with a normal school degree, a second teacher of many years of experience in the zone, and an Indian from Majipamba who assists the first grade teacher and teaches the literacy class. Also part of the personnel is a Peace Corps volunteer who is in charge of extra-curricular activities.

The Peace Corps member has initiated carpentry classes, with Cornell paying a master carpenter from Riobamba to teach the class; and a rabbit raising experiment. With a donation of 75 story and educational books, the social worker of the Cornell project has started story hours for the school children. The patio of the hacienda has become a recreational center for the school children and the young men of the nearby Indian communities, who play volleyball and soccer.

## ILLITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION

### INTRODUCTION

The rate of illiteracy in the Colta Lake zone is one of the highest in Ecuador. According to the 1962 Census, the literacy rate for the rural area around Cajabamba, the capital of the cantón, was 9.2%. The approximate rate of literacy for various communities of the zone is as follows:



TABLE IX

ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF LITERATES IN THE COMMUNITIES OF THE  
COLTA LAKE ZONE

<u>COMMUNITY</u>	<u>PERCENTAGES OF LITERATES</u>
Balbanera (Mestizo community)	50%
San Antonio	25%
Yanacocha	15%
Pardo	15%
Majipamba	10%
León Pug	5%
Colta Monjas	0%
Lirio	0%
Cebollar	0%
Guayllaló	0%

The consequences of illiteracy among the Indians are:

- 1) The Mestizos take advantage of the Indians' ignorance to exploit them in the stores and bars, in moneylending practices, etc.
- 2) The Indians live in ignorance of new developments and news of the outside world and so depend on the Mestizos for an interpretation of events.
- 3) The illiterate is penalized for his illiteracy by having to pay five sucres to the authorities every time he signs a document with his thumbprint.
- 4) The illiterate person is barred from participation in the political life of the nation. The illiterate, is in fact, not considered a citizen and so cannot vote.
- 5) The illiterate is unaware of his rights and duties.
- 6) The illiterate is considered socially inferior.

## LITERACY PROGRAMS IN ECUADOR

Due to the fact that about 43% of the population of Ecuador is illiterate, UNESCO selected this country for the initiation of a pilot project in adult education. The government of the Military Junta presented the problem of illiteracy to UNESCO and this organization provided a special fund for a literacy campaign which will begin in June, 1966.

Prior to this, the government of Carlos Julio Arosemena passed a decree (No. 07, Feb. 6, 1963) declaring the education of adults to be obligatory. The organization charged with carrying out the decree was the Ministry of Education through its Department of Education of Adults and Literacy.

The personnel of the Department of Adult Education consists of a director and a technical assessor. Under their jurisdiction are four regional supervisors and twenty provincial supervisors.

Ecuador also has a National Center of Literacy and Education of Adults whose duties are to produce suitable materials for distribution to literacy classes, provide orientation to literacy teachers, make evaluations and gather statistics.

Part of the national program consists in the formation of literacy boards at the national, provincial, cantonal and parish levels. Each board has a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and vocales. The duties of the boards are to collaborate with the Ministry of Education and the teachers in charge of each literacy center within their jurisdiction. This network replaces the UNP and LAE, the organizations formerly responsible for the literacy campaign in Ecuador.

In the 1965-66 school year, there were 150 literacy centers in Chimborazo, of which 12 were located in Canton Colta. In the Colta Lake zone, there is only one official center, the one established in the Colta Cornell School. This center has about thirty students, mostly from Majipamba and Colta Monjas.

LITERACY CLASSES IN THE ZONE

TABLE X

REGISTRATION, ATTENDANCE AND DROPOUTS IN THE LITERACY

CENTER OF GOLTA CORNELL, 1965-66

<u>REGISTERED</u>			<u>ATTENDING</u>			<u>DROPOUTS</u>			<u>% OF DROPOUTS</u>
<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	
31	10	41	20	10	30	11		11	25.4%

The reasons for the eleven dropouts were as follows:

- 1) Having to look for work outside of the zone (8 cases).
- 2) Contracting marriage (1 case).
- 3) Acceding to the demands of parents who objected to attendance (1 case).
- 4) Not liking the class (1 case).

The sporadic attendance in the class is the greatest problem confronting the teacher. It is extremely difficult to teach literacy to students who appear only occasionally. Because of the irregularity of attendance, there are great differences in the stages of development of the students. A few have learned to read simple texts while others are still learning the basic sounds.



*Literacy class at the Colta Cornell School.*



*School lunch program at the Colta Cornell School.*

TABLE XI

AVERAGE MONTHLY ATTENDANCE IN LITERACY CLASS AT COLTACORNELL, 1965-66

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>AVERAGE NUMBER ATTENDING</u>
November	10.09
December	17.93
January	14.87
February	24.99
March	23.73

The reasons given for irregularity of attendance are:

- 1) Some of the students work in Cajabamba during the day and arrive home too late to attend the class.
- 2) After working in the fields all day, they are too tired to attend class.
- 3) Some of the students work for temporary periods outside of the zone.
- 4) When the parents are celebrating fiestas or are on drunken sprees, the children have to remain home to perform the family tasks.
- 5) The parents object to their sons and daughters attending the class.
- 6) Those who are sharecroppers sometimes have to serve as huasicamas in the houses of the landlords in Cajabamba or Riobamba.

Because of the obstacles to attendance, the teachers of the zone have refused to establish literacy centers in their respective schools. Another factor impeding the initiation of these classes is that most of the teachers are not residents of the communities in which they teach and, in consequence, do not want to remain after school hours to teach adults. The only incentive for a teacher to initiate literacy classes is the 200 sucres (\$10.40) bonus given monthly for teaching these extra classes.

In spite of the difficulties, it would be of great value for each school to establish a literacy center. Not only would this decrease illiteracy in the zone, but would provide those who have attended school with the opportunity to practice and improve their reading skills. Very often, the Indians who have had one or two years of schooling regress to a state of illiteracy because of not having reading materials readily available.

#### METHODS AND PROGRESS

The eclectic method, adopted officially by the Ministry of Education after much study and experiment, is used in the teaching of literacy. For students who speak Spanish, the primer "Ecuador" used in the course is excellent, but it is less useful for Quichua speakers. The Indian women in the classes know very little Spanish and so do not comprehend the chapters on civics, hygiene, etc. which are included in the text.

The first stage in the official method consists in teaching fundamental knowledge which is ordinarily learned in the first and second grades. This includes reading and writing, arithmetic, geometric figures, civics, geography, history of Ecuador and some lessons on health and hygiene.

In the second, or post-literacy stage, the students are on the level of third and fourth graders. They review the knowledge learned previously and proceed to advanced lessons on the same subjects taught in the first stage.

The third stage consists in a more accelerated program with more difficult lessons. Each stage should be completed in a year so that after three years of study, the student has acquired the equivalent of a grammar school education and receives the corresponding certificate.

#### LITERACY CENTER AT COLTA MONJAS

The literacy center at the Colta Cornell school was inaugurated in November 1965 and is thus in the first stage of the program. The teacher is Manuel Bagua, an Indian from the community of Majipamba. Besides completing third grade, he attended a three months course in Limoncocha

sponsored by IERAC and under the supervision of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. The course consisted in acquainting literate Indians with methods of bilingual teaching. Manuel Bagua was the only highland Indian who completed the course. After this he attended two other week-long courses to learn more about the fundamentals of teaching literacy. He is paid 500 sucres (\$26) a month by the Ministry of Education and receives a small bonus from Cornell. Manuel Bagua's other duties include helping in the first grade with the children who speak little Spanish.

Because of Manuel Bagua's status as a more acculturated Indian of the zone and his zeal for teaching, he has captured the confidence of his students and there is no doubt that because of him, this is probably the most successful literacy class in the canton.

Most students are teenagers and children who are not able to attend the regular classes. The older adults do not like to compete with young people and so have refused to come. The only solution to this problem is to initiate a second class for adults only.

The Ministry of Education contributes all the materials needed in the class, including notebooks, primers, etc. CARE has donated powdered milk, which is distributed weekly to the students, and ballpoint pens.

Besides the regular classes, the boys in the class play volleyball in the patio of the hacienda. Some of them arrive early and stay late in order to participate in sports programs.

#### THE RADIO SCHOOL IN YANACocha

The only other literacy class in the zone is that of the radio class in Yanacocha. This is sponsored by the Catholic Church in Chimborazo which has set up a network of radio schools throughout the province. Formally there was great enthusiasm and a fairly large attendance in the school, but at the present time, only five women are regularly attending.

The school is located in an Indian hut and has no desks or other furniture. The radio school does have an abundance of teaching materials distributed by the Church. Besides learning to read and write, the students are taught Catholic doctrine and how to pray.

#### PLANS FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION IN THE ZONE

One can only conclude that the influence of education is still extremely limited in the Colta Lake zone and that this is the major reason for the high rate of underdevelopment and ignorance which inflicts the area. The people themselves are not convinced of the value of education and place household and agricultural tasks above education. Those who have attended school have completed only the first, second and third grades. The public schools in San Antonio and Pardo have had to seek the intervention of authorities to force the children into the schools. All of these facts have proved tremendous obstacles to the development of education in the zone.

To improve the educational system of the zone, it is suggested that a major plan be put into execution which would include the establishment of three grade schools in all of the communities. The presence of school with the right kind of teacher is a tremendous force for community development. The Colta Cornell School could serve as a central school for the upper grades. This would necessitate a teacher in each of the communities and three teachers in Colta Cornell, or a total of fifteen teachers. Also, a school bus would be needed to transport the children from around the lake to the Colta Cornell School. Colta Cornell would become the educational center of the zone with demonstration plots to improve agricultural methods and a workshop for teaching manual arts.

Other recommendations for the betterment of education in the zone are:

- 1) Teachers should be preferably natives of the zone.
- 2) The normal schools should include in their curriculums courses in rural sociology and the psychology of the Indian child.



- 3) The local authorities of the canton and parish should give more attention to education in the zone by providing the schools with needed materials, etc.
- 4) Textbooks and other teaching materials in Quichua should be formulated and distributed to the Indian schools.
- 5) The teachers should respect their Indian students and be more motivated to instill confidence in them.
- 6) The parents should be motivated to take a greater interest in the school and form Parent-Teachers Associations.

## G L O S S A R Y

AMO or AMU - A term of respect used by the Indians in addressing Mestizos or Whites, meaning "master."

AGUARDIENTE - A cheap liquor made from sugar cane.

ARRIMADO - Resident Indian of an hacienda who is technically not a huasipunquero. He lives with or near a huasipunquero relative and helps with the tasks on the hacienda, in exchange for food and shelter.

CABECILLA - An Indian leader.

CABILDO - The Town Council of a comuna.

CABUYA - The century plant, used in making rope, etc.

CANCAGUA or CANGAHUA - A volcanic earth made into blocks and used in house and fence construction.

CANTON - Somewhat analogous to a county in the United States.

CHACRA - A small cultivated field.

CHALINA - A woolen stole worn by Cholo or Mestizo women.

CHICHA - A beverage, most frequently made from fermented corn.

CHICHERIA - A place where chicha is sold.

CHOZA - An Indian hut, generally with a thatched roof.

COMPADRES - The godparents of your children. As the relationship is reciprocal, the godparents also call the parents of their godchildren compadres.

COMUNA - A community, below the level of a parish capital, which has been officially recognized by the Ministry of Social Welfare. A comuna is governed by an elected Town Council and generally possesses communal property which is protected under the law.

- COMUNERO - Officially inscribed member of a comuna.
- CUADRA - A land measurement, equal to 2.1 acres.
- ESTERA - A mat woven from the tatora reed.
- HACENDADO - The owner of an hacienda.
- HACIENDA - A large rural landholding; manor or estate.
- HUANTU or HUANTO - Datura sanguinea. A small tree whose flowers are toxic, used in curing and is occasionally added to chicha to make it stronger.
- HUASIPUNGO - A parcel of land held in usufruct by a huasipunquero. From the Quichua, huasi meaning "house" and pungo "door."
- HUASIPUNGUERO - An individual, usually an Indian, who in exchange for the use in usufruct of a parcel or parcels of land on an hacienda, works a certain number of days a week for the hacienda, receiving a minimal wage.
- LATIFUNDIO - Large landholdings.
- MACHICA - Toasted barley flour.
- MAYORDOMO - Overseer on an hacienda, usually a Mestizo or White.
- MINGA - A collective action project.
- MINIFUNDIO - Small landholdings.
- MITAYO - A deprecatory term for Indian, from the Spanish Colonial Period when some of the Indians were forced to work in the mines. These slave laborers were called mitayos.
- PARAMO - A high altitude plateau.

PARISH (parroquia) - The smallest political unit, somewhat equivalent to a township in the U.S.

PATRON - The owner of an hacienda, but used by the Indians as a term of respect for addressing "important" Mestizos or Whites.

PROVINCE (provincia) - Similar to a state in the U.S.

RANDINRANDIMPA - From the Quichua the system of mutual aid among Indian relatives and friends.

RUNA - "Man" in Quichua. When used by the Mestizos, it means an Indian man.

SUCRE - The official monetary unit of Ecuador, now worth about five cents, but its value fluctuates.

TOTORA - (*Scirpus lacustris*) The tules or reeds growing in Colta Lake, near the lakeshore and in swampy areas adjacent to the lake.

VARA - A measurement, equal to 2.76 ft.



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## **Historia y memorias sociales: Un coleccionista de presencias y evocaciones populares**

**Texto:** Blanca Muratorio

**Coleccionista entrevistado:** Iván Cruz Cevallos

**Cuadros:** Autores Anónimos

**Fotografías:** Soledad Cruz

**Bajo la historia, memoria y olvido.  
Bajo la memoria y el olvido, vida.  
Pero escribir una vida es otra historia.  
Incompleta.  
(Paul Ricoeur, 2004)**

### **Introducción**

Este es en realidad un trabajo de colaboración entre una antropóloga, un coleccionista apasionado llamado Iván Cruz y sus intrigantes cuadros de niños y niñas, cuya presencia podemos evocar aquí gracias a la sensibilidad de la fotógrafa Soledad Cruz.

✓ No puedo alegar que mi mirada es desapasionada y totalmente objetiva (nadie puede): soy también un <sup>a</sup> amante del arte popular y, como antropóloga, una coleccionista empecinada de memorias de vida y de los objetos que las evocan. Mi memoria también es selectiva y narra desde un presente, sólo puede ofrecer un residuo de lo que posiblemente fueron experiencias intensas. Pero como señala Lowenthal (1985:192-93), la historia es tan residual como la memoria.

Lo que me propongo es explorar algunos aspectos de las relación entre memorias – individuales y sociales a través de estos objetos de arte popular y vida cotidiana que nos ofrecen un rastro de la historia del Ecuador de finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX, principalmente los sentimientos y actitudes culturales hacia la vida y muerte de los niños prevalecientes en esa época en una determinada clase social. Las imágenes de los cuadros son de tres tipos: primero retratos conmemorativos póstumos de duelo de niños muertos que aparecen como vivos. Segundo, milagros o ex-votos, cuadros de acción de gracia por la vida de niños rescatados de una enfermedad considerada mortal en esa

época. Y, por último, retratos de niñas poco antes de entrar a un convento, es decir de niñas que morían a la vida civil para revivir en la vida religiosa.



Estos cuadros constituyen un conjunto muy pequeño de la inmensa y variada colección de Iván pero, según sus propias palabras, vienen con el tiempo a formar parte de su identidad como cronista de su ciudad, Quito. Los cuadros están desplegados en habitaciones importantes de la casa, donde podemos visitarlos todos juntos, algunos más íntimamente como si fueran de nuevo altares familiares. En esta colección, los cuadros vuelven así a ser espacios de memoria sociales, memorias de alegría por el rescate del niño de la muerte, nostalgias por la ausencia familiar y social de las niñas y congoja y duelo por las muertes infantiles siempre inesperadas.

La memoria y la historia se nutren de los objetos como rastros o vestigios tangibles de un pasado que fue vivido por otros pero que de distintas formas tratamos de recuperar o revivir. El mundo material constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Si embargo, los objetos no son inmediatamente transparentes, necesitan de análisis e interpretación desde un presente para revelar sus distintos y cambiantes significados. Como otras expresiones artísticas, los cuadros nos proveen de un escenario donde se producen y se disputan diferentes identidades sociales, sentimientos y valores. Queremos explorar cómo estas representaciones materiales dan forma y están conformadas por la memoria. Pero este acceso a los objetos es posible porque el coleccionista los ha rescatado del olvido de la trastienda para enriquecerlos de significados con sus propias experiencias personales y memorias. Por eso, como señala Portelli (1997:65), en la historia oral las interpretaciones y explicaciones del que escribe coexisten con las interpretaciones implícitas en las palabras citadas por nuestras fuentes, así como con las interpretaciones de nuestros oyentes o lectores.

En resumen, los objetos que aquí queremos considerar constituyen entradas a la investigación y son motivo de análisis porque siempre están provistos de “guiones” culturales y sociales que cambian con el tiempo como resultado de ciertas relaciones sociales

### **El coleccionista y sus cuadros**

“El gusto por coleccionar, sugiere Maurice Rheims, es como un juego jugado con absoluta pasión.” (Elsner y Cardinal 1994)

Entonces el trabajo es esta obsesión que digo casi “perversa” de ir coleccionando más y más retratos de niños. Que este es el juego del coleccionista. No? (Iván Cruz 2008)

Como ha señalado Appadurai (1996: 76), los objetos deben ser mantenidos y manejados semióticamente, deben ser guardados, restaurados y desplegados en contextos “apropiados”. Los espacios pueden ser privados como distintas habitaciones dentro de una casa o públicos como exhibiciones y museos. Pero siempre esta categoría de “lugares, espacios y formas apropiadas” es social e históricamente construida. En este caso, entramos a la casa antigua del coleccionista en el Centro Histórico, casa que ya viene cargada de sentido histórico, como veremos más adelante. Al prestarle “atención” y “manipular” ciertos objetos y “olvidar” a otros, el coleccionista ayuda a cambiar sus significados. El coleccionar tiene, a veces, cualidades redentoras de los rastros del pasado inmersos en los objetos.

Nos dice Iván:

Mi ex-mujer decía que había que comprar la pieza porque era única, pero luego aparecía la segunda y había que comprar el par y luego venía la tercera y se iniciaba la colección. Y así un niño me impresiona y empiezan a juntarse niños y luego comienzo a indagar: Y porqué los niños y Quienes son esos niños, quienes los pintaron, cómo y porqué los niños. Y van juntándose más niños, y ellos van a adquirir una función en mi vida y en la vida de mi entorno. Yo empiezo a coleccionar estos retratos y me vienen a contactar los



vendedores de cosas viejas que me empiezan a traer niños para vender. Primero porque son vendedores, pero después porque se encariñan con los niños y los traen para cuidarlos y hablan de los niños y de sus flores y de sus caritas de desolación. Como Cevallos que me dice: “le conseguí una niña preciosa para su colección y es la niña vestida de azul”

De esta forma, las relaciones de mercado se transforman en sentimientos y memorias compartidas por la muerte de los niños desconocidos. Y son en realidad los vendedores, los miembros de las clases populares, los primeros que contribuyen a rescatar los trazos de memorias sociales.

En las nostálgicas palabras del coleccionista:

“Lamentablemente estos cuadros son objetos que ya se van perdiendo. Si los dueños no tuvieron hijos, ni sobrinos, ni otros herederos, entonces van quedando en las trastiendas y se van deteriorando. Y actualmente son muy escasos. Son muy difíciles de conseguir esos ejemplos de niños muertos.”

*no  
sacó*

El patrimonio artístico Ecuatoriano, como otros patrimonios nacionales guardados en museos y en archivos, pretende ser un paradigma de la memoria social, la inclusión de lo valioso y lo bello sobre lo feo y descartable, el triunfo del recuerdo sobre el olvido, la verdad incontrovertible (Elsner y Cardinal (1994) Pero sabemos que los patrimonios, como las naciones, son construcciones sociales que dejan nichos para memorias e imágenes a veces críticas, a veces subversivamente alternativas. Este es el caso de la colección de estos cuadros de niños. Porque coleccionar lo popular es otra forma de salvar del olvido expresiones de arte que todavía no están aceptadas y establecidas como las colecciones monumentales de arte pre-colombino o colonial.

El gusto del coleccionista es un espejo de su ser. Como señala Baudrillard (1994), los objetos en nuestras vidas representan algo profundamente relacionado a la subjetividad, porque cuando éstos han perdido su función originaria, dan de cierta manera al coleccionista, la capacidad de gobernar el significado de sus objetos. Este usa los objetos para a construir su identidad. Son objetos de su colección y de su pasión. Pero como todas las actividades humanas esta forma de dar sentido a los objetos, no es

unilateralmente individual. Las narrativas de memoria del coleccionista están como veremos, calibradas en el espejo de las relaciones sociales, desde los vendedores de sus cuadros hasta sus otros amigos, los arqueólogos, los poetas y los novelistas. El individuo se relaciona a la sociedad para dar forma a las narrativas de los sucesos, sentimientos y memorias escondidos en los cuadros y así contribuye a crear una memoria social, un documento oral que es el que trato de transcribir y analizar sobre un momento en la historia social de las concepciones del duelo y de la muerte en el Ecuador.

### **Los niños, la muerte y los duelos**

El coleccionista explica así la aparición de los retratos:

“En el siglo XIX hay un cambio en la concepción estética. Aparece el paisaje y aparece el retrato. El retrato ya no sólo del noble o de linaje sino también de una burguesía incipiente. El retrato que aparece más frecuentemente es el del padre de familia y su esposa, el retrato del gran señor. Pero hay una serie de retratos que son muy atípicos y son el retrato del niño. Dado que no funda un linaje, dado que no es la culminación de un trabajo, tenemos que preguntarnos porqué aparece. Y porqué aparece en una sociedad donde la mortalidad infantil era altísima y había innumerables muertos. Entonces la explicación que encontramos es compleja”

Según Ariès (1962), en el siglo XV la iconografía del niño comienza a secularizarse, pero todavía no aparecen como retratos de sujetos independientes sino como parte de pinturas anecdóticas o en las tumbas de sus maestros o de sus padres. Recién a fines del siglo XIX en el Occidente se comienza a separar el mundo de los niños del de los adultos y surge una concepción de la niñez. Esto ayuda a explicar la aparición de los retratos funerarios de niños en esa época. Antes no se pensaba en guardar un retrato o imagen del niño porque la niñez se consideraba como una fase de la vida muy poco importante de la cual no era necesario guardar registros o recuerdos. La gente no podía darse el lujo de apegarse muy profundamente a alguien que con frecuencia podía ser una pérdida. Demasiados niños morían. La indiferencia podía ser muy bien, como señala Aries (1963), una consecuencia inevitable y directa de la demografía del período.

En Ecuador en 1908 de 1161 niños 104? morían antes de los 12 meses y en 1923 todavía la mortalidad infantil era del 30.67 % . (comunicación personal de Eduardo Kingman 2009) Por supuesto estas estadísticas no nos dan todo el panorama ya que no discriminan por clase social y son mudas a los sentimientos de duelo por esos niños. Esperamos que los cuadros sean más elocuentes. Según Aries (1962:40), la aparición de retratos de niños muertos es una evidencia de que su muerte ya no se consideraba una pérdida inevitable y marca un momento muy importante en la historia de los sentimientos.

En Ecuador, el retrato del niño muerto o recobrado de la muerte como forma de duelo y conmemoración es un reconocimiento de este fenómeno social de la niñez, por un lado, pero por otro, estos sentimientos también están entañados en las ideas cristianas de la inmortalidad del alma bautizada y en la creencia religiosa en los poderes curativos milagrosos de las imágenes populares como la Virgen del Quinche. Pero este es todavía un duelo y una conmemoración privada y de las clases sociales altas o de las burguesías prósperas. Es recién con la fotografía que tenemos una posible democratización de la



imagen del niño muerto y del duelo. Las más populares fueron tomadas con motivo de la celebración de los velorios del angelito. La fotografía permitió así a las clases medias y populares tener sus propios retratos, especialmente cuando ésta empezó a colorearse, costumbre que parece haber resurgido recientemente en los pueblos como una forma de distinción de la masiva fotografía digital (comunicación personal?????)

Es distinto en el ámbito público, porque los pueblos indígenas y las clases populares urbanas en Ecuador siempre celebraron a sus antepasados y otros seres queridos en lugares sagrados, cementerios o iglesias para el Día de los Muertos, por ejemplo, aunque no tenemos todavía evidencia de cuando comienzan los rituales o placas funerarias especialmente dedicadas a los niños y con motivos infantiles que ahora son comunes en todos los cementerios de Ecuador. Tales como ésta en el cementerio de San Diego.



El interesante libro de fotografías de Biede Pedersen (2008) sobre la cultura funeraria popular ecuatoriana da evidencia de esas formas de duelos populares públicos contemporáneos. En el prólogo, Gutiérrez Viñuales señala que predomina con notoria fuerza lo vinculado al culto de los niños muertos, sobre todo en términos celebratorios, ya que esa muerte no debe ser llorada por los familiares porque se cree que los angelitos van directo al cielo.

**Los primeros cuadros de la colección que paso a analizar ahora son los retratos póstumos de duelo o conmemoratorios.** A diferencia de los retratos funerarios donde el muerto es pintado en su féretro o en la cama donde falleció, el retrato póstumo de duelo pinta a los muertos como si estuvieran vivos. Eran encargados por las familias y, en la época que consideramos, la costumbre parece haber estado confinada a las clases altas. Nos explica Iván:

“El niño que muere pero a lo mejor era el primogénito, o el más mimado de su mamá o su papá o cualquier cosa. Y entonces empieza esa serie de celebraciones. Se celebra el quinto o el sexto año de la muerte del fulanito. En ese momento se le manda pintar un retrato. El niño ya no existe más, se murió hace 8 años o hace 5 años. Entonces el artista tiene que ingeniarse para descubrir el parecido con el papá o con la mamá e imaginar cómo sería o como hubiera sido el niño y así el resultado final es de un realismo maravilloso porque son adultos. Este está como flotando, con piernas que no le corresponden, y con cara de adulto. Los pintores no son académicos, pero pintores de taller. No es la belleza, la perfección lo que cuenta. ~~Es un retrato de pintor de taller.~~ Entonces cuando tú ves esos retratos no guardan las proporciones. Son cabezas grandes, y cuerpos chiquitos o unos señores con cabezas de niño- ~~Algunos son rarísimos parecen~~

~~enanos.~~



para  
cabe p

Si bien el niño muerto está pintado como si fuera vivo, la mayoría de este tipo de retratos contiene símbolos de muerte disimulados, tales como un sauce llorón o flores, que en la mano del niño significan inocencia o muerte, si las flores están marchitas. Según Goody (1993) en Europa, por ejemplo, el crisantemo estaba vinculado a los ritos otoñales por los muertos y al Día de Todos los Santos. A veces las nubes están pintadas para simbolizar la ascensión al cielo del alma pura. Este retrato en el Museo de Folk Art de Nueva York muestra otros símbolos como el barco que parte, los árboles truncados y tal vez un juguete para indicar género. En este caso, una niña, aunque a veces no podemos estar seguros si son niños o niñas, ya que en esa época no se habían establecido todavía las convenciones del tipo de ropa y colores que diferencian a los niños por género, más adelante en el siglo XX.

↑  
 aún <sup>apudau</sup> ~~parecer~~ a pesar de  
 las ~~convenciones~~  
 introd. x el  
 niño ~~femenino~~



“Algunos niños parece que flotan en el espacio, no están asentados o son muy etéreos. Otros parece que vuelan. También hay niños jugando, pero siempre son misteriosos, cargados de extrañas energías porque son niños muertos, niños imaginados, niños recreados, hechos a la satisfacción del padre o de la madre y con la torpeza propia del oficio. Y son expresiones de arte popular absolutamente excepcionales, y maravillosas.”

*no poets*

Son niños recreados de las memorias de sus padres, pintados de memorias para mantenerlas vivas y así evitar la finalidad de la muerte, para conmemorar al ausente y ahuyentar el olvido. Cumplían, como dice Ruby (1995:37-38) con referencia a retratos similares en Estados Unidos, una función terapéutica. Allí, los retratos funerarios se hicieron comunes al comienzo del siglo XIX después que se debilita la amonestación puritana contra estas imágenes consideradas ídolos o fetiches. Eran reconocidos públicamente y una práctica social aceptada. Se colgaban en la sala y los artistas ponían avisos en los periódicos locales.,

*} no seen*

En el siglo XIX en los Estados Unidos florecieron pintores itinerantes que pintaban estos retratos ahora específicamente llamados “Folk Art” y se sabía que cobraban el doble si los sujetos estaban muertos ya que debían trabajar rápido antes del entierro. Es evidente que los pintores ecuatorianos, aunque anónimos y de taller como los llama Iván, comparten con sus clientes y con otros pintores del “folk art” norteamericano una cultura de significados europeos en términos de las vestimentas aceptadas, las poses de las distintas clases sociales, y el lenguaje y simbología de la muerte, en este caso de la muerte infantil.



*como podemos comparar aqui con estos ecuatorianos del s. XIX de USA*

*¿peluca?*

Halttunen (citado por Mattison) argumenta que la cultura sentimental de la clase media de mediados del siglo XIX en Estados Unidos incluía un culto del duelo. Este se ~~veía~~ *consideraba* como una de las emociones más puras y profundas, y las prolongadas meditaciones sobre las alegrías y las tristezas del duelo se veían como un signo de dignidad y buenas maneras. [gentility]. Para esta clase, tener un duelo apropiado se convirtió en un despliegue público, produciendo desde formas de vestimenta hasta cartas de condolencia. Las imágenes de duelo confirmaban esos sentimientos. Es obvio que, en Ecuador a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX, estas clases aristocráticas y burguesas, y aún los pintores de taller que les servían, habían absorbido las costumbres norteamericanas y europeas de decoro y buenas maneras no sólo con respecto a la vida sino también con respecto a la muerte.

### **Memoria y ficción: El coleccionista y sus relaciones sociales**

Un aspecto interesante para la antropología de los objetos es cómo, a través del tiempo, éstos van adquiriendo nuevos significados y memorias a través de las relaciones sociales en la vida del coleccionista. Dos ejemplos de estos retratos de niños de la colección son relevantes para entender estos hechos sociales. Oigamos a Iván:



Yo tengo aquí una niña azul, muy linda, con una flor [un crisantemo]. Un queridísimo amigo mío, Olaf Holm la vio y me dijo: “Yo tengo el marido de tu niña que me compré en Cuenca así que te lo voy a mandar”. En 10 días llegó un paquetito bien cerrado con el cuadro. “Aquí va la pareja de los niños y ahora sí somos parientes” El inventó la pareja para que la niña no esté sola y para nosotros ser parientes.”

Otra forma en que los cuadros se van recargando de sentido es **a través de la literatura** y, porque en este mundo pequeño que es Quito, todos los intelectuales se conocen o están emparentados, las memorias del coleccionista se entrelazan con la imaginación de sus amigos novelistas y así conocemos a Natalio Mieles.



Este niño era un personaje anónimo en un cuadro que aparece como un objeto en el mercado pero ahora se llama Natalio Mieles.

Es un niño muy misterioso-dice Iván- muy triste, todo vestido de blanco. Yo soy muy amigo hace mucho tiempo de Javier Ponce, que estaba escribiendo una novela sobre los caucheros. Y en ella había una imagen de un niño hijo del dueño de la casa, de la familia, que estaba siempre muy bien vestido, muy limpio, muy cuidadito, mirando con una enorme tristeza y pena a los “longuitos”, los hijos de los inquilinos del piso bajo que se divertían enormemente en el patio y jugaban a las bolas o al chiche? Y desde la baranda de su casa este niño solo con su cara de susto y asombro miraba, siempre con una inmensa tristeza y pena el juego en el cual él no podía participar. Porque él era un niño bien....Javier recrea en su novela este retrato y ahora se llama Natalio Mieles. Adquiere un nuevo nombre y una nueva identidad y se va integrando en otra narrativa para adquirir nueva vida.

Igualmente, mi otro amigo literato, el Javier Vásconez a veces entraba en mi antigua casa y se aterrorizaba ante todos esos niños muertos que estaban colocados en una pared..

Cuando escribe su novela “Los invitados de Honor”, usa mi nombre como el cronista de la ciudad que anuncia la llegada de esos personajes que van a venir a visitar la ciudad para dar conferencias. Y el informante tiene esa extraña colección de niños muertos.

Entonces voy a aparecer en la literatura en estos niños. Y así se va enriqueciendo el mito de los niños y van volviendo a tener vida. Vuelven a adquirir una posición en la historia y en la vida de su ciudad. Vuelven a adquirir vida, son personajes que tienen acciones y



mediante el arte vuelven a ser depositarios de los viejos recuerdos que todos estos artistas tienen. Esto es lo fantástico. Son vivos, están vivos.”

Ricoeur (2004) se pregunta en qué sentido la experiencia de la memoria representando cosas del pasado difiere de las experiencias de la imaginación representando mundos ficticios. No hay nada en la imagen visual del niño, por ejemplo, que nos diga si es una fiel representación de su persona, o un recuerdo en la memoria de los padres o el personaje creado por el novelista. Según Ricoeur (2004), <sup>la diferencia está en</sup> ~~tratamos~~ de conseguir fidelidad en la memoria y lo lúdico en la <sup>de intenciones ficción</sup> imaginación donde se producen mundos alternativos. Por otra parte, en Ecuador los caucheros fueron una realidad histórica a principios del siglo XX, tiempo del que parece mirarnos este niño con su almidonado traje blanco. Y los personajes que encontré en los archivos del Napo (Muratorio 1991) bien pueden haber sido los padres de este niño. Lo cual <sup>no lleva a reflexionar sobre la</sup> ~~nos lleva a~~ Lowenthal que dice que la historia y la memoria son menos distinguibles como tipos de conocimiento que como actitudes hacia ese conocimiento, con la diferencia, por supuesto que la historia no es individual sino colectiva una actividad del grupo social. (213)

Lowenthal p. 226 La antropología y la historia tratan de entender este mundo, no el alternativo de la imaginación, están anclados en la realidad Truth is more specific it tends to be more literal in anthropology and in history than in fiction La segregación de la narrativa histórica de la narrativa de ficción, es un by-product del renacimiento tardío concerní about the validity y fidelidad de las fuentes históricas. las fuentes históricas El novelista J. Vásquez dice en una entrevista (citado en Barrionuevo) <sup>date</sup> “No me interesa la ciudad como historia. Ni como retrato de costumbres, sino como escenario de unos cuantos personajes. Me interesa inventar (mi énfasis) la naturaleza de esta ciudad”. Es aquí donde la ficción tal vez se acerca más a la memoria pero se separa de la antropología y de la historia, <sup>pero a diferencia de esta</sup> aún de la ficción histórica. A la antropóloga, como al historiador, le interesan las memorias del personaje como actor de la vida cotidiana y situado en la realidad histórica de su ciudad. Están más cerca de la memoria que aspira a la fidelidad, mencionada por Ricoeur. <sup>como señala</sup> Portelli (Como p.64) como ~~historiadores orales~~ tendemos a tomar seriamente tanto las historias orales unreliable como los plausible records de

¿qué es la memoria? tratamos la fidelidad y lo lúdico de la fin? ~~over?~~

La historia de aquello que a la memoria y ficción

ent.

memorias

registros históricos de los

archivo y los espacios entre medio. Debemos reconocer que hay varios approaches to the truth. y a ser responsables de nuestras propias interpretaciones como incompletas.

*ner*

### El milagro del privilegio

**Volviendo a la colección, encontramos el segundo tipo de cuadros que representan la celebración del milagro.**



Iván los explica así:

“El niño adquiere una enfermedad cualquiera, una enfermedad infecciosa como sarampión, viruela, hepatitis, que eran enfermedades mortales en esa época. Entonces la madre de la familia hace un voto: “Si es que me sanas al niño, lo vestiré de Dominico o lo consagro a tal o cual santo. Y el niño se sana, e inmediatamente se manda hacer el retrato que certifica el milagro. Y aparece el retrato de un niño enfermo, desnutrido, pelado que recién ha salido de una terrible enfermedad. O se hace un retrato del niño vestido de Dominico como el que tengo y sabemos quien es: Don Manuel Venancio Serialta y Mendieta que está pálido, y se acaba de levantar de la cama ayer.”



O este otro milagro o ex-voto en que el niño está disfrazado de hombre con las mejillas ya rosaditas y está dedicado a la Virgen del Quinche, costumbre que todavía se practica hoy en día en el Ecuador. (ver numero nota)l

Estos dos milagros son evidencia de devociones privadas, familiares y evidentemente marcadas por clase social. Es un tipo de retrato en el estilo del privilegio, del linaje que se continúa, casi triunfante. Y son muy diferentes de los otros ejemplos de milagros encargados por las clases populares que se encontraron y se encuentran todavía en algunas iglesias y santuarios populares del Ecuador como el del Cristo del Árbol en Pomasqui. A diferencia de los dos milagros de la colección, los más populares son generalmente de un realismo literal y de una modestia agradecida y enternecedora. Son memorias de una tragedia evitada.



### La muerte social y pública

[Y aquí esta última historia que por fin sí se va a relacionar más directamente con la celebración del bicentenario]

**Como señalamos al comienzo, la tercera causa de estos retratos pintados es cuando una niña se muere a la vida civil y renace en la vida religiosa.**

“Hay incluso un cambio de nombre” dice Iván, un rito de iniciación, hay una muerte y entierro de lo civil y el renacer a la vida religiosa. Entonces como la niña muere y la casa se queda en cierta manera abandonada de esa presencia, los padres hacen pintar un retrato para que la niña se quede y viva en la casa, en forma de retrato mientras ella entra en la nueva vida. Y a veces ese retrato entra en la herencia y vuelve al convento.”



Pero, desde la historia oral, Iván también recuenta un importante evento en la historia de la independencia de Ecuador: la muerte y exhumación de los restos del Mariscal Sucre. No es la absoluta exactitud de la memoria oral la que está en juego aquí sino <sup>como</sup> ésta se incorpora a la memoria histórica o viceversa ya que como señala Lowenthal (210) las fuentes históricas también están saturadas de subjetividad e incluso de chismes.

*Tanto aquí de*  
Resumir aquí una historia sobre <sup>escrita</sup> el cuadro

Así escuchamos a Iván: Resumir un poco esta historia

<sup>es el de</sup>  
El retrato que yo tengo es de la Marquesita de Solanda, una señorita Valdivieso que entró al Convento del Carmen Bajo y va a ser priora allí y ha de tener una enorme influencia en la vida de la ciudad porque es una mujer muy fuerte y de mucha fuerza y energía. Ella deja sus títulos a su sobrina, Mariana Carcelén quien se casa con el Mariscal Sucre. La Mariana es la que acoge los restos del Mariscal Sucre en el Carmen Bajo. Con el pretexto de ir a visitar a su tía, monja de clausura, no despertaba ninguna sospecha de que iba también a visitar y a rezar por los restos de su marido. Entonces esto era una muy buena cosa, voy a ver a la tía y de paso voy a verlo al Mariscal. Y ella es la responsable, la encargada de guardar el secreto de donde estaban enterrados los restos.

Ya que, por esas razones del siglo XIX estaban escondidos los restos de Sucre, así como también los restos de García Moreno, para evitar la profanación (la muerte pública que en este caso debe mantenerse en secreto para evitar la profanación hasta que se constata como "hecho histórico" con una serie de notables (see artículo de exhumación de restos=) como testigos. Son éstos mas reliable que la marquesita desde el cuadro? Relación historia oral historia escrita Portelli y Ricoeur. (lo de la muerte pública versus la muerte privada y el duelo público) costumbres sobre muertes públicas y personajes famosos.

*Es interesante  
señalar  
aquí  
de esta  
historia*

*Explicar  
aquí*

*Secreto q' se guarda cuando el dueño  
de la casa de Iván, un Sr. Melo lo revela  
después a una parente suya se lo ofrece a  
Cambio de una inversión. y entonces*

Resumen

Resumir lo que viene

Y este secreto aparece en 1920, con los notables, cuando un grupo de venezolanos viene a Ecuador a buscar los restos para llevarlos a Venezuela, y levantan todas las piedras de los conventos, arman un relajo histórico pero no los encuentran. Y los mandan sacando porque habían hecho ya muchos destrozos. Quien los encuentra es el dueño de esta casa (de Iván Cruz ahora), un Dr. Melo. (otra reliquia restaurada pero llena de memorias históricas) Había una bulla en la ciudad por los restos de Sucre : que estaban por ahí, que estaban en tal parte, que estaban en otra parte. Pero una enferma, una señora pobre, vieja se acerca al Dr. Melo y le dice: “Quiero que me trate que estoy enferma de no sé que cosa. Pero mire Dr que no tengo plata para pagarle y en vez le voy a pagar con un secreto. Yo sé donde está enterrado el Mariscal Sucre.” El Dr la atiende, le hace una curación y ella le da el secreto. Esta en el convento del Carmen Bajo en tal sitio. El Dr hace una venta, un negocio con el gobierno Ecuatoriano para dar el secreto y pide creo que la cantidad de 10000 sucres. Estamos en 1910-1911 y se hace una investigación y efectivamente aparecen los restos de Sucre y hay abundante material fotográfico y hay las fotos del Fondo Jijón, con el cráneo y con los notables y los restos y dicen que el Dr Melo era el reconocido y el primer radiólogo ecuatoriano y poseedor del secreto. Según entiendo, el Dr Melo se pasó 25 años en juicio con el gobierno ecuatoriano que nunca le pagó. Y a propósito de la Sra. que está ahí es la que cuida el secreto.

Y la vida social del cuadro nos sigue contando **la historia social de la vida de la ciudad, en este caso sobre las mujeres de los conventos**, sus vidas, sus vicisitudes, y los gobiernos que las abandonan “a la buena de Dios” como ellas dirían.

“Por herencia –dice Iván - el cuadro de la Marquesita de Solanda vuelve al convento del Carmen Bajo donde las monjitas lo guardan celosamente hasta que, cuando va a suceder un gran evento en el convento, las monjitas deciden, con toda razón, hacer una venta de algunas cosas, entre ellas su querida Marquesita. Esto será hace unos doce o trece años. Había unas 18 monjitas y 6 u 8 estaban enfermas, algunas con cáncer y había un solo servicio higiénico en todo el convento. Y el Alcalde y el Presidente le habían prometido:


“Vamos a hacer, vamos a comprar, vamos a dar”, pero la verdad era que las pobres monjitas no tenían ni para los remedios de día a día. Y una de estas monjitas que no era noble ni nada parecido pero que era la priora y que probablemente recién había llegado del campo, decidió vender. Bueno, que no eligen a las monjitas como cuidadoras de museos sino para que recen por todos. Y abren la casa para la venta, al comienzo tímidamente y luego que empieza a llegar mucha gente, entonces abiertamente le ponían precios a las cosas.”

Y obviamente nuestro coleccionista no pudo resistir la tentación. Pero es el conjunto de estas tentaciones objetivadas en los cuadros el que nos permite tener una experiencia sensorial de un momento histórico, una visión enriquecida de los sentimientos hacia la niñez y de la cultura de la muerte y del duelo en el Ecuador urbano.

El coleccionista explica así el significado que para él tienen finalmente estos cuadros:

“Estos personajes de los cuadros salen de lo popular y luego regresan transformados, mutados en otro lenguaje, en otra situación, pero vuelven a la vida, vuelven a su ciudad, y son lo que verdaderamente son, una pieza absolutamente clave para entender una realidad pasada Y siguen viviendo en la memoria, en la herencia, en los recuerdos y en los miedos de sus creadores y de sus custodios.”

Como antropóloga –o mejor digamos como abogada del diablo- me quedan, sin embargo, ~~las fuentes histórica~~ estas preguntas para terminar: cuál será el destino futuro de estos cuadros? Pasarán a ser parte del patrimonio de los museos y perderán allí todos estos significados para recomenzar otras vidas, otras historias y otras memorias? O se transformarán de nuevo en objetos, en mercancías mudas en un nuevo mercado? Mi historia de sus vidas y de su custodio es definitivamente, incompleta.



### Notas

(nota en la exposición las madres ponían angelitos de la guarda hechos por los niños en frente a la imagen de la Virgen del Quinche aunque ésta estaba en el Museo de La Ciudad (ver picture). (un poquito más de explicación aquí sobre milagros etc ver aries, ruby:??



2Nota aquí sobre exhibición y que ponían los angelitos hechos por los niños como ofrendas a la Virgen del Quiche, aun dentro del Museo.

1 Aunque a veces sucede que el retrato no contiene ninguna indicación de que fue pintado póstumamente.

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2. En un altar a la Virgen del Quinche construido en el 2003 en el Museo de la Ciudad con motivo de una exposición sobre religiosidad popular, muchas madres ofrecieron espontáneamente a la Virgen los angelitos de la guarda hechos por sus hijos como actividad educativa después de visitar la exposición. En esta fotografía se notan también las reproducciones de los milagros populares que se encontraron en el santuario del Quinche (Goetschel????)



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Falta + notas y  
concentraciones Erika.  
de fotos Erika.

## Memorias alternativas: Las cajoneras de los portales<sup>1</sup>

Blanca Muratorio

FLACSO, Ecuador, Junio 2008



Foto de la autora

Este ensayo sobre las cajoneras de los portales es parte de un proyecto más amplio de biografías visuales que tratan de dejar un registro histórico y etnográfico de las voces e imágenes de mujeres de la calle en el debate por la modernidad y el proceso cultural en el Centro Histórico de Quito.

*¿siento aquí una*

Mi aproximación a este tema es desde varias perspectivas. Primero la que he seguido en ~~mis~~ trabajos anteriores de dar relieve prioritario a las vidas y las voces individuales para entender las sutilezas y la profundidad histórica de un proceso social y cultural determinado. Segundo, un enfoque analítico todavía experimental, que a través de la representación visual, intenta evocar las otras experiencias sensoriales del olor, el gusto,

Las narrativas de identidad que voy a presentar aquí son las de las cajoneras o "buhoneras" de los portales del Centro Histórico de Quito.<sup>3</sup>

En el presente sólo quedan dos mujeres en el portal del Colegio Sagrados Corazones, mejor conocido como el Portal de Santo Domingo. Pero muchas de sus predecesoras desde el siglo XIX hasta bien entrado el siglo XX, ocuparon y lucharon por ocupar otros portales aún más estratégicos como el del Palacio Arzobispal, el de Salinas en los bajos del viejo Municipio, y otros en la Plaza Grande. Son precisamente las voces de estas cajoneras que quiero rescatar de los documentos históricos y de las memorias para entender porqué en el presente las pocas mujeres que quedan, todavía afirman dignamente su derecho a desplegar sus cajones en ese espacio público.

*Ver foto a Pauls foto de dos cajoneras Erika y nota. según las Erika siglo.*

A través del tiempo, todas ellas han sobrevivido varios procesos de modernización urbana y las más recientes políticas de intervención económica, social y de "reactivación" cultural en el Centro Histórico dirigidas a reglamentar lo que se supone es un incontrovertible consenso sobre el "patrimonio cultural auténtico" como símbolo

identitario. La incursión de la globalización es el último desafío que estas mujeres están afrontando.

Por el contrario, otras mujeres y hombres que vendían sus productos y desplegaban sus coloridas imágenes y texturas, los olores de los inciensos y las fritadas, los sonidos de sus charlas y pregones y los gustos de sus comidas en las calles y plazas del Centro Histórico, hace ya 5 años fueron excluidas o confinadas al olvido de los "no-lugares", tales como los antiguos baños públicos debajo de San Francisco o los "centros comerciales

populares" que también podríamos llamar "malls para pobres". Esta es la misma exclusión que las cajoneras de los portales han desafiado a lo largo de su historia y una de las

*ese mujeres ya todavía siguen*  
*en lugares!*  
*Se presenta como el comercio L cajoneras. parece ser el último desafío para*  
*Sus en banco, a diferencia de las cajoneras,*  
*Es similar a la*  
*que las cajoneras de los portales han desafiado a lo largo de su historia y una de las*  
*Se presenta como el último desafío para*  
*que las cajoneras de los portales han desafiado a lo largo de su historia y una de las*

el tacto, y el sonido. Con mayor o menor intensidad estos sentidos, junto con la visión, forman parte integral de la experiencia y agencia individual y cultural y son repositorios de conocimiento y evocadores de memorias (Pink 2006:41-42, Seremetakis 1994). Por último, una aproximación antropológica a la cultura material y a los espacios donde se produce y consume, que los sitúa en un contexto complejo y cambiante de relaciones sociales de clase, jerarquía y poder.

Las personas organizan sus vidas creando e interactuando con el mundo material y éste constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Ciertos objetos forman parte integral de narrativas de identidad que son conformadas y reconfiguradas de memorias de una vida vivida. Los dominios privados o públicos de la vida cotidiana, como el hogar o el lugar de trabajo pueden ser vistos como espacios donde los seres humanos tienen la posibilidad de construir, articular y desplegar un "ser de género" (~~gendered self~~) femenino o masculino que, como demuestra Sarah Pink (2004) en un estudio reciente, se hace en negociación con los ambientes sociales, culturales y materiales en los cuales a cada individuo le toca vivir. Estas experiencias están también históricamente condicionadas y son frecuentemente expresadas con metáforas lingüísticas que manifiestan emociones y evocan memorias referentes a todos los sentidos.<sup>2</sup>



Doña Judith Enríquez 1999

Foto de la autora

~~Aquí pones  
la de Erika +  
adelante  
donde dice  
Solo quede  
2.~~

□ ojo esto falta (13 de Jan) 4

razones por las cuales nos interesa presentarlas aquí. Tal vez la trama de sus historias nos ayude a entender el <sup>todavía</sup> ~~todavía~~ continuo debate económico y cultural entre los comerciantes informales populares y las burocracias nacionales e internacionales de los Municipios y del Patrimonio.<sup>4</sup> No es una nostalgia sentimental la que motiva <sup>esta investigación</sup> ~~esta investigación~~, sino el encanto estético e intelectual por el arte y la cultura popular y el respeto por sus agentes, <sup>que</sup> ~~que~~ están siendo cada vez más desplazados del espacio urbano y reemplazados por la reinvencción del pasado y la disneyficación de la cultura.

En recientes discusiones sobre el patrimonio, tanto Salgado (2004) como Kingman (2004) han señalado que las políticas actuales de patrimonio tratan de imponer en el Centro Histórico una cultura unidimensional del espectáculo "histórico", "religioso" o "de tradiciones ancestrales" en escenarios controlados cada vez más por las burocracias de la cultura.<sup>5</sup> Cuando se trata así de imponer una memoria e identidad desde una concepción esencialista de "lo culto", necesariamente se dejan de lado otras memorias populares alternativas. Con este ensayo sobre las cajoneras intento contribuir a ese proyecto etnográfico e histórico que otros colegas ya han comenzado para documentar esas memorias alternativas, sean éstas de los albañiles, los panaderos, las confiteras (Kingman y Espín La vida popular el pan y los panaderos 2008?), las vendedoras de santos, velas y herraduras de la suerte, o <sup>de las cajoneras de los portales</sup> ~~las~~ que venden los betunes, cintillos de terciopelo azul, fajas multicolores, collares, peinillas, cascabeles, trompos y muñecas de trapo ~~como las cajoneras de los portales~~.

Son precisamente las muñecas de trapo las que constituirán el hilo conductor de los discursos de clase y las memorias de identidad que paso a analizar a continuación.

2  
1  
\*  
see my paper Ed.  
↓  
que jurro  
En la  
aquí  
Kingman  
2004  
y 2008?  
o solo  
2008?  
(ver lo de  
Kingman  
y Salgado  
de Kingman  
2008)?  
\*  
\*  
por quote



## El poder de cuatro muñecas de trapo



Foto de la autora

Como ya dije, desde que hay antecedentes históricos de su presencia en el Centro Histórico en el siglo XIX, las cajoneras se ubicaban principalmente en los portales de las plazas principales, lugares de gran confluencia de público y centro en esa época de las prácticas sociales, económicas y culturales de la aristocracia que se autodefinía como “gente decente”, así como del ir y venir de todos los otros grupos sociales que de una manera u otra conducían allí sus asuntos cotidianos.

falta  
 Preguntar si hay recuerdos de antes del XIX



Cajoneras en Santo Domingo hacia 1910. Foto del Archivo Histórico del Banco Central (en Kingman 2006:200)

La densificación y el desarrollo urbano que se producen en Quito en las últimas décadas del siglo XIX traen aparejado el incremento importante de las actividades comerciales y nuevas disputas sobre la ocupación del espacio. Si bien el sector aristocrático ya gozaba de sus rentas agrarias y de su participación en las altas finanzas, se aprovecha de las nuevas oportunidades económicas arrendando los bajos de sus viviendas principales en la zona del centro para el establecimiento de pequeños almacenes, negocios o talleres (Kingman 2006:192-193). Por su parte, este nuevo estrato social de comerciantes urbanos en ascenso se ve motivado a compartir con la aristocracia los mismos valores hacia la propiedad y hacia la “exclusividad” moral y estética del uso del espacio público en su esfuerzo por alcanzar, no sólo su prosperidad económica, sino también el más elusivo capital cultural de “la decencia”.



Dueño de almacén de zapatos. Quito 1900 (En Hoffenberg 1982:25)

En 1902, por ejemplo, el comerciante César Mantilla solicita desalojar a una cajonera de la primera tienda del portal Salinas con el siguiente argumento: “deseo que la Municipalidad me la ceda para arrendarlo, con el objeto de levantarla a mejor decencia y prestigio, por el fin especial a que quiero destinarla, adornándola convenientemente para un establecimiento mercantil de venta de libros, útiles de escritorio y agencia de

periódicos importantes” Convencido de “el carácter civilizador y miras levantadas de los jóvenes que actualmente componen el Municipio” el Sr. Mantilla no duda que aceptarán su propuesta “extirpando así con mi nueva empresa la venta de baratijas o cajonerías que no tienen ninguna importancia ni decencia apropiadas a la localidad de esa tienda”

(subrayado de la autora).

Es en contra de estos dos estratos sociales de la aristocracia y los comerciantes urbanos que las cajoneras *de la privilegiada* deben luchar por sus derechos a ocupar los portales para sus ventas. Los argumentos en este debate entre el gran capital y sus acólitos y el pequeño comercio informal revelan, con la fresca transparencia del discurso prevaleciente en esa época histórica, las diferencias más profundas entre los valores sociales, políticos y culturales de los patricios y la burguesía por un lado y de las clases populares por otro.

A través del examen de una serie de documentos del Archivo Histórico Municipal (de 1883 a 1909?) y de algunas imágenes relevantes, nos proponemos recuperar en lo posible las voces y la presencia de los sujetos sociales en conflicto como un precedente para entender los intereses que están por detrás de los recientes y futuros debates por la ocupación material y social del espacio urbano y *de la defunción y de la burguesía* por las memorias históricas.

### Las voces de la elite

La elite en la  
Calle García Moreno, circa 1900  
(En Hoffenberg 1982: 21)



En una sesión del Concejo Municipal en 1883 se decide rechazar el proyecto relativo a prohibir la colocación de cajones en los portales públicos, obviamente a pesar del fervor del Vicepresidente de dicho Concejo, quien presenta los argumentos para prohibirlos “a favor del bien público” y de “las muchas personas respetables” que piden la reforma en bien del “aseo”, “el ornato”, “la salubridad” y “la moral pública”. Según los denunciantes, las cajoneras “ensucian y afean” los jardines, andenes y portales en el centro de la ciudad e impiden el tránsito de los que usan ese “foro” para tratar “asuntos importantes”. Aquí es necesario recordar que en esa época <sup>en Quito</sup> en Quito, sólo los hombres de cierta clase social eran considerados suficientemente “importantes” para tratar asuntos igualmente “importantes” en público. En resumen, la costumbre de permitir la existencia de “semejantes buhoneras” pugna con el poder la cultura patriarcal y erosiona <sup>su</sup> supuesta civilización de la época”. Por lo tanto, el Sr. Vicepresidente pone en duda que algún otro interés de importancia puede impedir <sup>la</sup> su abolición, <sup>de sus puestos de trabajo</sup> de sus puestos de trabajo. Negar el progreso de la República que se ganó al “sacudir” el “muy antiguo yugo del Rey”, es -de acuerdo al Sr. Vicepresidente- no ver que la Banca, el gran comercio, y la industria del país están estrechamente “vinculadas” a las instituciones políticas y sociales “de provecho:” Y reitera, todo este edificio social, económico y político está puesto en peligro por “cuatro muñecas de trapo y otras baratijas de la laya” (subrayado de la autora). ( AHM Copiadores de Actas 1883-1884 No. 577). <sup>A pesar de la metáfora</sup> Qué maravilla que cuatro muñecas de trapo <sup>depreca, parece que ~~se~~ ~~podría~~ tener el</sup> tuvieran el poder de amenazar nada menos que todo el comercio de la República. <sup>dejo / despiden</sup>

Pero el poder de estas cuatro muñecas de trapo también parece amenazar otro importante pilar de la estabilidad de clases existente. De acuerdo al Vicepresidente, las cajoneras y

sus “baratijas” dan escándalo y “corrompen a los domésticos de las casas contiguas a sus puestos públicos”. Considerando que la servidumbre que habitaba en esas casas formaba una parte considerable de las familias patriarcales de las clases acomodadas (Kingman 1992: 134) el temor de “los señores” podía no ser totalmente injustificado. Aunque por supuesto no existe evidencia de sus conversaciones, podemos imaginar qué ideas de movilidad social u otras posibles libertades las buhoneras pueden haber “instigando” en aquéllos otros miembros de las clases populares, cuyo trabajo doméstico consistía precisamente en crear y mantener la cultura material que hacía posible la “respetabilidad,” “el ornato,” “el aseo,” y la misma “cultura y “civilización” de las así designadas “personas respetables” por el Sr. Vicepresidente. Específicamente, es relevante citar aquí un documento de 1902 (AHM Copiadora de Actas 1902, f523) donde se aboga por el derecho a su cajón de “la Jaramillo”, “madre de seis hijos y que a fuerza de trabajo se ha elevado de la condición de criada reivindicándose a ser buhonera”. Más aún, tres años antes, “la Jaramillo”, junto con su colega Toribia Velasco, ya han hecho oír su protesta contra las políticas que favorecían a las elites, presentándose como la voz del pueblo.

### Las voces del pueblo



La Cajonera. Acuarela de Joaquín Pinto  
Siglo XIX  
(Foto en Samaniego: 1977)

En 1899 estas dos cajoneras, orgullosas miembros de esas clase “más honrada y laboriosa” están todavía luchando contra los enemigos de “la parte menesterosa de la sociedad” quienes, “por complacer con ciertos capitales,” quieren despojarlas del derecho “inmemorial” de ocupar con sus cajones los portales de la plaza de la Independencia “so pretexto de mejoramiento y progreso” (AHM Oficios y Solicitudes Mayo 17 1899, ff 86,87,88). Mientras que los miembros de la elite invocaban a la república en nombre del modernismo y del progreso del capital en contra del absolutismo real, las cajoneras afirman su derecho al espacio simbólico de la plaza de la Independencia como “legítima compensación de los servicios prestados por (nuestros) esposos é hijos, para el sostenimiento del orden público, y de la sangre derramada en los campos de batalla, para la defensa de las instituciones republicanas....”

No sólo hay entre la elite y las clases populares profundas diferencias sobre los fundamentos del sistema republicano sino también distintas concepciones sobre lo que constituye el “orden público” y la estética del “ornato” urbano. Como ya vimos, en 1883 el Vicepresidente del Concejo Municipal, y la elite que él representaba, opinaban que los cajones “ensuciaban” y “afeaban” el espacio público y atentaban contra la cultura y la civilización. Por el contrario, quince años más tarde, el representante de las cajoneras argumenta que “lejos de impresionar a la vista [los cajones y sus rentas de mercaderías] presentan un conjunto simpático de objetos variados graciosa y singularmente distribuidos.” (AHM Copiadora de Actas 1898-1899, No.585).

Por último, mientras los miembros de la elite acusan a las cajoneras de aferrarse a la tradición y así impedir el cambio social y el progreso del capital, estas últimas demuestran, por su parte, una actitud flexible y realista hacia el necesario cambio urbano



día a día y ellas están <sup>✓</sup> de todas maneras en edad de retirarse. Ya no hay razón para que demuestren el mismo espíritu de lucha de sus madres y abuelas. <sup>✓</sup> Sus narrativas de vida <sup>✓</sup> *su cultura,* <sup>✓</sup> sin embargo, revelan el mismo sentido de identidad familiar y el orgullo por la independencia de la “tutela” masculina que les ha permitido su profesión. Así nos dice Judith Enríquez en 1999:

“Yo hago muñecas. Mi abuelita inventó las muñecas (aproximadamente en las últimas dos décadas del siglo XIX?). Se llamaba Aurora Vargas, de descendencia Colombiana. Ella se separó del abuelito. Un día el abuelito le dijo: “Pongamos mejor una licorería”, pero ella no quería y él se fue a Manabí y no regresó más. Mi abuelita vivía entonces con una mujer que hacía muñecas y las vestía con papel. Mi abuelita encontró pedazos de tela y así con eso empezó a vestirlas. Tenía una demanda tremenda de sus muñecas. Se murió de 100 años hace ya 50 años. Mi mamá se llamaba Carmen Martínez y siguió haciendo muñecas y ahora soy yo la primerita. Algunas de las muñecas que hizo mi mamá están en el Banco Central. ✓  
2  
✓



Doña Judith Enríquez  
Foto de la autora

Yo hago mis muñecas “limpias” (de brujería). Otras hacen muñecas pero así no más porque son para maldades.

Mi hermana Zoila hace buenas muñecas y las vende a otras cajoneras. Mi hija también trabaja muy rápido haciendo muñecas. Cuando se dedica, la hija de mi ñaña también hace cosas bonitas: payasos, monjas, el niño Jesús, José, María, un gentío de muñecas.”

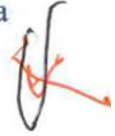


Fotos de la autora





Oigamos ahora el testimonio de identidad más reciente (2002, 2003 y 2007) de la otra cajonera Doña Rosa Paredes:



Doña Rosa Paredes 2002 Foto de la autora

“Soy viuda y soy cajonera desde 1976. Fui la última con el número 16. En esa época todo el portal (de Santo Domingo) estaba completo y no había espacio ya que cada cajón mide aproximadamente tres metros. Le compré el cajón a una señora Jesusa que era la madre de la otra cajonera que ahora queda en este portal. Yo me jubilé de un trabajo anterior con una señora como ayuda de ventas en el mercado de Ipiales. Luego compré el cajón y vendía a toda clase de personas desde “los de la Hi hasta los indiecitos”.



Fotos de la autora

Doña Rosa Paredes y una cliente 2002



Antes se vendía mucho, especialmente las muñecas. Recuerdo que un señor Viteri compraba en grandes cantidades y a todas las cajoneras las muñecas. Incluso yo antes hacía las mías. Ahora vendo las muñecas que no son de mi agrado. Antes se hacían mejores pero hay una señora que todavía nos deja las muñecas. Ahora no se vende lo que antes, las ventas no son buenas y el comercio ha bajado con la ciudad que se ha modernizado. Todas las mujeres se van afuera ahora. La hermana de esa cajonera (la otra que todavía queda) se fue a España.



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Fotos de la autora

Por su parte en 1999, la Sra. Judith recordaba así a sus colegas



Doña Judith Enríquez Foto de la autora

Antes había envidia entre cajoneras. Antes estaba la Mariana, la Sra. Rosario, la Marita que se murió hace poco y la Alegría que murió después de la Marita. Donde es mi puesto ahora había otra Sra. que vendía muñecas y las otras eran “las copetonas” de apellido Galiano. Le decían “las copetonas” porque se hacían unos moños. Sólo por “las copetonas” las conocíamos. Una era Isabel Galiano y la Helena puso un bazar por

El Inca. Dos más se han ido a poner un bazar. La de al lado mío, la Miche, tiene un bazar. Desde que había nacido era dueña del portal pero hace como dos años que no viene por cuidar el bazar. En ese tiempo no teníamos gremio y los puestos los daba el Municipio. Había que pedir permisos con el récord policial. Pero antes se peleaban por los puestos, ahora ya no. Por eso, ahora, estos señores que dicen que organizan lo bonito no nos han molestado como a otras vendedoras. No molestan mucho. Estamos solitas...

Al final del siglo XIX y durante la mayor parte del siglo XX para muchas mujeres, convertirse en cajoneras significó una fuente de seguridad económica y ascenso social. Los testimonios de Doña Judith y Doña Rosa muestran la dignidad de un trabajo duro y respetable que ellas consideran como la “decencia” de su clase. Es interesante señalar también aquí que como otras mujeres

Portal de Santo Domingo 2003 Foto de la autora



en posiciones vulnerables, las cajoneras tienen recelo de ser acusadas de “agentes de brujería” y su discurso de respetabilidad y decencia incluye el hecho de que, por tradición familiar, sus muñecas han permanecido siempre “limpias” de tales acusaciones. Sin embargo, desde las últimas décadas del siglo XX, las cajoneras comienzan a abandonar su profesión para invertir sus ganancias en poner tiendas o bazares. Y en los últimos años, una de ellas al menos, como tantas otras mujeres de la clase popular, ha migrado al exterior con la ilusión de ascenso económico y social.

Las cajoneras son no sólo miembros de una clase popular con memorias alternativas sobre la economía, la decencia y el ornato urbano, sino también “vendedoras” de memorias- de objetos que ahora evocan otras memorias alternativas de sonidos, gustos e imágenes familiares en la niñez de muchos. Como nos cuenta en su historia la Sra. Judith:



Doña Judith Enríquez Foto de la autora

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foto si está  
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Foto  
seede  
\*

“Antes en los cajones había collares legítimos que ya no se venden. Eran de corales. Antes también me acuerdo de las muñecas de aserrín, de los trompos, de unas pelotitas de agua y todo para los sastres: hilo de hilván, reglas, tambores y botones de toda clase. En

los cajones de antes también había juguetes, balancitas, baldecitos de lata y cocinitas enteras como las nuestras.

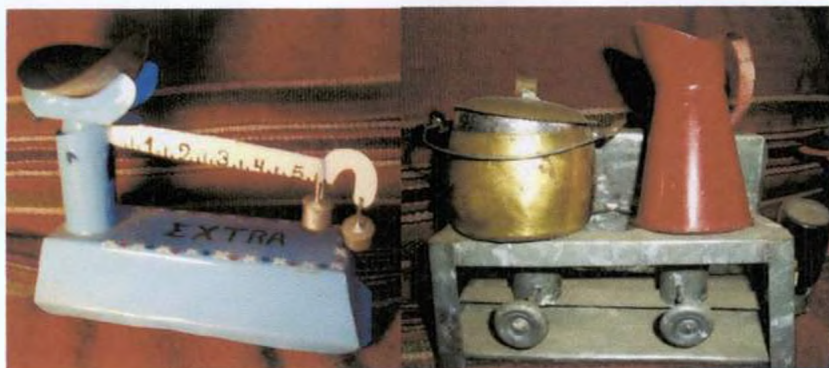


Cuando la gente pasa... Cajón de Doña Rosa

Paredes Foto de la autora

A veces cuando la gente pasa dice: "Ah! Qué lindo! Aquí mi mamá me compraba todos los juguetes y todavía existe! Para recordar me voy a comprar esos juguetes. Esas muñecas eran las que me daban para Navidad."

**Vendedoras de recuerdos....**



Fotos de la autora

Lo que más recuerdan son los caballitos de madera, esos que tienen una sola tira...Sonaban bonito cuando los guaguas los arrastraban por las calles.

### El corcel de la memoria



Fotos de la  
autora



Según el testimonio de Doña Zoila Landeta, ella permanecía en su puesto en 1997 sólo “para no dejar morir la tradición de las muñecas de trapo” (citado en Barriga y Rueda 1997: 26)



Foto de la autora



A través de esta historia, las muñecas de trapo se transforman en un símbolo del conflicto por el capital material y simbólico en los discursos de clase entre lo culto y lo popular. Para la elite las muñecas de trapo simbolizan el Otro, no el Otro exótico lejano sino el Otro pobre, tal vez demasiado familiar. Significan el supuesto y a veces temido “poco refinamiento”, el “mal gusto”, en fin como lo dicen la “cachivachería” de las clases populares. Por el contrario, para las mujeres de los cajones, las muñecas son un objeto de identidad y orgullo personal y familiar. Constituyen una trama de texturas y colores que las une a sus madres, abuelas y bisabuelas en una línea casi ininterrumpida de creatividad femenina desplegada en sus cajones de trabajo para el placer, la alegría y las memorias suyas y de otros.



Doña Rosa Paredes 2007 Foto Rocío Pazmiño

aquí ver  
foto  
truka ? \*  
2010

“Trabajo de lunes a sábado –dice Doña Rosa- desde las 10 de la mañana hasta las 5 de la tarde. A veces hace mucho frío en este portal y el trabajo es duro, sobretodo cuando se vende poco pero aquí todavía estoy. Sólo cuando tengo alguna invitación no trabajo.

Al final del día Doña Rosa guarda su cajón y las memorias que quedan en una bodega frente a la plaza de Santo Domingo.



Foto de la autora 200

Retornando al objetivo que mencioné al comienzo de recoger las memorias alternativas de mujeres de la calle quiero terminar con una cita de dos conocidos historiadores sociales de las clases populares que han inspirado mi trabajo:

“Respeto por el valor e importancia de los individuos es una de las lecciones éticas más inmediatas de la experiencia de trabajo de campo en historia oral. No son sólo los santos, los héroes, los tiranos- o las víctimas, los pecadores, los artistas los que tienen una resonancia única. Cada persona está en la encrucijada de muchas historias *potenciales*, de posibilidades imaginadas pero no cumplidas, de peligros esquivados y apenas evitados”.(Portelli 1997:

(Galba P.  
- Portelli)

Para Alessandro Portelli (1997), como para Luisa Passerini (1985), todos y cada individuo tienen derecho a una autobiografía, a narrar y dar así significado a sus propias vidas y a sus memorias.

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cu. p.1  
concejo

1 Agradezco a Rocío Pazmiño por su valiosa colaboración en esta investigación histórica y etnográfica. También agradezco a Eduardo Kingman y Ana María Goetschel por compartir conmigo sus vastos conocimientos de historia social de Quito. Cualquier error en la presentación o interpretación de los datos es totalmente de mi responsabilidad.

filu  
p.2

2. Por ejemplo, en una reciente experiencia etnográfica en la Plaza Grande con un grupo de jubilados, María Augusta Espín (en Kingman 2002?) cita una serie de refranes que estas personas recuerdan sobre la importancia del pan en la vida diaria. En estos dichos populares es obvio el uso de metáforas que evocan todos los sentidos y diversas emociones: el olor del pan fresco, la dureza del pan viejo, el color blanco del pan casero, en refranes como "Buena hambre no hay pan duro", "quien quiera más blanca la hogaza que amase en su casa" "pan caliente, hambre mete".

principio  
p.3

3. En un trabajo pionero con un enfoque histórico y estético hacia los objetos populares en el ámbito urbano, Pablo Barriga y Rocío Rueda (1997) presentan un estudio de las cajoneras y otros personajes callejeros del Centro Histórico. Mi presente ensayo quiere en parte retomar ese enfoque poniendo el énfasis en las voces de las mujeres y en el significado social de esa cultura material en sus vidas.

principio  
p.4  
Palacio

4. Por ejemplo, ver el artículo "Quito, 5 años sin comerciantes en las calles" donde se afirma que "preocupa [ a las autoridades de Quito] la posibilidad de que los comerciantes informales vuelvan a ocupar las calles de Quito y de otras ciudades del país." (Al Día. Periódico Urbano 20 Mayo 2008) Ver también "Los informales protestan en las calles del centro de Guayaquil (El Comercio, 22 Mayo 2008).

p.4  
cultura

5. Por ejemplo, en el año 2002, en la ceremonia de celebración del Domingo de Ramos con misa, palmas y burrito en la Plaza de San Francisco, irrumpió de improviso un conocido Ballet Folklórico contratado, erróneamente presentando un grupo de personajes vestidos de penitentes del Viernes Santo. Irónicamente, la explicación que el director del conjunto dio de esa interrupción a un acontecimiento tradicional de la cultura religiosa popular en Quito, fue que la intención era "preservar la cultura". El sacerdote que oficiaba la ceremonia interrumpió la misa y les pidió que se retirasen. Esta fue una interesante experiencia etnográfica de un intento oficial de convertir las manifestaciones populares urbanas en mercancía y a sus agentes en meros espectadores (notas de campo de la autora 2002).

concejo  
p.11  
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6. La misma actitud parece haber prevalecido más de un siglo después entre las vendedoras de objetos religiosos en la iglesia de San Francisco, quienes se vieron obligadas a modificar las especificaciones de sus puestos de trabajo diseñados y estandarizados por FONSAL. Según la vendedora María Mercedes Osorio, estos puestos no respondían a las necesidades del oficio, razón por la cual "han realizado una serie de

adecuaciones y arreglos con el fin de presentar al público sus productos de una manera llamativa y con buen gusto. (citado en Barriga y Rueda 1997:29)

7. Desde 2003 aproximadamente ya es extremadamente difícil, por ejemplo, encontrar los tradicionales santos y vírgenes populares de madera y yeso. Son ahora en su mayor parte de fibra de vidrio y fabricados en China. Más y más los adornos de tortas de bodas, bautismos y quinceañeras antes fabricados de azúcar están siendo reemplazados por figuras de plástico.

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Proveer esta  
cita para decir  
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## Epílogo

Como nos ocurre frecuentemente a los científicos sociales, la realidad pone a prueba las nostálgicas y tal vez precipitadas conclusiones sobre los sujetos de las culturas que, en el fondo, no queremos que desaparezcan. En este caso específico de las cajoneras, es la mirada etnográfica más joven de mi colega Erika Bedón la que me ayuda a corregir mis nostalgias y la que da lugar a estas reflexiones finales.

La cultura popular del Centro Histórico, y particularmente la de sus mujeres comerciantes, sigue siendo particularmente resistente a ser absorbida por los cambios de la globalización económica y cultural. Particularmente las mujeres comerciantes están resignificando las tradiciones y readaptándose silenciosa, pero seguramente, a las políticas de la nueva administración municipal que poco a poco parece revisar o eliminar las restricciones anteriores al uso popular del espacio público en el Centro Histórico.

Si bien es cierto que en la actualidad sólo quedan dos cajoneras hermanas con un sólo cajón en el Portal de Santo Domingo, y que la Sra. Rosa Paredes se ha retirado, ha aparecido una “nueva forma de cajonera”.



Fotos: Erika Bedón 2010

Hemos comprobado al menos la existencia de dos mujeres jóvenes que se turnan retomando un cajón

tradicional para seguir vendiendo objetos de consumo popular como espejos, cordones de colores para zapatillas deportivas, cepillos, tinta y hasta controles remotos de televisión usados. En comparación con otros objetos que se venden en los almacenes, estos productos siguen considerándose más baratos y están al alcance de la gente en su recorrido cotidiano por ese sector de la ciudad. Estas jóvenes se han apropiado de un espacio público en la calle Sucre y Venezuela, donde generalmente colocan su cajón.



Foto: Erika Bedón, 2010

Pero además, otros espacios de las calles del Centro Histórico que hace ocho años fueron “limpiadas” de la supuesta “contaminación” del comercio informal, van siendo re-ocupados por mujeres para trabajar y “ganarse la vida.” Y como lo hacían al menos desde el siglo xix, estas mujeres comerciantes han retomado la venta de mercancías de uso popular en las puertas de los almacenes o de pequeños depósitos de venta. Así es el caso de Ema Vázquez que vende los codiciados vestiditos bordados para el “Niño Dios” a la puerta del depósito de huevos “La Granja,” o de otras comerciantes que venden en las puertas de los almacenes de electrodomésticos y varios portales del Centro Histórico.



Foto: Erika Bedón 2010

Toda esta nueva evidencia me hace entonces más cauta para no volver a caer en nostálgicas

conclusiones sobre el futuro de la cultura popular. Pero, a la vez, todas estas nuevas vidas confirman sin lugar a duda la validez del objetivo que mencioné al comienzo de recoger las memorias alternativas de mujeres de la calle. Vuelvo entonces aquí a la cita con la cual comencé este trabajo para reafirmar las ideas que comparto con otros dos historiadores de la vida popular -Alessandro Portelli (1997) y Luisa Passerini (1985)- de que todos y cada individuo tienen derecho a una autobiografía, a narrar y dar así significado a sus propias vidas y a sus memorias.

**Algunas notas sobre la “nueva cajonera” y el trabajo de las mujeres en las puertas de los negocios comerciales del centro.**

En la actualidad solamente existen dos cajoneras que son hermanas la Sra. Anita y Lucía que se dedican a este trabajo, la Sra. Rocita ya se ha retirado de la venta y solamente pasa en ocasiones por el lugar visitando a sus amigas. No me supieron dar referencias sobre la Sra. que viajó a España, no la conocen según el testimonio de la Señora Lucía. (Otra cosa que quería comentarte es que en estos últimos tiempos, digamos el último año, se han dado varias publicaciones sobre las cajoneras, en revistas y otros artículos, esto hace pensar un poco sobre esta forma de patrimonializar la memoria en cuanto a los “personajes celebres” del centro.)

Sin embargo existe en la actualidad una serie de mujeres que continúan ocupando el espacio público para trabajar y “ganarse la vida”, los documentos de la primera mitad del siglo XIX dan cuenta de cómo las mujeres ocupaban las puertas de los almacenes para vender su mercadería, que en el mayor de los casos respondía a artículos de uso popular o de las clases populares y parte de estas dinámicas eran las ventas de las cajoneras. Actualmente al caminar por las calles del centro de Quito, parecería que estos documentos se hacen visibles, quiero decir que la presencia de estas mujeres en las puertas de los almacenes o de pequeños depósitos de ventas es una dinámica que está tomando fuerza, se puede ver que la mujeres continúan vendiendo ciertos objetos de uso popular. Por ejemplo la Sra. Emma Vásquez, vende vestidos bordados para el “niño Dios” a la puerta del depósito de huevos “La Granja” y así otras más en las puertas de almacenes de electrodomésticos y portales del Centro Histórico.



Sra. Emma Vásquez  
Foto. Erika Bedón.



Sra. Emma Vásquez  
Foto. Erika Bedón.



haber quitado la reja de la plaza de San Francisco o de que estas nuevas formas de trabajo femenino comiencen a emerger.



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Ventas

Foto: Erika Bedón.

en un portal del Centro.

Pero también hay una “nueva” forma de “cajonera” o una nueva forma en que una mujer de edad joven ha retomado para vender pequeños artículos, entre ellos, espejos, cordones de zapatos, cepillos, tinta, y hasta control remoto de televisión. Es una nueva forma de retomar la venta de objetos para usos populares, esta joven mujer también se ha apropiado del espacio público en la Calle Sucre y Venezuela, donde generalmente coloca su “cajón”. De alguna manera estas dinámicas se mantienen por que también sigue existiendo un consumo popular de estos objetos, que a comparación de otros objetos que se venden en los almacenes siguen considerándose más baratos y están al alcance de la gente en su recorrido cotidiano por la ciudad.

Me da la impresión que este tipo de dinámica se ha dado a partir de esta nueva administración municipal ya que anteriormente el espacio público estaba mucho más normado con la administración de Paco Moncayo. Es por esto que hay ciertas cosas que han cambiado como el

# **CHANGING RURAL BOLIVIA**

***FINAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL REPORT  
FOR THE PEACE CORPS***



***RISM BOLIVIA PROJECT  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF MAN***

CHANGING RURAL BOLIVIA

A Study of Social and Political Organization  
and the Potential for Development  
in Six Contrasting Communities

WILLIAM J. McEWEN

with the support  
of the  
Bolivia Project Staff

Final Anthropological Report  
for the Peace Corps  
RISM BOLIVIA PROJECT

Research Institute for the Study of Man  
1969

Project Administration

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Dwight Heath  
Solomon Miller  
Victor Novick  
Eloy Robalino S.

Senior Analysts

Adrienne Aron  
Marta Callejo  
Isabella Conti  
Blanca Muratorio

The complete list of project personnel is in Appendix I.



## FOREWORD

It is generally recognized that Peace Corps Volunteers working abroad must make a number of personal adjustments. They must first recover from the "culture shock" of having met with new and strange ways of life and modes of thought foreign to their experience. They must then -- as chance and situation dictate -- establish purpose-defined identity in communities in which they are alien, and where their presence may not be fully understood or appreciated. It is essential that community workers who come from a highly developed society incisively assess the potentials and limitations of their constructive efforts in the underdeveloped society.

The Revolution of 1952 set in train a series of major reforms in Bolivia -- many of which still need to be implemented -- and created a stimulus to social and political change. However, national economic growth and the achievement of development goals require massive technical and financial assistance. Countries like Bolivia do not have the capital inputs and technical resources to raise national living standards unassisted. The extension and improvement of roads, communications, medical services, preventive public health programs, educational and social services, electrification, and food production and distribution constitute Bolivia's basic need in achieving modernization. Adequacy in these things cannot be conjured up in short order.

This study of different types of Bolivian rural communities examines minute and often subtle internal factors that underlie both slow and rapid change. Comprehension of these factors should provide a framework for constructive organization of Volunteer work that can serve personal and community needs. Each of the chapters presents an aspect of community organization or character that has bearing on action programs. Each deals with many details about community life, and provides important clues for personal adjustment and informed planning.

## PREFACE and ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study has been carried out under the auspices of the Research Institute for the Study of Man (RISM), which was incorporated in 1955 as a non-profit scientific and educational organization in response to the need for stimulating and supporting social science research in little known and rapidly changing areas. In keeping with these objectives, RISM, in the late spring of 1964, undertook a program of epidemiological and anthropological research in Bolivia at the request of the Peace Corps. In part, this resulted from the RISM's prior relationship with the Peace Corps in the training of Volunteers for St. Lucia and Jamaica. The Bolivian study was carried out under Peace Corps Contract (PC(W)-397), which provided funds for a three-year project, to start in August, 1964. Due to the complexity of the research and analysis and the primary interest in the application of scientific knowledge, considerable supplementary funding has been provided by RISM in support of the project. Somewhat over a third of the total cost of the research has come from this source.

This project had two interrelated research objectives. It attempted to define the major problems of health and disease in rural Bolivian communities in the different ecological regions of the country, and to delineate the major social features of these communities. The attainment of both objectives was seen as fundamental to the planning of effective community development programs. Basic epidemiological and social science information and analyses directly relevant to significant innovation on the community level in Bolivia have been provided. The analyses based on these data offer a framework which can assist Peace Corps Volunteers and other community level workers in developing areas to understand the dynamics of community problems and community change.

The methodological and theoretical development of the project, as well as the research findings, have been subjects of report during the period of the contract. A series of quarterly reports, describing the work of the project and the course of research, have been filed with the Peace Corps. The final epidemiological report and summary of findings on health levels and health behavior, Epidemiological Studies in Bolivia, Omran, McEwen, Zaki, was submitted in November, 1967, and has since received wide distribution. This monograph has now been translated into Spanish (Estudios Epidemiológicos en Bolivia) by the Peace Corps for circulation in Latin America. Credits for the epidemiological research have been presented in these reports; but special mention must be made again of the contribution of Dr. Abdel Omran, who assumed responsibility for the research, tabulation and analysis. Finally, a number of articles, reports, theses and doctoral dissertations have resulted from



project research (see Appendix 3). A series of four film strips on Bolivia has also been prepared by RISM for training and educational purposes.

This volume presents the principal results of the anthropological investigations. It concentrates on focal topics that provide an integrated approach to understanding problems of community action. In order to present a systematic exposition of the principal findings, not all of the anthropological data that were collected are detailed in this report. The project research design is presented in Chapter 1. The full range of topics covered in the field research may be seen in the community study outline (Appendix 2). Discussion of a number of these topics has been presented, and further discussion will be presented in other publications.

Another reason for limiting the scope of this volume is the obligation to report the central findings within the shortest time period possible. Anthropological monographs usually require several years to a decade before publication, which may limit the implementation of research findings. In a nation like Bolivia, which has had very little scientific research and which is experiencing rapid change, early dissemination of research findings is of obvious importance.

It has been customary for the anthropologist to go to the field, collect data, then organize and analyze the data and write up his findings on return from the field. Research of the scope of the Bolivia Project did not preclude following such a model. However, since tradition is not necessarily the most feasible guide for large-scale research in contemporary complex societies, several different methods and strategies were applied.

To cope with the various problems of large-scale research, a unitary design was developed for the entire process of data collection and analysis. Based on the initial research design, a detailed field guide was prepared to coordinate the collection of data in Bolivia (see Appendix 2). To facilitate the analysis, a data classifying system was organized to process the field notes. Notes received from the field teams at monthly intervals were classified according to the field guide, duplicated and categorized by topic. Further, the community analysis outline, based on the field guide, was used to prepare the preliminary analysis as well as the present report. A detailed account of these procedures appears in McEwen, 1967.

Dr. William J. McEwen, the research director of the Bolivia Project, was responsible for developing the research design and the hypotheses that guided the study, as well as for the direction of the data collection, processing and analyses, and carried out the preparation of this final report.

Completion of the reports has been made possible by an intensive collaborative effort. The Bolivia research project in its various phases involved a large multi-disciplinary staff,

whose specific functions need to be identified. The anthropological field staff collected the primary data for this report. The study team in each of the six communities was headed by a senior anthropologist: Victor Novick in Reyes and Villa Abecia; Dwight Heath in Coroico; Solomon Miller in San Miguel; Hans Buechler in Compi, and William McEwen in Sorata. This volume would not have been possible but for their contribution to the basic data collection. In addition, a number of research associates and assistants participated in the community studies (see Appendix 1), two of whom must be singled out for major contributions to the research: Katherine Barnes, who worked in Coroico, Sorata and Villa Abecia, and Eloy Robalino S., who worked in Coroico and Sorata. Bolivian and United States research assistants, working under the direction of senior staff, were invaluable in the collection of field data.

Community selection was a vital aspect of the research design, involving a comprehensive survey of rural communities in different ecological zones. Reconnaissance for community selection was undertaken during July, August and September of 1964, by a project team consisting of Drs. William McEwen and Dwight Heath, Abdel Omran, M.D., and Victor Novick. The field studies were carried out between October, 1964, and December, 1966. The six communities were studied for varying lengths of time at different periods. Field work in Reyes was carried out between October, 1964, and September, 1965; in Coroico between December, 1964, and October, 1965; in Compi between December, 1964, and January, 1966; in Villa Abecia between October, 1965, and June, 1966; in Sorata between November, 1964, and February, 1965, and again between July, 1965, and September, 1966; in San Miguel between April and September, 1965, and between July and December, 1966.

The second group of project workers who must be identified is the team responsible for the continuous classification of field notes. Coping with the voluminous quantity of field data was a demanding task. The staff of coders made an important contribution to the work of the project, particularly Adrienne Aron, who completed the largest part of this assignment.

The third group of project workers to be identified is the data analysis team, which carried out a complex task with great skill. Special mention must be given to Blanca Muratorio and Marta Callejo, who completed drafts for the analysis of Villa Abecia and Reyes, respectively. Adrienne Aron and Isabella Conti completed drafts for some of the chapters of Coroico and Sorata, and Joan Medlin prepared a draft of the San Miguel setting. These initial analyses of data greatly facilitated the writing of the present volume.

The preparation of this volume in a comparatively short period of time would have been impossible without the fundamental contribution of the anthropological field workers, the data coders and the data analysts, under the direction of Dr. William McEwen. The Research Institute for the Study of Man gratefully acknowledges their work, skill and perseverance.

Administration of the inter-disciplinary project was carried out by the RISM staff, based in New York, which organized the two-pronged epidemiological and anthropological research, the collection of epidemiological samples and anthropological data. To minimize the investment in project administration, no central headquarters was established in Bolivia, although all the epidemiological samples were processed and tested at the central laboratory in La Paz, under the direction of Dr. Franz Ressel. A number of Bolivian assistants worked on various phases of the project, in collaboration with the research team from the United States. Administrative problems that arose during the course of the 30 months of field work were handled either at long distance, or personally by the members of the directorate of the project, who spelled each other in Bolivia at different periods. Certain empirical problems were not easily resolved, because of the nature of the field situation and difficulties in communication; nevertheless, the research proceeded on schedule, and the major objectives of the project were fulfilled.

In both the epidemiological and present reports, the actual names of communities have been used, else the epidemiological findings would not be meaningful. Names of individuals, however, except for national or historical figures, have been fictionalized. Other than the public personalities, no specific individuals are identified.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to the Peace Corps/Bolivia staff, Acting Peace Corps Representative (PCR) Daniel Sharp, PCR Jason Edwards, Richard A. Griscom, who was interim Peace Corps Director, PCR Arthur Purcell, and their administrative assistants, who patiently helped with shipments of field notes, handled correspondence, and provided general logistical support for the project. To the many Peace Corps Volunteers in Bolivia whose helpfulness and support eased some of the difficult chores of research, we are most indebted.

We also wish to acknowledge the cooperation of Juan Forster, Director of Caritas/Bolivia, who facilitated the research in many ways, and of Leon Schertler, then of Food for Peace. The assistance of the Bolivian Indianist Institute and its director, Dr. Oscar Arze Q., and his staff, was also most helpful to the project. We are most indebted to the Bolivian Ministry of Health, both for collaboration in the epidemiological study and continued cooperation during the course of the project.

Administration of the project and the preparation of reports have been greatly facilitated by the RISM secretarial staff, especially Mrs. Carol Dickert, Miss Dena Hirsh, Mrs. June Murray and Mrs. Andrea Talbutt.

Finally, we are indebted to the many Bolivians in the study communities, and in La Paz, Oruro and Tarija, whose cooperation with the project made the study possible.

Vera Rubin, Project Director

Lambros Comitas, Associate Director

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Photographs by Lambros Comitas, Lauren Klein and Wm. J. McEwen.  
Picture Editors: Jane Gregory and Andrea Talbutt.



**PART I**

**Introduction**



## Chapter 1

### THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

One of the more striking changes on the world scene has been the emergence of a multitude of new nations. A corollary to this has been tremendously increased attention to the problems of national development and modernization, especially in the less developed countries. While much national development planning focuses on economic problems, on how to diversify economic production and increase the rate of economic growth, there is now in most nations a much more inclusive, comprehensive conception, in which even small communities are important and have a place in national planning. In this more comprehensive view there are not only economic issues, but problems such as health, education, transportation, communication, housing and recreation to be considered.

Faced with scarcities of money, materials and trained workers, most of the underdeveloped nations have sought material and technical aid from abroad. The several forms of aid have been transmitted through a variety of channels, among them the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Health Organization, and through international bilateral agreements, sometimes involving a specific agency of the assisting country. One of the more unusual examples of this last type of aid is the Peace Corps, with its world-wide program of providing assistance through people rather than funds or materials.

The Peace Corps, inaugurated in 1961, sent its first contingent of Volunteers to Bolivia in 1962. By the summer of 1964, when the studies with which this report are concerned were begun, there were 152 Peace Corps Volunteers working in that country. Each was associated with one of several different development programs. There were projects in agricultural improvement, rural community development, colonization of new zones, and university teaching. Clearly, the biggest project was that in public health and sanitation. In this there were 71 Volunteers, most of them registered nurses or licensed practical nurses. They were scattered throughout the nation, some in cities, some in towns, some in tiny hamlets. Regardless of specific assignment, all were generally charged with helping the people of their communities with their most pressing problems, to the extent of the Volunteers' own skills.

Given this general charge, the research reported in this volume focuses on communities, on the situations in which Peace Corps Volunteers work. Such a focus, despite its obvious importance, has never been utilized in Peace Corps research. Following from this, one point has to be made absolutely clear: The research reported here was not designed to analyze the specific performance of individual Volunteers or to examine their par-

ticular projects. The success of many, if not most, local projects often depends on an individual Volunteer. This naturally directs attention to the strengths and weaknesses of the Volunteers themselves.

From this perspective flows a series of specific problems of relevance to Peace Corps operations, mostly psychological in character. Without minimizing the significance of these problems, such as the role of personal flexibility, of emotional maturity, of warmth of personality, on the adaptability of Volunteers to foreign situations, this research emphasizes the other part of the equation, the situation in which the Volunteer finds himself. Without denying that Volunteers bring contrasting capabilities to a problem, it is important to realize that varied abilities can be affected, even made irrelevant, by the circumstances confronting Volunteers. A capable Volunteer in a promising situation should have little difficulty; a capable Volunteer in a difficult situation will have a problematical fate; a limited Volunteer in a difficult situation probably will have no chance at all.

In Bolivia, there were many problems confronting the Volunteer -- the lack of roads, of schools and teachers, of electricity, as well as the specific problems related to health, such as inadequate or polluted water supplies. In addition, Volunteers encountered other types of problems, primarily those affecting the capacity of rural communities to undertake common action to improve their general welfare. Some communities were split by rigid social divisions, between which there was little communication and often considerable antagonism. Other communities were racked by hostile factions, or beset by rapidly changing and unstable leadership. Still others contained large numbers of newcomers, poorly integrated and with little social commitment; while important population segments of the towns were apathetic and alienated from community problems.

In 1964, almost half of the Peace Corps Volunteers in Bolivia were working in public health and sanitation programs. Diseases in Bolivia, as in other underdeveloped countries, are a major impediment to progress. High mortality rates and associated low life expectancy seriously reduce potential manpower. High rates of preventable disease similarly are costly in suffering and disability. Though census figures are unreliable, it is clear that the Bolivian population is predominantly rural. These are the people who suffer the greatest shortage of health facilities and for whom even a limited application of advanced medical knowledge could have appreciable impact. Given this setting, the small communities of the rural zones appeared to be a much more strategic focus for development efforts than the urban settlements. The significance of health and of rural community organization were key elements in determining the research design.

An additional element that played a role in shaping the research was the paucity of relevant and reliable information. Few health studies had been done, and most of these concerned urban populations. The last comprehensive census of the rural population had been taken in 1950. On the nature of Bolivian community

organization, the materials were even more dismal. While there has been some recent research, much of it has concentrated on the nomadic or semi-nomadic Indians of eastern Bolivia, an extremely small portion of the national population. As late as 1964, it was still possible for a review of community studies in Latin America to conclude that Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela are "practically terra incognita, as far as studies of the contemporary culture are concerned" [Strickon, 1964, p. 146].

On the basis of these and related considerations, the following three general objectives were selected in this research:

1. To determine the major health problems in rural communities in different physical environments.
2. To describe and analyze the dynamics of community organization in rural Bolivia.
3. To assess the significance of rural social organization, especially in relation to community action.

Following from these objectives, a series of linked epidemiological and anthropological studies were undertaken. A number of vital questions were posed, such as: What are the different, as well as common, health problems of communities in the major ecological zones of Bolivia? How much awareness is there of these problems in the different communities? How much awareness is there of other problems? What forces exist in the different communities to deal with problems? How do they work? What is the social and organizational context within which such activity takes place? How does this context affect community problem-solving?

The basic findings of the epidemiological study of health problems have been presented in a separate report [Omran, McEwen and Zaki, 1967], a companion volume to this one. This volume is concerned primarily with the social and organizational context within which development work must take place. In studying the community as an organization, particular attention has been directed to community power, authority, leadership, political participation, community status, status groups, group membership, group leadership and inter-group relations. These themes were chosen as especially pertinent for understanding community social structure and the context of social action.

The six communities studied in this project were not selected as typical of the hundreds of communities in rural Bolivia. The lack of reliable, nation-wide background and statistical information made such representative sampling impracticable. An alternative might have been to pick communities to represent different regions in Bolivia, for the six are in fact in different regions; or to represent different histories, for they have distinctive histories; or different economies, for economic contrasts among them are marked. Regional, historical, and economic sampling criteria were set aside as less illuminating of community differences when a major interest was community action. Instead, the

practical as well as theoretical solution was to select communities to represent major organizational types, ones with decisively different organizational properties. On both theoretical and empirical grounds, two properties are especially significant for the understanding of rural Bolivian communities. One is social stratification and the other is politicalization.

Typically, in socially stratified communities, members of one stratum differ from those of another in their style of life, their beliefs and values, their forms of association, but especially in prestige, wealth and power [Kahl, 1957, Chapter 1]. While all communities exhibit differences in individual status associated with differences in prestige, power and wealth, a stratified hierarchy is a structure of ranked groups invidiously distinguished and unequally sharing in the rewards and privileges of the community [Tumin, 1967, Chapters 4 and 5]. The reality of stratification conditions community leadership, politics, group membership and inter-group relations.

Social stratification has been a major factor in Bolivian history and development. At least as early as the Inca penetration and conquest of what is now highland Bolivia, a stratified social system was in existence [Baudin, 1961, Chapter 4]. Of greater contemporary relevance is the Spanish conquest of the 16th Century, which resulted in a variety of complex orders of stratification. In subjugated lands with large Indian populations, such as Alto Peru, the system was organized around a ranking stratum of Spanish rulers to whom the Indians were subject. In the course of time, as a result of economic, political and social processes, important intermediate strata began to appear, as well as further stratification along regional and rural-urban lines. These added complexities have not blunted the sharp features of social stratification in the rural zones. Rural communities vary in the extent to which they are internally stratified. In many small villages there are differences in income, in material goods, in prestige and in power, but the differences are relatively small, and there are no distinguishable social strata -- these can be referred to as simply stratified or one-level systems, in contrast to complexly stratified systems. Two of the communities in this study are of the simple one-level variety, while the other four are examples of complex stratification in rural life.

Politicalization, the intensification of political involvement, is a critical but protean element of vital importance to developing nations, not least in the case of Bolivia. While as much as two-thirds of the Bolivian population has been defined as Indian, the Indians were traditionally and systematically excluded from national politics. Illiterate, isolated from all but word-of-mouth communication, they were largely an inert political mass. From 1952 on, however, their situation was radically altered. After a short but violent clash in the spring of that year, the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) overthrew the ruling military junta and established itself as a reform government.

The MNR held power for 12 years. During this period the

largest mines were nationalized and their control was given to the miners' unions; the larger agricultural estates were seized for division among peasants; the peons were freed from feudalistic labor obligations; universal suffrage was enacted without regard to property, linguistic or educational qualifications; campesino sindicatos, the peasant unions, were established, some of them armed to serve as para-military units. A consequence of these measures was that the barriers which had isolated the rural Indian from the national society were breached. In the rhetoric of the revolution, rural Indians became campesinos, "countrymen". The campesino sindicatos were drawn into the MNR and were exhorted to take their place in the vanguard of the revolution. This politicalization of the Bolivian rural population has been uneven, however. It did not occur everywhere, or not with the same intensity. The communities selected for this study present contrasts not only in social stratification but in degree of politicalization; two have been but slightly changed, two have been moderately affected and two have been highly politicalized.

The six communities thus chosen represent critical variations along the two organizational dimensions. It is abundantly clear from the research that these six contrasting places present very different work situations for Peace Corps Volunteers and very different challenges for community action programs.

That the importance of the work situation is more than a casual factor can be shown from the research itself. In three of the six communities studied there were Peace Corps projects. In these communities samples of residents were questioned regarding their knowledge of the presence of Peace Corps Volunteers. The contrasts in the proportions who knew that Volunteers were in town is striking: 88% in Reyes, 61% in Coroico, and 22% in Sorata. Since there were Volunteers in all three towns, these proportions are an indication of the differences of impact that Volunteers have had on their communities. Furthermore, these contrasts cannot be attributed to differences between particular Volunteers. From the records, there were both effective and ineffective Volunteers in all three communities. In addition, in all three there was not only more than one Volunteer working, but the set of Volunteers encountered during the field studies was only the most recent of several sets that had been active in each community over the preceding two years.

Not only are there over-all differences of awareness about the Volunteers, but there are also revealing internal contrasts within each community. When the respondents in the survey samples are grouped in three gross classes by occupation (defined as high town occupation, low town occupation and traditional agriculture), the stratified sub-samples reveal important differences. In Coroico, 74% of the highs, but only 53% of the lows know of the Peace Corps' presence. (There are almost no traditional agriculturalists in this town.) In Sorata, the comparable proportions are 49% for the highs, 17% for the lows, and 0% for the traditional agriculturalists. In Reyes the proportions are 98%, 83%, and 83%. The differences within Coroico and Sorata emphasize the significance of strata position in their being knowledge

of the Volunteers. It is equally clear that the structural differences between the two towns also affect the way in which social strata responded to the Volunteers. Highs in Coroico are more knowledgeable than highs in Sorata. Finally, the greater receptivity of Reyes as a whole almost cancels the influence of strata position, re-emphasizing the significance of different types of communities.

In these contrasts are some of the explanations for the differential of impact that the presence of Volunteers has had. Again, it is not that Reyes was fortunate in receiving a number of strikingly effective young Peace Corps Volunteers and that the other two towns did not fare as well. This was not the case. The research findings demonstrate that Coroico, Reyes and Sorata, as well as Compi, San Miguel and Villa Abecia, present very different contexts for Volunteer action. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that these differences in knowledge of Volunteer presence reflect not individual Volunteer effectiveness, but most likely systematic differences in the structure of these three communities.

The following chapters attempt to describe in detail the differences in the contrasting types of communities, and further, to so present the study that it may serve as a model to assist the community worker in organizing his work. While the Volunteer needs to be prepared as a person to cope with the challenges that face an American working abroad, he also requires, just as importantly, a conceptual awareness that will enable him to understand the situation in which he must work.



## Chapter 2

### THE BOLIVIAN SETTING

Bolivia is the fifth largest country in South America, its area being 423,163 square miles, somewhat over half the size of Mexico and not quite twice the size of Texas. Within this moderately large country there exists a marked regionalism, the effect especially of geographic obstacles to communication and geographic imperatives in population distribution. All Bolivia is in three major ecological zones: high plateau, valleys and lowlands [Osborne, 1964, pp. 7-34].

The high plateau (the altiplano) covers about one-fifth of the country, in the west and southwest. It is a series of large tablelands extending from north to south, walled off to the west by the Cordillera Occidental, and to the east by the Cordillera Real, snow-capped chains of the Andes. Elevation above sea level varies from 12,000 to 13,000 feet, and the region is generally treeless and barren and tends to be cold, windy and arid. The flanking mountains rise to 23,000 feet, and in them are most of the mines and known mineral wealth of the country. On the altiplano live perhaps 70% of Bolivia's people. Two of the communities of this study are in this ecological zone.

Compi is a community of the northern altiplano. It is situated beside Lake Titicaca, and consequently has slightly warmer weather, more reliable rainfall and fewer hailstorms than other parts of the high plateau. South of Compi is San Miguel, in the central altiplano, a zone which is generally more arid, less fertile, and subjected to extremes of cold and wind.

Most of the eastern chain of the Andes, the Cordillera Real, is dry, stony, and sparsely populated. However, cutting through the eastern Cordillera is another livable world, a complex belt of valleys that connects the altiplano to lower lands in the east. This valley region comprises about 10% of the area of Bolivia but contains 20% of her population. It is a fantastically convoluted region of jagged mountains that drop away into a myriad of canyons and valleys. Some canyons extend for miles, but are only a few hundred yards across. The considerably wider valleys sometimes offer a broad expanse of relatively flat land. Crossing the eastern Cordillera at altitudes of 15,000 to 16,000 feet, the canyons and valleys descend into another, a main valleys area, which slips down from 10,000 to 2,000 feet above sea level.

Two of the study communities are in the upper, the higher altitude valleys. One of these, Sorata, is not far in an air-line sense from either La Paz or Compi, but lies far over on the eastern side of the Cordillera Real and down at an elevation of 8,000

feet. There are no broad valleys here, so much of the agriculture is practised on steep hillsides. The climate of Sorata is markedly Mediterranean, with seasonal grasses, groves of eucalyptus and large fields of maize.

The second of our communities in the upper valleys is Villa Abecia. It lies south, close to the Argentine border. Although it is only slightly lower in altitude than Sorata, Villa Abecia's climate and vegetation are very different, affected by an immense, desert-like area -- the Chaco, to the southeast -- which covers most of northern Paraguay and part of southern Bolivia. Except for a brief period following the rainy season, most farmlands in the Villa Abecia area must be irrigated, which generally means river-bottom cultivation. Sparsely covered steep mountainsides shed flash floods during the rainy season, and rising drafts in the heat of the summer often bring down destructive hailstorms. Flood and hail take an annual toll of crops. And because roads are continuously washed away, some part of what is left for harvest may go unmarketed.

As valley succeeds valley in the sometimes gradual, sometimes precipitous descent to the trans-Andean eastern lowlands, the Mediterranean climate of the upper valleys gives way to a semitropical environment. Much of the lower valleys zone is accessible only on foot or on horseback. An exception is the zone known as the Yungas, in which lies the study community of Coroico. This is a zone of deep canyons, year-round rivers and lush vegetation. It produces such semitropical crops as coffee, bananas and citrus fruits, as well as coca (source of cocaine and chewed for its stimulant properties), all grown on carefully terraced hillsides. The Yungas has always been an important agricultural area in Bolivia.

The low hills of the lower valleys eventually give way to the Llanos del Oriente, an immense flat plain that stretches north and east to the Brazilian frontier and south to Paraguay. The Oriente is about 70% of the total land area of Bolivia. It varies in altitude from 300 to 1,500 feet, is hot and wet. Heavy seasonal rains inundate great expanses for weeks at a time. Over this great flat area tropical jungle alternates with open forests and savannah grasslands, and though it is rich in plant and animal growth, it contains no more than about 15% of Bolivia's population. In this area of generally small and widely separated settlements is the sixth study community, Reyes. It lies in grassland but not far from forest, near the western edge of the northern part of the Oriente.

The three major regions of Bolivia differ greatly in accessibility. The lowland Oriente region is most isolated, though it has recently been penetrated by one of the few paved roads in Bolivia, which carries traffic between Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. Two rail lines also run from Santa Cruz, one to the Brazilian border in the east and the other to Argentina in the south. But these facilities still leave most of the Oriente without road or rail transport. Travel is by foot, horseback, canoe or small boat, except that important towns such as Reyes -- and even some

unimportant ones -- are served by the national airlines.

The generally flat terrain and the great distances make air transport an ideal though expensive form of rapid transport in the Oriente. In the valleys region, terrain rules aircraft out; while on the altiplano, it is more a matter of being financially out of range for small farm villages. The terrain in the valleys region is also inhospitable to railroads, so most traffic moves over raw roads that generally have been bulldozed out of the mountainsides, subject to continual erosion and destruction. The three valleys communities of this study are reached by such roads.

A rail line traverses the length of the altiplano but has little impact on most of the communities in this region, for it serves few cities, and is mainly an export carrier of mined minerals. Few communities have airline service, and the road network is poor. Nevertheless, goods and people move, for most of the altiplano is level, dry and hard and heavy-duty trucks can reach most communities without any road at all. At times, it is only necessary to point the vehicle in the right direction and follow the landmarks and the stars. This is the case with travel to San Miguel, except during the rainy season when it is quite inaccessible by vehicle.

National census data are far from reliable. The 1950 census gave the proportion of rural residents as 66.1%, but since all administrative centers, regardless of region, were counted as urban, this figure is very likely an underestimate [Lyle and Calman, 1966, p. 14, Table 7]. The National Planning Council estimated the rural population in 1960 as 71% [Planeamiento, 1961]. Other data give the proportion of residents of localities of over 100,000 persons in 1957 as 10.2%, which would mean that 89.8% were in rural communities [Lyle and Calman, 1966, p. 15, Table 8].

About 70% of the labor force is engaged in one or another of the agricultural occupations [Zondag, 1966, p. 18], which accounted for approximately one-third of the gross national product in Bolivia in 1964 [Zondag, 1966, p. 202, Table 15]. On the other hand, 40% of Bolivia's imports in approximately the same period were foodstuffs, which the country itself theoretically could produce, while 95% of the value of all exports came not from the sale of agricultural products, but of minerals [Zondag, 1966, p. 177]. In short, this predominantly agricultural population does not produce enough food to meet its needs, but feeds itself in part through its mineral exports.

Each of the six communities of this study is within the agricultural sector of the Bolivian economy. In them we shall find some of the problems and prospects of the whole agricultural sector as seen at the local level. As a set, they represent the major regional variations that occur in Bolivia in terms of distinctive physical ecologies, some peculiarities of micro-environments and microclimates excepted. They typify some of the most important farm and market communities of the country.

## Society and Government

Just as the research communities exhibit environmental and economic variations encountered in rural Bolivia, so they reflect some of the major forms and variations in social and political organization. According to the National Planning Agency, the Bolivian population is 52.9% Indian, 32% cholo (mixed descent), 14.8% white, and 0.3% other races [Osborne, 1964, p. 106]. In fact, this is more a distribution of cultural types than a racial distribution. There are few whites in Bolivia who have no Indian ancestry, while the definition of a cholo depends more on cultural criteria of language and manners. Further, these figures probably greatly overestimate the proportion of whites and underestimate that of Indians.

Whether thought of as fundamentally racial or ethnic groupings, this way of categorizing the national population has had an important influence on Bolivian society ever since the early decades following the Spanish conquest, and it still affects its social stratification. At the time of the Spanish conquest, as at present, the Indian population was concentrated on the altiplano. Within a few years most of the Indians were not only under Spanish administrative control but under the economic control of individual Spaniards, through repartimiento and encomienda grants that gave the conquerors legal right to Indian tribute and labor. Such grants, and the legal theory behind them, went through tortuous development during the colonial period; but in time they enabled the Spanish minority to amass large agricultural estates to which Indians were bound by feudalistic obligations. Then as now, agricultural labor was supplied chiefly by Indians. Up to the revolution of 1952, hacienda labor was performed as a complex set of specific work obligations in exchange for the use of a small subsistence plot of land on the hacienda. Compi is an example of this type of community.

In some parts of the altiplano the frigid climate, infertile, rocky land and relative inaccessibility lowered the potentialities of labor exploitation and marginal agriculture. As a consequence, haciendas were never established, and the Indians were allowed to retain their land and live in what have been termed "free" communities. The number of such communities today is something under 5,000, though the size of the "free" population is unknown [Urquidi, 1966, p. 211]. Such communities have experienced a quite different course of development, making for differences in their relations with the national government and the blancos, the governing class. San Miguel is an example of a free Indian community, and illustrates some of these differences.

Following the Spanish conquest, a number of towns were established throughout the country as governmental and marketing centers. Coroico and Sorata are examples. Other communities, because of similarly strategic geo-economic location, ultimately developed into such towns, generally populated by Spaniards and mestizos, with a minority of Indians. Examples of this development are Reyes and Villa Abecia.

In the eastern lowlands and the southern valleys, the much smaller Indian population was rapidly reduced and today survives as a distinct segment of the population, mainly in small nomadic bands in the more isolated jungle zones of the lowlands. A major consequence of this for social relations in the towns of these regions can be seen by contrasting them with Coroico and Sorata and their environs. Before 1952, caste-like social strata in these communities were rigidly defined in terms of race (indio, cholo, mestizo, blanco), even though the distinctions between strata were largely cultural differences in language, dress and manners. In contrast, not only has racial distinctiveness disappeared to a great extent in Reyes and Villa Abecia, but cultural distinctiveness has similarly declined. In these communities stratification is more directly a matter of power and wealth. Four of the communities of this study illustrate different ways in which cultural traditions have been combined with economic and political power in rural Bolivia to produce a strongly hierarchical stratification order. San Miguel and Compi, on the other hand, are communities of Indian agriculturalists, fundamentally unstratified.

Bolivia has a highly centralized national government in which the decisive power is in the hands of the president. Down from the national level the country is divided into departamentos, provincias and cantons. Domination by the central executive over the regional and local levels of government is ensured because their key officers are appointed from the top [Leonard, 1952, p. 189 ff.].

In contrast to most rural communities, all but one of the study communities are exceptional in that they have regional governmental importance. Coroico, Sorata, Reyes and Villa Abecia are all capitals of provincias. Each, therefore, has a set of appointed officials who direct province affairs, in addition to another appointed set who direct town affairs. San Miguel is the capital of a canton, also a regional unit of government. Compi is not exceptional in this regard, since it forms only part of a canton and is not a regional capital.

Study of the six communities reveals an often wide gap between legal rules written in the national capital and local practice. This vexing problem has a number of antecedents, which will be discussed in later chapters. A question of not least importance is whether local government as it functions today is viable. Bolivia has had a number of national constitutional revisions, the latest in 1967, altering some aspects of local government, but always central control has been maintained at the expense of local responsibility.

Since the early years after Bolivia's independence in 1828, contests for control of the national government have generally been conducted in a nominally political party context. Because constitutional literacy and income requirements disenfranchised well over 90% of the population, such contests were mainly between urban elite groups. Even among these, party personalism dominated party organization and programs. As a consequence,

until the rise of the leftist parties and later the MNR, political parties as such had little structural substance. This was even more true in the rural towns and villages, and even today in the rural zones political parties are often marginal, weak, unstable organizations.

There are three political parties of national importance. The Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR) is the radical reform party that came to power in 1952 and governed Bolivia continuously until 1964. The Falange Socialista Boliviana (FSB) is the party of conservative interests in Bolivia and the main opposition to the government. The Movimiento Popular Cristiano (MPC) is the new government party. It has continued to support most of the reform programs of the MNR, but with increasing, even drastic, attention to economic solvency. There are many other parties, but these are the three that had national as well as local importance during the period of this study.

### 1952, The Year of Revolution

The most decisive event in recent Bolivian history was the seizure of the national government by the MNR in 1952. Bolivia has experienced frequent violent changes of government, but the rise to power of the MNR was the first change that had wide popular support, that was not merely a palace revolution. The crisis out of which the MNR emerged had been developing over a period of years and was compounded of disparate but interrelated factors. Among the most important of these were the stagnation and imbalance in the national economy; inadequate tax revenue; an increasingly inept national administration; the growing organization and militancy of labor groups, especially miners, and the spreading dissatisfaction in the politically critical urban populations [Malloy, 1968].

The MNR did not suddenly appear with a well developed set of solutions to Bolivia's national problems. The forces pressing for radical reform had built up over a long period, and the MNR emerged out of a tortuous history primarily as the organizational framework through which a variety of groups and interests pressing for change could combine forces. The MNR was far from being a monolithic party. Its initial executive and programmatic actions depended very much on tactical considerations and the balance of competing pressures that existed at any given moment. However, how and why certain reforms came to be supported by the MNR is not so important in the present context as the fact that reforms were in fact enacted, and that there were widespread local repercussions. [See Alexander, 1958, for a discussion of the rise and early years of the MNR government.]

Within months of taking over the national government, the MNR adopted labor legislation and social security measures and nationalized the major mining properties. These acts had only an indirect effect, if any, on rural populations. The degree of effect depended very much on the position of a rural community in the governmental system, on its social character and especially

on the relevance of specific reform legislation to its economic character.

The agrarian reform that the MNR instituted had radical consequences for many areas of life [Patch, 1958]. This act largely destroyed the feudalistic hacienda system. The extent of concentration of land ownership under the hacienda system had been revealed by the 1950 census. The data of that census showed that 3.8% of private land holdings constituted 81.8% of agricultural property [Lyle and Calman, 1966, pp. 60-61, Table 37].

The dissatisfaction of the Indian peons on the haciendas had become intense in some areas even before the formal inauguration of agrarian reform in August of 1963. On some haciendas, especially in Cochabamba, Indians refused to work. Some hacienda owners were driven off and their lands were seized. In other areas, changes occurred more slowly and Indian occupancy of hacienda land took place legally under the reform program.

Most of the agrarian reform program went through rapidly and thoroughly, though problems involving the assignment of formal land titles have still not been completely resolved. Hacienda labor obligations ceased and landlords were forbidden to exact work without payment of wages, unless under a harvest-sharing arrangement. The Indian peons were the primary beneficiaries. In general, peons kept as their own the subsistence plots that they had been working on the haciendas. Depending on the size and quality of the land, peons in many cases took over a major part of the land that the hacendado had formerly reserved for himself. In some cases the Indians got it all. Political considerations as well as sheer force were important in the division of land of the hacienda proper.

An extremely important consequence of agrarian reform was the organization and proliferation of peasant sindicatos. Through these unions the peons negotiated with the agrarian reform courts and other reform agencies, and dealt with their patrons. The sindicatos enabled them to make collective decisions, to select persons to represent them and to control hacienda-wide affairs. On many haciendas local government evolved from these sindicatos. Equally important, they were the instrument for integrating the rural Indian peons into the national society. It was through the sindicato that most peons for the first time had an opportunity to participate in the wider sociopolitical arena of national affairs. Strengthening this development was the MNR's policy of decreasing the strength of the national army and national police forces, while arming civilian militia units for national defense. These units were mainly the sindicatos, not only the urban labor unions but also the campesino sindicatos. Further, campesino sindicato officials became the local representatives and spokesmen for the MNR as a political force.

As it developed, the various parts of the agrarian reform program were to have a variety of social, economic and political effects on the rural countryside and rural communities. The program had more relevance to some areas than to others, and its

effects were frequently uneven. Where it was relevant, its effects were radical, and this can be seen by comparing the study communities. Compi was a hacienda community, while Coroico and Sorata were market towns serving a hacienda countryside. They have all three experienced major changes since 1952. Villa Abecia and Reyes are towns that were closely linked to hacienda-type economies, but the special character of those economies blunted the application of reform in their areas and they experienced much less change. San Miguel is a free Indian community in an area without haciendas. The agrarian reform program did not apply to such areas, and therefore it, too, felt little change.

The first radical measure of the MNR program that had full impact on the rural population was electoral reform, an act which enfranchised the Indians. Before 1952 eligibility to vote had been restricted to men who were 18 or older, if married, or 21 or older, if single, who were literate and had a cash income of 200 bolivianos (\$4.00) or more [Leonard, 1952, p. 189 ff.]. In July of 1952, within four months of the revolution, the new MNR government established universal suffrage, abolishing the sex, literacy, and income restrictions on eligibility to vote, and making voting obligatory. The consequences were dramatic. In the presidential election before the revolution 126,125 votes were cast. In the first presidential election after the revolution there were 931,888, and in the presidential election of 1964 there were 1,294,000 votes cast [Legters and Blanchard, 1963, p. 358], a more than 10-fold increase, largely from having drawn rural Indians into the national political process. The development of a new political status for these peasants was brought about by the MNR mainly through the new sindicato structure. The new status has its symbol in the MNR policy of referring to Indians as "campesinos" in all official statements, which had the effect of removing the term "indio" from most ordinary discourse except as a pejorative.

While the new national politics under the MNR required that the numerically preponderant Indian population be immediately advanced to full citizenship regardless of literacy, the fact of illiteracy remained a major obstacle to the improvement of the Indian's social, economic and political position. Before the revolution there were very few schools on haciendas, so it is not surprising that most Indian peons were illiterate. To give special recognition to the desperate educational need in the rural countryside, the MNR separated rural education from urban education and assigned this responsibility to the new Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos, which was exclusively concerned with the affairs of the rural population. By 1965 the new ministry estimated that there were 7,000 teachers in rural zones. While many of these were not adequately prepared, and schools are still understaffed and ill-equipped, and the entire rural educational program is plagued with a variety of serious problems, the extension of education has been a major reform [Comitas, 1968].

#### 1964: The Overthrow of the MNR

Where, how, and what changes took place in Bolivia's rural



communities as a result of the MNR reform programs is what a comparison of the six study communities tells. San Miguel and Villa Abecia have been little affected by the revolution and illustrate traditional forms of rural community organization. In contrast, the other four communities exhibit various consequences of impact.

The studies were carried out over a period of approximately three years. During this time, in November 1964, the MNR government was overthrown by the army, and the government was run by military dictatorship until July 1966. For a brief period the sindicatos were outlawed, and their officials were removed from other posts of influence; but soon the sindicatos were restored, and many of the old leaders returned. Then a new national political party was formed (the MPC) and preparations for national elections were begun. Significantly, the military coup d'etat period was referred to by the new government as the "Restored Revolution". The fallen MNR was accused of corruption and terroristic activities, but its agrarian, political and educational reforms were reaffirmed. Many campesino sindicato leaders and ex-hacendados had expected a reversal of MNR policies, but this did not in fact occur at the time. The MPC directed its efforts at a strengthening of the national economy. National elections were held in July of 1966 and the military leader of the interim government, General René Barrientos, was elected to a four-year term as president.

Many of the events of this period and the effects they created are reflected in the community studies. However, these studies were not all done simultaneously. As a result, the analyses reveal not only differences between types of communities, but also differences in what each community was reacting to at the time it was studied. In some instances it has been possible to fill in the gaps of time by reconstructing a critical episode that was reported, though not in fact observed. In other cases this was not possible, which explains, for example, why only three of the community analyses refer to the election of 1966, for only three were studied at that time.

Although some of the events that occurred during the research were somewhat unsettling to the research itself, they reaffirm a basic point: that even small rural communities have important connections to the outside world but that these vary and so must be considered a problematic feature of any rural community. National developments frequently stimulated local developments, and the ways in which the different communities reacted are reported. Reaction to such national developments emphasize the necessity of defining the larger regional and national contexts in which small communities function, as a basis for understanding the internal workings of these communities.



PART II

**Villa Abecia: A Complex Traditional Community**

## Chapter 1

### THE SETTING

Villa Abecia is a small town of only a few more than a hundred houses in the valleys region of Southern Bolivia, about 7,500 feet above sea level, an area of ravines and canyons that links the altiplano in the west to tropical lowlands in the east. The country is dry and barren, except for those valley bottoms in which rivers and streams provide a year-round source of water. Villa Abecia is at the southern end of Cinti Valley, which is broad and hilly within itself, and well known in Bolivia for its grapes and wine. Approached from the north, the town appears as an oasis, as a cluster of white buildings on a small hill, surrounded by green vineyards which soon give way to the dry earth and rock of the mountainsides.

The main source of water for the Cinti Valley, the Rio Grande River, turns east well before Villa Abecia is reached, so here the vineyards must depend instead on the Rio Chico, a small mountain stream. A complex network of big and little ditches carries water to the 270 acres or so that are all of Villa Abecia's irrigable land. Opposite the town, on the other side of the river, are the intensely cultivated vineyards of an area known as La Banda. Dotted among the vineyards of La Banda is an occasional large house belonging to a vineyard owner, while scattered throughout these properties, but more difficult to see because of their small size, are the houses of peasant field workers.

The town is laid out in an irregular grid pattern around a small plaza. Most of the streets are cobbled. The houses of two to four rooms are made of adobe, mostly single-storied with cane roofs. In the back yards are bread ovens and sheds for animals. Fronting on the plaza, which is the commercial and social center of town, are the church, the priest's house, the government offices and two country hotels. In most of the other buildings on the plaza are small stores, and pensiones rather like coffee houses, where people meet to eat and drink and talk, and play dice or cards. The only important buildings not on the plaza are the hospital and the Internado, the orphanage. The hospital, built in 1942, has nine beds but is not much used, only now and then for some minor medical problem. The Internado is used by the parish priest for child care, education and social programs. A small primary school is just off the plaza behind the church, but there is no secondary school.

#### The People

In 1965, according to the census carried out by the project, there were 622 people living in Villa Abecia, but the number at

home varies with the seasons. There were 118 households, with an average of five members. More than 70% of the people were born either in the town or within a radius of 30 miles. The dominant language of the population is Spanish. Even the peons of the area, who are not Indians, as on the altiplano or northern valleys, speak Spanish. On the other hand, most of the merchants, known as Vitichis, from the town of Vitichi, only 45 miles from Villa Abecia but high up near Potosí, speak Quechua as well.

The climate of Villa Abecia is temperate throughout the year, generally sunny and dry. The summers are moderately hot, and even in winter the days are warm though the nights are likely to be cold. The seasonal rains of spring and summer begin in November or December and last until February or March. During the rainy season the area is subject to hailstorms. A series of these in the summer of 1965, during the study, destroyed most of the crops.

Villa Abecia changes markedly with the seasons -- in appearance, in numbers and in movement. Summertime, green and bright and flowering, is the season of much activity and many people. Students are back from school and migrant workers have returned from the zafra (harvest) in the Argentine sugar fields. Everybody has money and the plaza stores and the plaza itself are crowded, busy with buying and social gathering. There are no modern recreation facilities. Recreation is standing around the plaza, at food and beverage stands; or, for the more affluent, is sitting for hours at the pensiones or dancing away whole afternoons and evenings at many parties in private homes.

Come winter, the plaza is empty a good deal of the time. By seven or eight o'clock at night the streets are dark and deserted, and only the flickering light of candles and kerosene wicks -- in this unelectrified town -- can be seen in the once busy shops. Only some national celebration or holiday brightens the winter months, as at the Fiesta of San Juan, when both town and countryside build bonfires and friends and relatives gather round for wine and cinnamon tea.

### Outside Communications

An all-weather dirt road, a section of the still far from finished Pan-American Highway, ties the Cinti Valley to Potosí, La Paz and Sucre in the north and Tarija in the south. This road runs through Villa Abecia, along the eastern side of the plaza. Several flotas (fleets) of buses transport people and goods to the larger nearby towns and more distant centers of trade and government. The trip to La Paz takes two days, stopping at night to rest in a crude country lodge. The journey is a long, dusty, tiring bone-shaker, but the buses are generally filled and frequently turn people away.

There are also rough roads and trails running east and west from town. One of the most important of these, a footpath out

of Villa Abecia that soon becomes a cobblestone road, is the way to Jaillia, a village about seven miles southwest. Known as the Old Spanish Road, it was probably built by the Spaniards during colonial days. Villa Abecia people own property in Jaillia, mainly vineyards.

Waiting for buses is information-exchanging time. They rarely arrive on schedule. For the relatives and friends of coming and going travelers, and townspeople who have come to collect their bus-borne mail, packages and newspapers, the later the arrival the more time there is for gossip, for chatting and strolling. Villa Abecia's sources of outside information are the mail, which comes only on Saturday, incoming travelers, newspapers from La Paz, the Spanish edition of the Reader's Digest and a few radios. There is also a telephone connection with the telegraph office at Tupiza, a mining town on the altiplano, about 30 miles southwest of Villa Abecia.

Trucks on the relatively busy north-south road are an auxiliary way to travel and ship goods to nearby cities. The drivers can even be prevailed upon to carry small packages and personal messages. Many people in Villa Abecia thus keep in close touch with Sucre and Potosí in the north, and especially with the departmental capital of Tarija, only four or five hours to the south.

### In Time

Throughout the colonial period, Villa Abecia's closest ties were with Sucre, to the north, then the capital of Bolivia and the most important city in the region. The Spanish founded Sucre early in the 16th Century, attracted by its fertile lands and mild climate. It grew rapidly in prominence as a base area for the gold and silver mine enterprises in the cold arid zones of the altiplano, and as the site of the Audiencia Real (Royal Court), and of one of the early universities of South America, Universidad de San Xavier, founded in 1624. Many men who had decisive roles in the Wars of Independence at the beginning of the 19th Century studied at this university.

For centuries, the important Spanish families living in Sucre held large properties throughout the Cinti Valley. Ruins of their large homes on these fincas (estates or ranches) can still be found around Villa Abecia. An historical document of 1796 concerns one of these fincas. It is an inventory of its assets set down by a crown agent who was sent to investigate because the owner had not paid the decimo tax -- one-tenth of his annual profit -- to the Hacienda Real (Royal Treasury). The inventory lists large vineyards, a wine distillery, and 300 head of cattle, an extremely large herd compared with the number of animals found around the town today.

Before the arrival of the Spanish, the whole area, one of small, scattered settlements, was under the influence of the Incas. Arrow heads, pottery, stone tools and chulpas (graves)

are the surface evidence of earlier cultures. Many artifacts have been dug up by townspeople in search of hidden treasure.

Many Villa Abecians believe their town was on a caravan route from the gold and silver mines, and there are tales of tapados, of hidden wealth, buried by the Spaniards because of the death of transport animals or attack by the Indians. There are several men in town who have had unusual quantities of ready money, and these, some say, found Spanish treasure.

In 1944 Cinti Province was split, the southern part became independent and was named Sud Cinti, with Villa Abecia as its capital. This was the outcome of a long struggle by the land-owners for local autonomy and for a way to avoid long and tiring trips to Camargo for documentation of their legal affairs and commercial transactions.

The sharp break with the past that occurred in some parts of Bolivia with the Revolution of 1952 did not occur in Villa Abecia. Southern Bolivia is distant and relatively isolated from the main stream of national affairs. The centers of revolutionary thinking and action were in the north, in Cochabamba and La Paz. In the Villa Abecia area there were no large masses of peasants who could be organized into a revolutionary force, for most fincas had only a handful of peons and were too small for practical expropriation. During the early years of the revolution only one peasant leader, Chumacero, aggressively agitated for radical measures, and he was a former miner from the alti-plano. From his headquarters in Culpina, a small town to the south, he attempted to organize sindicatos in the Villa Abecia area. The patrons vigorously opposed him and succeeded in keeping many of their peons from even non-violent action.

The high point of agitation under Chumacero was reached when he led two mounted columns of peasants through the streets of Villa Abecia. This show of strength was sufficient to frighten the patrons and force them to forgo some of their feudalistic claims on peon labor. Shortly afterward, Chumacero was murdered, and there were no more demonstrations in Villa Abecia.

Villa Abecia has changed only slightly over the years. Little of even this moderate change was a result of the 1952 revolution. Very likely the eradication of malaria some years earlier was a more important factor. What is more striking is the evidence of continuity. Villa Abecia is still basically a society of the patron and his peons -- a community of relatively undisturbed tradition.

### Town Economy

The juice of the grape is the lifeblood of Villa Abecia. There is almost no one in the community who is not dependent on it. The whole Cinti Valley, indeed, is famous throughout Bolivia for wines and singani, a grape brandy. Other products of commercial importance to the valley are figs, peaches, cherries and

apples, grown at somewhat higher altitudes and where water is less abundant. Maize, wheat, tomatoes and green vegetables are grown for local consumption and for barter with neighboring villages. Sheep and goats are raised on the now state-owned grazing pasture lands in the area, and the meat, cheese and dung are marketed locally. Woollen blankets, sacks and other articles are woven solely for household use.

Work in the vineyards goes on throughout the year. The summer months of February and March are especially busy with the harvest. During June and July the soil is turned and fertilized, and the plants are sprayed to protect them against insects and diseases. August and September are given to preparing the land for planting, and to pruning and tending the vines.

Most of the properties around Villa Abecia are small or medium holdings, as defined by the Agrarian Reform Law. They vary from one acre or less to a maximum of 25. Any farm of more than five acres is considered large. By inheritance or by purchase, many people have several small plots, scattered around the town and the nearby villages of Jailia, Taraya, Tarcana, La Cueva and others.

Twelve acres of irrigated land produce about five tons of grapes, locally considered to be a very good crop. Good yields notwithstanding, there are economic pressures. Viticulture demands skilled labor and intensive care. Not inconsiderable sums go for labor, fertilizers, insecticides and wooden posts to support the vines. And besides, there are natural disasters. Small proprietors frequently are unable to invest in land improvement or to pay for insurance against hailstorms. A branch of the National Agricultural Bank at Camargo grants agricultural loans repayable at harvest time; but in Villa Abecia landowners protest that interest rates are too high and the time for repayment too short. Only those with large properties, with influence at the bank, can get loans for periods of five to eight years. And even these must run the gantlet of complex regulations, of harassing paperwork and costly delays. Some rules eliminate potential borrowers for no relevant reasons. For example, there is a rule that bank engineers who appraise property must travel by jeep. But many loan-worthy properties cannot be reached by jeep. No jeep, no appraisers, no loans. The bank is also of little help when natural disaster strikes, for it is more likely to be worried about the soundness of its investments than concerned with the landowners' urgent needs. Thus, despite the government's income from high taxes on wine production, little assistance comes back in the form of loans, or even technical information, or materials for improving that production.

### Irrigation

Irrigation is essential to the production of good grapes in Cinti Valley. Water taken from the river and distributed through a system of ditches would be sufficient to irrigate all the land presently under cultivation if it were apportioned according to



need. It is not so apportioned, however, since rights to the use of river water are privately owned. Water rights are a separate part of land titles, and must be separately negotiated in acquiring a piece of land. As property has changed hands over the generations, inequities of water rights have been written into contracts. Theoretically, these inequities were abolished by the Agrarian Reform Law, but the law has never been fully enforced in Villa Abecia. Under agrarian reform the selling of water by one landowner to another also was made illegal, but this still goes on. One of the responsibilities of the agrarian judge, who was stationed in Villa Abecia until 1964, was to enforce a proportional distribution of irrigation water and to act on complaints; but there is no evidence that he had much success.

In Villa Abecia, the right to water means the right to draw from the irrigation ditches. In present practice property owners in the irrigation zone draw water only during certain hours on certain days. A comprehensive schedule exists, specifying the turno, the time period when water may be turned onto a given property. Traditionally, this schedule has been controlled by the property owners, without any government regulations; and so it is, despite agrarian reform.

The right to irrigation water obligates a landowner to assign one of his peons to clean and repair the ditches for every day that he takes water. In addition, his peons must guard the ditches to see that no neighbors divert water to their own property out of turn. Some owners pay an extra wage for this patrol work, which goes on night and day, while others give their peons some additional fruit trees or a little more land. During the rainy season the schedule of turnos is not in effect. Indeed, there is an overabundance of water; but the cleaning and repairing of ditches must go on.

### The Labor Force

Now, as in the past, the burden of cultivation in Villa Abecia is borne by peons. To appreciate how little the traditional agricultural system has been changed by the revolution it will be useful to compare the pre-agrarian reform system with that of the present. Before 1952, a small, culturally homogeneous group of patrons owned all the land in the area. This was classified in three types. The most important was the irrigated acres around Villa Abecia. Then there was the land that was too high and lacked sufficient water for growing grapes, and this was planted to potatoes, corn, wheat and fruit. The third type was pasture, on the surrounding hills and mountains, rented for sheep and goat grazing. The rent for this grazing land was generally paid in dung for fertilizer and in wooden posts, both needed in the vineyards.

Only a very small amount of land, generally the more isolated and less productive, was owned by free peasants. Most peasants were landless and worked as peons. Two types of peons developed in this system, the arrenderos and the viñateros. The arrenderos

worked the higher altitude lands of the patróns, and in turn were allowed to use a small plot, generally not larger than one hectare (2.47 acres), for their own subsistence. In addition, they were required to work in their patrón's vineyard for a period of 40 to 50 days, depending on the size and quality of the plot they held in arriendo. For additional work they received a small daily wage. In the Villa Abecia area the largest landowners had as many as 50 arrenderos.

The viñateros lived near the vineyards of their patróns and were required to give most of their time to the demanding work of caring for the grapes. For this they received a small daily wage, a small part of the fruit crop, and small plots in the vineyards for their own use. Occasionally they were also given the use of a plot in higher valleys.

Both arrenderos and viñateros had yet another labor duty to their patróns. On Sundays, before their weekly wages were entered in the account books, they were required to work without pay until noon, either in the vineyards or at any other task specified by the patrón. This Sunday faena was required by all patróns. If a peon refused, his wages were reduced.

In addition to their work obligations, most peons acquired debt obligations to their patrón. He was generally the only source of extra food, money, legal advice and medical care. Emergency borrowings for food or medicines over periods of years mounted beyond possibility of repayment and tied the peon to his patrón at a cost of whatever freedom was left to him.

In the years immediately following the Revolution of 1952, when the local peasant sindicato was better organized and more militant, the peons of Villa Abecia were able to force some changes in their work situation. The Agrarian Reform Law eliminated the faena. The patróns now had to pay higher wages to the viñateros, as well as daily wages for all work done by the arrenderos in the vineyards.

The viñateros received no land under agrarian reform and continued to work in the vineyards in the traditional way, with a right to a small plot of ground for themselves and a part of the fruit harvest. Unpaid labor by peons has decreased considerably but has not been abolished. Some patróns have replaced the traditional verbal work agreement with a written contract, as required by law, but the new contracts include few improvements for the peon. The average daily wage paid to the viñatero is three to four pesos (24 to 32 U.S. cents).

The arrenderos, though lacking legal title to their plots in most cases, work them now as their own. More importantly, they no longer feel obliged to give 40 to 50 days of work to the patrón and will work in the vineyards only for wages. Today peons work without wages only in their own cooperative work parties, still called the faena. Peasants who own land, or who have use rights to land, help each other with difficult agricultural work, especially at planting time. They move in groups from plot

to plot to help in the sowing. The peasant who is helped provides food and drink for all, and the day generally ends in music and dancing.

Work in the vineyards is done almost exclusively by men. With few exceptions, patróns are in the vineyards too, working or supervising. Meanwhile, the peasant women are working for their households, collecting firewood, carrying water from the ditches, spinning wool, weaving and making clothes and caring for the animals. Some women, however, still feel obligated to work without pay in the patrón's household, washing clothes or preparing food.

A change in the labor scene comes with an annual winter migration of some peons. They go off to work in Santa Cruz or Argentina from May to November. Most of them prefer the sugar plantations in Argentina because of better working conditions and better wages. The Argentine plantations send trucks to take them to the border. From there, after a medical examination, they are sent on by train to the sugar fields where they work as cane cutters.

The migrants from Villa Abecia try to remain together, to work and live together on the plantations. For a few months they are better off in some ways than they are at home. They are better housed and better fed. They get meat and milk regularly and are cared for medically. However, the work is very hard, made more difficult by a humid climate and insects, and is not without hazard of accidental injury. But recently the sugar corporations have begun to pay indemnities for work-related accidents. For most migrants, the disadvantages are offset by their wages, which average at 4,000 pesos (\$320.00) for the season.

Some Villa Abecia workers have been going to Argentina for the cane harvest for almost 20 years. Those who return regularly, thus acquiring skills, and particularly those with some ability to read and write, are likely to get better jobs. In any case, the migrants can make more money in six or seven months in the sugar fields than they could make in a year in the vineyards of Villa Abecia. Most cane workers end the season with relatively large sums of ready cash, some of which they spend in Argentina on such things as bicycles, sewing machines and radios; but much comes home to Villa Abecia to be invested in land and houses. Some even lend their money to local landowners. These migrants are a minority of the peons of Villa Abecia. Their work and its effect on their lives clearly separate them from the local viñateros and most arrenderos.

### Fruit and Wine Markets

At harvest time the peons gather the grapes in large baskets and load them onto trucks for the market. The bulk of the harvest goes to the wine presses. Some is sold as table fruit, mostly locally. Some of it goes to the distillation of singani (brandy). The larger landowners, with better grapes and larger quantities, sell to big buyers from La Paz and Potosí, but the

smaller growers usually sell to the wineries in Villa Abecia. A few growers make raisins of white grapes, and these are sold mainly in the Tarija and Sucre markets. Most growers who make wine produce both red and white and make singani as well. For most of them, wine making is a family tradition. Equipment is simple and the process is elementary. The result is a great unevenness of product, comparing one producer with another and the product of one year with that of another. They enter their wines in national competitions annually, and a few can boast of awards. None admits to producing any but the purest, finest wine. In fact, adulteration with sugar and water is common, for to sell wine made only of the juice of the grape is not very profitable.

Tax regulations prescribe the production of not less than 1,000 liters of wine at a time. When harvests are good this is easy, but when crops are poor wine makers may have to combine their production to make up the required quantity. Wine is also made in smaller quantities, and there is strong social pressure against denouncing this illegal production.

The biggest winery in Villa Abecia is a cooperative, founded by a small group of the bigger landowners who obtained a loan of about 40,000 pesos (\$3,200.00) from the National Agricultural Bank. The cooperative now has 14 members, each of whom sells part of his crop to the cooperative. A few of the members are paid to run the group's winery and distillery, and profits are shared among the members in proportion to the quantities of grapes provided. The cooperative has a rudimentary bottling plant operated by two girls. The members complain of the need for improved bottling facilities and for canning machinery, for much of the wine must now be stored and fruit is wasted for lack of immediate markets. Not all local wine makers are in the cooperative or want to be. They say that sales sometimes depend on quick decisions, impossible in the cooperative, which requires that members meet to discuss such matters.

Some producers sell their wine in markets as distant as Santa Cruz and Oruro, but the smaller ones cannot afford to pay the required taxes and costs of transportation to these markets. Some local winemakers sell to agents or distributors in the larger cities, but here, too, there are difficulties, because agents frequently fail to pay regularly for the wines they sell, and besides, charge for their services.

The market for fruits other than grapes is primarily local, and the form of exchange is frequently barter. Villa Abecia merchants travel to Jaillia and to other nearby villages to trade cloth and other merchandise for dried fruit. In turn, the people of Jaillia exchange grapes and dried fruit for meat in Culpina. In general, the flow of bartered goods consists of fruit and singani moving from the lower valleys to the colder, higher valleys, in exchange for potatoes, beans and meat.

The position of Villa Abecia in regional commerce corresponds closely to the road pattern discussed earlier. The main commercial stream is north and south between Tarija and Potosí. Villa

Abecia is in this stream, contributes to it, and is able to take advantage of it to keep its own economy moving. Most of the wine made in Villa Abecia goes out over this north-south line, and the products moving along this line from other towns come in. Radiating in a more complex pattern, though mainly east and west, is the foot and mule traffic in products in and out of Villa Abecia within a more concentrated area. The fact that transactions in the north-south pattern are carried out in cash, while those in the east-west directions are often carried out in the form of barter, suggests the intermediate economic development position of this community in contemporary Bolivia.



## Chapter 2

### POWER AND AUTHORITY

The fundamental arrangements by which one person or group is subordinated to another are essential to an understanding of how communities function as organized sets of relations between people. This is especially so where relations between groups are characterized by conflicts of interest. Despite the potential for change created by the Revolution of 1952, the social power structure of Villa Abecia is relatively simple in comparison with the other communities of this study, in that it is essentially a matter of relations between two status positions, that of the patrón and that of the peon. The essence of these relations is expressed in three forms of power: economic, traditional authority, and political power.

#### Economic Power

Economic power in Villa Abecia, today as in the past, is derived from control of land, water and labor by a small group of patróns. This power is exerted in several ways. The patrón is the source of almost all means of existence. In time of need it is the patrón who can assist -- if he will. In the absence of an effective sindicato, a viñatero may be dismissed with little or nothing to show for years of work. Similarly, the patrón may cancel a tenancy contract and force an arrendero off the land; though this power has become less effective in recent years.

The Agrarian Reform Law of 1953 declared all latifundia, the large estates, to be illegal, but the owners of small or medium holdings and of some larger mechanized farms were permitted to retain all or part of their lands, though they were required to apply for new titles. Land held in excess of limits set for each type of terrain was subject to expropriation. Pasture land was nationalized and campesinos were granted free and unrestricted use of it. Campesinos who had held use rights were to be given title to such plots if they had been obliged to give free labor to their patrón. Other provisions of the law required that all campesinos engaged to work on the land be given wages on written contract terms and be freed of all labor obligations. Serfdom was thus abolished, without exception.

Agrarian courts consisting of a judge, a secretary and a topographer were created in all important towns. Such courts were empowered to adjudicate land claims brought either by a patrón or a peon. The peasant sindicatos played an important part in the work of these courts in most areas. An office of work inspector was also established in the important towns to ensure the legality of labor contracts.

The patr6ns of Villa Abecia were largely unaffected by reforms. Many of the irrigated holdings are small properties (three hectares or less), not subject to expropriation under any condition. All of the other irrigated holdings were medium properties under the law (three to 24 hectares). Legally, the peons who worked usufructuary plots on these medium properties could gain title to their plots; however, in most cases the patr6ns avoided even these losses. By 1964 there were 24 patr6ns in Villa Abecia who had obtained new titles to their land, but only one peon had been able to secure a land title. Thus, while they lost large tracts of pasture through agrarian reform, most patr6ns still have their valuable properties intact.

The success of the patr6ns in keeping title to their lands did not come without effort. Most of them joined the ruling MNR party and worked from within to influence the application of reform law. To prevent peons from acquiring land and contesting their power, the patr6ns gained control of the local Agrarian Reform Court and held it from 1955 to 1964. They maneuvered one of their own group into the office of the agrarian reform judge and controlled him through bribery or political pressure. Another factor in their success was the absence in Villa Abecia of a militant sindicato, which could have challenged patr6n and judge and vigorously defended the interests of the peons. In other towns in the area, where sindicatos were strong, as in Jaillia, Achuma, Camargo and Culpina, patr6ns lost land and campesinos gained legal land titles.

The patr6ns of Villa Abecia circumvented the Agrarian Reform Law and prevented their arrenderos from obtaining title to their plots by arguing before the agrarian court, which they controlled, that the arrenderos were not serfs, because they worked on a wage basis. This was true only in that the arrenderos were not obliged to provide the variety of free services characteristic of haciendas in the north or on the altiplano, and were paid a daily wage for the days spent working in the vineyards beyond the obligatory 40 to 50 days -- plus faena time -- for which they were not paid.

In response to the pressure of agrarian reform there is a pronounced tendency among the patr6ns to minimize the size of their properties. If asked how much land they own, the typical answers are, "I have a small chacrita (plot)", or, "only a few hectares". The chacritas frequently are several rich, irrigated acres. Further, patr6ns own land against which claims could be made, and are very careful to avoid calling attention to it.

While some claims before the agrarian court have been pending since 1962, and only one peon has secured a land title since 1953, the patr6ns of Villa Abecia have been able to secure their rights easily and speedily. This is illustrated in a comment by one of the major landowners:

Ah! It was the will of God that I didn't lose anything -- without lifting a finger to defend myself! I didn't have one lawyer or anything, and I was able

to keep my properties. Mine was the first name to come up in court. I went before the police chief [1953] and the agrarian judge, but I told them not to make a big noise, to simply review the facts, talk to my workers and then decide. After that I didn't do anything, just complied with what they said. One day Diego Agote was going to La Paz. I yelled out, 'Hey, Diego, bring back my titles with you.' And sure enough, he later came back with them. They were sitting in the agrarian judge's office! I hadn't paid anything -- only about 3,000 bolivianos for Diego to get them out of hock.

While the patrón in this case laid it to the "will of God" that his property remained intact, the facts are that the peons did not oppose him, and that Diego Agote is the sub-prefect of the province and a close friend. According to one of the former agrarian judges, this patrón received titles to properties larger than the law allowed. Some of this land is now being sold by the patrón -- legally -- to arrenderos who had prior legal claim to it.

Some redistribution of land from patrón to peon has occurred, but mostly in the less productive hill areas, through private sale or uncontested peon occupancy. While few arrenderos have succeeded in obtaining legal title to the plots they have traditionally cultivated, they continue to work these plots for themselves and regard them as their own. Equally important, many of the arrenderos no longer work in the vineyards of the patróns in return for the land they use, which they claim was one of the feudalistic labor obligations abolished by agrarian reform. Patróns, on the other hand, argue that this labor was in lieu of cash rental for their plots and that rental in some form should continue. Nevertheless, the patróns are constrained from taking legal action in these cases because they prefer not to stir enquiry into the ambiguous legal position of the arrendero under the Agrarian Reform Law, and because of their own frequently illegal possession of properties in the higher valleys. This explains the willingness of the patróns to sell plots of land to the occupying arrenderos, even making generous long-term payment arrangements. Patróns with new titles can sell their land as they please, but sales of land by those who do not hold new titles are illegal. Significantly, local judges have been honoring these sales without questioning the legality of titles. The arrenderos, generally uninformed about the law and their legal rights, accept whatever arrangements are offered them.

In most recent land disputes between peon and patrón, the posture of the peon is that of a person reluctant to antagonize or disturb a patrón, of a man who has no alternative and no resources, ignorant and afraid. Two peons who offered to buy a small piece of abandoned and almost worthless land from their patrón were asked to pay an outrageous price. Reluctant to take the case to the agrarian judge in Camargo for fear of losing their jobs as viñateros, they agreed. In this and similar cases, the peon continues to exhibit the traditional patterns of servility.



In this arid region, to have control of an abundance of water is to have economic power. Control of water, like control of land, gives control over people. In any transfer of land, irrigation water is a separate negotiable item. Over the generations, rights to river water have become very unequally apportioned to the lands around Villa Abecia. Agrarian reform law says each property must receive a quantity of water proportionate to its size; but in this reform as in others, customary practice prevails.

In the Villa Abecia irrigation system, those who have water rights take turns in drawing from a highly complex network of ditches in accordance with rules laid down in many conventions and informal arrangements. Even some patróns do not fully understand what is going on. Only the peons, working directly with the system, have been able to master all its regulatory intricacies.

It should not be astonishing that imprecise claims to water so precisely needed give rise to competitive conflict. Such conflict occurs between patróns and between peons and between patrón and peon. It is this last form of conflict that is most relevant to this study, for it is another means by which the patróns strengthen their position in relation to peons. Needless to say, the patrón comes out on top.

Important conflict occurs when the patrón causes an extra burden to fall on the peon; for example, the number of peons each patrón must assign to clean the irrigation ditches, and the amount of work each peon must do, are determined by the hours of water consumed, and if a patrón sends fewer peons than are required for the job, those who go work harder and longer. The peons are aware that even trivial matters result in a short-handed ditch gang; and they get no extra pay for the extra work. Their complaints -- if they dare complain -- are ignored.

Conflict between patrón and peon occurs when a patrón informally arranges to divert part of his turno to another patrón. They rarely do this if water is needed for their own lands; but when they do make these arrangements the viñatero goes short, because he can irrigate his own plot only during the turno of his patrón. Without legal rights to land or water, the viñatero is in no position to protest. They complain only to each other, though occasionally one will talk to his own uninvolved patrón, in the hope that he will have some effect on those who break the traditional rules. Unfortunately, the big patróns are -- as one peon put it -- above the rules:

Diego Agote is the owner of the water in La Banda. He gives water to whomever he wishes. We, the peons, do not say a word. How are we going to say anything if even the other owners keep their mouths shut? We are the peons, we cannot do anything, even if we would complain and shout.

The cohesion of the patrón stratum expresses itself in another type of conflict between patrón and peon. In this type the issue

is in fact between two patróns. When a conflict develops, but they are otherwise on good terms, they will frequently fight it out through their peons. For instance: Francisco Campos, a peon of Marta Torres, was irrigating her vineyards. Diego Agote sent one of his peons to divert the Torres water to the Agote fields. The two peons fought over who should have the water. Later, Agote's peon reported the fight to his patrón, and he in turn confronted Marta. Rather than antagonize Agote by defending her peon, she acknowledged that he was to blame. Agote then sent for Campos and gave him a tongue-lashing. Campos took it, but later complained of Señora Torres:

And my own patrón, that old fool, instead of being on my side, she turns against me. What else does she want? I was concerned about taking care of her property and that's how she repays me. I am not going to let myself be beaten and outraged, if on top of all that she lets me down.

### Traditional Authority

It would be misleading to suggest that coercion through economic power is the only device for maintaining the power of the patrón in Villa Abecia. There is a second basis, which makes active coercion largely superfluous. This is the system of traditional authority, in which there is universal agreement about who is to command, who must obey. Traditional authority defines the separate rights and reciprocal responsibilities of patrón and peon, and continuing acceptance gives the system a legitimacy that reduces the need for correction or coercion.

Despite the reformist nature of the revolution, most members of the community are still guided in their everyday actions by their common understanding of all that is implicit in the traditional distinction between patróns and peons. The revolution has produced some changes in economic relations and social beliefs, but the traditional authority system in Villa Abecia is largely undisturbed.

Landowner Marla Santana, called Marequita, is the grand symbol of traditional society in Villa Abecia. She is known to all. Her large holdings give her power and prestige. She defines and reinforces the norms of the community and punishes those who deviate. She represents in her own person the patrón stratum. To understand her social position, her outlook, her actions, would be to understand the traditional authority system of the community.

Marequita has lived in Villa Abecia for about 40 years. Her father, descendant of a very important family in Sucre, died when she was very young, and she was left without close relatives. When she came of age and took charge of her inheritance, she found herself possessed of several properties with almost 100 peons. She directly supervised their agricultural work, an unusual role for a woman at that time. Characteristically, she

became active politically in 1940 and has served as alcalde (mayor).

Her house just off the plaza is a hive of activity, an information exchange, to which all her female friends bring the news and gossip of the town. Almost every night her closest friends meet there to play cards. In this group are four of the major landowners and other important people. They are all very close friends among themselves, and frequently aid and influence one another. Marequita bosses them all, calling everybody hijo (son), except Diego Agote, whom she treats more as an equal. The nearby plaza is another center of her activities. There she can be found in daily chat, expounding on the important issues, even of international politics. She is an intelligent, forceful person, a skillful leader, and clearly enjoys being the outstanding citizen. To the other patróns she is a "correct patrón", one who serves as the standard of patrón conduct. To the peons she is the "good, paternalistic patrón", the definer of proper patrón-peon relations.

The right to command, to obedience without question, is based on a shared understanding of correct conduct appropriate to different social positions. In Villa Abecia the conception of the correct patrón is one who is condescending, benevolent and indulgent toward the less-privileged peon. Social relations with the peon should be familiar, expressed by the use of intimate forms of address. The patrón should accept, even encourage, some forms of social connection quite aside from strictly work relations, such as becoming a compadre (co-parent). The patrón should be willing to do favors for his peons, feel responsible for them, and be a source of advice and confidence. The patrón is expected to feel that paternalistic conduct establishes his greater social worth and that he should take pride in the moral correctness of his position.

But these are ideal standards. Few patróns, with the possible exception of Marequita, come close to fulfilling them. This is not to say that they fail to think of themselves as the obliging nobles of noblesse oblige, chiefly because Marequita exerts a potent force upon them through her own exemplary conduct toward her peons. She addresses her peons as hijito (little son) or papito (little daddy). They call her La Niña (the girl), she who never married; though her house servants call her mamita (mommy) and behave toward her with ease and familiarity. That she swears a great deal and constantly orders them around does not bother them, for she behaves in the same manner with patróns.

Marequita holds it the duty of the patrón to educate his peons in a virtuous way of life. If peons drink too much on work days, she regards this as a fault of the patrón. She permits no drinking on the job among her own. She is very aware that her peons are dependent upon her and is eager that it be known that she treats them well. She is also aware that it is easier to deal with a single complaining peon than with a sindicato official.

For years she has kept an account book in which she records

the wages of each peon, his purchases from her, his loans and all other material obligations. Every Sunday Marequita's peons come to her house for an updating of the book. She keeps a detailed account of wage credits and debts, and when the harvest is in she balances the two. She willingly provides whatever within reason her peons want, recording it and asking them to write it down in a book of their own, all the while coaxing them to work harder. She clearly enjoys the relationship, deals with them in a friendly, open manner. Responding to her familiarity, they feel at ease, speak up to her and disagree on occasion. In establishing a personal relationship with each peon, she reinforces their identification with her, and their chronic indebtedness further binds them. In general, they feel obligated to her "for all she has done for us in the past".

Marequita believes it to be the paternalistic responsibility of the patrón to provide "the extra things". Among these are medicines and funerals. Being a *madrina* (godmother) of peon children is another "extra". She is proud of having the largest number of such *compadrazgo* relations in the community. Their more than symbolic value is suggested in a patrón's wishful comment:

I should like to be their *compadre*; it would help a lot. I am not, and it has to be of their choosing. I couldn't obligate them to want me for a *compadre*. No, but it would help, for *compadrazgo* creates a certain level of familiarity between people. Between patrón and his peons, it is then no longer simply professional, but more personal and familiar. There is more affection, and both parties benefit. I would like to be in that position, so as to coax them to work better and be able to tell them I'd lend them money if they need it. But you can't make them your *compadre*; it has to be a thing of free will.

This patrón is a *forastero*, an outsider, not of the town, and of marginal social status because he was once a taxi driver.

In his turn, the ideally correct peon would be obedient, unassuming, unaggressive and a hard worker, a man who knows the obligations of his status, and who would derive his self-esteem from his conforming to these criteria. As with patróns, so with peons: not all of them conform. But the level of conformity among peons is undoubtedly higher than it is with patróns. Some peons are thoroughly convinced of the correctness of traditional ways. Others conform because they see no realistic alternative, and others because of the risks of non-conformity. In some cases, conformity is reinforced by the debts of close kin. One of the more radical migrant peons explains his loyalty to his patrón in terms of the obligations created by his wife's being reared in the patrón's house and by a wedding party that the patrón held for him, which in fact the peon paid for. Significantly, most of the peasants in Villa Abecia refer to themselves as "peons", not as "campesinos", the title sanctioned by the revolution for all peasant laborers.

## Political Power: Party Politics

In addition to the threat to their economic domination posed by the Agrarian Reform Law, the patrons were confronted after the revolution with a second significant challenge to their power. This came from the new enfranchising laws, which gave the right to vote to all adults of both sexes, without educational, economic or other restrictive qualifications. In general, the sindicatos have been the primary vehicles for effecting change in the political status of the campesinos, for achieving their new rights and freeing them of traditional obligations, for bringing about a shift in the balance of power.

In areas where the sindicatos were strong much political power, including control of both party politics and local government, often shifted to them; but in Villa Abecia the patrons were able to contain the local sindicato, partly through their being able to control local party politics. Most of the leading patrons quickly joined the new governing party, the MNR. Their economic strength and their traditional authority enabled the patron group to dominate the local MNR, and the close connections between party and peasant sindicato made it possible for the patrons to control the latter organization as well.

The participation of large landowners in a political party espousing land reform and peasant rights is not the contradiction that it may appear. Political parties naturally seek political power, sometimes for what power can effect; but most political parties in Bolivia seek nothing else. Party programs and party ideology are for the most part empty rhetoric. Though this is markedly less true in the case of the MNR, political parties are so weak in the rural areas that the difference has had but little effect. Consequently, a Villa Abecia patron in the MNR sees no moral or ideological dilemma in his position, no conflict between his own interests and party principles. Nor does a Villa Abecia patron in the MNR have a more radical view of agrarian problems than a patron who is a member of one of the more conservative parties. The patron in Villa Abecia did not join the MNR to carry out reform, but to curtail it.

In the years since 1952, three patrons have held the major government offices. Diego Agote was sub-prefect, the head of provincial government, from 1952 to 1964. Andres Mardueño was the alcalde from 1952 to 1954; and since 1954, Jose Madrigal has headed the town government. Throughout this period these same three men at different times held the key position in the local MNR of jefe de comando (party coordinator). In the nine years from 1952 to 1961, when Villa Abecia had an agrarian judge, the post was filled by two local patrons who also belonged to the MNR.

During the period of MNR rule in Bolivia (1952-1964), there was almost no political opposition in town. A few patrons belonged to other parties but they were too few to be effective. In the 1962 senatorial election 98% of the valid votes (not counting the blank votes or those ruled invalid) were for the

MNR and 2% (four votes) for the PRA, a party formed by a splinter group from the MNR. In nearby Jallia, all the valid votes were for the MNR. In the 1964 presidential election 99% of the valid votes in Villa Abecia were for the MNR and 1% (two votes) for the PRA. Again in Jallia, all the votes were for the MNR. In 1964 the representatives of the other parties made no attempt to qualify for a position on the ballot.

The dominance of the MNR in Villa Abecia should not be taken as a sign of party fervor. Voting is not only an adult right but a legal obligation, and most adults in Villa Abecia do turn out. Nevertheless, except among people like Marequita, the local doctor, the local judge and other government officials, who keep up with political affairs, politics of any kind do not often enter conversation. The alcalde, Sr. Madrigal said:

This town is a dead town. Here people only know about politics from what they hear on the radio. They do not make politics something really alive in town. They are apathetic.

In recent years the political scene in Villa Abecia, as elsewhere in Bolivia, has become confused. The ruling MNR broke into factions, and then was overthrown in the coup of 1964. Finally, new parties and coalitions formed as the presidential election of 1966 approached. Following the coup of 1964 many local government offices changed hands throughout Bolivia. But the changes often had little significance except for the persons involved. Ignacio Martinez replaced Diego Agote as sub-prefect, but both are large landowners; and the alcalde, Sr. Madrigal, stayed on as the chief executive of Villa Abecia.

With a new party in power, the MNR put up no candidates in Villa Abecia for the 1966 national election, so the MPC -- the party of the de facto government in La Paz -- easily won. A few MNR ballots were cast, but were judged invalid. The patrons again had taken the lead and their peons followed. It was said that all the peons of the sub-prefect switched from MNR to MPC without knowing anything about the new party, just to please their patrón.

The confidence of the patrons in their political future is based on their success in maintaining control of the local political scene, especially of the campesino sindicato. The kind of orientation provided by the patrons when they gained control after the murder of Chumacero, the militant peasant organizer, is suggested in the following statement from a speech by Diego Agote, who was sub-prefect at the time:

This centrale (regional sindicato federation) will be one of the strongest bastions of the revolution and of our cooperation. For the revolution, we must work without class distinctions, so that one day we get benefits for the country, the government, the patrons and the peon. We must also fight against Communism, a party that would never lead us to save our homes nor our lands.

To further their control the patrons managed to have a member of their own group, Miguel Montes, elected secretary-general of the centrale. According to Montes, later agrarian judge, his task was to put a brake on sindicato reform activity which was being rekindled by sindicato leaders from outside the area.

The effect of patron influence has been to weaken and demoralize the local sindicato. Most peons in Villa Abecia were passive sindicato members at best. They attended meetings infrequently, and neither asked for nor received much help. Most of them are poorly informed about the Agrarian Reform Law and have only a vague impression that -- somehow -- the sindicato is supposed to defend the poor. The older campesinos who knew Chumacero agree that he was the only leader who explained the meaning of agrarian reform. The younger peons, who did not know Chumacero, have little interest in political action.

### Government Authority

Some of the characteristics of government in Bolivia have produced conditions and consequences that cannot be predicted from the other parts of the power system.

Villa Abecia, as the capital of the Province of Sud Cinti, is the seat of both a town government and a regional government. The latter is headed by a sub-prefect, appointed by the prefect (head) of the Department of Chuquisaca in Sucre, who has authority over the entire population of the province. The sub-prefect is primarily concerned with enforcement of the law in the province. He is assisted in this by a provincial chief of police, appointed from Sucre but responsible to the sub-prefect. In each provincial community -- including Villa Abecia -- the sub-prefect is represented by a corregidor, whom he appoints.

The town government of Villa Abecia is headed by an alcalde, who is assisted by an official mayor (deputy alcalde) and an intendente municipal, the supervisor of public works and facilities. The responsibilities of the alcalde include the maintenance of streets, plaza, public buildings and sanitary facilities of the town, the regulation of public water and the levying of municipal taxes. He is supposed to keep the public informed of town problems and of the management of public funds.

Ideally, the alcalde and sub-prefect are selected by the prefect in Sucre from a slate of three nominees for each position put forward in an open meeting in Villa Abecia. In practice, there are many variations on this pattern; the "open" meeting may not be open; the nominating procedures may be strictly controlled by local politicians and others influential in the community; and finally, the prefect may reject the entire slate and substitute any person of his choice, including non-residents.

Other offices in Villa Abecia include a unit of the lowest level of the national court system, a court of first jurisdiction, staffed by a judge and a secretary, in which initial pro-

ceedings in most civil and criminal cases are heard. There are, also, an official notary, who is head of the Registro Civil (office of Public Records); a tax agent who collects levies on wine, commerce and property; administrators of the post and telegraph offices; the director of the public primary school, and the physician who directs the local public hospital. There is also a branch of the federal highway agency (Servicio de Caminos), whose job is to maintain the north-south highway leading to Potosí and Tarija. Excepting the sub-prefect and the alcalde, none of the occupants of these offices wields authority beyond the narrowly interpreted limits of his official duties. Some even lack authority in the performance of their work and depend more on their extra official status to carry out their duties, as in the case of the doctor, who is a large landholder and whose occupation carries considerable prestige.

One other office, public but not official, is that of the local priest. Since he is German and regarded as an outsider, neither his cassock nor his person has given him any large measure of power in the community. He remains rather aloof, but many consider him a good priest precisely because he does not meddle in local affairs. He devotes considerable time to the campesinos in the surrounding area, but has not been very successful in persuading them to participate in church activities. He commands most respect among the women, but his influence is largely in religious affairs.

This sketch of officialdom is an outline of local government as it is locally defined. In actual operation, however, local government rarely conforms to the definitions. Responsibilities and jurisdictions overlap to such an extent that correct procedure is never clear. A consequence of this overlap is constant conflict between officials. In any given instance, justice may be dispensed by the sub-prefect, the alcalde, the judge, the chief of police, and even others -- or all of them may get involved. Officeholders frequently lack relevant qualifications. In some cases adequate qualifications are not specified, and in other cases they may be but are ignored. Tenure is likely to be uncertain at the local level, so there are few who resemble a career official. Rather, there is likely to be a shuttling back and forth between private enterprise and public office, though indeed it may be hard to distinguish between the two positions. A patrón does not sell his land because he has been appointed to an office, nor does anyone expect him to. Public servants typically lay as much emphasis on the private gains extractable from an official position as they do on the duties they are theoretically expected to perform. Graft and corruption are all but synonymous with public office.

The result of all this is a great reduction of effectiveness in local government. Yet, the responsibilities of maintaining order, dispensing justice and providing basic public services are carried out, though often to only a very limited extent. Some officials may become effective because of their high status in the community and the far-flung social relationships from which they draw support. This is the sub-prefect's method of accommo-



dation. He devotes himself to the surrounding villages, leaving the town to the alcalde. In the villages he deals with campesinos as a large landowner, as patrón to peon. In Jaillia, where he has compadrazgo relations with numerous peons, he is recognized as a socially superior person, though he does not assert himself among them. He acts correctly, a condescending and paternalistic patrón. He even delivers their babies without charge, since there is no midwife in Jaillia and he happens to have some experience in this work. He is generally treated with traditional deference, and he is frequently sought out for legal advice and to settle disputes.

Another effective form of accommodation within the confusion of local government is to rely on one's own force of character, personal resources and abilities -- essentially a personalistic method. The incumbent alcalde, Jose Madrigal, says he is effective because of his personalidad, his force of person. What he means by personalidad is that he speaks effectively in public, handles difficult situations without getting rattled, and is able to convince and persuade others. His general policy is to seek national government rather than local support for all local public projects. For example, a crisis developed when a severe hailstorm damaged the public water system, interrupting the flow into town. Madrigal proposed a request for federal aid, but many residents said the seriousness of the matter would not wait on time-consuming negotiations. Under considerable pressure, he was forced to call an open meeting to discuss his proposal, but he so intimidated the people that no one was willing to stand up and oppose his position. He contained the opposition and then sought a way to resolve the problem as he worked. In the course of the discussion the priest made a suggestion in accord with the alcalde's policy, and this he seized on. Exploiting the respect held for the priest, he brought the suggestion to a vote, announced it as accepted without a tally, and was able to close in his own favor what had begun as a hostile meeting.

There is a third form of accommodation to political office, not so important in Villa Abecia, but it stands out in some of the other communities. This is accommodation through inaction. When officials lack personal skills or superior status, they are left with few means within government to accomplish anything. And that is what many accomplish: nothing.

The police of Villa Abecia are the most corrupt and abusive of all public authorities. Local people lay the blame on national officials. They say the less competent, poor performers among the police are sent to the provinces. But perhaps a more important factor is a regulation requiring the appointment of police to areas with which they are not acquainted and for limited periods of time. The justification for this rule is that it lessens the probability of personal and social involvement that could compromise the exercise of official duties. In fact, the opposite effect would be preferable, since one of the great constraining forces on local officials is their social involvement, their need to protect their status in the community. The policeman, a stranger on the scene for but a short time, is free of

almost all restraints in pursuit of his private interests.

It is the peons who feel the rub. The patrons and the better educated members of the community fight back. If a police official makes himself obnoxious they are likely to telegraph to his superiors in Sucre, demanding his replacement. And if the demand is insistent enough they get action. The peons, on the other hand, feel impotent when faced with officials, including the police. Take the following exchange between Marequita and one of her peons:

Marequita: What happened with the police?  
Peon: He made me pay 20 pesos (\$1.60).  
Marequita: Ah, hija, I told you not to go in there.  
Peon: But Mamita, what could I do?  
Marequita: Nothing, I guess, but you knew he'd collect a fine.

Police and government what they are, it is not surprising that most people avoid the procedures of formal justice and seek solutions to their problems through informal and traditional means. Patrons negotiate directly with each other. Peons turn to their patrons to decide their disputes.

There are no trained lawyers in Villa Abecia. For legal aid, peons go to the tinterillos, two self-tutored, self-styled lawyers with no legal training. The important people consult professional lawyers in the cities. The town judge is respected because of his profession, because he is a patron, and because he belongs to a family socially prominent in the history of Sucre. However, he is old and thought to be a bit senile. His knowledge of the law is disputed by everyone, and he has been accused of causing delays and perplexing complications through errors of procedure.

#### A Dispute Between Patrón and Peon

The social structure of even a relatively simply organized community reflects a complex interplay of powers. These constitute a system which operates as a unity and is so experienced. This unity of interwoven powers is well illustrated in an instance of conflict within the fundamental relationship on which the social structure of Villa Abecia rests -- that of patrón to peon.

Faustino Medina worked for 13 years on the lands of Victoria Santana. During this time, while she lived in distant Sucre, he supervised the work in her vineyards. In all these years he received no wages. As is usual, he cultivated a plot of her land for himself, and it was his understanding, partly based on assurances from Ignacio Martinez, patrón and sub-prefect, that eventually he would be paid for his work.

But when Doña Victoria returned to Villa Abecia in 1965 she refused to acknowledge the work that Faustino had done, denied

his claim for back wages. Counterattacking, she accused him of misappropriating part of her land and tried to have him thrown off. Faustino asked the sindicato to intercede. An ad hoc sindicato commission was elected and went to Doña Victoria to explain Faustino's rights. Under the Agrarian Reform Law, they said, she could not fire him before the end of the harvest. The commission assured Faustino that they would support him, but took no further action.

Though Faustino sought aid from the sindicato, it seems clear that he felt dependent on the patrón. She continued to give him orders and he continued his work, behaving in a subservient manner and appearing to be somewhat bewildered by her hostility. Doña Victoria finally agreed to let Faustino stay on until the end of the harvest, but only if he would not seek back wages or further involve the sindicato. It was widely agreed that Doña Victoria would lose the argument were it carried to court. Nevertheless, Doña Victoria's other peons came forward to lay blame on Faustino. The following comment summarizes their criticism:

He was cutting her wood to build his house, and telling us we'd be fools if we didn't do the same. When the patrón came to town, he wanted us to sign a paper to sue her because of his back wages. We didn't know anything. We are very grateful to the lady, because we are living on her land, satisfied and happy, and we have nothing to say, only that Faustino was bad. He bossed us even worse than the patrón, and was abusive.

It is not doubted that the patrón herself prompted the peons in this testimony. Nonetheless, the criticisms suggest that in their eyes Faustino had violated his proper responsibilities as a peon by having cultivated land to which he was not entitled, and in asserting authority over the other peons.

In the midst of the dispute Doña Victoria's son-in-law, a lawyer from Sucre, arrived in town and persuaded Faustino to accompany him to the sub-prefect's office to work out a settlement. Out of this came a formal contract, in which Doña Victoria agreed to Faustino's working until the completion of the harvest. This was the finale in a series of acts in which the power of the patrón was marshaled to contain a challenge. The work contract prepared by the lawyer and signed by Faustino restates the traditional positions of patrón and peon:

I, Victoria Santana, ...had realized that Faustino Medina..., without my permission, was using the land of my vineyards. But out of my own generosity, I relinquish my rights to collect the value of the trees he felled for his own profit....And to protect him from any harm, I allow him to stay until the harvest is over....

I, Faustino Medina, ...accept all the previous statement, and testify that I do not have any more claims

or complaints against that lady. And, that the suit I made before was the result of deceitful counsels, which I received from persons who wanted to cause trouble, where there are no problems. Therefore, I desist from that action, because it has no valid grounds whatsoever.

Both parties agree that now they are in perfect harmony. From now on, all work will be paid for, according to the customs of the place....

The viñatero, Faustino, will collaborate in all work, with eager interest and respect for the landowner.

Faustino's agreement to an unfavorable and highly impermanent settlement when the facts of the case appeared to point to victory for him, can be understood only in terms of pressures generated by the dispute and his inability to counter them.

The portrait of the generous patrón, the emphasis on the weakness and the obligations of the peon and the exhortations to work hard, reflect central values of the contemporary social order in Villa Abecia. Faustino overreached his position and has now been corrected. The patrón showed an excess of choler, but criticism from the other patróns will perhaps restrain her. Most importantly, such conflicts as this case illustrates are shown to be still easily managed within the traditional social system of the community and their resolution sustains the dominance of patróns over peons.

Maria Santana, the Marequita of earlier mention, is the sister-in-law of Doña Victoria, and though their personal relations are very strained, she also became involved in this case as a leading patrón and important figure. The local power system is revealed in her discussion of the case:

Hijito, you know, that was really something! Here Doña Victoria thought she could fire someone just like that, regardless of the reform. She thought she was God Almighty. Well, the compadre [Faustino] came to me and I told him to get the help of the sindicato. He said they had done nothing, and what should he do? Well, Hijito, I told him to go and talk to Doña Victoria and straighten it out. He began to cry here, saying that she wouldn't even let him within spitting distance of her house, screaming out 'indio' and all types of dirty things. But, papito, his own men fried him! Well, then the son-in-law of Doña Victoria came to see me. He told me that in any court Doña Victoria would lose, but that he wanted to resolve this without fuss. He asked me what should be done, and I told him that, in my opinion, they should keep Faustino on until the harvest and then see what happens. At that time, and Faustino knows this, they can take his lands, his house, his pastures, all.

## Chapter 3

### SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The ranking of social positions in a stratification system rests primarily on differences of power, wealth and prestige. Stratification by wealth and power creates in Villa Abecia two main strata; patrón and peon. Differences in prestige rest on several other criteria and create a more complex stratification system around that of patrón and peon.

One basis of prestige is race as socially defined. Terms like blanco, mestizo, cholo and indio are heard in everyday conversations. Blanco means white; mestizo and cholo mean "mixed-blood"; indio means Indian. These terms are not used simply to denote biological race but are used principally to indicate either the social status of a person or a social stratum of the community. The word blanco can mean either light-skinned or of European descent. There are few people in Villa Abecia whose skin pigmentation is literally what would generally be recognized as blanco, and fewer who can claim European descent. But the word is there and has come to mean a member of the gente decente (decent people), the top social stratum of the community. A person may have dark skin and be descended from Indians, but if he has money, is educated and lives in the manner of the patrón, he is a blanco, a decente.

If the word indio is defined as a distinctive racial or socio-cultural group, then there are no Indians in Villa Abecia. Most persons recognize that racially the population is mestizo. Indio is a word infrequently heard. Its primary meaning is now derogatory, used of a person whose conduct is reprehensible. The more frequently used terms for agricultural workers are peon or campesino, status terms in which the implication of race is largely absent.

Over the whole reach of the hierarchy the strata are also distinguished by the quality of deference shown to one in comparison with another. From this perspective there are four strata, rather than two. In referring to the top stratum, people frequently use the terms gente decente or gente buena (good people) instead of patrón. The next stratum is comprised of a few merchants (most of whom are known as Vitichis) plus some clerks, office workers and specialists. A very small third stratum is distinguished as campesinos civilizados, made up of the migratory campesinos who go to the sugar plantations and of some of the less skilled craftsmen and day laborers and house servants. Finally, the fourth and lowest stratum is comprised of the peons, sometimes referred to as campesinos.

The epitome of the decente is the patrón. However, land

ownership, with its implied wealth, is not the only qualification for membership here. Proper style of life, level of "culture", moral behavior, lineage and local origin are also counted, singly and in combination, in assigning a person to a particular prestige stratum. All the wealthy patrons are decentes, but even relatively impoverished patrons are decentes if they qualify by lineage and "cultural" and moral behavior. On the other hand, wealthy Vitichis are not decentes, because their origin, style of life and Quechua speech disqualify them.

As is frequently the case with a traditional elite, which has most to lose in terms of privileges, the decentes show more concern than the other prestige strata for precise prestige assignment. Among themselves they distinguish a sub-class of marginal decentes, comprised of persons and families whose prestige qualifications are tainted. Examples are sons of old decente families who have married campesino women and live somewhat like campesinos, or who have become very heavy drinkers and are regarded as shiftless and irresponsible.

The Vitichis are a separate prestige stratum below the decentes, to which can be added a small number of civil servants and skilled workers whose prestige standing is approximately equal. This class is dominated by the Vitichis, exclusively tradesmen. They own the important stores in town, except for three owned by landowners. The townspeople consider them outsiders and so do the Vitichis themselves. They are in Villa Abecia to make money, and will then go back to their homes in Vitichi. Their women chew coca and wear polleras, the many skirted costume of the chola. In other parts of Bolivia the Vitichis would be called cholos. Like cholos, they are bilingual (in Quechua and Spanish). They tend to trade in the cheaper goods and are more likely to extend credit, so most of their customers are campesinos from the surrounding villages. They are a serious people, put much emphasis on industriousness, and think the patrons of Villa Abecia are a lazy lot. As one of them said:

We are outsiders, and it is better not to pay attention to those people (decentes). Those from the town are lazy people. There is no reason why a person with money should be lazy. These people and their rich sons should work. Instead, they play, and think the world owes them something. We are from outside and we are workers, that's why we are here. But the rest don't like us because we work.

As a general category, the campesinos comprise the most numerous group. The majority conform to the classic, pre-revolutionary pattern, that of the deferential, illiterate peon, resigned for generations to an impoverished and precarious existence, living in crude huts in the vineyards and fields, dressed in homespun and working long hours.

But since the 1940's, a new type of campesino, the campesino civilizado, has appeared in Villa Abecia. These are the peasants who go off to work in the sugar fields for high seasonal pay.

Some have received land under the agrarian reform, and some are arrenderos who have bought land or otherwise have control of a farm plot. In all cases these are individuals who no longer have to work in the vineyards of the patrons for a meagre living. These zafra (sugar harvest) workers spend the other half of their lives back in Villa Abecia as shoe repairers, bricklayers, butchers, and so on. Zafreros with large families must spend most of their earnings on food and rent, but the younger, unmarried zafreros build comfortable houses and have beds, tables and chairs, bicycles and radios. They spend considerable time among themselves at parties and athletics, activities for which the peons have neither leisure nor money.

Affluence sets the zafreros apart. Travel, association with people of different backgrounds and comparative wealth, have given these campesinos a great measure of self-assurance. They are no longer diffident and humble peons, are inclined to be independent and to speak up for their rights. They resent the traditional status system in Villa Abecia, and though they are still a small group, they constitute the most serious challenge to this system.

Domestics and foster children occupy somewhat special status positions linked to the lowest stratum. These have a mobility potential and are not always easy to place in the prestige hierarchy. The first of these special positions is that of the imillas, or emilias, the women who work as maids in decent homes. All of them come from peasant families, and those recently recruited, still wearing polleras and chewing coca, cannot be distinguished from campesino women. Their fashion of life has undergone a quick change, for they live in the homes of the decentes and eat from their kitchens. In time, they stop chewing coca, abandon the pollera for de vestido -- Western style dress -- cut their braids off, learn to speak better Spanish and otherwise attempt to emulate their employers. Some aspire to even better things, dream of going off to Tarija or Sucre, or even Argentina, where they can make more than an equivalent of four dollars a month, their average wage in Villa Abecia.

Social ambition for many imillas is not so much to become more like decentes but to become less like campesinos. This is suggested in the comment of an imilla who has lived with a decente family since she was a young girl:

Sometimes I have thought of wearing polleras, but more and more the servants are no longer wearing them, but changing for fine vestidos. They want to be like their patrons, and they don't even want to greet older people any more. By wearing vestidos they have become spoiled. I wear vestidos, but my patrons have taught me how we ought to behave. Besides, when the llocallas [young campesinos] see one of us with polleras, they annoy her and make shameful propositions to her. On the contrary, if we wear vestido, we are respected, and we can even have proper boy friends.

On the other hand, some imillas wear vestidos when they visit Tarija and other cities, but change into the pollera when they return to Villa Abecia. These still have strong campesino ties, and are sensitive to criticism that they are "trying to put on airs" and are "not good enough to wear vestidos".

Imillas may hold their special place in society, somewhat above campesinos, for several years, but it is usually a temporary status, changing when the girls marry. As a group they are isolated and turn to each other for companionship and recreation. It is also a vulnerable status, and some imillas become prostitutes in town, not only for the llocalas but also for the decentes.

The second special position is that of the hijo de crianza, the foster child. These are usually children of poor peons, given to decente families and raised by them. They may be treated as servants. If so, their status may be even lower than that of a servant, for they receive no wages. Sometimes the child is reared as a member of the family and may achieve near-decente status, but there is social pressure against this among the decentes.

Villa Abecia is too small to have socially distinctive residential districts but there is a segregation effect. The best houses are concentrated around the plaza and the rest diminish in quality with distance from the center. Except for some large homes on the surrounding fincas, the far outlying people live in crude huts. Patrons and the better off Vitichis live in the houses around the plaza. Marginal decentes, smaller merchants and skilled workers live nearer the periphery. Most campesinos have their houses in the surrounding fields. Segregation by status most sharply meets the eye in public settings. In earlier years campesinos were not permitted to sit on plaza benches. Now they sit along the east and west sides, where often a campesina sells food or chicha, a fermented maize drink. These sides are primarily campesino territory, while the north side is where decente men congregate.

Marequita Santana has an honored claim on the southeast corner of the plaza near her house. There, usually joined by members of her family and her close friends, she passes part of each day. One day she found young campesinos sitting on the bench in that place. "I am sorry, hijitos," she said, "this is my bench." They stood up without a word and left. This form of status separation also occurs at town meetings and fiestas.

At large private decente parties an hijo de crianza may be accepted, but when a peon has been asked to attend -- this being a birthday or a wedding in a patrón family -- he is no less a social inferior and is expected to show proper subordination and deference. He is there only to pay his respects, and then remain apart or quickly leave. In contrast, patrons who attend parties given by their peons, thus honoring them, are no less paternalistic and condescending. No change occurs in status barrier, either way.



Traditional quasi-religious fiestas often bring members of the different prestige strata together, but their interaction is again circumscribed by status. The Taripacu is a campesino fiesta given in honor of a compadre. Campesinos troop through the streets carrying baskets filled with cakes and gifts and dancing to the traditional music of the now-vanished Chapaco Indians until they arrive at the compadre's house, where the fiesta ends in drinking and dancing. In this, and in street fiestas, the greatest being the Carnaval before Lent, it is usual for decentes to join campesinos in singing and dancing. Decente girls take part but are very careful not to join hands with campesinos. When dancing is in couples, rather than in rounds, campesinos never dance with decente girls, but decente young men dance with servant and campesino girls.

There is also a stratification effect in moral standards; but there the license is in favor of the campesino. The decentes believe themselves to have a stronger sense of honor, responsibility and family loyalty. These traits, as well as the sense of virtue felt in the cultivating of one's superior endowments and the importance of one's cultural tradition, are held to be decente characteristics, but are regarded as unusual in a campesino or even a Vitichi. Campesinos are not expected to adhere to these values. Public opinion is harsher and social pressure is much more severe, therefore, on the moral transgressions of decentes than on those of campesinos.

Theft, habitual drunkenness, premarital pregnancies and physical fighting provoke strong sanctions against decentes but are considered normal in campesinos. The decentes think campesinos care little whether the girl they marry is a virgin, whereas a decente girl known to have had sexual relations may not find a proper husband. Campesino tradition supports decente suspicion in this particular. A customary practice among the campesinos is *amañarse*, in which a couple live together for a year or more before marrying. This has the consent of all parents, with the understanding that it will terminate in marriage if they are compatible. To the decente, his accepting differences of moral standards is a method of underlining the correctness of the social stratification system. Where belief and practice of separate strata are identical, the implicit challenge to the stratification order is resolved by labeling it exceptional.

Education is another basis for prestige assignment. All decente children go to primary school and almost all continue to secondary school. Many go on to universities in Tarija, Sucre, Oruro, Potosí or La Paz. Vitichis also make an effort to put their children through primary as well as secondary schools. The campesinos are beginning to attach value to an education, but they still have serious economic problems in obtaining even a primary education.

Many campesinos, but more the older ones, are illiterate. Others have had but one or two years of primary education. Adult education and improved primary education were two objectives of the revolutionary MNR party, specifically to raise the campesinos;

but the adult literacy program never got started in Villa Abecia. Further, the established obstacles to a peon child's attending the local primary school remain. Some patróns oblige peon children to work along with their parents on the fincas when they could be in school. The local primary school charges no tuition, but many campesinos cannot afford to buy notebooks and pencils, much less the customary uniform. Others are ashamed to send their children barefoot in rags. Still, by and large, younger campesinos are getting more education than their parents did.

One of the more critical features of social mobility, the shifting of people from level to level in the stratification system, tells a great deal about how the system functions and maintains itself. Since the bases of status in Villa Abecia -- wealth, power and prestige -- are so completely monopolized by the patróns, there should be relatively little shifting. It is clear that social mobility requires a source of wealth outside Villa Abecia, and that wealth alone is not sufficient. These points can be illustrated by two instances, one a successful shift, the other not.

Vidal Naranjo, an altiplano Indian, who by hard work, ability, and some luck became a truck driver and later a transportista (an independent trucker) in Tarija, is the one who failed. About 1950 he sold his house and truck in Tarija and moved to Villa Abecia to work as a truck driver for Andres Mardueño, one of the biggest patróns. After a few years Naranjo invested his savings in a large vineyard. Employing several peons, he made enough money to buy a house on the plaza and open a general store, which is run by his wife.

Naranjo is respected as a good, hardworking man, but is regarded by others and by himself as an outsider and is socially isolated. He is addressed as maestro, a term widely applied to persons holding skilled or semi-skilled jobs. The term is inappropriate for a landowner and is therefore a constant reminder of his inferior social position. He does not attend public meetings, nor is he invited to parties or other social activities of the decente. His wife still wears traditional campesino dress and he still chews coca occasionally.

Naranjo admits to not a single friend in Villa Abecia, but explains that this is because he does not drink. He seems to take pride in not being a "drunken indio". In this and other respects he identifies with the decente, though sobriety is not invariable even among them. His ambiguous social status as a rich Indian patrón makes life very difficult. He says he intends to leave soon for Potosí, where some of his children are in school. There he intends to buy a store for his wife and a taxi for himself and return to his earlier occupation of chauffeur.

Carlos Preciado had more in his favor and succeeded. He was born in Villa Abecia, the illegitimate son of a decente father who never recognized him. As a young man he worked as a tailor, but on his return from the Chaco War he opened a hotel with his savings. He married a girl whose father was a well-to-do cholo,

and who inherited his money. Preciado is highly regarded in the community, both for the money he controls and because he is a responsible, serious, moral person. The Preciados are accepted as decente but this is somewhat qualified by the cholo background of Señora Preciado. That she has great social ambitions for herself and for her family annoys other decente families. It was, for instance, something of a tragedy to Sra. Preciado, but a satisfaction to some of the decentes, when she failed to break into the tightly closed aristocratic circles of Sucre.

Most of the conditions that affect social status combine in Villa Abecia to restrict mobility. No opportunities for new wealth have appeared in the community, and old wealth is carefully husbanded by a small number of patrons. Thus, the material conditions of mobility lie almost entirely outside the community.

Downward mobility is as important as upward, but no cases appeared that would illustrate it. There are two instances of members of decente families whose conduct is regarded as so outrageous that they are widely criticized and generally avoided by other decentes. Both are serious problem-drinkers. Since both are partially supported and protected by their families, it is too early to tell whether they or their children will lose status permanently in the community.

The social stratification system in Villa Abecia has undergone some minor but no major changes because of the Revolution of 1952. Today, as for prior generations, this system consists basically of a small landowning elite over a larger land-working population. Most of the town's wealth, power, and prestige are reserved to its elite, while the privileges of the peasantry are few. This is a type of status order that was widely prevalent throughout Bolivia before 1952.

## Chapter 4

### GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

With its small and relatively stable population, there are few persons in Villa Abecia who are not acquainted with everyone, but in this situation acquaintance is not a step toward friendship. Friendship is strongly conditioned by status, so most good friends are social equals. Most campesinos think that friendship between persons of different prestige strata is almost impossible. Some decentes think so too, but assert that status differences should not influence friendship; or they say that persons of different status can be friends if the status differences are "not essential". It is the campesinos who are more realistic. They do not mistake paternalism for friendship.

At all levels of society membership in groups of friends and family and compadre relationships reinforce mutual assistance and obligations. The ties are especially important among the decentes for maintaining status interests and in influencing community action. The collective relationship around Marequita Santana presents a good example.

Marequita is the indisputable leader and uniting force of two friendship groups, a group of old maids and the loba (a card game) group. Postmistress Marta Torres, Teresa Arellano, Paz Duran and Marequita are the old maids. They gather at Marequita's house, at the post office, or at Marequita's plaza bench, mainly to gossip. They also attend mass together occasionally.

The loba group includes the old maids and Andres Mardueño and Diego Agote. All own land in Villa Abecia, all are decentes. These members of Marequita's clique have affection for each other, hold each other in esteem and assist and protect each other's interests. When Mardueño was unable to sell his grapes after a December hailstorm, Marequita sold them for him as if they were her own, without profit, "as a favor to him because he is my friend". In turn, Mardueño is always willing to let the others use his distillery.

But family ties transcend all others. In Villa Abecia she has two nephews with wives and children, an unmarried nephew, Victoria Santana, widow of her brother, and Marta Torres, a distant relative. Marequita stands at the head, a spinster matriarch, and all except her sister-in-law treat her with affection and respect.

To be taken to the heart of such a family, however, relationship by birth or marriage is not alone always enough. For example, Marequita does not consider that Marta Torres is up to Santana standards in household manners and interpersonal etiquette,

and this she frequently deplures; but she keeps her in the family group because of their long and close friendship, bad manners and impoliteness notwithstanding. Marequita is forceful and demanding -- the expected role of the head of the family in Villa Abecia -- no matter that she is not a man. In turn, the members receive her unconditional loyalty, constant moral support, and generous economic assistance, and they are loyal to her and assist her whenever they can. All have their own primary economic interests; all but one are landowners. Consequently, the economic impact of group on its members is somewhat marginal.

More typically, family groups have singular economic interests. An example is the Preciado family -- mother, father and six children -- each of whom has an economic role in the family wine enterprise. Two of the children, Alfredo and Lydia, live with their parents, and the other four, David, Elva, Patricia and Tomas, either work or go to school in Oruro. Alfredo supervises his father's vineyards and works beside the peons. His sister Lydia tends the family store throughout the day, every day of the week, accepting this as a family duty. Alfredo occasionally rebels against what he says is too much labor for too little reward, but there has never been a breach of cooperation. The eldest son represents the family business in Oruro, acting as intermediary between his father and the distributing agent for the family's wine and sangani products. One of his sisters works as secretary and accountant for the same distributor. The father writes twice a week and parcels are always on the move between the two branches of the family.

In general, relations between members of a family are relaxed and affectionate. The father is the family authority, but the austere aloofness noted in men in other Latin American communities -- which accounts for the real influence of mothers elsewhere, a countervailing influence -- is less marked in Villa Abecia. Here the father is more approachable -- at the center of everyday family affairs. Mother shares with father the direction of the family, though she is subordinate.

Sex roles become sharply distinguished in the family. Girls learn their household duties at an early age, and boys start young as well, working alongside their fathers, though this is less true of sons of higher status, who will spend longer years in school and possibly go on to a different occupation or a profession. As boys grow older they are supervised less and less, but girls who have sexually matured are closely guarded by parents and brothers as well, especially among the decentes. And yet, the meeting of the sexes appears to be more open and friendly in Villa Abecia than in many Latin American communities, the young men here seeming to be less intensely engrossed with machismo, their maleness.

One of the most important of social ties in Villa Abecia is compadrazco, the tie of fictive kin relations. Compadrazco establishes obligations not only between a padrino (godparent) and ahijado (godchild), but also among the compadres, the godparent and his godchild's parents. These obligations frequently

are of great importance in everyday life. Baptismal *compadrazco*, ritually established by Catholicism, is the most important, for here the rights and obligations are formally associated with strong social, moral and spiritual values. Closely related to baptismal *compadrazco* are *compadrazco de agua bendita* (blessed water) and *compadrazco de misa de salud* (health mass). These are baptisms performed by the godparent himself when there is fear that the child may suddenly die and are the same in their significance, the difference being that a mass is later celebrated in one but not the other.

Other forms of *compadrazco* are similarly associated with church ceremony and belief. These are at the first communion, confirmation and marriage. A variant which is almost exclusively *campesino* is the *compadrazco de mortaja* (shroud), in which a person becomes the godparent of a dead child and is obliged to provide the shroud and oversee the funeral.

One form of *compadrazco* found in Villa Abecia is disapproved by the priest, but without marked effect. This is the bond of *guaguas de pan* (babies of bread) which is entered into by women and is comparable to the *compadrazco de amistad* (friendship) among men. To become *comadres de guagua de pan* two women carry out a ceremony consisting in a mock baptism of a baby doll made of bread, which is soaked in wine after the baptism and eaten.

Wealth, power and prestige have an important influence on the selection of *compadres*. *Compadrazco* involves real obligations and some of these can be expensive. It also brings advantages, and few persons are unmoved by these potentials when selecting a *compadre*. For the *patrón* it is another means of influencing his *peon*. *Campesinos* frequently must refuse to become godparents because of the cost in baptismal fees and clothes for the child and other gifts, but they seek *patrones* as *compadres* because of possible favoritism and economic benefit. The *Vitichis* seek social advantage in their *compadres*. For example, Manuel Frias, a *Vitichi* merchant, chose as *compadres* of marriage for his daughter, Diego Agote, Carlos Preciado and three members of the *Marduño* family, all important *decentes*. He explained his choices this way:

In looking for the right persons one takes into account how they behave socially, or if they excel socially or culturally. Then, one tries to have certain relationships with them. I found all these characteristics in the persons I named as godparents for my daughter. Relationship becomes more intimate. There is social, cultural and economic advantage. *Compadrazco* strengthens the friendship link, and through it one is able to move upward socially.

In Villa Abecia, where social relationships are little affected by formal organization but are mainly personal, the flexibility of *compadrazco* in establishing mutual obligations has transformed it into a key feature of society. Its utility in obtaining personal advantage, which often means limiting some other

person's advantage, is perhaps most important of all. It is exploited to obtain more regular work, credit in a store, loans of money, help during the harvest, more water for irrigation, better deals in land, assistance with the children's education, moral support, and advice in time of need. In the traditional society of Villa Abecia the system of compadrazco has become an important adaptive mechanism.

### Formal Organization

Formal groups and organizations are few and tend to be unstable. National political parties become active only with elections, but at other times are very nebulous organizations. The Veterans of the Chaco War has very few active members and no regular meetings. There are 40 to 50 veterans in town, including campesinos, but few think it worthwhile to pay their monthly dues because, they say, membership tax exemption benefits are never available and the officers are chronically dishonest.

The most viable and important of the few formal organizations is the wine cooperative. Founded in 1964, it has approximately 15 members, all vineyard owners. Some of its members are residents of Carreras, Taraya and Sucre, but are all related to important patrons in town. Although some small property owners have become members, the big owners thus far have dominated the cooperative. Ignacio Martinez is general president and Andres Mardueno is his deputy. Prudencio Rioja is treasurer, and Rosendo Maldonado is general secretary. All are important landowners. Maldonado has studied wine making and claims charge of wine production. These four have discussed the possibility of ousting the others on the grounds that it was their property that was put up as security for loans from the Agricultural Bank, and since they assume all the risks, they should receive the benefits without sharing.

Only two of the large landowners are not members of the cooperative. One is Marequita Santana, who does not produce her own wine, and the other is Carlos Preciado, who prefers to produce independently because he thinks the rules and procedures reduce profit-making opportunities. Membership has also been restricted because vineyard owners join mainly to borrow money, and the loans from the Agricultural Bank are not large enough even to cover the needs of present members.

Another grouping of some importance is that of the sports clubs, although typically they have a short and unstable life. Since their membership is drawn primarily from young adults, they become active only when the students return from the cities and the zafreros come back from Argentina and Santa Cruz. Four sports groups have been active in recent years. Two draw their members, both males and females, from decent families. In one the age range is from 16 to about 30; in the other, from 11 to 15. Both groups play basketball and soccer, but the most popular activity of the older group is dancing in the homes of the girl members. Married men usually are excluded because the girls be-

lieve they are inclined to drink too much and thus spoil the fun and games.

The two other groups draw their members from zafreros and lower status Vitichi families and, to a lesser extent, from peons. Sport is taken more seriously in these two clubs, and competitive matches are arranged with teams from nearby towns as well as with the older decente club.



## Chapter 5

### COMMUNITY ACTION

Contaminated drinking water, inadequate public sanitation, scant means of communication, lack of electricity and poor school facilities are some of the more insistent problems in Villa Abecia.

It has been usual for local government to appeal to the central government for technical aid and especially money whenever problems come up, but this is risky business because the central government never has enough of either, especially money. Success in this approach depends heavily on the political connections, on the influence local officials have in national circles. The alcalde, Jose Madrigal, has had an impressive record of success, but his influence in La Paz may be waning. Between his appointment to office by an MNR regime in 1961 and the end of 1964 he got central government funds through his party friends for the improvement of the local primary school building, for concrete sidewalks and benches around the plaza, for a government office building and for other public works. His successes greatly enhanced his prestige. He could boast of "good contacts" in La Paz, of being a devoted public official and the only citizen really concerned with the welfare of the town. The extent of his popularity was demonstrated after the change of government in 1964. Though MNR officials in other towns were immediately thrown out by local citizens, or soon were to be unseated, the townspeople in Villa Abecia successfully petitioned the central government to continue Madrigal in office. But his MNR friends are gone, and since 1964 the alcalde has had to depend increasingly on local resources for local projects. However, the old pattern of reliance on the central government and the alcalde's personal interest and influence in previous successes have had a spoiling effect; but quite aside from this there is an even more important factor impeding any effective shift to basically local support in getting anything done. The campesinos, who comprise the majority of the population, are not regarded by town officials, decentes or Vitichis as full citizens, despite their legal claim to this status since the revolution, and for this reason it is difficult, if not impossible, for them to cooperate in community affairs. The decente belief that campesinos are ignorant, lazy and irresponsible provides a more than adequate rationale for excluding them from the discussions and planning that must precede collective effort, and their social segregation prevents the opening of the channels of communication that would be necessary for informed campesino action. The sindicato seems to have served this purpose in the mid-1950's, but in recent years it has become an ineffectual organization. It is indicative of the current situation of the campesinos that when representatives of a national Catholic aid organization arrived to estimate emergency

needs following hailstorm disaster, they were content to inquire only among the patrons about the needs of the peons.

The campesinos are neither assisted nor encouraged in accepting community responsibility. Further, they would run the risk of seeing the benefits of their efforts accrue mainly to others, primarily the decentes. Improvement of the school building would benefit the town. But many campesinos find it impossible to send their children to school. Thus, any appeal to campesino self-interest cannot but fall on skeptical ears.

The hard-working, educated Vitichis offer comparatively far greater immediate potential for developing community cooperation. Yet this potential must be severely qualified. Many Vitichis regard themselves as transients who will one day return to their native town. They have no long-range commitment to Villa Abecia. Moreover, the decentes consider the Vitichis to be outsiders, not really of the place, so this further tends to isolate them from participation in community affairs.

The only major segment of the population remaining, the one most crucial to action, are the decentes. But though they feel a strong sense of community loyalty and responsibility, in some ways they think they are the community, and constantly equate the interests of the town only with their own interest. Marequita Santana, for instance, reacts to the proposed electric light project by saying: "¿Qué me importa?" -- "What do I care? I have my lantern." The absence of electric lighting raises no problem for her because she can afford lanterns and oil to fuel them. The many families in flickering candlelight simply do not count. On top of all this there is mutual distrust between government officials and the citizens of the town. The officials are skeptical of the possibility of assistance from the population, whether in work, money or even ideas. The people in turn suspect the motives of their officials and especially their honesty in handling money. The affair of the plaza illustrates this conflict.

The appearance of the plaza is criticized by everyone, but when the alcalde has attempted to improve it he has generally received little cooperation and sometimes has been charged with having made it worse. When he imposed water rationing so that he would have enough to keep plaza plants and grass alive, there was widespread complaining and people violated the order in watering their gardens anyway. When he was offered free plants in Tarija to improve the plaza, people said he put off picking them up so that he might charge the town for them, but keep the money for himself. On his part, the alcalde pleads that he can do little to improve the plaza if townspeople refuse to pay taxes intended for public works.

The decentes avoid public affairs. To them, the problems of local government are peripheral problems, not worth the attention of decentes, and concern about them only invites their ridicule. In this unpromising setting collective action is nevertheless not completely impossible. On the night of December 29, 1965, a furious hailstorm hit the town and surrounding countryside, destroying

grape and other crops. A second hailstorm occurred two days later. Torrential rains followed. The river overflowed and flash floods came down through the ravines above the town. The racing flood waters carried tons of mud, sand, gravel and huge boulders onto the properties below. Some properties virtually disappeared beneath, while on others only barren rock remained.

Property owners met the next day and dispatched telegrams to central government officials, La Paz newspapers and the La Paz radio. When it was suggested that campesinos should also sign the telegrams, the sub-prefect signed for the sindicato on his own authority. At a second meeting three days later it was decided to send a commission to seek aid from President Barrientos, the American Embassy and any other likely source. The commission included the alcalde, the sub-prefect, two of the largest landowners and two or three other persons to represent nearby villages and the campesinos. It was decided that each landowner would contribute a sum proportional to the size of his property to pay the expenses of the commission. Two patrons volunteered to collect this money, but it was more than a week before they had enough to send the commission on its way.

When the commission got back a special meeting was called to hear its report. Some members boasted of having had great success. The property owners among them had obtained an extension of eight years on their loans from the Agricultural Bank. The American Embassy had promised some pipe for the flood-damaged water system, and seeds and a few tools for the campesinos. There was talk in town that commission members had exerted themselves primarily for their own benefit. Some said they pocketed money donated by the president, though no evidence was adduced.

The immediate problem caused by the hailstorm was the interruption of the public water supply. Water for household use is piped into Villa Abecia from a cement storage tank in the hills north of the town. An open stream fed by a spring is the source of this water, and while the tank was not damaged the stream was diverted from its course by flood debris, and tons of deposited rock broke the pipeline running out of the tank. On the day after the first storm the alcalde and others inspected the water system to assess the damage. They found that it was extensive, and decided that it would be wise to relocate the pipeline to a safer position. This report heightened the general concern. There was no water coming from household faucets and neither was there any available from the nearby irrigation ditches because these were full of mud and rocks. Water was to be had from the river, but only insufficient quantities could be carried. Most households had small gardens of vegetables and fruits, and these would soon die without water, and there was worry lest an epidemic develop from drinking contaminated water.

At the second public meeting on January 3, when the commission was formed, various arguments for urgent action were put forward. The majority favored direct local action. But the alcalde argued that the town must wait for the government engineers and for government assistance in rebuilding the water system. He supported

his position by pointing out that the municipal treasury lacked adequate funds to undertake expensive repairs, that emergency repairs would represent money thrown away, since the system had to be redesigned, and that any stop-gap repairs would weaken the position of the town in seeking government assistance to reconstruct the water system. No one at the meeting was willing to challenge the alcalde directly, to initiate any action that he opposed, so the meeting ended with the alcalde's policy in effect adopted.

In the week following the January 3rd meeting, dissatisfaction with the alcalde's position increased. Still, no one attempted to organize opinion against him. In this situation, the anthropologist associated with this study, interested and sympathetic, became a focus for direct action. The handful of citizens in somewhat active opposition to the alcalde sought to reverse his policy through another public meeting, which was called on January 10, but they were routed again by the alcalde's rhetoric. With many still dissatisfied, several -- including one of the project field workers -- confronted the alcalde with a firm decision; they and other members of the community were going to do something about the water problem whether he liked it or not. The next morning this small group, including the sub-prefect and two of the project field workers, discovered that the tank and the feeder stream were intact, requiring only cleaning, and that only 50 yards of pipe, not the 300 of the alcalde's estimate, had been buried and might require excavating. Part of the group was immediately sent to town to get help, tools and food, and the others set to work dredging mud with their hands. In less than an hour water was flowing into the tank and on into the pipeline. As the hours passed, more and more people arrived from town to join in the work. Men, women, adults and children, patrons and peons, all pitched in to do what they could. Even the alcalde arrived, but only to give orders. By nightfall the town had water.

This may be an impressive success story, but its implications are largely negative. Up to the day of activity, attitudes conformed exactly with the Villa Abecian pattern. A solution to a community problem is sought through the central government, and this mode of solution is most particularly favored by the person most visibly charged with public responsibility, the alcalde. The leading patrons and the decentes in general may criticize, but they do nothing. The peons are not supposed to have a voice in public affairs and are not heard. The difference in this case is that even patrons need water. They did not take charge, but it was clear that they were in disagreement with the alcalde, and also that something had to be done. Energetic intervention by members of the study staff doubtless disturbed the pattern somewhat, making it difficult to guess what might have happened if they had not been present.

Crisis makes possible arrangements and activities that are otherwise difficult if not impossible to evoke. In Villa Abecia the patterns of social relations and social belief otherwise tend to prevent collective activity. Local government officials and

many decentes refer to the town as apathetic. Apathy appears less important in preventing community action in Villa Abecia than the traditional structure of power, status, and social obligations. Realistically, it is among the decentes that the greatest possibilities for community action lie. Clarification of the limitations of local government and local government responsibilities vis-a-vis the decentes immediately become issues of importance from this viewpoint. Increasing community participation by the patróns must raise the issue of who benefits. For communities like Villa Abecia such issues must temper optimism concerning their capacity for collective self-help.



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PART III

Reyes: A Complex Stable Community

## Chapter 1

### COMMUNITY SETTING

The town of Reyes is near the western edge of the vast lowland plain of the Beni in Eastern Bolivia. This is an area of few people and much land, with huge natural pastures alternating with tropical forests. The town sits on a low rise in the plain, approximately 700 feet above sea level, from which the grasslands extend on all sides beyond sight, so flat that it fills with water during the rainy season and remains under several inches of it for several months. Three sides of the town are bounded by the curiche, a U-shaped moat dug long ago to protect the place from Indians. Just beyond the curiche is the Lechería, a stream that flows only during the rainy season but which is a year-round source of reservoir water.

Within the old moat the town is laid out in a regular grid pattern of more than 50 blocks, except on the periphery where settlement is sparse, the streets become paths and there is heavy vegetation. The town gives the impression of spaciousness. The streets are wide and there are many scattered vacant lots. The houses are far apart and the properties are either fenced with wire or have no fence at all -- are not shut in by the traditional high adobe walls. Almost all the houses are of one story, with two or three rooms, occasionally four or five, and are made of a variety of materials -- adobe, mud-plastered adobe, cement-coated adobe, wooden poles, or simply palm leaves. Almost every household has a garden with some fruit trees, including avocado and citrus fruits. A few people have their own wells and neighbors draw from these or go to the curiche.

There are two plazas in Reyes, after the pattern of Spanish Colonial towns. Both are unattractive, unimproved. In one the odd horse or cow comes grazing, but the other, central plaza, is completely cut off from use by a wire fence. At a corner of this plaza are a wooden church and its companion rectory, and behind them is the parochial elementary school. Facing the church on the other side of the plaza is a small adobe public high school. One block in back of this is the public elementary school. In one of the larger houses on the central plaza local government is run from a rented room.

#### The People and Their Activity

In 1965 the project census counted 2,129 persons in Reyes, distributed among 322 households, one-quarter of which were of more than eight persons. All townspeople speak Spanish, but one quarter also speak one of several Indian languages, Quechua, Aymara, or a language of the lowlands such as Reyesano.



Throughout most of the year the climate is humid and hot, the temperature usually ranging between 97° and 61° Fahrenheit. The rainy season, at its wettest in December and January, varies in length and in rainfall. The average is 70 inches a year. During the rains the dirt streets are transformed into mud sloughs and at times into rivers.

On an ordinary weekday activity starts early. The butchers open shop at the slaughterhouse at 4 a.m., but a queue forms well before that. The general stores are open by 7 o'clock or earlier, and the women begin their chores and the children are at play. As the morning progresses the streets gradually fill with chatting, bustling people, but at noon all stops, the stores are closed, the streets are deserted, the doors and shutters of the houses are shut. This is the time of greatest heat, of mid-day meal and siesta. At 2:30 the stores open again and the town returns to life. Chatter and bustle reach a high point at dusk at the street intersection one block south of the central plaza where a movie theatre stands on one corner and an open-air coffee and beer kiosk on another. At 11 o'clock the few street lights are turned off and most people go home. But at the coffee and beer cantinas and kiosks the men are at cards and dice by lantern light, and their games and talk may go on beyond midnight.

#### Outside Contacts

Throughout much of its history Reyes has been in comparative isolation. There are no railroads or highways through the Beni, not even unimproved roads, for the yearly flooding would make roads difficult to build and costly to maintain. But horses, and carts with large wooden wheels drawn by oxen, travel the flat terrain throughout the year over a tangle of crossing trails. Within the town a few trucks, a jeep and a couple of tractors provide transport, and recently some cattlemen have taken to the range on lightweight motorcycles.

The remoteness of centuries was broken for Reyes in 1946 with the construction of an airfield by the Corporacion Boliviana de Fomento (Bolivian Development Corporation), a federal agency whose chief local function is increased production and improvement of the quality of Beni cattle. The CBF, with headquarters in Reyes, established breeding farms stocked with imported Cebu and Santa Gertrudis bulls. CBF planes now carry dressed beef directly from Reyes to La Paz and return with goods for local merchants. Weekly flights out of Trinidad, the departmental capital, touch down at Reyes and three or four other towns. There are also irregularly scheduled direct flights between Reyes and La Paz, sometimes as often as once a week, for the transport of goods. All flights are subject to weather, the dirt landing field being usable only when dry. Mail is carried by plane. The state operates a radio-telegraph office at Reyes, but heavy rains interrupt even radio communications, isolating the town completely.

## In Time

A large part of the central Beni as far west as Reyes was known to the early Spanish explorers as Moxos, after the name of an Indian tribe of the region. Rumors of great wealth in this back country prompted several expeditions to set out from Lima, Asuncion and Cochabamba between 1539 and 1630. In fact, the area was lightly populated by small bands of semi-nomadic Indians who had little gold for the Spaniards.

At the end of the 17th Century, before the imposition of Spanish military or administrative authority, the Jesuits founded a mission in the Moxos country and attempted to create a simple Utopian society. At mission stations, two Jesuits were assigned as physicians, teachers and inspectors of work. An Indian civil administration was set up to govern over the newly congregated and resettled Indians. The Indians elected from their own numbers a corregidor, several regidores, alcaldes and a council, and the communities settled down to farming and craftwork, taught and supervised by the priests. No one received a salary, nor was there any type of money in use. Each member of a community received what he needed out of the collective production. The mission stations rapidly extended their control over the Indian population of the Moxos, and to prevent despoilment of the Indians the Jesuits barred Spanish colonists from mission territory. But colonists still came in search of riches and to seize Indians to work as serfs on plantations in the south. The Jesuits eventually prevailed in this conflict and the King of Spain dispatched a Royal Letter forbidding the entry of colonists into the mission area.

Reyes was the 10th Jesuit mission founded in Moxos, sometime between 1700 and 1710. It was situated on the Rio Beni, just west of where the town now lies. A half-century later, in 1767, with all the governments of Europe aligned against their order, Spain expelled the Jesuits from her South American dominions and Reyes, with all the rest, passed from church to civil control. With the departure of the Jesuits traders came, offering attractive goods on terms little understood by the Indians, and quickly swindled them of their animals and land. His possessions gone, the Indian himself became security for his debts, and he was thus forced to involuntary labor. The superficial legality of these transactions put the power and prestige of the colonial government behind the merchants. Under the law, the Indian could in effect be bought by anyone who would pay his debt, thereby enslaving him to a new creditor -- for few Indians ever were able to pay their debts. By the 19th Century the Moxos had become a region of colonial estates with large herds of cattle and horses. Many of these merchant landlords were "turcos" -- traders from the eastern Mediterranean. During the 19th Century Spaniards came to Reyes in increasing numbers as governmental officials, merchants, workers and adventurers, lured by economic booms in quinine and rubber.

In the 1850's an intense demand for quinine developed on the world market. The cinchona bark found in the forests of the Beni

was the best in Bolivia, and the people of Reyes set to work collecting it. The labor ranks were swelled by people from nearby villages as well as from distant parts of the country. Requiring little investment, profits could be made by all. Then the British planted the cinchona tree in India and Malaya, and by 1870 their more efficient plantation production and shorter trade routes destroyed the demand for Bolivian bark.

Hardly was the quinine boom over when the search for natural rubber began in 1874, and Reyes had another economic upsurge. This -- as it turned out -- was an accident of geographic ignorance. Rubber collected in the western Beni was brought up river to Puerto Salinas, west of Reyes on the Rio Beni, and over the few miles to Reyes, then overland in a long trek to Santa Ana, where it was reloaded and sent down the Rio Mamore into Brazil. Reyes became a land trans-shipment center because no one knew that the Rio Beni joins the Rio Mamore at the Brazilian border, and that the rubber need never have been unloaded.

Two or three very large firms and many small ones were established to handle the rubber trade and they were soon dealing in other merchandise up and down the rivers and along the trade routes. In 1880 the true course of the Rio Beni was found and the overland rubber route through Reyes lost its purpose. A sharp decline in commerce took place, but Reyes continued to profit from the rubber boom until after the turn of the century.

Cattle which the Jesuits had introduced in the 1600's had by now multiplied on the virgin pasturelands from a few hundred to many thousands of head. There was no control of breeding and great wild herds had grown up. At the same time, merchants and other men of means were taking over the large tracts of land that were to become cattle estancias. For a time after the Corporacion Boliviana de Fomento had come in to improve cattle production, Reyes was the only community with air transportation within hundreds of miles, so it became a central cattle market and shipping point. But now every important town of the region has its airfield. Further, reckless exploitation of the cattle herds in recent decades and unchecked diseases in the animals have greatly diminished their numbers. Meat was flown out of Reyes daily in the early 1950's, but now only once or twice a week.

Reyes, which had been made a provincial capital in 1939, had a change of local government officials after the Revolution of 1952; but little else changed. There was no hostility, none of the fighting between peons and patrons that occurred in other areas. The relation of land to labor that contributed to the Revolution of 1952, as seen in the other towns studied, did not exist in Reyes.

### Town Economy

In cattle raising lies the greatest concentration of wealth in the community, despite earlier unrestrained slaughter and

epizootics of rabies and hoof and mouth disease. Threatened with the destruction of the herds, most cattle growers are adopting remedies. Estancias are being fenced to control breeding and new breeds have been introduced. More herds are being vaccinated, and there are efforts to produce disease-resistant strains. Cattle are tended more closely, moved to high ground during the rainy season and to water sources during the dry, so that good physical condition can be maintained and the loss of animals minimized, but these measures have made cattle raising more costly. Most cattlemen today own no more than a few hundred head. A few have herds of one to two thousand, but none is greater than 5,000. The small breeder, hardest hit by increasing costs, is least able to get bank loans, for the Banco Agrícola requires that the assets of the borrower be three times greater than his loan. Even so, loans are for short periods and interest is high.

Most of the cattle in the Reyes area are sold to a middleman who has them butchered in Reyes and ships the carcasses by air to La Paz. Cattlemen can make a greater profit by shipping the meat themselves, but they risk a considerable loss since there are no local refrigeration facilities and bad weather may halt air traffic. Under these circumstances the meat must be processed locally as charqui (dried, salted meat), for which cattlemen get about half the fresh meat sales price.

To reduce the cost of air shipment, most of the local meat dealers arrange to have the meat planes return with goods for resale in Reyes. This provides the town with an important, though expensive, source of trade goods. A direct but not very profitable by-product of cattle raising is the local work in leather. A small tannery near town employs several men, and more make leather goods in their homes. Saddles and other leather articles required by cowpunchers, and shoes and sandals are the principal types of leatherwork. They are produced for local consumption only, and demand is light and uneven.

Another significant group in terms of concentrated wealth and importance in the local economy are the retail merchants. While dozens of people in town sell goods, especially as a part-time activity, three or four merchants dominate retail trade. Their stores carry the greatest quantities and largest assortments of merchandise. Almost all household needs can be obtained in any one of these stores, much of it brought in from La Paz. The larger merchants are also moneylenders, to whom small farmers pledge their harvests for loans and credit, an arrangement very favorable to the merchants.

Reyes is now in another of its periods of economic decline, this time through the loss of its position as the only shipping point of beef for a large area. The CBF, which once had a work force of more than 200, now has only 30 people on its payroll, though it continues to provide work to a substantial number by contracting for specific tasks such as posts for range fences. There is no other source of employment that compares with the CBF. The estancias have work crews, but each one employs no more than a handful of vaqueros. The stores and other businesses

in town employ even fewer persons. Men who have few skills or almost none find a living at odd jobs, and many families depend entirely on small game and fish and what they can raise in their own gardens and on their chacos, their small subsistence plots of farmland beyond the town. Nearly every family raises poultry and pigs. Lack of work and short-term employment are causes of much complaint.

The full-time farmers, over 25% of the male labor force, raise cash crops, but primarily for the local market. Rice, maize, yucca and guineo (a variety of banana) are the most common crops. Tobacco, sugar cane and coffee are also cultivated, but to a lesser extent. No fertilizers are used. Depleted soil is simply abandoned. Neither are insecticides used. Only the montes, the woodlands cleared long ago, are available for farming. The pampas are entirely in the hands of the cattlemen.

Independent agricultural work was the goal of many of the mozos, the peons of the cattle ranchers who were freed of their debts by the Agrarian Reform Law. While still working as mozos, many had cultivated a small chaco on the patrón's estancia. Then they received a few acres of land under agrarian law, but many have now returned to the cattle estancias to work for wages. Their farms yielded very small profits at best in the limited Reyes market, and it was not unusual for these men to discover by harvest time that they owed more than the value of their crops.

The area around Reyes offers a number of other means of livelihood. Though none of these provides full-time work for anyone, they are important economic supplements. Rubber is still produced on a very small scale and many varieties of trees in the nearby forests are cut for house construction, furniture, light poles, roofing material and other uses. Wild cats and jaguars are hunted for their fur, small animals and fowl are hunted for their meat, and fish are abundant but are caught only for home consumption.

Money for most families seems constantly in short supply. There is continual borrowing and chronic indebtedness. Workers regularly seek advances on their wages. Most retail stores sell on credit and make direct loans. Interest varies widely, depending on the amount of the loan and its duration. Debt peonage became illegal under the Agrarian Reform Law, and all pre-1952 farm worker debts were voided, but mozos still become indebted to their patróns and others and local authorities are inclined to support the patrón when he demands that the mozo work off his debt.

## Chapter 2

### POWER AND AUTHORITY

Reyes is a larger, more heterogeneous community than Villa Abecia. Its cycles of economic boom and recession have favored various segments of the population, and have not permitted the continuity of control that is such a prominent characteristic of Villa Abecia. On the other hand, the Revolution of 1952 did nothing to Reyes in any truly revolutionary sense, though significant changes were greater than in Villa Abecia. It was the same revolution, but with differing effects, the social structure of Reyes being relatively less stable and of greater complexity.

#### Locus of Power

The most important form of exploitable wealth in Reyes today is meat. The ganaderos, the cattlemen, are therefore pre-eminent in the community power system. The pampas of the Beni favor the raising of cattle and have been an important part of the Reyes scene ever since its founding. With the development of air transport they became the one valuable commodity with a market in the world outside, but not all ganaderos possess important wealth. Some have as few as 100 or even only 50 head, but they are important because their group holds the greatest power, most of it concentrated in those with herds of 1,000 to 5,000.

The cattle estancias of even the biggest ganaderos came through the revolution almost unchanged, chiefly because the Agrarian Reform Law acknowledged that cattle raising requires broad expanses of land. Besides, large tracts of unused land, especially in forest, were available for allocation to peons. There was almost no expropriation under the law, and even when confiscation is alleged to have taken place it was often of land that had been abandoned, land that had become the property of the state under the new national law.

The economic dominance of the ganaderos has been threatened less by agrarian reform than by poor technical management and the forces of nature. Neglect during periods of heavy rain or intense heat causes heavy losses among cattle. Worse still, rampant diseases have destroyed entire herds. Not a few prosperous ganaderos were wiped out in a single attack in the days before the now widespread use of vaccines.

Ganaderos of once great power and prestige are now but shadows of a former prominence based on large holdings. Others have fallen from the ganaderos class altogether, and have been forced into unskilled work to make a living. The effect has been a hindrance to the continuity of dominance by this group and to the

development of an elitist tradition, such as that among the patrons of Villa Abecia.

The power of the ganaderos over their workers traditionally took the form of debt peonage. Workers were forced to pay very high prices for the goods they needed and high interest rates for essential money, but their wages would rarely permit repayment. Further profits were made out of their ignorance, through easy falsification of accounts. By such means the mozos became hopelessly indebted, and their debts in time were inherited by their children. The effect was a stable supply of cheap, controlled labor. Agrarian reform crippled this traditional peonage system by abolishing all debts contracted by agricultural laborers prior to the revolution, and by requiring formal work contracts which must specify the rights and wages, as well as the obligations of the worker, and also the rights and obligations of the employer. Nevertheless, mozos must still depend on patrons for work and patrons still make loans of goods or money to their mozos. These debts can no longer be inherited, but they are certainly collectible so long as the patrón can force the mozo to work and local authorities support his doing so. Here, too, the revolution wrought a change. The public floggings to which mozos traditionally were subjected are now prohibited. In this and other ways, agrarian reform has greatly restrained the once almost unlimited power that the patrón in Reyes had over the peon. The peon of today is less deferential, more independent in outlook and action. Still, he must eat, and this sustains the power of the ganadero, for the smaller estancias employ no more than three to four vaqueros, the larger ones usually no more than 10 to 15. Demand for labor being low, profits from independent farming being not high enough for a decent living, it is easy for the cattle estancias to recruit mozos on the boss's terms.

Yet another source of ganadero power is his well established reputation for violence. Before 1939, before its becoming a provincial capital, Reyes had no formal local government, no policemen. Isolated, at a great distance from formal authority, the town conducted itself according to the classic frontier rule of force. The history of Reyes is full of tales of gun fights, atrocious assaults and assassinations. Prudence dictated only that murder be done with as little risk as possible. The shot was fired from a concealed position, from a dark doorway.

Today, ganaderos are more likely to hire a killer or have indebted henchmen do the job. One local ganadero recently was accused of having used his men to commit several murders. The evidence against this cattleman was inconclusive, but most people consider the charges true. Furthermore, the ganadero can usually count on the cooperation of the authorities. When these affairs get beyond local jurisdiction he can generally avoid difficulty by letting the prima facie killers face the charges, which is possibly a part of what they have been paid to do. Though quality of law and order probably has improved considerably in the past decade, the old pattern of terror and violence has not been completely erased.

Two of the most talked of assassination incidents of recent years concerned two MNR families, people of the revolution, who had come to town to represent the new political order. The first MNR family -- a large one -- arrived in 1953 and were active in organizing a local branch of the MNR party. Through their political connections they took a strong lead in town affairs, in efforts to develop its economic interests. A dispute arose between the family and the director of the CBF over a debt. This progressed from an exchange of messages to an exchange of words to an exchange of blows. At this point the CBF director armed some of his men and drove into town to settle the quarrel. He also picked up several of the ganaderos who were becoming increasingly antagonistic toward the family because of their growing power, their open hostility to the ganaderos and their favoring the peons. The CBF director and his gang fired on the houses and buildings of this large family, killing several of them. The others fled. The CBF director promptly left town, but members of the family later returned and killed one of the ganaderos -- then retired from Reyes for good. No investigation, no arrest, no further action occurred.

The second MNR family arrived in Reyes in 1954. One member had been appointed alcalde, and his brother had been named head of the local federation of sindicatos. Both brothers were militant MNR officials and quickly made many enemies among the ganaderos. Not long after their arrival the brother who headed the Central was accused of raping a townswoman whose husband was away from home. The husband returned, sought out the brother and shot him dead. People on the side of the peons say that the woman's accusation of rape was planned by the ganaderos as a pretext for getting rid of a threat to their way of life.

Shortly thereafter an investigation commission arrived from La Paz to examine charges of corruption against the other brother, the alcalde. He, too, had drawn the ire of the ganaderos for promoting the interests of the peons and protecting their rights. For example, instead of allowing ganaderos who had physically abused their peons to get off with a fine, he would jail them for a day or two. The arrival of the investigators brought armed groups of opposed ganaderos and peons into town. With that, the commission decided to interrogate the alcalde in La Paz, though the peons had to be persuaded to allow him to leave. He did not return to Reyes. He was jailed in La Paz and subsequently disappeared from view.

The activities of these two families were the high point of the only serious, organized challenge to the dominant power position of the ganaderos under the MNR government. In both cases violence played an important part of the maintenance of ganadero power. It was the only time that persons of importance took the part of the peons. In Reyes, as in Villa Abecia, the patrons were able to find a modus vivendi with the new national government that enabled them to survive with much of their power intact.

Two ganaderos are especially prominent today in town affairs. They represent the two styles employed by most ganaderos in their



exercise of power, the elitist style and the activist. Luis Regla typifies the elitist style, the pretense of unobtrusiveness. He seldom goes to public meetings, regardless of their importance, and when he does he seldom participates, even when asked to. But he takes part by proxy, having someone there who is a known associate. As one of the wealthiest ganaderos he is frequently invited to form or serve on a committee, generally in the hope that he will make a large financial contribution to its work. He is not a frequent collaborator in voluntary community projects and has even gone so far as to refuse to pay his cattle taxes, on the grounds that the money is misused. On the other hand, he has donated a large sum to remodel the central plaza.

The other ganadero, Abel Zarco, is a model activist. This is a style that is especially congenial to politicians and government officials, as Zarco once was. He came to Reyes as sub-prefect, but married into a wealthy cattle family and became a ganadero. He attends all public meetings and holds offices in many different groups. He talks more at meetings and contributes more ideas than others. He is inclined to direct these meetings in an autocratic manner, and even if not allowed to take over he is sufficiently skillful in debate to get what he wants with considerable frequency. Elitists like Regla try to avoid open struggles, try instead for private settlements, from which decisions can be implemented without fanfare.

While one form of violence has been a source of strength to the ganaderos, another form has weakened their class position. Discord and conflict occur frequently among them. There are lawsuits over inheritance rights and suits occur between relatives as well as other ganaderos over cattle agreements. They are forever seeking allies from among themselves to attack yet another of their group as opportunity presents itself.

An instance of dissension among the ganaderos occurred in 1965 when it appeared that Luis Regla might be appointed to replace the alcalde, who was accused of incompetence and at a public meeting had been asked to resign. It was suggested that Regla be appointed because he had offered money to complete the remodeling of the central plaza. This proposal split the ganaderos, one side supporting Regla and the other rallying around sub-prefect Abel Zarco, friend of the alcalde.

The core of Regla's supporters, mostly wealthy ganaderos, were card playing companions at a drinking and gaming cantina, and the alcalde's backers were ganaderos and a few officials who regularly gathered at the Azcui kiosk, another place for cards, coffee and beer. The alcalde finally resigned, followed by Zarco, who quit in protest against what he called irresponsible criticism, but he was also losing a pliable alcalde, a loss through which his position as sub-prefect became less attractive. Zarco then attempted with the support of his faction to force Regla to sign a statement that he would complete the remodeling of the central plaza on becoming alcalde, using his own funds if necessary. Regla refused to accept the office under this condition, and eventually a new alcalde and sub-prefect were appointed from La Paz.

This incident should not suggest that the ganaderos are organized in two stable groups of rival card players. Most ganaderos freely move from one gathering place to the other. Ties of kinship and friendship, recreational association, personal and economic interests and various animosities create a complex web of crosscutting interconnections among the ganaderos and their families. There are constantly shifting alliances formed to meet a specific situation. Such alliances exploit whatever part of the network is useful to the occasion. Other problems and other occasions bring about new alliances.

Despite internal factionalism and conflict, the ganaderos are aware of their common interests and of their power to influence community decisions in favor of those interests. However, in contrast to Villa Abecia, they have not been able, except for a relatively short period between 1930 and 1952, to monopolize all power in the community. There are several subsidiary groups with whom they must share control. The most important of these are the comerciantes, the merchants, some of whom have amassed considerable wealth. They can buy immunity from law, and all else that money affords. They are issuers of credit and lenders of cash, on whom laborers and farmers depend for everyday necessities. Many of their debtors never completely pay off, and from these the merchants expect deference and can exact subservience. The creditor merchant is in a position to influence a relatively large proportion of the population.

A somewhat tangential power is held by the small sindicatos scattered over the countryside, and especially by the secretary general of the local federation of sindicatos. The sindicatos are not usually involved in community affairs, but are likely to be approached to supply peons when a town project requires a labor force. The leader of the sindicatos at these times becomes a person to be reckoned with. In the Reyes area the sindicatos were never the militant units that arose in other parts of Bolivia. Since the fall of the MNR in 1964, the local sindicatos have become even more timorous. They represent no threat to the power of the ganaderos and the merchants.

Another minor center of power is the church, meaning the bishop and Padre Lorenzo, his chief assistant. Padre Lorenzo is an official in several groups, a member of various committees, and directs a soccer team. He frequently directs his sermons to discussions of community action.

Finally, two organizations must be mentioned in speaking of power in the community. One is the ever-present Association of Veterans of the Chaco War. Typically in Bolivia, this organization has little or no say in community affairs. The difference in Reyes is that it has a reputation for having important political contacts in La Paz. There is no evidence for this except some instances when local officials have been replaced without explanation, but this in itself is not an unusual occurrence. Nevertheless, a reputation for power is itself a source of power, so the president of this organization is generally included whenever the important people of the community assemble.

The second organization is the Amigos del Progreso, the Friends of Progress, a civic improvement association which will be discussed later. Its members are the important vecinos (residents) of the town. It is a force in the community because the collective power of its members is considerable. Among these are the ganaderos, merchants, CBF officials, the bishop and priest, the doctor, local government officials, and a few others. The Amigos del Progreso unites most of the facets of power in Reyes. It is a new organization that has become very prominent in community action.

### Government Authority

Before 1939 Reyes had a corregidor, an official appointed by the provincial sub-prefect as the sole authority. This period of government is referred to as a time of open corruption and dictatorial force. The corregidor supported the ganaderos completely and in turn was allowed to exploit his office for personal profit. It was a time when a complaint from a ganadero brought immediate flogging of the offending mozo by the corregidor's men.

In 1939 Reyes became the capital of the province and received a full set of local officials. Chief among these are the sub-prefect, the alcalde and the intendente. The sub-prefect is administratively responsible for the entire province, while the alcalde has similar responsibility for the town. Other important settlements in the province, the cantons, are governed by corregidores appointed by the sub-prefect, but the surrounding countryside is governed by a cacique appointed by the alcalde. The intendente is responsible for enforcing the regulations covering public services. Private activity under public regulation, such as retail selling, is under the authority of the alcalde. There is also a small police force.

Even though the legal jurisdiction of the alcalde is broad and inclusive the actual definition of his responsibilities is typically narrow. Aside from upholding the laws, a task largely delegated to others, the office is mostly concerned with cattle slaughtering, public lighting, sanitation, and civic celebrations. New or chronic community problems rarely receive more than passing notice. The public elementary school building fell into decay before a substitute was found. The central plaza is an overgrown, virtually abandoned plot. There has been much criticism, but government has taken no action. There are no sidewalks, and during the rainy season the streets are under water or are rivers of mud.

The response of all alcaldes to the need for action is that there are no funds in the municipal treasury. And it is true that Reyes suffers from inadequate revenue. Its most important income is from the tax on meat shipped from town but the yield is very irregular. Reyes has had no officials who have been able to get that extra financial assistance from the national government, not even on a modest scale, that distinguishes the performance of a successful local politician.

In Reyes the proper concerns and responsibilities of local officials are ambiguously defined, leading to overlapping jurisdictions. Rare is the officeholder who has a clear conception of what his office entails. This is partly due to the lack of professional cadres of officials, to poor education and to little, if any, relevant experience. There is essential unreality in there being elaborate legal specifications for local government but no means to make this government-on-paper viable.

The uninformed and misinformed official wonders whether he may appoint a subordinate, whether he ought to submit a list of candidates to La Paz, or must simply wait for La Paz to do something. Typically, he resolves the problem by not resolving anything, lest his decision turn out to be a wrong one. Overlapping jurisdictions leave the citizen not knowing where to go for help. Minor judicial matters are summarily handled by the sub-prefect, the alcalde and the intendente. This overlapping creates a potentially competitive situation by bringing the influence of personality rather than official office to the fore. The two most important local officials, the sub-prefect and the alcalde, both have a claim to primary authority over the town. Given a forceful sub-prefect, he tends to eclipse the alcalde. Given another less aggressive and dominating, and the alcalde gains some of his earlier responsibilities, such as presiding at public meetings and receiving town committees and delegations.

Another obstacle to effective government is the way offices are obtained and kept. Local residence qualifications, education or experience are not important. Officials frequently are appointed from outside the town. One of the work inspectors was illiterate and one of the agrarian judges was neither a lawyer nor acquainted with the Agrarian Reform Law. Honesty or ability is not decisive. Lack of good character may rouse criticism, but no one seems to have been barred from office for such limitations. No Indian or campesino holds office, but they lack so many of the apparently important qualifications that nothing can be concluded from this.

Political affiliation is considerably important in acquiring official position. It had even more importance during the period of MNR rule, when party membership was necessary. The uncertain situation following the overthrow of the MNR government in 1964 enabled conservative parties to promote their interests more aggressively. Persons who took office immediately following the 1964 coup were either members of the conservative FSB party or of unknown affiliation. As the political situation became clarified, and a new government party took shape, these men were replaced by others who were assumed to be loyal to the new government.

Of transcendent importance in obtaining office is tener muñeca, "to have connections". A common topic of gossip in Reyes is that someone has gone to La Paz to obtain some official appointment or that someone is threatening to go to La Paz to obtain an official job now held by another person. There is much boasting of valuable connections with important officials of the

central government, but no one publicly offers intimate details of these connections. The "connections" have many different roots. Kinship, compadrazco, friendship, money, political following, any or all may be the nature of them. Different appointments can be traced to different networks. Though the routes frequently are complex and hidden from view, all involve "connections".

The liabilities of public office being well known, there is little competition for most government jobs, especially the executive ones. Many local offices are minor bureaucratic positions for which the pay is small but sufficient, or sufficiently elastic, to be attractive, such as the offices of tax collector, and of the various inspectors of slaughterhouses, of forests, of public work contracts and of agrarian work. These offices are the local outposts of national agencies, to which they are directly responsible. In the same bureaucratic category are two jobs for which there is intense competition. These are the office of the agrarian judge, who has jurisdiction over land disputes and allocations of land under the Agrarian Reform Law, and the other is that of surveyor, who does the land surveys. The pay is low, but the extra fees run high. Land surveys are required in all distribution and claims cases and fees must be paid by the litigants. There are great potentials in these two jobs, in fees and bribes.

The workings of muñeca cut short many a career. Appointments are often for unspecified periods; but even in those for which periods are fixed, few officeholders complete the course. The job of intendente changed hands three times in 1958; that of sub-prefect, three times in 1960 and four times in 1964; that of alcalde, four times in 1964. Sometimes rumors of change circulate beforehand. Other times, the first notice is the official document in which the name of the new man is announced. The most popular topic of that day is speculation about how he got his appointment.

A branch of the lowest level of the national courts system, the Corte de Primera Instancia, sits in Reyes, presided over by a judge, the juez instructor. Usually these judges have had legal training, but the law is not the paramount factor in the disposition of the case. Indians and campesinos get short shrift, blunt and hostile. Mozos and laborers barely come off any better. They get no legal assistance, their ignorance is openly taken as an advantage and penalties are harsh. Judgments are handed down in favor of the man with connections, and the process is notoriously eased through bribery.

The office of agrarian judge is open to the same persuasive influences. Only the heads of the sindicatos, with relevant experience and an organization behind them, have had any success in defending campesino interests. Since mid-1965 there has been no agrarian judge in Reyes. The area is now served by the departmental capital. Nor is it in the agrarian courts alone that the spirit of reform has been subverted. Inspectors were appointed by the MNR government to enforce new labor laws requiring formal

contracts to protect workers in town and country against traditional abuses. In Reyes, claims and complaints by workers or peasants have been rare. Most actions are initiated by patrons. These offices have in fact become a new means for employers to collect on the debts of their workers.

To the extent of its functioning at all, government in Reyes is in the hands of the ganaderos and large merchants, as can be seen in the events following the downfall of the MNR government in the autumn of 1964. On the day following radio news of the coup d'etat, it was announced over the loudspeaker at the outdoor cinema that there would be a meeting of the people of the town that afternoon at the police station. The stated purpose was to form a new local government. Relatively few people responded. The sub-prefect, the alcalde, the intendente and other officials were present. The town's only physician was chosen to be chairman and proceeded to supervise the election of a temporary, three-man governing council. A minor professional of a high social status was elected president, and the members were the president of the Chaco veterans and a school teacher. Someone suggested that a representative of the peasants should be appointed, but the idea was ignored. The meeting then proceeded to the election of provisional officials. A cattle owner was elected alcalde and a business entrepreneur became sub-prefect. MNR officials and militants were passed over. Throughout the discussion, the selection of candidates and their election, the meeting was dominated by one of the important ganaderos.

The conduct and outcome of this open meeting in the community reveals one of the primary conditions of local government. This is the restricted segment of the community that considers itself to be the public of local government and to which local officials restrict their responsiveness. In a community of more than 300 household heads alone, there were not more than 50 persons of all ages, both sexes and all propertied levels at this public meeting. No craftsmen, no laborers, no peasants attended. This was an assembly of vecinos, which in this context does not mean "neighbors", but residents of importance and prestige. Significantly, the old officials said little, and agreed without protest to hand over their offices to the persons selected at this meeting.

Local government appears to get along only by sufferance of ganaderos and merchants. This is especially apparent in its effort to collect taxes. The alcalde frequently acts as if the taxpayer were doing him a special favor. He calls a ganadero to his office, explains the financial problems of the town, sometimes has to tell specifically how the money is to be used, and occasionally ends up by reducing the tax to get any payment at all. To collect the tax on the local general stores the alcalde called a meeting of the merchants at his office. When they balked he offered to reduce the tax. He explained that the money was needed for the reconstruction of the primary school, a very pressing problem. The merchants countered by pointing out that some of the men engaged in the reconstruction owed them money, and suggested that their wages be applied against these debts. The alcalde accepted the proposal.

Rarely is the alcalde ready to provoke a confrontation on the tax payment issue. The only instance in recent times involved a rich ganadero who owed a considerable sum in taxes and refused to pay, on the grounds that nothing useful would be done with his money. After long, unyielding negotiation, the alcalde finally forbade him to ship cattle from the Reyes landing strip. This brought down considerable criticism on the alcalde. He was accused of making enemies unnecessarily. He was also accused of contributing to further economic recession, since this ganadero probably would ship his cattle from the air strip at Santa Rosa, a small town east of Reyes. In fact, the ganadero solved his problem by shipping through a middleman in Reyes. The controversy continued for several months more, until the ganadero at last agreed to pay part of his taxes.

### Political Power

After the Revolution of 1952 the MNR government party achieved an importance at national and local levels that parties had never had before. They organized and directed mass participation. They trained government leaders and established a communication network throughout the country at all levels. They became an important source of favor from above and applied their influence locally under central direction. Since the fall of the MNR government the party at the local level has become but one of several poorly organized associations.

Most of the major parties have supporters in Reyes. Before the 1964 coup the majority of Reyesanos supported the MNR and the FSB was second. After 1964, many MNR supporters shifted to the new MPC. There are also small numbers who favor the PRA, the PURS, the Communist Party and the old Liberal Party. Political parties form and die at a high rate. A number of them are little more than paper organizations, with a directorate but few members. Political parties, as they function in the small towns and villages, frequently constitute no more than unstable cliques.

For even the major political parties it is often difficult to see a distinctive, ideological orientation; this is not for lack of pronouncements of policy, of which there is a great deal for all parties. The problem is that the rhetoric of party pronouncements, like the legal basis of local government, has slight relevance to the everyday world of Bolivians, including the politicians. If there exists any working ideology, it seems to be one of expediency in maintaining power. In Reyes, as elsewhere, politics are a favorite topic of conversation, but there is little talk of principles, issues or programs. Discussion centers on the criticism, on the dishonesty, culpability, immorality of officials and politicians, and why it is important that the party of the speaker come to power. Party functionaries in fact are frequently unacquainted with the official position of their party on various issues.

From statements by party members in Reyes it is possible to draw only some inferences about party differences on national

issues. MNR members feel more sympathetic toward the peasants. They frequently cite injustices committed before 1952 and the measures taken by the MNR government to redress the peasant situation. They rely on the campesinos to return the MNR to power in Reyes, undoubtedly a factor in their pro-campesino utterances. In contrast, most FSB activists deplore the agrarian reform, complain that the campesinos no longer work hard now that they have land. They are strong supporters of law and order, and feel that MNR reform measures are making the campesino population ungovernable.

The MPC, organized in 1965 as the new government party, presents itself in Reyes as a continuation of the MNR. Locally it was announced that the MPC would follow the same economic and political policies, but without the corruption and abuses associated with the MNR. The most intensely ideological are the Communist activists, who impute all of the problems of the Beni region, as well as of Bolivia as a whole, to the United States.

The major political parties have had a largely symbolic significance. Only since the MNR and changes in the franchise have political parties acquired some organizational importance, even locally, and not many parties have adapted to the changing situation. Large numbers of Reyesanos have no involvement at all in political affairs. For those who are involved, political conviction plays a small part, political opportunism a great one. The only objective of many in supporting a party is to obtain some public office or official favor. Others, who fear that their party has little chance of coming to power, readily change their allegiance. As one Reyesano commented:

In the late 1940's when the PURS came to power, every Reyesano became a Republican. Then when the MNR came into power, everyone became a Movimientista. Now everybody is MPC.

Campesinos alone appear to be different. There is widespread sympathy among them for the MNR. This explains the stress placed by MPC organizers on their party as a continuation of the MNR. Despite this, many campesinos in the Reyes area refused to change their party membership. They said that they would support the MPC at the elections only if the MNR would not put up candidates.

Opportunism is recognized by Reyesanos as a prime mover in political activity, so much so that a person's expressed party preference is ignored, and clues to political allegiance are found in the company a man keeps, the persons who are his friends, and in what he has to say on specific issues. In effect, secrecy surrounds political affiliation. This is true of even some of the most politically active persons, including a recent sub-prefect, a phenomenon that underscores the ambiguity of party politics as a source of power in the community. But despite the dictates of opportunism, there are some differences of social composition among the several political parties; but here the true opportunist is found on the membership rosters of two parties.



A number of MNR members, especially town workers, joined because of their jobs, and in the CBF all employees were required to belong to the MNR, though many of these people had no political interests -- or may even have been opposed to the MNR. When the MPC became the party in power the first to switch membership were CBF officials, who explained that it was really the same party and so involved no real change. Since they were government employees no one really expected anything else of them. Indeed, CBF officials became the most active MPC recruiters among the campesinos. It is difficult to know how many persons have shifted to the MPC, because the MNR reorganized after a period of inactivity following the coup of 1964, and many who had affiliated with the MPC began again to attend MNR meetings.

The Falangistas of the FSB are mainly town dwellers -- store owners, traders, craftsmen, some school teachers, some ganaderos. Some members felt that the FSB was receiving increasing support from workers and campesinos, but others complained that it would never come to power, "because we are like a caste, we have no members among the workers". A small number of ganaderos, some craftsmen and campesinos, and one professional comprise the local Communist Party. Those still loyal to the old Liberal Party are a few wealthy ganaderos and a lawyer. Too few persons belong to the other parties to establish the character of their membership.

Considering that the three wealthiest occupations -- ganaderos, merchants and professionals -- function as quasi-groups in the community, there is rather little political homogeneity. Some ganaderos support the MNR, others the FSB; but those who are most active in politics and community affairs support no party openly, stimulating much conjecture about their political allegiance. Similarly, merchants support both the MNR and the FSB. The MNR "connections" of some of them are said to have been an important factor in their prosperity. As for the professionals, they may be the true eclectics, for their affiliations are spread from the ancient Liberals to the Communists.

Only the MNR, during its period of control from 1952 to 1964, can be said to have had important political functions. It was a highly articulated organization, geographically comprehensive and practically coincident with the structure of government. At both department and provincial levels there existed comandos zonales, regional commands, for implementing party policy; but the MNR was weakly organized in the Reyes area. A regional command there was, but it was never very active. The party was successful, however, in organizing sindicatos in the rural zone, and these constituted the main source of its strength in Reyes, though many were not strong and some had virtually ceased to exist by 1964.

A year after the military coup of 1964 a group of army officers arrived to organize the new government MPC party, but they soon departed, having created little more than a skeletal structure that had only one official changed with the registering of new members.

The FSB was in an even more disorganized condition, holding

only one meeting during the period of the study to choose representatives to a national convention in La Paz, while other parties do not really exist as organizations at all.

The local Communist Party is in a somewhat special situation because of the secrecy with which it surrounds itself, probably accounting in part for the rather widespread anti-communist fear and hostility in the townspeople. There was much gossiping about the Communists, but few facts were available. Their meetings were small and brief. They generally included both townspeople and campesinos, but the party appeared to have little support in either town or country, perhaps as a consequence of their preoccupation with international issues.

Local political parties at best are amorphous organizations, consisting of but one or two officials who have a roster of presumed members or sympathizers. Only under the stimulus of an important national event, an election or party convention, is there anything like political action. A national political figure may show up for a harangue, but the enthusiasm he generates is generally very short-lived.

## Chapter 3

### SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Conditions peculiar to eastern Bolivia disrupted and distorted the growth of a classic colonial stratification order. Firstly, the Indian population was comparatively thin and was rapidly reduced by epidemics of introduced diseases, leaving no appreciable numbers for economic exploitation. Secondly, the relatively simple political organization of the Indian tribes of the Beni made them less tractable to the Spanish forced labor system. Thirdly, the series of economic booms and recessions in north-eastern Bolivia caused ups and downs of individual social status as fortunes were rapidly won and lost. Within this highly mobile society there was extensive intermarriage between small populations of blancos and indios, and since the proportion of blancos to indios was not as unbalanced as in the valleys and the highlands of Bolivia, the result was a relatively fast erosion of the racial basis of status. The bulk of the population became mestizo. Nevertheless, racial terms like "blanco" continued as a means of denoting social status.

As the possibilities for easy wealth became fewer and cattle became the greatest form of wealth, social mobility decreased and strata lines began to harden. This was a period that apparently reached its peak in the 1920's, when "everybody knew his place and nobody tried to mix with people of other classes". It was a time when strict status etiquette was observed. No mestizo or Indian would sit down in the presence of a blanco unless he were asked to.

Recent events again weakened the rigidity of social stratification. Of critical importance was the Chaco War of 1932-1935, in which blanco prestige suffered heavily from ineffectual handling of the army and the disastrous losses of the War. The second major historical event of the recent period was the MNR revolution. Although the revolution did not greatly affect the wealth and power of the local elite in Reyes, it did free the campesinos from some economic and status obligations and promoted somewhat more equalitarian social relations.

The initial conditions and the changes over the years have given the Reyes region a complex stratification order. It is sharply bounded at the extremes but has a very extensive and convoluted middle section whose boundaries are quite indistinct. At the top are the gente buena (or gente decente), the good, the decent people. At the bottom are the campesinos, the peasants. In the middle are the mestizos. Blanco is a synonym for gente buena, but is used infrequently. Campesino has become almost synonymous with indio, but the latter term is far more frequently applied to the remnants of the old tribes.

Of the classic terms of racial distinction only mestizo has survived to denote a major social stratum. The status implications of race that a term like mestizo evokes, as blanco and indio once did, is still a part of Reyesano thinking. Blancos are always gente buena while mestizos are never gente buena, say the Reyesanos. However, there are few persons in Reyes -- notwithstanding blanco status -- who can claim only European ancestry. Rather it is wealth, occupation, comportment and family membership that in fact determine status.

### The Social Strata

In the Reyesano status order the gente buena and the campesinos are clear-cut high and low prestige strata. The gente buena are the ganaderos, the bigger merchants, the professionals -- the doctor, the lawyer. They have wealth, live in houses of four or five rooms with brick floors and tile roofs, have ample furniture and cabinets for china and glassware. Their houses generally have electric lights, and a privy and a well in the backyard.

Gente buena men wear suits on important occasions. Their trousers and shirt of everyday wear are clean and carefully ironed. They wear felt hats, especially the ganaderos, imported from Brazil; and they wear shoes or boots, always kept polished, though the streets are either muddy or dusty. Gente buena women wear knee-length dresses of expensive cloth. Their hair is cut short or at medium length and is artificially waved. Clothing and shoes distinguish the gente buena from all those engaged in manual work.

Most gente buena have had at least several years of primary school and attach much importance to advanced education. Most of their children go to secondary school and some to the university at La Paz. Some go to the capital even for primary schooling. Gente buena speak Spanish exclusively although a few also know another non-Indian language.

At the other end are the campesinos, peasant farmers who live on small subsistence chacos in the surrounding countryside. Some are able to sell a small part of what they raise to merchants in town. Families of five or six are crowded into a one-room or two-room house of pole walls, palm roof, dirt floor. There may be a crude table or a chair. They sleep on the ground. They have no electricity, no well. Water is carried from the river or the moat. Earth is their latrine.

The campesino's trousers and shirt are usually homemade, patched and ragged, unironed and not often very clean. He wears a straw hat and either goes barefoot or wears sandals. The dress of campesino women varies with age. Older women usually wear the traditional tipoy, a straight dress down to their ankles, and their long hair is usually braided. Young girls wear knee-length dresses of sateen or flowered cotton and often cut their hair.

The Indian languages are gradually dying among the campesinos and Spanish is now universally spoken, though for many of the older ones it is a second language. Most campesinos have had no education. At best a campesino gets one or two years of primary school, but most have no schooling. Few can read or write.

Occupying most of the middle ground are the mestizos. They are the CBF contractors, the technicians, clerks, craftsmen, skilled workers and semi-skilled laborers who -- with their families -- make up two-thirds of the population of the town. The distinctive character of this stratum is the very considerable range of prestige positions within it. But these are merely the gross differentiations. There are even further sub-differences to consider. The CBF contractor who occasionally provides material for fence construction is a modest workingman. But the regular CBF contractors who are builders as well as suppliers of wire and wood play cards with the gente buena. There is a similar ordering of craftsmen, from those who have a regular clientele and are the most skillful and charge higher prices for their work, to those whose skills and prices are measurably lower, down to the craftsman whose product is poor and whose sales are few. Skilled workers, carpenters, adobe makers and the like, are sharply distinguished from laborers. They are paid by the job, while laborers receive a daily wage.

All mestizos speak Spanish, few speak any other language. Most of them have had some primary education, and in this and their dress and social conduct they are closer to the gente buena than to campesinos. Their houses are likely to be in between, to have two or three rooms, roofs of palm leaves and floor of packed dirt, usually no electricity and no well of their own. Most mestizos dig holes in the yard for disposal of excreta and sometimes enclose them.

Between the mestizo and the true campesino there is the town campesino, a man of ambiguous status. He was once a dirt peasant in the surrounding campo. He still has a chaco to raise food for his family but is trying to make a living doing odd jobs or assisting a craftsman. In contrast with his country cousin, he is fairly at ease among strangers and retains few distinctive campesino customs. His wife may take in washing while his son gets some primary schooling. He is considered a low mestizo on one occasion but still campesino on another, depending on which of his conflicting status characteristics is seen as relevant to the occasion.

The wide range of mestizo prestige has important implications for this stratum. There is almost as much difference between mestizos of the upper reaches of the stratum and those of the bottom as there is between those of the bottom and the adjoining town campesinos, or those at the top and the adjoining gente. This reflects the considerable instability of the status order through past generations and the considerable amount of movement up and down that has taken place. It also reflects the considerable homogeneity of race and language that has facilitated mobility. It is important to the mestizo stratum that its limits

tend to be blurred. Town campesinos are characterized by an inconsistency of status-defining elements, which means that they share some of those elements with the mestizos above them. The same is true at the other end of the scale. The existence of such a situation, of course, further facilitates over-all status mobility.

One stratum remains to be identified -- that of the marginal gente buena. They are the smaller merchants and minor professionals, teachers and top CBF contractors. They are also gente buena families whose fortunes have been waning for some time, as well as the most successful mestizos who are on the way up, most of whom are clearly not working people. They are generally moderately well-educated by town standards and deport themselves in gente fashion, but are not accorded the prestige of the solid gente buena.

### Social Effects of Stratification

Public social affairs, semi-public recreation and private parties are all occasions that show the effects of social stratification, but they vary in their sensitivity. The street corner, the church and the outdoor cinema are settings for the open interaction of all members of the community. They are least sensitive to stratification effects, but nevertheless reveal them.

Reyes is a town of much street activity, but at two corners the action is at its highest and most gossipy. At one of these corners is a general store patronized by mestizos and campesinos and here they congregate. At the second corner, opposite the cinema is the most prestigious gaming and drinking kiosk, where mainly gente buena men and youths congregate.

Reyesano men spend considerable time in kiosks and cantinas. The Azcui kiosk and Pelayo cantina are places where gente buena predominate. Wagers at cards in these two recreation centers are often as much as a laborer makes in a week. Ganaderos have lost herds and estancias in a single night. Two other cantinas are patronized mostly by mestizos, small merchants, skilled workers, a few CBF cowboys, a barber, a school janitor, day laborers, and a few who are unemployed, as well as by the campesinos when they come to town.

In church and cinema there are no formal rules about segregated seating, but most people know their place. For example, two lines of men form in the church for confession, one of gente buena and the other campesinos. Even though the line of campesinos may be very much the longer, no campesino will move over to the other line. Often the circumstances and setting of a public activity, such as civic processions, church functions, and entertainments, force division into two parts. In such situations the mestizo stratum itself divides, the upper part joining the gente buena and the lower part the campesinos.

Almost any event in Reyes, a christening, a wedding, a birth-

day, a graduation, an arrival, a departure, a victory by a soccer team, is sufficient reason for having a party. The private party is the setting of greatest social intimacy and is most sensitive to status interests. For the gente buena, to invite a person to a party is to accept him as a status equal. Those who do not qualify are carefully excluded. Gossip reinforces this segregation effect, for news of who attended what party soon gets about and is eagerly discussed. Even when an exception is made, and a person of lower status is invited to a gente buena party, the status consciousness of the guests may cancel the intentions of the host. At one gente buena party a popular mestizo was stopped by one of the guests and asked whether he was there to serve. The mestizo replied that he had been invited, but he left immediately.

Regularly at the larger gente buena parties the common folk and their children gather at the doors and windows to gape. This contributes to the showcase effect of these affairs, for which hostesses have gone to considerable expense to uphold or enhance their reputations.

The young of the gente buena are the most status conscious of all. Invitations to their parties are most rigidly controlled, and here the aspiring lad of questionable status faces the acerbic test. Will he be accepted by the young girls as an equal? Frequently they refuse to dance with boys whom they consider unqualified. Some young men of ambiguous status attend these gente buena parties but ask no girl to dance for fear of being rejected.

Mestizo parties are modest and comparatively simple. Instead of cocktails, straight alcohol is mixed with water or fruit juice, though passed around in water glasses, the quantities are small. The parties of the town campesinos are called "burys" and also feature the use of straight alcohol and music from discs or radio. Lower status mestizos may be invited to the "burys". While campesino men prefer to dance in groups the girls enjoy dancing with partners, so the mestizos receive a good welcome. Young gente buena men come uninvited to "burys", with the young girls and casual sexual encounter in mind. These young men are admitted, but their campesino hosts may warn them not to abuse their positions as guests. In recent years the mestizos and town campesinos have become more actively intolerant of these gente buena intrusions.

### Relations Between Strata

Relations between the different social strata are strongly revealed in the beliefs held by the members of one stratum concerning the other. The gente buena say campesinos are childlike, ignorant and lazy. Common remarks are: "Campesinos have no idea of what to do with their money. They spend it quickly on whatever takes their fancy." "Campesinos are lazy and produce only what is barely necessary to survive." To the gente buena, these imputed traits explain the poverty of the campesinos. They mock the speech, social manners and moral conduct of campesinos. "He

[a town campesino] may come to town and wear shoes, he may learn manners, but he remains an indio." Intermarriage would be unthinkable. On the other hand, campesinos recognize the virtues of wealth, education and social grandeur in the gente buena, and even vaguely sense a racial superiority. On their part, campesinos think of intermarriage only as most unlikely to happen, the more so because they are fully aware that enduring extra-marital unions of gente buena men and campesino women are not uncommon. The gente buena man is privileged, so much so that his raping a country campesino woman does not even provoke discussion. Deference to gente buena even extends to the country campesino's marriage bed. While he would almost certainly assault and perhaps murder a fellow campesino for having seduced his wife, he is unlikely to do anything if the man is a gente buena. Town campesinos, in contrast, have become less docile. They permit gente buena men to attend their dances, but often will not allow them to take campesino girls away from the party. Gente buena sexual adventurers recently have been followed and beaten by town campesinos.

Having to bow to the superiority of the gente buena, campesinos and mestizos try to ease their own situation by establishing ties of mutual obligation between themselves and gente buena in the traditional ways, as they do in Villa Abecia, though there are fewer variations in the ties. Here, as elsewhere in Latin America, the most important of these ties are those of compadrazgo. Campesinos and mestizos try to find gente buena to be padrinos for their children, thus acquiring compadres for themselves. Church precept exerts pressure on gente buena to accept the relationship, though it may be declined. The padrino in Reyes obligates himself to certain duties toward his ahijado, for example, to give him presents on his birthday and to be responsible for him on the death of his parents. He is also expected to be favorably disposed to his new compadre, the child's parent. Despite the fact that gente buena padrinos do not always fulfill their obligations, there is a decided tendency for lower status persons to seek higher status individuals as a form of security for both child and parent. In contrast, the gente buena select padrinos from their own stratum. If the chosen gente buena is not at hand, a campesino can act as proxy in the ceremony.

Through the growth of sindicatos the subservient position of the campesino in his relations with gente buena and even mestizos has undergone a change. Before the Revolution of 1952, when large numbers of campesinos were required for some collective or community enterprise, the ganaderos ordered out their mozos. Today most ganaderos employ fewer mozos and their conditions of work less often permit their use in such projects. Now larger numbers of campesinos are independent farmers, are organized in sindicatos, and the gente buena are confronted by men who have been freed of many of their traditional obligations. Under these conditions the gente buena find that campesinos must be persuaded that their participation in a community project is in their own best interests. Such organized bargaining takes place, however, only under rather special conditions, the wider possibilities of



collective campesino effort having not yet been realized or even attempted. In general, the relations between strata are still those of deference on the one side and privilege on the other. It is a status system, however, in which the dividing lines are wavering and the movement between strata is considerable.

### Status Mobility

Compared with Villa Abecia, the status system of Reyes is open and social mobility is much greater. The criteria of status that are relatively immutable -- such as place of birth, membership in a prestigious family, language and especially race -- are not of great importance in Reyes. Race is a concept defined mainly by social and economic criteria; wealth, occupation, manners and style of life are the most important status definers.

Most of the instances of recent upward status movement have occurred through changes in wealth, inheritance, insurance benefits, indemnifications and so on, enabling the fortunate recipient to open a tienda or set up another form of business. New wealth can raise the lowly people at least as high as the top ranks of the mestizos, and possibly even as high as the marginal gente buena. They find themselves being addressed in a different way. Instead of being called by their first or last name unadorned by title, they are addressed as señora or doña or don. Gente buena accept invitations to their parties. They are likely to be asked to serve as padrino of a club or a public event. This is accepted as a way of being asked to make a donation to the organization or event, but it also suggests that wealth has endowed new qualities and manners in the man, and that he would honor the club by his attendance.

Not infrequently newly acquired wealth runs into disaster because of lack of business experience. The decline in status is just as sudden. Respectful forms of address are heard no more. The higher status townspeople no longer recognize the poor fellow. He is never again invited to sponsor anything. But for those who are able at least to keep their new wealth, if not increase it, the next step is often marriage into a gente buena family and elevation to that status. The very next step is to disown all poor relatives. One newly elevated gente buena colared his poor, uneducated father at the Reyes landing strip and put him right back on the plane without allowing him into town. He appears to have been well advised. An important store owner lost prestige and was ridiculed after her sister came for a visit, because the sister had very dark skin and spoke faulty Spanish.

The established gente buena deplore the importance of money in status grading. One of them stated:

An Indian or a mestizo tries to overcome his humble position, and he finally introduces himself among gente buena. I find this good. If he is well-bred and polite, he should be considered as one considers gente buena. What makes me mad is that mestizos and

Indians should be accepted for their money, because as soon as they have a little money they think themselves better than gente buena.

Recognizing that fortunes may suddenly turn, gente buena simultaneously emphasize manners, which serve to protect their own status by making it less accessible to others.

Education is also important to social mobility in two different ways. One of them is to provide the basis for the manners thought of so highly by gente buena. More generally, education provides the verbal and intellectual skills that are useful to gente buena activities. In fact, there are not great differences in the educational attainment of the different strata in Reyes. Segments of all strata have had no education at all, while most have had some years of primary school. Mestizos drop out of formal education earlier than gente buena, and campesinos earlier still. Some gente buena have finished secondary school and a few have had some university training. What appears more important in distinguishing the strata is not the difference in years of schooling so much as differences in the opportunities to apply their education. The gente buena have more need to use words and figures in their work and other activities, while mestizos and especially campesinos forget what they have learned from lack of use.

The other importance of education is to equip a person for a better occupation. Campesinos are particularly conscious of this possibility and make every effort to send their children to school. Gente buena also recognize the importance of education and regularly send their children to elementary as well as advanced schooling. Among the gente buena this is almost a matter of course, while campesinos and poorer mestizos often reveal a fervor to have children succeed in school and thus advance themselves.

Downward mobility has always been an important social phenomenon in Reyes. The principal cause of downward social movement is loss of wealth. The economic recessions of the past claimed many victims. More recently, mismanagement of cattle and loss of whole herds through disease have caused the social decline of more persons. Severe losses in gambling and inferior marriages have also had unfortunate effects on status.

The decline of gente buena families through loss of wealth usually proceeds slowly over several generations. Their high status often lingers as long as appropriate occupation, manners and style of life continue. There are relatively impoverished ganaderos in the community who are still treated as ganaderos, not as the poor people they actually are. They are addressed respectfully and continue to associate intimately with gente buena. But once they deviate from the manners and morals of their high status, their claims are likely to be challenged. In the crisis of their decline these deviations occur. In the long run they are not able to provide their children with an adequate education or place them in occupations that qualify

them as gente buena. While the father may have been able to retain much of his status, the children may not.

### The Modified Status of Campesinos

Most of the social mobility in Reyes concerns individuals or families rather than entire strata. The one partial exception is the campesino. The revolution produced no radical changes for the campesinos of Reyes and its environs but did bring on some important ones. Their initial release from debt peonage and their acquisition of land did not greatly affect the other strata, but the campesinos ever since have been more independent. They have acquired a bit of economic strength and rather better living conditions. These have been important gains, raising their status in Reyes society. Something of the character of this change can be seen in the following incident.

A campesino who had been drinking and playing cards at one of the mestizo cantinas entered the Azcui kiosk, where a group of ganaderos were drinking and gambling. He was well-dressed in new trousers, new white shirt, new shoes; but he wore no socks and his teeth were decayed. As one of the ganaderos shook the dice, the campesino, shy and a little drunk, put 10 pesos on the table -- the day's wages of a laborer. A ganadero who was watching the game said to the players: "Look who's going to win the game. That money on the table will make you lose." He was laughing at the campesino who had dared to bet against a ganadero. In response, the campesino asked in an almost inaudible voice, "Why, can't I play?" The ganadero who had been joking said: "Of course you can't, camba de mierda. If Gilberto [the ganadero rolling the dice] loses, I'll whip you." The ganaderos were amused at the uncomfortable situation in which the campesino had put himself. He did not take his money off the table. He drew it a little closer, but left the bet in place. The ganadero threw the dice and lost. The ganadero who had been watching and joking then said: "I told you I was going to whip you, but I will give you a chance to escape the kicks. You can leave now so I won't have to knock you about." Though ill at ease, the campesino did not leave.

The ganadero who had been joking took the dice and prepared to throw. The campesino again put 10 pesos on the table, and the ganadero said: "If I don't win, I believe I will have to carry out my threat." He threw and the campesino won again. Now the ganadero made no more jokes. The ganadero prepared to throw the dice again, but now he put a 50-peso bet on the table. The campesino put down another 10 pesos. "This time," said the ganadero, "put up twenty or leave." The ganadero threw and lost again. The campesino took the 20 pesos he had won and laughed loudly. The ganadero he had been playing against said: "This camba de mierda is lucky, but I will carry out what I have promised. I want him to win these fifty pesos and then I will teach him not to mix with gente buena." Without a word, the campesino turned and left, leaving the ganadero humiliated and angry. The ganadero called after him: "I'll whip you, dirty camba, wherever I find you."

This incident illustrates both the continuity and the change in the status of the campesino in the Reyes status order. There is still deference but there is also greater independence. The campesino had obviously been drinking, which probably helped him to face the hostility that he knew he would encounter in the Azcui kiosk. He never once attempted to sit down, but played while standing beside the table. Although the butt of jokes and insulted, he never once responded. However, he did go into this game room, which he would never have done before 1952. He also played on equal terms with the ganaderos and continued even when pressed to withdraw. And though threatened for his impertinence, nothing was done to force him to leave, even after he had bested two of the ganaderos. Before 1952 he would have been thrown out and probably beaten.

## Chapter 4

### GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Crosscutting the power and status hierarchies of Reyes are a large number of overlapping groups and organizations. Most Reyesanos are members of several of these social units, establishing a complex network of reciprocal bonds. The most important are those of family and friends.

#### Family Ties and Kinship

The average age at marriage is 25 for women and 34 for men. The average household contains six persons, but there are many with more than 10. Most households contain a simple nuclear family. However, many families adopt an hijo de crianza, a foster child, generally of a poor family or the child of a dead relative. In some households grandmothers, uncles and other kin who have no place of their own are included.

Older children of gente buena families, boys particularly, go off to La Paz for advanced schooling but are home during vacation. Many of these are likely to stay in the city after graduation because of lack of opportunity in Reyes, a condition which affects young mestizos and town campesinos as well. When mestizo young men leave home they seek work in the larger towns of the Beni or in the department capital towns of Santa Cruz and La Paz. A few daughters also leave Reyes, either to work in La Paz or to marry into a family in one of the nearest towns.

Marriage may be either civil or religious or both. The gente buena may marry either way or both. Concubinato, the consensual union, is very common among campesinos, town campesinos and lower status mestizos. Some gente buena men who have legitimate families in town also have concubines and illegitimate children in the countryside. The status of the children of these unions depends largely on the attitude of the father. If he recognizes them they may inherit property and may even be granted a large measure of his social status. Unrecognized children of the less stable unions are considered the children only of the mother and seldom benefit by the status of the father.

Divorce is common, especially among mestizos and town campesinos, many of whom have been married two or more times. It occurs with less frequency among the gente buena. In lower strata there are unmarried women who have had children by different men, some of whom bear the surname of the mother, some that of the father. Concupiscence is a primary cause of family instability. Either the husband falls in love with another woman or the wife has been unfaithful. Occasionally, drunkenness is the issue.

When divorce takes place children generally remain with the mother.

Beyond the nuclear family ties of kinship have no fixed value. Second degree relatives -- grandparents, uncles and first cousins, even married sisters and brothers -- may be treated with respect, with feelings of warmth, with a sense of obligation, or may be treated casually, ignored, even regarded with hostility. Beyond these close kin of the nuclear family is a much larger set, referred to as parientes. These are the distant relatives, such as third and fourth cousins and great-aunts and uncles. To many families the exact kin relationship of these parientes is vague or unknown. Nevertheless, their social importance is not always different from close kin. They are another set of persons with whom close social ties can be established.

It is primarily within the nuclear family that kinship ties have an established significance. Such ties are defined in terms of the central concerns that distinguish adults from children and males from females. Most wives are primarily responsible for the maintenance of the house and the care of children. This requires their presence at home for most of each day, but many wives of town campesinos and lower status mestizos work as washerwomen, cooks or maids, which takes them out of the house for at least part of the day. A few higher status mestizo wives work as teachers or nurses and those with families that own stores frequently work in them.

With few exceptions, married women do not participate in voluntary groups or organizations and even less frequently hold office in any of them. Except for a small group of gente buena wives who play cards regularly and a larger group of gente buena girls who play basketball, women have no organized recreation. Married women spend a good part of their free time visiting with friends or sitting in front of the house to catch a bit of gossip.

Married men spend almost all their leisure hours on the street corners and in the cantinas and kiosks. The ganaderos, who have considerable leisure time at different periods of the year, spend a good part of both day and night at a kiosk playing card and dice games. Husbands keep their own counsel about their outside activities and most wives are careful not to enquire, lest they be sharply reminded of their proper place. One woman insulted a man with whom her husband had been fighting a few minutes earlier. The husband told her to mind her own business and sent her into the house. Husbands and wives rarely go out together. Even on the few occasions when they are invited to private parties, it is expected that they will not associate with each other.

The wife generally has undisputed responsibility for the routine activities of house and children, but when problems arise the husband's authority is paramount. Though absent a good deal, the husband takes an active interest in family affairs and does not hesitate to intervene. The older the son, the more the father is concerned that he exhibit the desired general traits of

manliness and capability, while the mother generally attempts to ease these increasing pressures. In families without adult males, young sons help out by getting work of some kind. Adult sons are expected to turn in the greater part of their income.

Girls in all families are introduced to the routine of household work at an early age. Fathers show a casual though warm interest in their daughters until they mature sexually, then they become increasingly concerned and keep a wary eye on all the young men. Brothers, and sometimes other close male relatives, also mount hymeneal guard over the girl's social activities. Brothers usually learn about boy friends before the father and may be the first to take protective measures. One young man who informed a brother that he was a girl's boy friend was curtly told: "Don't ever make that joke again." Despite family surveillance girls manage to meet boys surreptitiously. When sexual adventures become known in the family attempts are made to force a marriage -- especially if the young man is viewed as a qualified suitor. The protectiveness of brothers is not without its tyranny. They order their sisters to perform small services for them, such as to wash a shirt or iron a pair of trousers.

In the conflict between the men of the family and daughters, the mother will frequently take the daughter's side. In one case a young man was disapproved by the men of the family, but after persistent effort he was able to win over the mother, who permitted him to see the daughter without revealing this to the men in the family and even permitted him to open the question of possible marriage. On the other hand, mothers characteristically seek the assistance of fathers in maintaining parental authority over the children. A complaint to the father that a child is not obeying is generally sufficient to cause him to intervene effectively.

Establishing a new family is a serious step, not only for the couple involved but also for the two parental families. Parents want their daughters to marry responsible, hard working and morally respectable young men. Extremes of gambling or drinking are frequent disqualifiers. Some parents also oppose divorced men. Young people themselves play the major role in selecting future partners, but few can escape the screening process of parents and other close relatives.

The most generally prominent criterion is social status. Both sets of parents as well as the focal parties themselves tend to seek persons of equivalent status, either deliberately or by utilizing the built-in social restrictions of the community. The protective family tries to prevent inter-status contacts. And the higher the status, the greater the effort. Thus, the careful screening of those invited to gente buena parties has the additional consequence of shielding marriageable girls from those of lower status.

When a flirtation between a gente buena girl and a mestizo boy becomes known, active opposition is mobilized by the girl's family. If the situation looks serious she may be sent to another

town to stay with relatives. But if not, and the lovers are persistent in the face of opposition, not infrequently the family will consent rather than take the risk of their running away. The adamant opposition of a girl's parents is easily sustained by outraged friends and relatives, but if some relatives favor the match the parents are more likely to yield. In opposing marriages across strata, Reyesanos commonly express their opposition in terms of race. The anger and resistance is against a blanco's marrying a mestizo, or against a mestizo's marrying an indio.

The extension of kinship ties through compadrazgo is also prominent in Reyes. Compadrazgo relationships include the many varieties that are sanctioned by the church, but the important ones are first communion, confirmation, marriage, and especially baptism. The padrinos of baptism accept the most serious obligations and this establishes the strongest ties of compadrazgo. Friends and relatives are the primary candidates in Reyes. Compadrazgo is a way of transforming a mere pariente into a close and more dependable relative, or a casual friend into a close one. Most often this occurs when close ties are forming and compadrazgo is a way to speed the process.

There is also a tendency for families of lower social status to select those of higher status. The gente buena, however, are less affected by feudalistic economic interests than the patróns of Villa Abecia and therefore have little reason to encourage compadrazgo relationships with workmen. This is not the case, however, on the cattle estancias, where the vaqueros and mozos still seek the ganadero patrón as compadre and where mutual interest supports the bond.

### Friendship Groups

A second important relationship binding members of the community is friendship. One is obligated to respect and assist a close friend almost as much as a close relative, in some cases even more so. Close friends are common to both sexes and to all ages. The network of dyadic ties that are formed by friendships have varied effects -- provide an outlet for family tension, a channel of communication between families and a basis of extra-family social support, all of which add to the resilience of the social structure. Friendship also gives rise to two different social groups.

Among the boys and young men of Reyes are groups referred to as cuerdas, cliques. Persons joining these groups vary in age from around 13, or post-elementary school, to those in their late 20's and early 30's. The cuerdas tend to be similar in age and in social status. For girls there is nothing of this sort.

The cuerdas play a central part in the life of their members and must be counted as important groups in the community. Membership is not uniformly clear-cut in all cuerdas. Some have a name and only a recognized member is permitted to call himself by that name. Others use a distinctive signaling whistle that identifies them as accepted members.



The character of the cuerda is best brought out by examining one, a cuerda about a year-and-a-half old. Some of the members knew each other in the local primary school and have been acquainted since childhood, but they had never formed a group. All of the members are sons of gente buena families. The cuerda in this case has no membership identification mark or signal. It regularly attempts to eliminate certain persons, boys of lower social status, before embarking on group activities. One method of elimination is to pretend that no activities are in the offing and more or less ignore the non-members until they go away.

The eight regular members of this cuerda meet every evening at around 8 o'clock at a street corner. There they may stand for a considerable time, or they stroll the streets, smoking, chatting and planning their activities for the night. Typically, they will go to a movie, or go buy ice cream, or attend a party. For more serious affairs, like stealing chickens or sexual adventures, the group will generally break into pairs. Some members have closer ties with some than with other members, but to outsiders they are all friends.

The cuerdas in this age range tend to be more active and in turn more cohesive than the cliques of older youths. These boys have no regular jobs and consequently have more free time to spend together. The boys firmly state that no member dominates the group, but in fact one member, the oldest, regularly makes more suggestions than the others and his advice is generally accepted.

The cohesion of this cuerda is evident in affairs between members and their girl friends. They act as go-betweens for each other and as sentinels. They will all attend a movie, not because anyone wants to see it but because one of the members can use it as an opportunity to visit with his girl friend. They are very close in their feelings, attitudes and interests. The cuerdas are seldom aggressive, but if a member is involved in a fight his opponent will very probably have to fight separately each of the other members of the cuerda in addition.

Cuerdas last from a year to several years. Boys do not change cuerdas as they change in age, but rather advance in age within their cuerda. The cuerdas occasionally break up because of internal friction. They also disband when their members leave to work or go to school in another town or to go out to work on the estancias. The cuerdas of the older youths most often lose their members through marriage, and this destroys them. Newly married men, unlike other adult men, spend much of their free time at home. They are often subjected to ribald criticism, but this does not prevent them from breaking off from the cuerda and spending little time on the streets. The cuerda being discussed is far from this point and represents the cuerda at a period of maximum importance.

In a community with very limited recreational facilities, an important effect of the cuerda is that it organizes and regulates

the leisure time of a segment of the population that has little but time on its hands. The cuerda is a context for training in independence, for the boys are out of the household and on their own most of the time. It is an important bridge between their parents and a family of their own. A girl met in the cuerda period will probably become a wife.

The other important friendship groups, more loosely organized than the cuerdas, are those of the kiosks. While young men meet on the street corners, older men gather at the kiosk or cantina. Gente buena men have much free time, especially the ganaderos, and this is spent in the kiosks. A consequence of making the kiosks rather than homes their headquarters has been the development of a number of relatively stable gente buena kiosk friendship groups. Examples are the two groups that frequent the Azcui kiosk.

One group clusters around Luis Regla, one of the greatest ganaderos in the area. Two of the other members are also ganaderos, but neither possesses more than a hundred head of cattle. One was formerly a major cattle owner, but he lost most of his animals to disease in the 1950's. All three support the MNR. A fourth member is a cantina owner who temporarily occupied a series of local government offices following the coup of 1964. All in this group supported Regla in his effort to become alcalde. The economic position of Regla is very much superior to that of the other members in the group. They share a limited political interest but particularly an enthusiasm for card playing.

The other group consists of four to five ganaderos, none of whom is especially wealthy. One member supports the MNR, but the others are members of the FSB. No one member stands out authoritatively or in any other way in this group, but all are eager card players and share a dislike for Regla.

The opposition between these two groups stems from an intra-family quarrel over an inheritance finally contested in court. One of two sisters emerged the winner, and she is the wife of Regla. The husband of the sister who lost is a member of this second group. When the kiosk is full the two groups can be seen as distinct clusters in the gathering, but when there are few customers the two brothers-in-law and their friends do not hesitate to sit at the same table and play, the game transcending animosity.

Almost all of the regulars at the Azcui kiosk are gente buena. Most are ganaderos, but there are also some store owners and professionals. The majority are married, ranging from 30 to 56 years of age. This kiosk is a place where important and influential men come to talk, gamble, drink and observe the street activities. An important feature of this kiosk is its construction and location. It sits on one of the corners of the most socially active street intersections of the town. It is the major street corner for the gente buena cuerdas and a vantage point on much of the town's comings and goings. Since the major portion of the kiosk has no walls, all of this scene is open to the men at the tables.

Conversation is constant at and around the tables, even during the games. Many conversations concern the games, the runs of luck and the possibilities of cheating. Fights, shootings and cattle rustling are discussed in the greatest detail. Sexual adventures are recounted with gusto. Political conversations also run high, along with the problem of the mines and the foreign relations of Bolivia. Many of the regulars at the kiosk are important sources of information and sufficiently important in themselves to be newsworthy. Thus this rather unimposing place with its thatch roof is in fact quite important in providing a setting for the regular contact of persons with status and power in the community, where issues are discussed and opinions shaped. Other kiosks and cantinas have their regular customers, and small friendship groups, but they do not have the wider importance of the Azcui kiosk.

The cuerdas and kiosk groups are important in the maintenance of a stable and viable social order in a community like Reyes. They are the means for linking persons in mutual obligations and provide a basis for organizing their activities.

### Formal Groups and Organizations

There are more than 20 special interest groups and associations in Reyes, and they tap all sectors of the population for members. One of these, formed in separate units, is the Catholic Church's Legion de Maria. One of its affiliates is the Legion de Señora del Carmen, which has branches in the rural countryside. Its members -- all males -- are mestizos and town campesinos. The organization works for moral improvement, gives assistance to the sick and needy and spreads anti-Communist propaganda.

A second unit is the Reina del Santo Rosario, whose members are the young girls of the parochial school. This is a private primary school run by nuns, mainly serving gente buena girls. It also is concerned with moral improvement and charitable work, but charity is regarded as an individual responsibility in contrast to the collective efforts of the men. The meetings of this organization are taken up with prayer and reports of each member's acts of charity, which consist mainly of visits to the sick and intercession with the deity for their recovery. A third unit is the Sagrado Corazon de Jesus. Its members are the married women of gente buena families. Their only obligation of membership is to attend mass on the first Friday of each month.

The population overwhelmingly professes Catholicism, but most men take little part in church-sponsored activities, except as they may have bearing on status and economic reward. For example, men who join the Legion de Señora del Carmen, which stresses self-sacrifice, discipline and hard work, gain a reputation as responsible and diligent workers, no small asset in a town with limited employment opportunities. More directly, membership in the legion can lead to employment on church projects.

Prominent among special interest organizations in Reyes are

the sport clubs, chiefly soccer teams, all loosely tied within an athletic league which is responsible for the scheduling of matches and tournaments, for arbitration of disputes, and especially for enforcement of rules. One team is made up of students, mainly sons of gente buena families, a second of CBF employees, and a third of town campesinos. Soccer is the most popular sports activity in Reyes and during the season there are matches every Sunday afternoon, well-attended by cheering throngs. All teams select madras, godmothers, who provide uniforms, equipment and refreshments. A soccer player of unusual skill may be invited into higher social circles. One outstanding mestizo player was frequently invited to the parties of the younger gente buena, and aside from this, fame sometimes promotes economic fortune by bringing a player to the attention of employers.

Soccer and the soccer teams are one of the few topics of common interest in Reyes and consequently a force for general cohesion in the community society. This is furthered by the ceremonies that inaugurate the soccer season each year in which the madras all appear, the bands play, and trophy badges are displayed to the appreciative audience of townspeople. Cohesion is also advanced by the inter-town matches that polarize the townspeople against the outside opponent. This is one of the few occasions when it is possible for the league to enforce training discipline, for the appeal to the players is that the prestige of the community is at stake.

Organizing for economic advantage has met with no success. A few years ago the ganaderos organized a cooperative to advance their interests, but personal disagreements and rivalry and the traditional suspicion of officials who handle money led to its early dissolution. None of the craft or other sindicatos are present in Reyes and those of campesinos in the surrounding countryside have no direct impact on the town.

The priest has started a savings and loan cooperative within the over-all socio-economic program of the Catholic Church in Bolivia. Membership in the cooperative is open to all for a fee. The purpose of the program is to provide loans at less than excessive interest. Those joining are primarily workers who hope to free themselves of their dependence on merchant usurers. This cooperative is still recruiting members and has yet to make a loan or pay a savings dividend, but if it ever gets going it may very well collide with the merchants.

The rank and file of the Veterans of the Chaco War are workers and town campesinos who look to it for the paltry benefits that come from the national treasury. Its limited success in this has seriously weakened most of the local units. The organization avoids involvement in sectarian political activity, but its president is active in community affairs. During the political uncertainty that followed the coup of 1964, the military team that came to Reyes delegated to the Chaco Veterans responsibility for maintaining order in the community, but the organization did not seriously attempt this. Nevertheless, the Veterans have a reputation for influence with national government officials and

for having used it on occasion to oust local officials.

The Amigos del Progreso, an organization with a thoroughly civic outlook, was formed in June, 1965, by a small group of gente buena to consider the pressing problems of the community and do something about them. By their second meeting the membership roster included most of the important people of the town, the big cattle owners, the larger merchants, the top officials of the CBF, town government officials, the bishop and the important professionals. An effort was made to bring in all parts of the community, even the sindicatos, but the organization has remained essentially gente buena.

During the period of this study the Amigos rapidly became important. They tackled the school building problem energetically and soon became an alternative center of community leadership. The plight of local government is, indeed, clearly revealed in the rise of the Amigos. The authorities soon wanted the Amigos to take responsibility for civic programs. Even when the activities of the Amigos clearly overlapped government responsibility, the authorities preferred that the Amigos act on their own. When the Amigos asked for a tax levy in aid of their community work, the town officials suggested that the Amigos request permission of the national government to collect the taxes themselves. The methods of this group will be examined further in the discussion of community action. As a group of persons of similar status and known to each other, many of them having ties of kinship and friendship, the Amigos del Progreso is a type of organization common to the larger rural towns.

The kinship, friendship and special interest groupings among the Reyes population are social clusters, complexly interrelated through common membership and common interests, and tied together vertically through power and status relations. Compared with Villa Abecia, this three-dimensional web is more complex but looser. The webbing of the Reyes social order is more elastic than that of Villa Abecia, allowing for a social system more tolerant of individuality.

## Chapter 5

### COMMUNITY ACTION

Despite its status as a provincial capital, Reyes has difficulty in satisfying valid public needs for education, uncontaminated water, a sewerage system, roads, markets and law enforcement. Bolivian communities are in a quandary because public organizations responsible for public problems exist, but only rarely are they either active or effective. Occasionally a community receives special attention from an outside agency. This has been the case in Reyes with the CBF, and in recent years the town has benefited from the presence of Peace Corps Volunteers. However, the community cannot rely on outside assistance, which is often quixotic and undependable, nor on government. There do exist some alternative organizational means for dealing with these problems. The voluntary committee is one of the most important of these.

Committees are formed for very specific ends, such as to obtain playground equipment or provide a library for the public elementary school. Once the specific task is done, they disband; though they are as likely to fall apart with the task undone. At the time of this study there were committees for schools and cathedral construction, plaza improvement and civic celebrations. The committee for school construction is the most revealing of community action by committee.

#### The Adobe Schoolhouse -- A Committee Project

The public elementary school occupies temporary quarters in a building one block off the central plaza. The school was once in permanent quarters that are remembered as having been fairly satisfactory, but sometime around 1951, according to townspeople, the director of the local CBF project offered to make some improvements as a gesture of good will toward the community. His project engineer examined the building and recommended that the roofing tiles be removed and reset. A considerable number were broken in the process, and before new tiles could be found -- and the roof replaced -- heavy rains struck and the exposed adobe walls became sodden and crumbled. The director of the CBF called a meeting of the important people to decide whether to repair the damage or construct a new building. The sub-prefect favored repair, but a majority was opposed. The CBF supplied men and a tractor, tore the place down and sold all salvageable materials. According to the former sub-prefect, the CBF kept the salvage money and did nothing further. It must be remembered that the CBF was a very large, important operation at that time, its director a man of power.

About two years later a CBF engineer became interested in the problem and organized a committee of prominent townspeople, mainly ganaderos, who contributed funds for the work. Somehow, it is said, the money disappeared. A few years later a third committee was organized by a wealthy Reyesano who was one of the major contractors for the CBF, and a number of people offered money and materials. A brick foundation for a new building was laid but nothing else was accomplished. As before, there were accusations of skullduggery.

In 1963 a fourth committee was constituted. After somewhat more than a year of effort it could point to considerable accomplishment. Of the two sections planned for the new school building, one had been completed except for minor interior work, and about half the wall of the second section was up. Then, in November of 1964 an influential member of the committee resigned, and a month later one of the two most dedicated members left town. Then the other one moved away in April and committee action declined. In September of 1965 the building was still unfinished.

The fourth committee accomplished much more than any of the previous ones but it was not an unqualified success. Among its members were the priest, the local doctor, the sub-prefect, two school teachers, a wife of one of the wealthiest ganaderos, a judge's secretary, and the CBF administrator. Associated with the committee was a Peace Corps Volunteer. It was a group of considerable prestige as well as power in the community. All members but one were gente buena. Public committees in Reyes are not organized to be representative of the population, but rather on an elite basis on the assumption that this will inspire confidence and cooperation.

Two members, the doctor and the Peace Corps Volunteer, were certainly the hardest workers. Committee members may put in several hours in discussion and planning at meetings, but they do not expect to have to work very hard, least of all do any physical work. The doctor, but especially the Peace Corps Volunteer, participated actively in the construction work, but complained constantly that Reyesanos simply would not help, that neither example nor exhortation could persuade them.

Only when a crisis threatened was it possible to move committee members themselves into action. When the contractor, for example, announced that he had to have money to pay his workmen or he would have to stop the work, the committee stirred itself and raised the money. Another time, a Peace Corps Volunteer got funds from the Alliance for Progress for materials that were not locally available, but he soon had to point out that, though the terms of the donation required that construction be completed within 180 days, they had now been at it for more than 12 months and were in danger of losing these funds. Under this threat the committee took another step forward.

The committee's problems were not all internal. It enlisted the sub-prefect as a member in the hope that he could be counted

on to supply crucial funds to cover current small debts and otherwise support the project through his office, but he could do this only in a rather tortuous manner. He knew, for instance, that an inheritance tax was about to be collected and he set this aside for the school. Some national taxes had recently been collected and he requested of the national government that he be allowed to use these. Again, every able-bodied male citizen is obliged to give three days of work annually to the local government or to pay a stipulated sum for the hiring of another man to replace him. The sub-prefect earmarked the payments on a number of these obligations, called *prestacion vial*, for the school. However, local officials can be arbitrarily changed. The sub-prefect and *alcalde* were replaced, and the new administration told the committee:

We have other expenses. We want to dedicate ourselves to other works besides the school. We have other projects, such as the plaza, the meat market. The streets need repair before the rains. The cemetery needs cleaning. We have many things to do. On the other hand, the *alcaldía* does not have any income, for the cattle are lean and sick in this season.

This ended the modest support from the local government. Earlier, the sub-prefect and the supervisor of rural schools had gone to La Paz to appeal to the Minister of Education and the President of the Republic, but they came back empty-handed. The committee also sought aid from other organizations in town. Some committee members who were members of the *Amigos del Progreso* approached that organization for help, but the *Amigos* were giving their attention to a road construction project and turned the committee down. But then the *Amigos* discovered that the funds they expected from the Alliance for Progress would be available for roads only on completion of the school and they became interested.

The *Amigos* called an open meeting to which they invited the teachers because, they said, teachers should be more active in the project. At this meeting the former sub-prefect summarized the problems. A large sum of money was needed, he said, but nothing was coming from the local government because people would not pay their taxes. He warned of their losing Alliance for Progress support because of delay in completing the work. He then lashed out at the whole population, but especially at the teachers:

The Alliance will take away the funds they have promised us and give them to another town more genuinely interested in progressing. Thus, we have to hurry. The town must live up to its side of the contracts by supplying money for salaries, by providing all materials, at the site, ready for use. Jorge Jones [Peace Corps Volunteer] has bought the materials for the school and they are in La Paz, ready to come down when we are ready here. Now I don't want to throw the blame on the teachers, but it must be said in all truth that they have been no more than spectators,



sitting on the fence and laughing. The problem does not lie with the committee of four people. It is you the teachers, the directors, the students and the town who must see the work through. And the teachers must be a driving force, leading and guiding the town. It is criminal not to have done anything, just to have sat and laughed at the efforts of others.

The response of the teachers to this attack was immediate. One said that every teacher had contributed money to the school construction project and that the teachers as a group had organized a series of fund-raising carnivals, held every Sunday some months earlier. When it was suggested that the teachers could organize a carnival for a coming holiday, another teacher said this was already planned. It was clear that the committee's relations with the teachers had been autocratic and distant.

General community interest was low and suspicion high. According to the contractor in charge of the school construction work, when people in town heard that an effort was going to be made to collect more funds for the school, the most frequent comment was, "Oh, no, not again". Few people offered money, materials or time. Most argued that they had helped before and nothing had come of it. The seriousness of the situation came out at one of the committee meetings:

We have a deficit of 156 pesos [approximately \$13.00] and we still lack materials to finish the building. This time you must do all you can to obtain funds. We never thought that we would have to buy all the materials. Before starting our work, we thought that they would be donated, since this is a project that will benefit all the town. It has been very painful to see that we are doing the best we can and have obtained so little collaboration from the town.

The committee unfortunately had a long legacy of failure and corruption to live down. Reyesanos distrust anyone who is handling public money. Everyone could cite examples of mismanagement, graft, pilfering, and the mysterious disappearance of a treasury. One committee member suggested: "The best thing to do is to form a committee of women to ask for the money. People trust the women more." The suggestion was adopted and one of the women on the committee undertook the task. But this did not work either, leading another committeeman to lament:

I wish that at this point we could stop all the criticism that has been going around about the committee and to this end I intend to post tomorrow in the street an account of all its financial operations.

It is equally difficult to get townspeople to volunteer their labor for community projects. Two male Peace Corps Volunteers who were successively involved in the school project helped with construction work on the school as an example to the community.

Both commented that they often had an audience, but that few ever stepped forward to lend a hand.

### Building a Road to the River -- Amigos del Progreso

In addition to the voluntary committee, the second device for taking action on local problems is the civic association. While a few of the founding members of the Amigos del Progreso saw it as a social club, it was soon guided by the more prominent members to confront community problems. It never had more than 25 really active participants, but this is not reflected in the scope of its projects. The construction of a road from Reyes to the Rio Beni at Puerto Salinas captured the quickest interest of the Amigos. It is the only project of considerable value to the community that was brought to a successful conclusion by a group of townspeople.

This road, one of the early projects of the CBF soon after it was established in Reyes, is an opening to river trade. Part of the town's food supply comes in over it. It enables campesinos with chacos near the river to ship their produce to market. However, it was not constructed to withstand either torrential rains or the heavy use to which it is subjected.

The country between Reyes and Puerto Salinas is flat and very low, with year-round standing water at many places. Nowhere are there any materials that would provide a solid foundation for this road. It has been created by piling dirt to a level slightly above that of flanking swamp and flooded lowlands. Rapidly growing tropical brush and trees nearer the river shade the road from the sun and keep it wet. Heavily laden two-wheeled carts pulled by oxen gouge deep ruts in the soft stretches of the road. The rains reign and the ruts grow deeper and soon the road is impassable for motor traffic. Each year the washouts and ruts need filling and the vegetation must be cut back. The CBF then puts its men to work so that its trucks may move again.

The Amigos del Progreso became involved in the Puerto Salinas road project by way of a casual conversation between the manager of the CBF and the sub-prefect at an Amigos meeting. The CBF had begun its yearly repair of the road and the manager was discussing with the sub-prefect what could be done to keep the two-wheeled carts off it until it would be thoroughly dry. Other Amigos overheard, and the informal chat became a formal discussion. Talk broadened to the possibility of so repairing the road that it would not be subject to serious yearly damage and interruption. Before the meeting ended the road had become the first major activity of the association. A committee of volunteers agreed to inspect the most vulnerable sections of the road, determine the number of days each section would have to be closed following a rain, and to mark the routes of detours around these sections to enable carts to reach town. Materials, machinery and money would be needed to make substantial improvements. Outside assistance was suggested: borrow road-building equipment from the not too distant Alto Beni colonization zone; ask the national

government for permission to use locally collected national taxes; look for Alliance for Progress funds. As for possible United States financial aid, the Peace Corps Volunteer was asked to investigate. The CBF had a tractor and a grader and there was certainly a labor pool potentially available.

The Amigos sought labor from a number of sources. One three-mile stretch of road near the campesino estancias of Guaguauno and San Jose had to be closed for repairs, so a committee went to the estancias and spoke to the members of their sindicatos. The advantages of an improved road and their responsibilities as citizens were stressed and both sindicatos agreed to cooperate. The president of the Legion de Maria offered a band of his men. The commander of an army detachment bivouacked near Reyes also agreed to cooperate. Even some of the Amigos offered to work on the road to show the community, especially the campesinos, that they were not asking of others what they were not ready to give of themselves. When it came down to the actual job, however, labor's ranks were thin.

A half-dozen or so campesinos from the two sindicatos appeared on the day assigned but they left one-quarter of their task unfinished. Furthermore, they said they would not return to finish the work because their fellows from the sindicatos had not shown up at all. The next day the sub-prefect went to the estancias and forced a number of campesinos to return with him to work on the road under their prestacion vial obligation. The Legion de Maria volunteers never appeared, because they demanded that all their meals be served on the project, a condition which the Amigos would not accept. Neither did any Amigos show up, those who had pledged themselves sending paid laborers instead. A reassessment now took place, and there came a rather quick shift from voluntary to obligatory and paid labor, the bulk of it performed by campesinos who were forced to work off their prestacion vial obligations. A wealthy ganadero and the Amigos provided food on the job and fuel for the CBF road machines. Under CBF supervision, the work gangs raised the level of the road, reinforced a bridge and opened up a number of detours for two-wheeled carts during muddy periods.

While pushing ahead with local materials and manpower, the Amigos sought outside support. The Peace Corps Volunteer was appointed to negotiate with the AID in Bolivia. He visited officials of the AID Community Development Program in La Paz and returned with the message that, if the community was serious about its road project, the Program would cover half the cost. Further, AID was sending an engineer to look things over and give a cost estimate. The Amigos were very pleased with this news and were confident that the work already done would cover their half of the expenses.

When the AID engineer arrived, the CBF manager outlined the work already done, paying particular attention to the fact that the community was required to supply 50% of the cost of any project:

About half of the work is being done by the Proyecto Ganadero de Reyes [CBF] and the other half by the people from town, mostly those that you see here now. The work being done by the Proyecto Ganadero is almost all out of my own pocket, since we had no funds available for this sort of work. Our machines are for work with cattle. We thus ask that these factors be taken into account. So far we have done about 11 miles, lacking only three miles or so more to arrive at the river. Just now the tractors are clearing all the way to the river. So, we ask for your collaboration, that you advise us and guide us, tell us if it is well done or not. We have never had a plan of an engineer, only the good judgment of the tractor drivers.

With the requirements of the AID projects in mind, the CBF manager greatly amplified the contribution of the community. Actually most of the work on the road was being done by the CBF itself with its machines.

The AID engineer found technical weaknesses in the project. He tried to soften the blow by praising the great amount of work that had been done, the clearing of underbrush and the filling in of ruts. But these improvements, he said, could only be regarded as temporary. They had moved dirt around and piled it up to make the road higher, but with the coming of heavy rains erosion would begin again and soon the road would be in ruins. This work, he said, could not be counted against the costs of the project. The Amigos took his report soberly and set up a committee to find out how much would be needed to do the job properly -- the amount of labor, the number of tractors, the quantity of gravel for the road foundation.

Without gravel or additional tractors, they pushed ahead with what was on hand and at last the road came to the Rio Beni. On September 2, after three months of work, the new road was officially inaugurated. Impassable muddy stretches there will still be. Nevertheless, this road has been a major accomplishment.

That so much was done is attributable in part to the character of the Amigos del Progreso as a civic body. Its members are men of power and status in the community, and their coming together was an expression of their status obligations, their sense of responsibility for the community. Collectively they assumed powers of leadership over local government itself, and proceeded as if the town's affairs were their very own, making whatever decisions they felt were necessary. When something was needed, local officials were informed, as when the sub-prefect was told how many campesinos were wanted to do a particular job.

Not even with the campesinos could the Amigos be so peremptory. Those who were sent to persuade the campesinos to give voluntary labor were very carefully chosen. They were picked for their influence -- the bishop, the supervisor of rural schools, the doctor, the alcalde and the CBF manager. The campesinos generally assented

to these requests, but not enthusiastically. One of them told the committee that he and his fellows wanted to be sure that the road was to be completed as far as the river, for the CBF had promised this many times. Now and again Amigos complained that the campesinos were not cooperating wholeheartedly, and the commanding officer of the soldiers who were working on the road accused campesinos of having refused to sell him rice to feed his men. There is some suspicion that he was refused because no payment for the rice was intended. In any case, the peasants made it clear that they could no longer be manipulated as arbitrarily as they had been before the revolution. The gente buena still have much power. Means were found to enforce campesino participation in the road project. But absolute dominance over them has clearly dwindled.

### Underpinnings of Community Action

The relative success of the Amigos on the one hand and the failure of the school committee on the other make it possible by analysis of what made the difference to evaluate the prospects for community action in this town. There are several basic weaknesses in both organizations. One is the exclusivity of membership. In Reyes, there is a tradition of community responsibility among the decentes that encourages participation in civic organizations. Unfortunately, the counterpart of this is a belief that this responsibility is a prerogative only of decentes, and none of the egalitarian ethic of the revolution has shaken this notion. While others in the community, who constitute by far the majority, are frequently asked to make a contribution to community work, they contribute as outsiders in an enterprise clearly run by a privileged sector.

Another common trait is the short staying power of most decente volunteers. Their sense of obligation will bring many out for initial meetings and some can always be counted on to give some of their time on a more or less regular basis, but none will persist over the long haul if attracted only by a sense of communal responsibility. Another marked characteristic is that few are willing to make any great sacrifice, especially a material one, for a community project. This is neither unusual nor unreasonable; but since most projects face costly obstacles, it introduces a major impediment to sustained voluntary action.

Two other linked features are the importance of outsiders and a lack of local technical competence. Projects in Reyes are dependent on the "enlightened" stranger, often a professional person temporarily resident in the community. The education, quasi-public position, and dependence of such persons on the community all facilitate their involvement in community projects. However, despite the participation of relatively highly educated persons, there is often little interest -- and less specific competence -- in the technical requirements of a project, often with discouraging or disastrous consequences. For example, a veterinarian is not by that fact competent to direct the construction of an all-weather road.

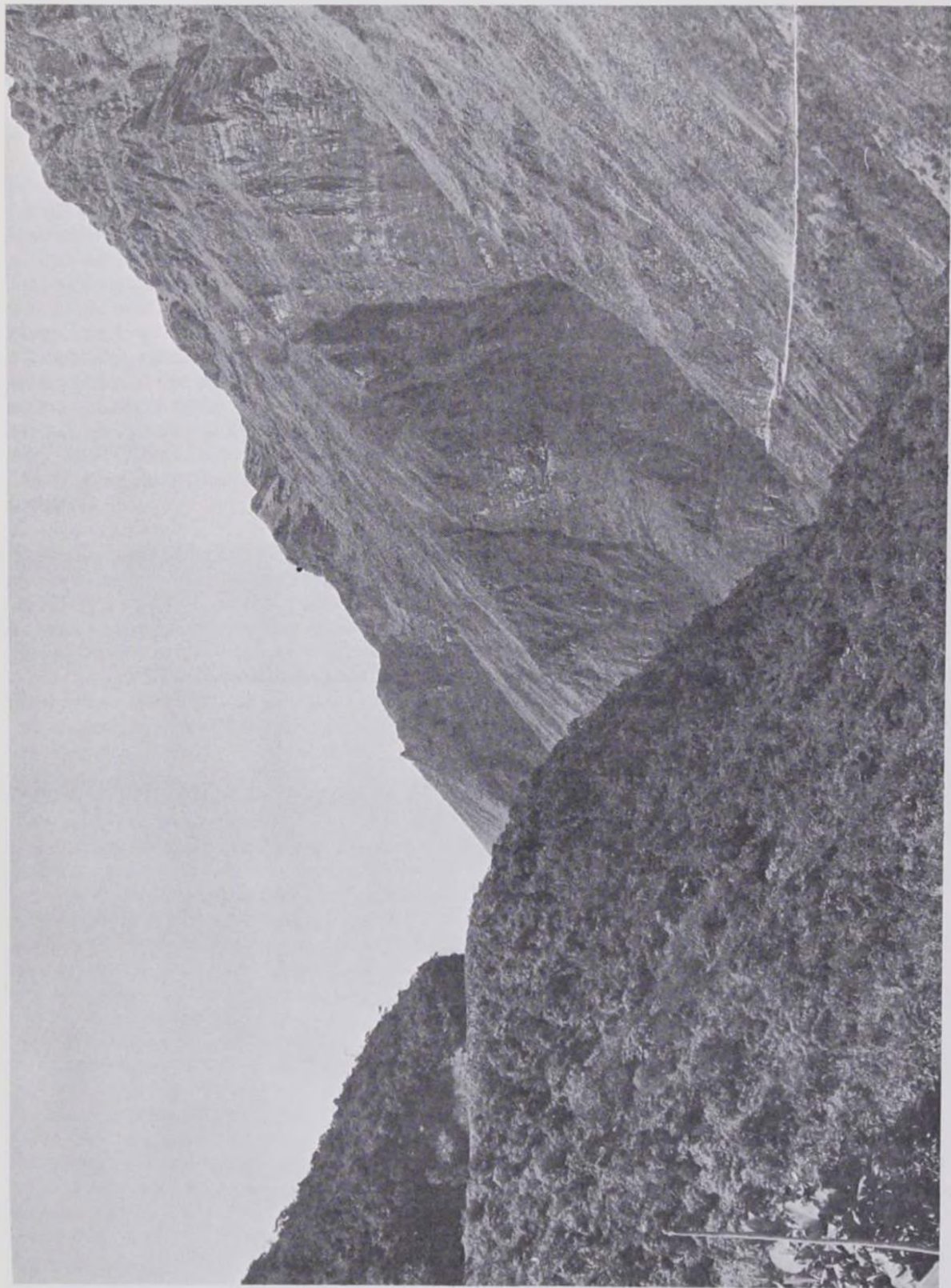
Inadequacies of all sorts played parts in the two projects discussed. Both were hampered by the narrow base of their support and by material obstacles. The school committee gradually faded away, especially when the key outsiders left the community, though the staying power of the Amigos was not really tested, since its activities were concluded rather quickly. Why interest fades introduces two other matters.

Successful efforts are usually those in which key participants are attracted by a large measure of self-interest. Secondly, they often involve at least a few powerful residents, who control important resources. The school required supplies that had to be purchased and skilled labor that had to be paid. With no really important persons pushing this project and raising funds critical to success, it foundered. The road project, on the other hand, required mainly machines and unskilled labor. The CBF administrator, greatly interested in the road for his activities, had the machines and was more than willing to supply them. It was also relatively easy to secure the labor through the sub-prefect and the prestacion vial. The drawback to this "successful" project was that the lack of awareness of technical problems meant that the completed road will soon again be rutted and washed away.



PART IV

Coroico: A Complex, Radically Changed Community



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## Chapter 1

### THE SETTING

Coroico lies about 6,000 feet above sea level in the Yungas, a part of the valleys region formed by a slope of the Andes east of La Paz. It is a region of harshly broken terrain, of sharp ridges and deep narrow valleys. In the upper reaches of the Yungas the air is thin and cold and vegetation is slight, but at the level of Coroico the climate is semi-tropical and vegetation is lush.

The town is perched on a narrow promontory several hundred feet above the Rio Coroico. In the distance, looming high above the town, snow-topped Mount Uchumachi is visible. So uneven is the land that there is a difference of 400 feet between the highest and lowest parts of this town, barely greater than four blocks by five in size. The population of Coroico was 2,147 in the project census of 1964. There were 513 households with an average of four persons. About 68% of the people are native to the town; 47% speak both Spanish and Aymara; 30% speak only Spanish, and 15% only Aymara.

The town is a picture of aged, settled density. Its narrow cobblestoned streets are lined with two-story buildings of plastered adobe with tile roofs and iron balconies. Most of its buildings are old, somewhat gaudy, and in disrepair. There is but one plaza, shaded by huge old palm trees. Along the whole of one side are only the church and the offices of the town government. To the right and left and across from the church are branch offices of national agencies, provincial government quarters, private homes and places of business. One block off the plaza is the mercado, the marketplace, a paved rectangle bounded by small merchants' stalls.

Before and after the rainy season the climate of Coroico is warm, pleasant, though sometimes humid. During the winter months it is cold, damp and frequently foggy. Rains generally begin sporadically in September and increase in frequency until they occur daily between December and February and then taper off in April or May. At the height of the rains the mountain roads are turned to mud and subject to frequent landslides. This is the season of least movement. Few people are in the streets, except for the weekend market and an occasional fiesta.

A paucity of people contributes to the generally slow pace in town. Many of the large old homes shelter but remnants of formerly extensive households. Campesinos of the town are away all day, at work on their lands. Some live on their plots in the campo for several days at a time. Other campesinos in the surrounding rural area own houses in town which they use only on weekends when they come to market. Many doors for many days are

locked up tight. Even Time seems to hesitate. Few people keep to their appointments, and there are always some who never arrive and some meetings that never begin.

### Outside Communication

Before the Revolution of 1952 Coroico was the trade center for very productive haciendas worked by a large Indian population. Radiating from the town are paths and dirt roads to the nearby hacienda communities. One of these roads connects Coroico to three other important towns in the Yungas, which lie almost in a straight line southeast of Coroico on widely separated mountain ridges.

The agricultural prosperity of the Yungas has always been dependent on the markets of the altiplano, especially La Paz. Until the 20th Century coca and other agricultural products were carried out by mule caravan over well-worn trails. Even before the turn of the century a road was begun from the La Paz side, financed partly by foreign interests, but the going was tediously slow because the Andean slopes are deep in shale and subject to frequent slides. The broken terrain made construction difficult and expensive. Not until 1936 did a road adequate for motorized transport reach Coroico. It is a narrow road of extreme grades, unpaved and full of hairpin curves. Were it not for landslides it would be passable throughout the year, and it carries a great quantity of goods in and out of the Yungas. It once took mule caravans three days to reach La Paz, but a loaded truck now covers the 62 miles in seven hours and a private vehicle does it in four. By 1960 the La Paz road into the Yungas had been further extended by a spur section which bypassed Coroico and went on for another 60 miles or so to Caranavi, once a small Indian hamlet in virgin territory, but today a boom town larger than Coroico.

Before the turn of the century, work was begun on a railroad into the Yungas from La Paz. The technical difficulties of railroad construction in the Andes consumed considerable foreign capital before a narrow-gauge line was laid between La Paz and Hichuloma in 1924. Prohibitive costs blocked its completion 23 miles short of Coroico, so passengers and freight had to be carried by bus and truck to the terminus. High freight rates, slow speed, erratic schedules, featherbedding, the inconvenience and cost of having to load and reload goods in and out of Coroico, and competitive truck traffic ran the railroad deeply into debt and it finally closed in 1965. This presented no serious problem to campesinos and merchants but it did cause problems for people who wanted to travel to La Paz without having to ride on top of a heavily loaded truck. Today a La Paz bus line runs a regular service of one round trip each week.

The town is liveliest on Saturday and Sunday when campesinos come in from the countryside to buy and sell and the market is full of merchants and townspeople. In the plaza people gather to chat. On one of the government buildings beside the church

is a bulletin board where notices of public interest are posted. There is also a public address system which blares out an occasional important announcement. Besides gossip, a bulletin board and a loudspeaker, there are radio broadcasts and newspapers from La Paz; and for quick private communication with the world there is a telegraph office -- service subject to interruption. Postal communication, because of unsteady road conditions and inefficient administration, is unreliable.

### In Time

This part of the Yungas was conquered by the Spanish in 1538 and by 1591 lands in the area of Coroico had been granted by royal decree to soldiers and courtiers. As Villa San Pedro, Coroico was established in the 16th Century as a trade and administrative center. It flourished in periods of gold and rubber booms in the region, and in 1903 Villa San Pedro was elevated to the administrative status of a city and changed its name to Coroico, from the Aymara word korihuaico, meaning golden partridge.

In the past 10 to 20 years the importance of Coroico has diminished. The new road into Caranavi and a great increase in truck transport throughout all of the Yungas has established competing commercial centers. Many products that used to be made by Coroico artisans can now be had more cheaply in La Paz. Agricultural produce of the once all but inaccessible Caranavi area now compete with local products in the Coroico market.

Coroico has also been seriously affected by political changes in Bolivia following the Revolution of 1952. Since the colonial era the rich agricultural lands of the Yungas have been held by a small Spanish aristocracy. In the early years of Spanish rule large numbers of Aymara Indians were forcibly transported to the Yungas to work the haciendas. The hacendados and their families spent part of their time on their estates and part in their town houses in Coroico. A few of the wealthiest also had homes in La Paz. The proximity of the Yungas to La Paz, its large Indian population and its agricultural wealth made it an early target for agrarian reform following the revolution, and MNR officials soon entered the Yungas to organize campesino sindicatos and to expropriate the land holdings.

But the Spanish aristocracy in the Coroico area had been leaving since the late 1940's, when it appeared that a fundamental revolution was imminent. While there was little physical violence here in 1952, most of the still resident hacendados either left discreetly or were forced to leave. The majority went on to La Paz. The few who remained in Coroico were able to salvage very little either of their goods or of their land.

In 1952 the Indians of the countryside, for generations in peonage, found themselves free and equal citizens of Bolivia. As in Villa Abecia, Reyes and everywhere else, they were given the franchise and the right to organize. Unionism was actively

fostered by the government, and in 1953 they received the expropriated lands.

The impact on the town was profound. Indian producers entered directly into buying and selling in the Coroico market and their purchasing power increased, to be diverted considerably in recent years from Coroico to La Paz. Freed from the haciendas, many campesinos moved into the towns like Coroico, where living conditions are better and where their children can get an education. Some campesinos spend long hours traveling daily to and from their plots. Others have given up agriculture altogether. Many have become unskilled laborers, some have learned a craft and a few have become merchants. These town campesinos make up 15 to 20 percent of the population of the town.

Still, Coroico remains a mestizo town, its cultural and social life more Spanish than Indian. The mestizos are the majority. They fill the better jobs, run the better businesses and control the town. The effect is that town and country are against each other. To the mestizo townspeople the campesinos are ignorant Indians who have been unfairly rewarded by the revolution, while the campesinos see the town and its people as a continuing source of discrimination, mistreatment and fraud.

Economic and political changes have greatly reduced the former eminence of Coroico but have not totally eclipsed it. It is still a provincial capital and therefore a center for regional governmental and judicial offices. It is also the headquarters of a Catholic diocese. And it is the biggest and most accessible marketplace for a still large area. It also produces craft products of everyday necessity.

### Town Economy

The rich farm land yields a variety of crops, including corn, potatoes, peanuts, chili peppers, avocados, dates, several varieties of bananas, citrus fruits, coffee and coca. The important cash crops of the area are coffee, oranges, limes, tangerines and, to a lesser extent, coca. Climate and altitude provide ideal conditions for coffee growing, and a high and steady demand makes it a very profitable crop. The majority of campesinos cultivate coffee as their major crop and produce bananas in considerable quantities because the trees provide necessary shade for young coffee plants. Other crops are raised in smaller quantities, some only for household consumption.

Coffee production around Coroico has increased in importance over the years and coca production has steadily declined because land and climate farther south and southeast are more favorable to it. Similarly, banana sales have fallen off in competition with the new banana-producing lands of the Alto Beni zone around Caranavi. The economics of coffee reflect the radical impact of the revolution on this community. There are no large-scale producers around Coroico for there are no large production units. In Reyes the large cattle estancia is run by the ganadero and his

mozos, and in Villa Abecia the much smaller but economically overwhelming grape finca is run by the patrón and his peons, but the big haciendas and hacendados of Coroico are gone. Most of the hacienda land was broken into farms of less than 10 acres and is now in the hands of the campesinos who had worked it as peons. Not all of them as yet hold legal title to their land, but they exercise effective control. Any disliked ex-patrón who ventures onto his old lands risks verbal abuse and physical assault. #

The wealth of the land has not been shifted intact from the hands of the elite to the hands of their former peons. The quantity of coffee produced on some of the old haciendas, and the managerial experience and sales connections of hacienda owners, generally enabled some, though not all, to deal directly with large coffee processors in La Paz. The proportionately small production and the parochial marketing abilities of the campesinos discourage direct selling. One result of land reform has been the rise to prominence of the coffee rescatador, the middleman, who buys from many small producers and sells in bulk in La Paz. X

The importance of the rescatador to the coffee business is not restricted to his intermediary marketing function, but is also closely related to his role as a creditor. Coffee is harvested and sold from April to September, and during these months most campesinos have money in their pockets. But very few have other sources of income and their cash from coffee sales is generally exhausted long before the next harvest. During the six months of the off season most rescatadores make loans to campesinos against the next crop. This involves very little risk for the lender, since there is little possibility of crop failure. The rescatadores do not forthrightly ask for interest on their loans because, they say, the concept of interest is incomprehensible to campesinos. Since most of the coffee-growing campesinos borrow and all the rescatadores make loans, a system has been developed in which loan charges are absorbed by the profits that exist in the buying and selling of the coffee. X

This is how the system works. A campesino who is short of cash by October borrows, for example, \$100 from a rescatador and promises to repay the loan within six months, by which time he will be harvesting his coffee again. The agreement calls for a repayment of the \$100 or an equivalent value in coffee. At harvest time the campesino sells his crop to his creditor, the rescatador. The rescatador subtracts the value of the loan, \$100, and gives the balance to the campesino. Now the profit to the rescatador in this "free" lending of money comes in three ways. The local rescatador buys at a lower price than the buyer in La Paz. Part of this difference, subtracting transportation and overhead charges, will contribute to profits. The rescatador also takes a quantity of coffee in excess of true measure. The units of measure for the purchase of coffee are the arroba, which is equal to 25 pounds, and the quintal, which is four arrobas. However, in Coroico the quintal at the time of the study was defined as equivalent to 110 pounds, while out in the countryside it was 120 pounds. These differences are known to all and are X

the customary allowance for the work of collecting and moving the coffee to market. The greater the distance from the La Paz market, the bigger the allowance. These differences in weight contribute to the profit of the rescatador. Finally, most rescatadores give themselves a small bonus of coffee with each purchase. After the weighing they add a few extra handfuls to their purchase, called the "yapa", the "extra", a customary practice.

These practices in the buying of coffee may be worth as much as half the value of the loan. This explains how townspeople could lose ownership of the surrounding land but still retain a significant portion of the profits from that land. It is the rescatador who takes a major share of the existing profits in coffee under the present system. The campesino in fact frequently does not repay his loan. His need of cash and the low price he receives for his crop will make it necessary to defer repayment. This suits the rescatador. A campesino may sell his coffee to anyone, but it is understood that a campesino in debt to a rescatador will sell his coffee only to his creditor.

The rescatadores do not set prices or change weights in a capricious or arbitrary manner. The determining factors are the market price of coffee in La Paz, which sets their lower limit of profit, and the campesino's inability to sell his coffee in La Paz himself. The campesino is at a disadvantage in several ways. His production is small and he is unacquainted with La Paz buyers. His ways are rustic and his Spanish is poor. The rescatadores set prices that will give them a good profit, but they are constrained from pushing prices too low lest they reach a point at which the campesino would be compelled to stop producing or to market the coffee himself. Since campesinos are already selling other produce in La Paz markets, this is not a remote possibility.

Campesinos are aware of the ways in which the rescatador cuts into their profits but thus far they have had little success in breaking the system. In 1965 they tried through the sindicatos to restore the countryside arroba to its traditional La Paz value of 25 pounds. At a regional meeting of sindicatos it was announced that members intended to sell only by the 25-pound arroba measure and that campesinos who disregarded this resolution would be fined. This action encountered unshakeable resistance from the rescatadores. Although campesinos threatened to sell elsewhere, for most of them there was no alternative. A group of campesinos loaded their coffee on mules and trudged for 12 hours to the village of Suapi, only to find that Suapi rescatadores were using the same arroba weight as those in Coroico.

Today it is the big rescatadores who have become the economic elite of Coroico. Some are ex-patrons, some are merchants, some are former campesinos, others have always been rescatadores. Their economic hold on the campesinos is reinforced by the nature of the coffee plant. It requires attention throughout the year, making it impossible for the campesino to seek work elsewhere between harvests to keep himself from debt. Some of the bigger merchants also lend money to campesinos against the coffee har-

vest. These loans are sometimes repaid in cash but more frequently by a portion of the crop, and there is always an understanding that the debtor will deal only with his creditor. Most comerciantes, who form the largest occupational group in town, have no money to lend and operate on the narrowest of margins. Their stock is often pitifully small, a few pieces of fruit and some rolls, and many are women.

Next in numerical importance in Coroico are the craftsmen and skilled workers, who comprise approximately one-third of the labor force. These are the shoemakers, hatmakers, tailors, jewelers, carpenters, masons, truck drivers, bakers, blacksmiths and butchers, all of substantial numbers. Some of these occupations -- the blacksmiths and the carpenters, the forgers of tools and builders of equipment, the truck drivers -- also derive their livelihood from the campesino's coffee.

For artisans and craftsmen, times are changing. Their work is considered old-fashioned and too expensive. The hand-made ceramic tile of Coroico, still to be seen on many of the old buildings, has been supplanted by less expensive corrugated metal. Rich and poor alike increasingly prefer factory clothing.

The town also gives a livelihood to a small number of professionals and semi-professionals. There are a doctor, a dentist, two lawyers, two judges, and three pharmacists in Coroico, and more than 20 school teachers, most of whom are women. The majority of these professionals spend as much time as possible away from the community and leave as soon as they can secure a post in a city. At the other end of the occupational scale are the unskilled laborers and servants. Most are campesinos seeking a better future away from the land, the women working as maids, cooks or laundresses. The men assist with building construction or repair work, or get jobs as porters or watchmen. Others find work as assistants to craftsmen or skilled workers, which pays very little but holds the promise of learning a skill and of becoming an independent artisan.

## Chapter 2

### POWER AND AUTHORITY

In contrast to Villa Abecia and Reyes, Coroico felt the full force of the Revolution of 1952. Here the revolution has produced upheaval in the social order. A once important hacendado now waits on customers in his dingy little bar. One of the richest men in town is an Indian. And government officials court the favor of campesino sindicatos. In the following account the economic basis of power and related matters will be discussed and then attention will shift to government and politics, which is where the campesinos have most sharply contested the old and new elites of the town.

#### Economic Power

One of the most radical consequences of the revolution for Coroico was the destruction of the economic elite of the community, the hacendados. Until that time the town had existed to service the great haciendas. The small number of families who owned these properties, large in size and in Indian manpower, controlled an extreme concentration of wealth. With homes both in town and on their haciendas, these landlords and their families dominated both town and countryside. Shopkeepers, craftsmen and skilled workers were dependent on their good will. Town officials were often related to hacendado families, but whether they were or not, remained in office at their pleasure.

On the hacienda the economic power of the patrón was augmented by traditional authority. Peons who did not fulfill their assigned work could expect swift punishment, a fine or a lashing. Many haciendas had small windowless huts for summary incarceration and trivial theft brought three days of confinement.

At the outbreak of revolution in 1952 terrifying stories of pillaging and armed attack came from the altiplano and Cochabamba, and hacendados around Coroico fled, leaving the Indians in possession of the land. While most hacendados have a legal right to a small part of their former properties, many are too fearful of their former peons ever to return. Others with more aggressiveness or less cause for concern did claim their portions, but found that none of their former peons would work for them even for daily wages and they were forced to sell out.

A few ex-hacendados have remained in Coroico. Most are no longer wealthy, many are quite impoverished. Some live in their large town houses, now falling into disrepair. They eke out a living by renting rooms to school teachers, selling or renting what remains of their movable property and by the odd minor



business deal. A few hope for a return of their properties and have kept this idea alive in their children. In 1965 campesinos came on the son of Lorenzo Montes, a landless hacendado still living in Coroico, while he was picking fruit on one of his father's former haciendas and they angrily chased him off. Puzzled and irate, the son complained:

Yesterday in town I saw one of the campesinos who came after me. I asked him why they did it, what I had done, and he just said that we bother them too much, that we should keep away. But it's our property. No one ever paid us for it. Yet we can't do anything about it! Does that seem like justice?

However, the traditional authority of the patrón is no more, except in the imagination of some ex-hacendados. But despite loss of property and wealth, within Coroico there is still a faded measure of respect for the Diaz, Pineda, Uribe, Vasquez and other old, important families. They are asked to serve on civic committees and are given places of honor at public affairs. But it is a hollow, wavering respect. Aristocracy is no longer a force in the community. In its place is the new elite, that of the rescata-dors who have profited handsomely out of the need of a fragmented agricultural economy to adjust itself to a market system designed for large-scale production. While rescata-dors are not as rich as hacendados once were, they hold a large share of the wealth of the town. Some own one or more trucks, used to transport coffee to La Paz and for general haulage. Some also own retail stores and all are money lenders.

In contrast to the patróns of Villa Abecia and the ganaderos of Reyes, the rescata-dors of Coroico do not constitute a social group. They are too heterogeneous to have developed social solidarity. A few are ex-hacendados but many more were once poor merchants. Others were traveling merchants or muleteers. A few were even campesinos. All speak Aymara but some speak only broken Spanish. Some have had a few years of secondary school, others no more than a year or two of any schooling at all.

Since the claim of the rescata-dor to power is purely economic, to gain any direct social or political power in the community he would have to sacrifice some of his wealth to buy these other forms of power. A few are therefore content not to be invited to serve on civic committees, content to be considered of little importance and to have little influence on community affairs. Most of them, however, are able to maintain and in fact reinforce their economic power through political and social means. It is mainly these rescata-dors who run the community. In addition to the economic elite (the rescata-dors and the big shopkeepers), the professionals (the doctor, the dentist, the pharmacists, the lawyers and the tinterillos -- the untrained, self-appointed lawyers) also have a measure of power, not through their wealth, but because they are in a position to influence others. In short, there is no organized power structure in the town. Categories of workmen, merchants as well, are represented by sindicatos in

Bolivia and there are several different sindicatos for merchants. But in Coroico they disappeared or were severely crippled in the coup d'état of 1964. In any case, the craftsmen and skilled workers live in a precarious market and for this reason the sindicatos have never flourished among them.

The church in Coroico, with its well-maintained buildings, its well-appointed living quarters for priests and nuns, its big new school building and its vehicles, stands out as economically well-supported, but much of this support comes from the United States. Most of the priests are American Franciscans sponsored by the Catholic diocese of St. Louis, Missouri. The relative affluence of the local church rouses envy, but it is not a basis for power. The policy of the bishop is to restrict himself to religious matters and not become involved in other aspects of community life. This does not always hold for individual priests.

### Political Power

Before 1952 no campesinos of the Coroico area and relatively few townspeople took part in politics. Until that time political activity was a privilege of the educated economic elite. Offices in the local political parties and the local government were all filled by members of the important families. Now, all adult citizens without exception are required to vote in national elections. But though Coroiqueños dutifully turn out, effective political activity in town has changed little since 1952. Most unskilled laborers, skilled workers, craftsmen and small merchants still do not concern themselves with politics. They leave the uncertain world of government to the economic and status elite, the big rescatadors, merchants, and the professionals.

On the other hand, the town elite is no longer as solid as it once appeared to be. The social and cultural diversity of today's economic elite and the relative rapidity of its formation have impeded the development of a united political force in the community. Before the revolution the old elite had their Sociedad de Proprietarios de Yungas (Society of Yungas Landholders). This is gone, an anachronism disbanded by official decree, and while no decree prevents the ex-hacendados or the rescatadors from organizing themselves now, that initial action of the revolutionary government still deters the growth of such groups.

Political office is won competitively, that is to say, usually through having superior competitive muñeca with higher officials in La Paz. But without ties of economic interest, kinship, friendship, and cultural tradition, without the union of wealth and status, or common interest, politics divides the town elite. Besides, the campesino sindicatos in the countryside have developed as a political force, competing with the town for strategic resources.

As a rich agricultural zone with a large campesino population, the Yungas received early attention in the agrarian reform program. Most haciendas were of medium size (11-150 hectares) and

subject to reallocation. The central government representatives who helped the peons organize sindicatos on the haciendas were MNR activists. Legal action in taking over the lands was initiated in the collective name of the peons of each hacienda, or of several if they were small, and the sindicato was the means by which they took collective decisions. The agrarian reform program was completely identified with the MNR government, and no opportunity was lost to remind the campesinos that they owed their new rights and advantages to President Paz Estenssoro. Campesinos were expected or ordered to vote MNR, and almost always did.

Bolivia's population being predominantly rural, the entry of the campesinos into politics drastically altered local and national politics. In Coroico, this took the form of increasing campesino influence on the prefectural and national governments at the expense of the town, whose appointed officials are still mestizo residents. The failure of campesinos to obtain political control of Coroico does not represent an unqualified victory of townspeople over them. As sindicatos have gained experience in political affairs and sindicato leadership has matured, Yungas campesinos have become more insistent and effective in pursuing their interests. This has been facilitated by the formation immediately after the revolution of the Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos -- exclusively concerned with campesino matters -- which has provided the campesinos with a channel of access to national decision-making. Sindicatos of the Coroico area have sought national government funds for schools, better water supplies, electricity and other improvements. This has placed the town itself in competition with surrounding sindicato communities for the same limited funds, and the town has frequently been the loser. The campesinos are no longer totally dependent on the town government of Coroico. However, this is not a total disadvantage to the town, because it has enabled it to manage its own affairs even in the face of a new and important source of regional political power.

Throughout the 1920's and 1930's the important local parties were the Liberals and the Republicans. By the 1940's the MNR and the FSB, the Falange, had become the major local parties. Throughout all these years the workers and small shopkeepers of the town participated little in political activity and the campesinos not at all. Through the 1950's up to now the MNR and FSB have continued as the major parties in Coroico, though as many as 10 other parties have minor representation. Since 1952 the FSB, a right-wing party modeled on the Spanish Falange, has been the rallying point for those opposed to MNR social and political policies. Although without victory in 12 years, and with little hope of electoral success because of solid campesino support for the MNR, FSB members in Coroico have loyally waited their chance. The confusion in the days following the overthrow of the MNR gave them their opportunity, and the way they used it provides a case study in the workings of local politics.

On November 3, 1964, Alcalde Jesus Cuevas boasted to a friend that the MNR would govern for another 100 years. The friend

recalls what happened on the following day:

Jesus and I were out taking a walk together when the news of Paz Estenssoro's fall came to us. Jesus Cuevas almost dropped dead. He insisted that he was not going to hand over the alcalde's office. I told him, "Look, you've got to hand it over decently. You've got to do it because the party's fallen". I kept insisting until he finally assented.

As the news spread, FSB leaders called an open meeting to select new town officials. However, it appears they intended the meeting to be a sounding board only for Falangistas, or so it seemed to one of their opponents:

There was an open meeting but it was closed to dissenting voices. There were only 60 or 70 people, and the only ones allowed to speak were their supporters. There was chaos throughout the nation, and no one knew quite what to do. This was the situation these men took advantage of. When chaos broke out in La Paz and Jesus Cuevas found out there was a change of government he abandoned his office. What he should have done was to have awaited instructions, or to have said, "I will remain to hand over this office to the legally elected representative of the people of Coroico". Instead, he bolted. It was his stupidity. Well, those men took over immediately. They seized the opportunity.

Although General Barrientos, the leader of the coup, spoke of correcting the abuses of the MNR regime, people in Coroico and elsewhere differed about what the abuses were. The general was not a member of the FSB, but the local Falangistas hoped he meant, among other things, that land confiscation had been one of the abuses. In any case, it was clear to them that if national MNR officials had to be replaced, so did local MNR officials. And who but themselves were qualified?

The Falangistas selected Pablo Jimenez as alcalde and the MNR government walked out without a struggle. Four days later the FSB deputy alcalde announced over the public address system that he and his party colleagues had been recognized by the "Supreme Government of the Revolution of Restoration of the Country". The FSB had succeeded, but that their own future might also be uncertain was suggested at the time by an MNR supporter:

The authorities of Coroico are Falangistas who came in with the tide of November fourth. Who can oust them? Nobody! Right now it's impossible to think of getting rid of them. The Falangistas are very sectarian. They have hopes of returning to the way of life that existed before the revolution of April 9, 1952, but they'll never get away with it. The campesinos will see to that.

The new alcalde, a man in his early 40's, was generally well thought of in the community. He lived with his widowed mother, who helped him with his coffee business. The good positive regard for him was partly due to discontent. Although Cuevas had been alcalde only a short time, it was rumored that he had already embezzled more than \$2,000.

Jimenez and his associates were in office hardly a month when General Barrientos came for a short visit. A crowd of about 800 assembled in the plaza to see and hear the general, but they first had to listen to the alcalde, the deputy alcalde and the sub-prefect -- all Falangistas -- praise the general and damn the MNR. In turn, the general praised the people of Coroico and also recited the evils of the earlier government. But he very pointedly affirmed his support of the agrarian reform policy of the MNR government. A month later the prefect of the department arrived to discuss community problems and he promised to contribute a small sum (one million bolivianos -- \$83.33) to improve the water system.

Another month went by and General Barrientos came back for a second public visit. This time he spoke of the non-partisan nature of his government, the importance of national unity and development and of community projects. At this point the Franciscan priest who led the campaign to improve the water system announced to the crowd that the prefect of the department had contributed to the project and he asked for a proportionately large contribution from the general. Barrientos quickly offered two million and was roundly cheered. About three weeks later the alcalde and his official fellows received telegrams from La Paz, thanking them for their services and saying that a new alcalde would arrive shortly. Before that could happen Jimenez went to La Paz to see if he could reverse the decision. Meanwhile, some said this was the work of Cuevas, the former MNR alcalde. Some said the campesino sindicatos were being listened to again in La Paz. Others said Jimenez brought it on himself when he permitted the priest to embarrass the general by publicly asking for money. Confounding all of them, Jimenez returned in a few days with an order reinstating him and all his associates.

By June the position of the alcalde truly worsened. He had been in office for seven months but had done nothing to improve the plaza or keep the railroad from shutting down. No one could see that anything had been done, but what was happening to local tax monies? Over all this muttering, General Barrientos announced the formation of a new party, the Popular Christian Movement (MPC), and since all the town's officials were well-known militant Falangistas, there was doubt whether they would be allowed to remain in office.

In September a prominent merchant who had been active with all the parties, but not strongly identified with any, was seen conferring with a group of campesinos, and when he was asked what was going on he said the campesinos of Cruz Loma were planning to take over. This was a gross exaggeration, probably not

intended to be taken seriously. Cruz Loma was a focal point of sindicato activity. The truth was that Mateo Angula, a tinterillo not identified with any party, was approached by campesinos from Cruz Loma and asked to be a candidate for alcalde. He declined, but in a later discussion revealed that a change was indeed coming:

I'll tell you something entirely off the record. Last week the Ministry of Government issued a statement that the alcalde of Coroico would be changed. But I told them I would not campaign. I don't want to do that. I feel I could improve Coroico, make it a working, integrated, autonomous town. But I will not go to the people for that, especially since the proclamation for change hasn't been made public. That might provoke something.

Soon it was made public. The Ministry of Government announced that a new alcalde would be appointed from a list of three names submitted from the town. The three persons named were Mateo Angulo, Torribio Uribe, the head of the newly formed Coroico MPC, and a finca owner named Campos. A few days later Uribe was named alcalde.

The campesino sindicatos in the Yungas have been an important factor in town politics since the revolution, though their power is not overt. As one Coroiqueño put it:

The campesinos are powerful in that in all Bolivia they have the influence and pure numbers to call the plays, to elect the President. They don't operate directly in town, but through the proper channels.

Their channels are the national ministries in La Paz, especially the Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos, and the office of the President itself. Jesus Cuevas, the former MNR alcalde said of the former peons:

All the campesinos around Coroico are organized. They are the ones who choose the leaders in Coroico. Look at the history of the MNR here -- the campesinos held the strings. What they do is go directly to the Ministry of Government in La Paz, and because the government listens to these guys, they have their way. Beforehand, they go around to likely people in town and ask them if they would like to be alcalde.

Another important feature of local politics that this episode reveals is the dominant role of political opportunism. The MPC did not draw unengaged townspeople into political affairs, but attracted FSB and MNR activists. This further weakened the position of the FSB alcalde. It also brought back several MNR politicians who had gone into semi-retirement after the 1964 coup.

With Barrientos an almost certain winner of the coming presidential election, the MPC was obviously the way to political advantage, and there were many willing converts. As the Coroicoños say, "They blew with the wind". Jimenez recalled that he had become alcalde with the solid backing of the FSB, "but it seems that now we are a little fragmented". Shortly before this, Uribe had formed a local branch of the MPC. He was known to have supported the campesino request for a reduction of produce taxes. As a leader of the new party in Coroico and a supporter of campesino interests, it is not surprising that his visit to La Paz paid off with the selection of himself as the new alcalde.

The change from Cuevas to Jimenez to Uribe in less than a year took place within the context of local political party activity, which is a more prominent feature of the Coroico community than of Villa Abecia and Reyes. In Coroico the community meetings, community projects, civic rallies and committees are much more politically partisan in character than in the other two towns. Almost all such activities are sponsored and organized either by a political party or the local government. Since the latter is generally identified with a particular political party, local government sponsorship is also partisan. As an example, Jimenez as alcalde ordered that the interiors of all public buildings on the plaza be painted as part of his town improvement program. The work was carried out and it did improve the appearance of the buildings. But the completed work also served to advertise the FSB party, for he had had all the rooms of the buildings painted in the color of his party, light blue.

Most campesinos hold membership in the sindicatos formed on the haciendas. During the years of MNR government the sindicatos were units of the MNR. After the formation of a new government party many switched to the MPC to be on the winning side, although it was clear in many areas that campesinos continued to favor MNR policies and that they were confused about the relation of the MPC to the MNR.

That sindicato activities are political, the only effective means of obtaining a variety of aids and services from the national government, and that to be effective the members must be partisan, many campesinos now know. They resent the time required of them to participate in political rallies, and the money it takes to entertain visiting politicians, but many have also come to appreciate the advantages of political organization and strength. The value of political activism is illustrated in the following two incidents. The first is told by a Coroico truck driver:

One day a committee of Falangistas came to call on me and they asked me to join their party. I told them that I was very busy with my work and that I didn't care much for politics. I said I was awfully sorry, but I wasn't interested and didn't see that I'd gain much by joining. Well, after that I

sure got it in the teeth. When they see Lara's truck coming, three or four town employees get prepared to slap a tax on me. Once the chief of police came to my store to ask me to donate two sacks of cement for that wall they're constructing in front of the post office. Well, to avoid trouble, I gave them two sacks. Later he got hold of my son and told him, "Look, Lara, you'd better go get me two loads of sand or stone". Then my son, who's a real rebel, talked back to him. The chief called my son names and tore his shirt because he wouldn't obey him. He told my son that if he didn't bring in two truckloads he'd find his truck out on the street, easy prey for anyone who wanted to strip it.

The next incident is related by a jeweler:

Some years ago I went to La Paz to see about getting a scholarship for one of my sons. It didn't matter much which son got it. I have eight sons. But I ended up spending money and getting no results. When one of my sons graduated in agronomy, I again went to La Paz. I visited the Minister of Agriculture and some other government offices, this time with the hope of securing a job for my son, but again I got nothing. They asked to see my party identification card, and when I told them I didn't belong to the MNR, they offered to sign me up, telling me that once I was a member I would see results. But I didn't join, and so all my efforts were in vain. I ended up with nothing. My son had to abandon his profession. Today he works as a clerk in a general store.

The subversion of politics for personal advantage by a privileged few is roundly denounced by the commonfolk. Here are five statements:

Those of us who live from our work don't want anything to do with parties. All they do is cheat you.

I am tired of all this political trickery. That's why I have no confidence in any political party -- they're all alike.

In my opinion, none of the political parties is worth joining. From my experience I have found that political life is a sham.

I don't like to have much to do with politicians. I don't have respect for men like that, for they don't make their money honestly or by their own sweat.

I can't support any candidate, because nearly all of them are charlatans, liars and cheaters.

The overriding concern of political parties with providing



profit and privilege to their activists explains a number of characteristics of local parties that are otherwise anomalous. One is the irrelevance of political ideology. The political parties contain ideological labels in their names and political literature, and political speeches are generally couched in ideological terms. Most parties have borrowed their ideologies from European models. The MNR pictures itself as a revolutionary party and a proponent of radical economic and social programs. In these cases a political form is adopted locally, without any intention of implementing its substance. The need to serve political principles or ideological tenets can be equally as costly to party activists as to the general populace. Such a position makes no sense in Bolivian political life where one becomes active in politics in order only to profit rather than to serve. Thus there is really no dilemma among the patrons of Villa Abecia who have joined the MNR, nor among the ex-hacendados of Coroico who are activists in the MNR. #

Pablo Jimenez and his FSB associates stayed with the FSB for 12 years under MNR governments because they expected to have a chance to govern the town themselves someday and saw little chance of becoming influential in the MNR party in the face of the headstart and advantages that others had over them. Had General Barrientos decided to take over the FSB and develop it as the new governing party, Jimenez and his associates would still be in office in Coroico.

The dominance of self-interest over public issues in Bolivian political parties is also seen in the relative absence of antagonism between local parties and their activists. During the years of MNR domination in Coroico, FSB leaders on occasion found themselves jailed or fined on one pretext or another, but these as often represented clashes of personalities as much as political clashes. In August of 1965, Torribio Uribe and a friend were beaten up by a group of Falangistas while they were distributing MPC literature. Significantly, almost all known incidents of political conflict in the community have involved townspeople, never townspeople against campesinos as occurred in other areas. #

But friendly accommodation is much more typical of political antagonists than any form of conflict. Jesus Cuevas, MNR ex-alcalde, has congenial relations with the FSB officials who replaced him. Ignacio Espinosa, the FSB sub-prefect in 1965, was a regular drinking companion of Torribio Uribe, which continued even after Uribe became head of the local MPC and began to work to oust Espinosa's associate, Pablo Jimenez. José Pineda, head of the local FSB, plays cards several nights a week with Luis Vasquez, head of the local MNR. In one prominent family four of the brothers are active in the FSB, two support the MNR, and one is inactive politically. The brothers report no partisan quarreling. #

#### Government Authority

Although within the space of a year three separate political

parties were able to place their men in local offices, there were few politically relevant differences between these men. All were townspeople. All came from the higher social and economic strata. This is a large number of changes, but in the past decade it was not unusual for local officials to be changed at least once a year. Such a high rate of turnover would seem likely to produce an erratic, inefficient and ineffective local government. While each new set of officials undoubtedly did bring some changes to local government, the basic elements in the pattern of local government continued.

Coroico, like Villa Abecia and Reyes, is a provincial capital. The ranking officials are the sub-prefect, the chief officer for the province, and the alcalde. The sub-prefect is responsible for public affairs throughout the province, while the alcalde's responsibilities are limited to community services. The structure of each of the administrations, provincial and local, is much as it is in Reyes.

Most townspeople have little to do with local government officials. Only when crises occur, as with the water supply in Villa Abecia, are citizens and officials moved to action. In Coroico, as in Reyes, drinking water is polluted, but no official seems able or even willing to do anything about it. This inaction may in part be attributable, here as in the other towns, to the limitations of local government. One limitation is overlapping and ambiguous jurisdiction. For example, a person who suspects he has been cheated by dishonest scales in the market ought to complain to the market inspector. But if he cannot find him, or does not like him, or is a good friend of the sub-prefect, he can take his complaint to his friend, or to a judge, or to the intendente, who oversees public works. Almost all officials are happy to receive complaints that may involve a fine. Fines are good for the municipal treasury and the official. Every official considers himself empowered to hear any issue or dispute and enforce a decision. No one official takes on all the jobs of the others all the time only because the other officials are there to compete, but when they are absent this is exactly what happens.

Each official plays his role by ear, responding to requests from above and below as he sees fit. And, after all, he may be gone tomorrow. All official positions, here as elsewhere, are held at the pleasure of superiors. None of the important officials in Coroico has had any special training for his job and few have had more than a primary education. None has a trained staff. There are few fixed terms of office and no seniority rights. No one thinks of government as a career. The alcalde says he is a merchant, the deputy mayor that he is a pharmacist, the sub-prefect that he is a carpenter. Public office is only an interruption. Indeed, many carry on at their regular jobs, after a fashion, even while holding public office. The principal exceptions to the rule are judges and police officials, usually career men with formal training.

This foundation of government is further weakened by lack of money and the misuse of what there is. As in the other two

towns, government in Coroico is seriously underfinanced. The sub-prefect, the highest ranking official in the province, has no budget for his office, his own very modest salary excepted. The major sources of public income, the taxes on wine in Villa Abecia, on cattle in Reyes and on coffee in Coroico, are tapped by the national government, except for part of the shipping tax on cattle in Reyes. Officials work without supplies, equipment or adequate assistance. Some do not have an office. The ones who do are housed in a government building with a collapsing wall.

As an important town in an important zone, close to La Paz, Coroico could normally expect to receive central government funds from time to time for municipal projects. Villa Abecia does, even though irregularly. That Coroico has received very little assistance in the past 13 years is perhaps not so much to be attributed to an unfailing ineffectiveness in her local officials as to the rising power of the campesinos. While the townspeople would once have been the favored population of the area, the campesino sindicatos are now preferred. Their communities get the money for schools, roads, water and electricity.

The corollary of underfinancing is low salaries. From the lowest local official to the highest, salaries range from approximately \$5 to \$35 a month. Some, such as the notaries, live on a part of the fees they charge, getting no salary. These incomes are inadequate to supply food and shelter for even a small family at a very modest level, and cause irresistible pressure to find other sources of money.

Most officials have no fixed hours of work. If a particular one must be seen it is generally necessary to search through the town. If he is not tending to personal business he may be at home, or at a local bar, or visiting a friend, but rarely in his office. Many give far more time and much greater attention to private work than they give to public duties, though sometimes the two are gainfully joined; for example, there was the alcalde's remedy for a sudden shortage of flour in town. After trucking his coffee to La Paz he returned with 1,700 pounds of flour which he sold at low but profitable prices out of the government office building "as a public service". Then there is the judge who occasionally serves as counsel to clients in his own court. Even to Coroiqueños whose cynicism is high this is too much. Public offices become private dwellings, used postage stamps are re-issued as new, books are sold out of the small public library, and small tax revenues disappear. But the biggest private profits from public office are from fees, fines and bribes.

Almost every public service has its price, and the distinction between fees, fines and bribes is arbitrary. There are fixed fees for marriage licenses and copies of birth certificates, but if for any reason a citizen wishes to correct or alter the form the fee will be higher. If you want the intendente to get after your neighbor who throws his garbage in the street beside your house he will act faster if he is given a small gift for his trouble. The dumping of garbage in the street is a violation,

and your neighbor may be fined by the intendente, but he also may have the fine reduced or possibly forgotten if the intendente gets a small sum. The merchant pays a fee for marketplace stalls. He can get a better spot for a little something extra. Even within the awesome precincts of law and order justice is for those who can afford it. This situation is openly acknowledged in the community. The DIC (Direccion de Investigacion Criminal) agent explains this vividly:

Let's say your brother is murdered. You come to Coroico for justice. I'm interested and sympathetic, but I have no transportation and no allowance for travel. So, if you want me to go investigate you have to pay my way, with meals, and pay for the travel and meals of another policeman who comes as my helper. And you have to provide lodging for us as long as we're investigating. Well then, suppose we're lucky and find the guilty party within a few days. We still have to bring him back to Coroico. So you, as the interested party, have to pay his transportation as well as ours. Then, when he's in jail here, you have to have his food brought in. Then you have to pay for his trip to La Paz and for the trip of his escort, a policeman who has to eat and have lodging for a few days in La Paz before you pay his expenses back to Coroico where he is stationed. All this the interested party alone has to pay. We have no funds. So justice is expensive, and many people let things go because they can't afford such costs. It's a shame, but there's no remedy.

Then there was the Campos case, one of accidental homicide, from which nothing ensued. Raul Campos, an ex-hacendado and former president of the Veterans of the Chaco War, got into an argument in 1964 with a fellow rescador over the weighing of a quintal of coffee. Campos drew his pistol, fired a shot into the air and killed a woman who was passing by. Campos was arrested, but soon was released and that was the end of the case. The DIC agent commented on the Campos case, which he knew only from police records and second-hand comment, since he did not arrive in Coroico until 1965, as follows:

I wasn't here then, but I have heard the story. They say Campos was transporting a bag of something for Diaz, and the two of them got into a fight. Campos fired a shot and killed a woman. They took him to jail, but he paid them off and got out. That's the way it is here in Coroico. In all Bolivia, for that matter. You pay and you go free. In this case, there were no members of the family pressing for justice. It was one of those cases of manslaughter, unpremeditated, and the family didn't press charges. But I was not here, so I don't know all the facts.

Most Corolqueños understand that legal protection is bought and

that punishment is avoided by bribery. "They decide," said an ex-hacendado, "in favor of the fellow who brings them the biggest chicken." The man who has least suffers most from the workings of the law. As a person of no education, little money and few friends, the campesino is a ready victim for official exploitation. Before the revolution he could count on his hacendado to protect him, but today the only organization that could defend him, his sindicato, is in the countryside, not in town, and there are as yet no sindicato tentacles that could reach so far on behalf of a persecuted member. But the sindicato had sufficient power to influence the selection of the alcalde in Coroico and this is sufficient to have made local officials rather careful in their handling of campesinos in town. When campesinos are jailed, fined or required to pay a fee, there is always a regulation at hand to justify the action. Ironically, the big rescatadors and merchants, some of whom are ex-hacendados, are most willing and able to help campesinos who are facing legal charges. They pay fines and bribes and intercede personally. This serves to increase the indebtedness of the campesino and bind him more tightly as a client.



## Chapter 3

### SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

From the division of the haciendas among the former peons and their being freed from bondage flowed a series of further changes: the rise of the rescatadors, the partial movement of campesinos to town, and especially the entry of campesinos into new occupations. In the post-revolutionary years the campesino sindicato became a force to be reckoned with, and in some areas it was more than able to redress the old imbalance of power between peon and patrón. The sindicatos in the Coroico area acquired sufficient influence with the national government to obtain a number of advantages for their members, including schools. But the improvement of the position of the campesino envisioned by the MNR fell short because the revolutionary planners did not foresee that the fractionating of the concentrated economic power of haciendas would leave the individual campesino in a relatively weak bargaining position in the marketplace, and that a good share of the hacendados' economic power would flow to the rescatador. Further, the sindicatos themselves failed to use their new political power to bring about any basic changes in town and regional government. Despite their acknowledged ability to influence the selection of major governmental officials, local offices are still held by a privileged few for the benefit of a privileged few, to the disadvantage of the greater population and especially the campesinos.

The basic changes, muted changes and aborted changes subsequent to 1952 are evident in the status structure of Coroico. Before the revolution the community's society was sharply divided in a stratified hierarchy ruled by those decentes most eminent for traditional prestige and wealth. These were the hacendados, the race-proud families of Spanish descent who carefully controlled the marriage of their children to other decentes. These families were educated and polished, dressed in the European fashion, spoke only Spanish in polite conversation, and gave their lives to the cultivation of leisure.

Considerably below the decentes in social status, and also only a small part of the population, were the mestizos, most of whom are the mixed offspring of decente males. They were often responsibly accepted and given at least a primary education and a chance to learn Spanish. With these advantages they became merchants, government officials, clerks and hacienda administrators. They dressed and spoke like decentes and emulated their manners and style of living just as far as their resources permitted. They had to work, but it was gentle work. Some learned to speak Aymara, which was useful in their jobs, and while they would perhaps wish to marry decentes, they took easily to marriage with Indians.

Only slightly lower than the mestizos in the social scale were the cholos, the culturally distinct, racially mixed stratum that appeared early in the colonial period. Until recent years they monopolized small-scale commerce and skilled work in the towns and countryside. Their hybrid origin and colonial cultural heritage are reflected in physical appearance and speech. They speak Aymara before Spanish, and affect a distinctive mode of dress, their women, the pollera and the derby hat, and their men a rather old-fashioned European dress. For the most part they married among themselves.

Far below the cholos in social status were the indios, the descendants of the indigenous people. This stratum made up the larger part of the population of the region but a minority of the town. They had equally distinctive cultural traditions and social characteristics, received little or no formal education, spoke only Aymara, and got their living from unskilled manual labor. Sharing approximately the same social status, though socially segregated from the indio, were perhaps a thousand Negroes scattered in isolated hamlets throughout the Yungas.

There was also a sub-category of indios, the free indios, culturally not different, but whose status was somewhat higher than that of the general Indian population. The free indio, who owned his own small plot of land or did unskilled work in town, was not a peon, not subject to the traditional authority of the decentes, and was relatively free to move as he pleased and work as he chose.

The traditional status hierarchy of the Coroico region developed early in the colonial era. It rested on the hacienda system of economy, for although mining has been important to the Bolivian national economy, the Bolivian population is overwhelmingly agricultural. Haciendas varied in size from a few hundred to many hundred hectares (hectare = 2.47 acres), and they flourished on the labor of peons. In the Yungas peons were obliged to give four days each week to the patrón and in return were permitted to farm a small plot on the hacienda for themselves. Their hacienda work days were 13 hours long, and on some haciendas the peons and their wives were obliged to work in the master's house for one-week periods in rotation. Peons were occasionally required to care for hacienda animals, and if an animal appeared to have died before its natural time they had to reimburse the hacienda for the loss. Peons who did not meet their work obligations were fined, and on repeated failure were beaten. Beyond their specific work obligations, the peons and their families were in general subject to the authority of the hacendados and their families. Dependent on the hacienda for their livelihood, bound to it by indebtedness and with no place to go except another hacienda, the peon learned that an hacendado's wishes were virtual commands and that any form of disobedience would be met by swift punishment.

#### Old Decentes and New Vecinos: Changing Social Strata

Now, more than a decade after the revolution, the status order

of Coroico is no longer a hierarchy of unambiguous strata. Today some of the old decente families live an economically precarious existence and have little if any political power. Other families of little prestige, cholos and even indios, have prospered in transport and trade. More townspeople speak Aymara and many indios now speak Spanish. European-style dress is becoming increasingly prevalent in all strata, and even the old pattern of residential segregation, in which families of higher status lived closer to the central plaza, has disintegrated. The bases of the traditional stratification order no longer support that order. Before the revolution, race was a fundamental criterion of status. Today the flight of the hacendados has left few blanco families in Coroico. The influx of indios into town and their economic prosperity has promoted their intermarriage with cholos, mestizos and even blancos, further blurring racial differences.

The result is an increasingly mixed population and an increasingly unstable racial criterion of status. Mestizos call themselves blancos, cholos dress in western style, and some indios, having become prosperous townsmen, have taken on many of the characteristics of the townsman in the process. Caucasian characteristics still lay claim to higher status and status inequality is still justified in terms of racial differences, but in everyday life racial differences no longer guide social relations. Occupation similarly has become an uncertain basis of social status. The occupation of rescatador has become the most important and lucrative since 1952, and decentes now must share this position, if they hold it, with mestizos, cholos, and even indios. Trucking is another occupation that has risen in economic importance and become a new source of wealth. Its status was never high, for it was traditionally identified with cholos. Today it is lower still, for many campesinos have become truckers.

Not only have many of the criteria of status ceased to identify unambiguously discrete social strata, but there is no longer any consensus on what expressions properly describe the various strata of the community. "Decente" may refer to race, to having a Spanish name, to refined social manners, to membership in an old family, to some grouping of these characteristics or to all of them. The same person may use the term decente in one of these meanings in one instance and one of the other meanings in another. One Coroiqueno gave four different meanings for the word decente: an honest person, a person with good manners, a person with a prestigious (meaning old Spanish) name, or a wealthy person. One person in town is considered to be a decente by some, a respectable mestizo by others, a rich cholo by still others, and a few consider him to be nothing but an Indian. This suggests the depth of the uncertainty now surrounding the assignment of social status in Coroico.

Rapid and extensive changes in the foundations of social status have affected both the character and correlates of social status. The most appropriate, best-fitting term for the top stratum in Coroico society today is vecino. Vecino means neighbor and is widely used in this sense. On occasion it is also used to



refer collectively to all residents of the town, particularly when distinguishing them from outsiders. In an old variation on this latter usage, the word identifies a special category of townsmen. In this sense, vecino refers to residents of substantial economic and social importance. Thus, when vecinos were called to open town meetings in earlier times this was not an invitation to all residents of the town, but only to those property owners who represented the social elite of the community.

But "vecino" defies precise definition now because the bases and characteristics of status have become mixed throughout the population. The vecino stratum is internally heterogeneous. With the breakup of the decente ranks and the emergence of mestizos as big rescatadors, a blurring has occurred in which the two are no longer consistently distinguished from each other but are collectively referred to as vecino. This does not mean that decentes are never distinguished from mestizos, for they are. Not surprisingly, it is the old decente families who are most conscious of the distinction. They will employ expressions like "vecino nuevo" or "vecino de fuera" to distinguish social and geographic newcomers with claims to vecino status from old decentes like themselves. Even they do not use these terms consistently.

Vecinos have turned to status characteristics less amenable to change as the basis for asserting their own claim to high status. Occupation and even race no longer serve this purpose. With rich cholos and campesinos in town, neither does money. One that remains is education. Since one of the major programs of the MNR government was to provide educational opportunities to the campesino population and large numbers are now receiving some formal education, this might appear to be a questionable basis for establishing exclusive claims to high status. But the education to which vecinos attach importance is not formal schooling. What they mean is good breeding, proper manners, and refined comportment, forms of behavior that one learns in "refined, civilized" homes, and that cannot be taught easily in public schools. Such a concept refers to earlier days when Corolqueños formed theatrical and musical groups for their own amusement and edification, brought in pianos from La Paz on the backs of peons so that the ladies of the house could learn and practice their music, and supported a local printing press that published a newspaper and pamphlets written by the local gentry. Unfortunately, today few vecinos have either the time or means for such pursuits and the concept is anachronistic in relation to the actual way of life of these families. However, such special educational characteristics do disqualify cholo and campesino families, but they are increasingly unrealistic also for most vecinos.

It is taken for granted that vecino children will attend primary school and, if inclined, go on to the university, especially the boys. However, there is none of the intense preoccupation with education so characteristic of many campesinos. The special adult literacy classes that were set up under public school auspices after 1952 were attended by few illiterate vecinos. Partly,

they were embarrassed, disinclined to reveal an inadequacy in common with campesinos. Others felt it was not important. On the other hand, more and more vecinos recognize the threat to their own status in the increasing number of campesinos and cholos who are getting a primary school education and even going on to secondary schools. As one vecino put it:

I do not agree with educational reform insofar as the government gives the Indians opportunities to study five or six years in primary school, then secondary school, and then even the university. That is inconceivable. For the campesino it is enough to give them two or three years of primary school and nothing else. If they go to the university, who is going to work the fields? They would have to leave the country and go to the cities, as is happening now. This is shameless. There should not be so many advantages for the campesinos, for soon they are going to dominate the country, they are going to be superior to the blancos.

While the mestizos have merged with a few remaining decentes to form the vecinos, the cholos have remained much as they were, except that they are more prosperous than ever. They continue to occupy the large middle ground between vecinos and campesinos. Since they were not subject to the legal, traditional and economic restraints imposed on peons, the legal, political and economic reforms of the MNR government had little direct effect on them, but their economic position has improved because of the considerable growth in micro-commerce that followed the dividing of the haciendas among the peons.

The trucking industry has become vital to Yungas agriculture and cholos have been very prominent in its growth. Their willingness and ability to seize on new economic opportunities have also enabled some cholos to become important rescatadors. However, they have not merged like the mestizos with the decentes to become vecinos. To the old decentes the cholo is unmistakable, a lower order of person, not to be admitted into vecino circles. The cholos remain bilingual, speaking both Spanish and Aymara, but their Spanish tends to be more colloquial and the women speak rapidly and with a high-pitched whine that is very distinctive. While cholo men wear European-style dress that is not substantially different from that of vecinos, the women still wear the distinctive pollera, derby hat and shawl.

The criticism and continued rejection of cholos by vecinos works against assimilation, but economic success is greater to the cholo than social acceptance, as indicated in this statement of a cholo woman:

I don't care if I am called a chola, because what is important for me is to know how to work in order to have money. I am not going to live on the "good names" of the people of "blue blood". Their good

names don't feed me. They may say what they want. I don't care as long as I have money and can educate my children. That's what I am concerned about.

The growing wealth and economic power of the cholos has made vecinos increasingly hostile toward them. On the other side, the cholos are threatened by the liberated campesinos. The peon who moves to town does not dress differently nor often appear to be very different from the cholo. When he learns Spanish he no longer speaks differently, and when he becomes a skilled worker he competes with cholos. Similarly, when his wife wears the pollera and a derby hat and shoes, she too can look like a chola. Thus, while successful cholos do not become vecinos, successful campesinos do become cholos, so there are now old and new cholos, and just as vecinos, and especially the decentes, emphasize lineage and family name as the only legitimate basis of vecino status, members of old cholo families emphasize lineage as the basis for distinguishing themselves from the newcomers. They stress the affluence and especially the refinement in manners of the old cholos, just as the old decentes do. Refined ways, say the old decentes and old cholos, cannot be bought or easily learned. This preserves, at least temporarily, a certain status exclusiveness in an otherwise changing and mixed situation.

Although the campesino's social status has improved since the revolution he is still on the low rung of the ladder -- a foothold now ambiguous. On the one hand, the MNR government and sindicato leadership have proclaimed for over a decade that campesinos are legally, politically and socially equal with all Bolivians, and at various times they have been urged to refuse the deference traditionally shown toward vecinos and to assert their rights of equality; but on the other hand, both resident and visiting campesinos are constantly reminded in town that they are not the equals of cholos, and even more inferior with respect to vecinos.

In dress the campesino is frequently not distinguishable from a cholo, though some campesino men and women still do not wear shoes. Their houses in town cover almost the same range of size and age as others in the community, though more of them are smaller, with but one or two rooms. Their diet has improved, differs not greatly from that of cholo families. Set off against these improvements is the dependence of campesinos on local merchants and rescatadors. For the current generation of campesino adults who have not received the new advantage of formal schooling, this dependence can also lead to abuse, as noted by a chola shopkeeper:

There is an art of buying coffee from campesinos. You strike up a conversation with them and make a few jokes, and while they're engaged in talk, you quickly weigh the coffee they've brought in. They don't know how much they've brought, so if they have twenty pounds, I pay them for less. Some campesinos are so dumb that they never even count the money I give them.

Negroes constitute a separate segment of Coroico society, distinct from the campesinos and yet with approximately the same status. The history of Negroes in the Yungas has been closely linked with that of the Indians, but they are a relatively closed society, living by themselves in separate rural villages. There have been Negroes in Coroico since shortly after the Spaniards arrived, but never more than a few families. Most of them live on Calle Ayacucho, which is a campesino street, and go from there to their fields to work. They dress like campesinos, but speak Spanish rather than Aymara, though some are bilingual. The vecino stereotype of the Negro is similar to the one he holds of the Indian, that they are lazy, thieving, dirty, bad actors and not "civilized". There is little overt discrimination against them, but intermarriage is strongly condemned by all other strata and occurs infrequently.

### Strata Interrelations

The extensive change in the character of the stratification order in Coroico has introduced considerable tension. While cholos and campesinos stand around to chat in cholo shops, many vecinos walk in and out with only enough time spent and words used to obtain their purchases. A number of old vecino families are rarely seen in public. They stay home to avoid having to mix with those of lower social status. The intensity of this avoidance is illustrated by the vecino mother who refuses to send her child even to the parochial school because the school admits campesinos and "she will never be educated there, with all those dumb, stupid indios".

Vecinos still honor traditional status obligations, such as those of compadrazgo, but even here avoidance appears. Vecinos accept requests to become padrinos to cholo children, for example, but they do not attend the parties that follow the religious ceremony and do not drink with their new cholo compadres. This avoidance is rationalized by stereotypic assertions that cholos are sneaky, untrustworthy, scheming and aggressive, and that campesinos are dirty, lazy, ignorant, animal-like. Among vecinos the word cholo is used not only to refer to a social stratum but as a term of derogation in which the stereotype meaning is intended. In the word campesino, the intent is not as clear-cut. When vecinos want to make sure that it is the stereotype that is understood, they will use the term indio. The cholos, whose specialization in small-scale commerce and trade brings them into contact with many people from both town and country, cannot afford to practice avoidance. Even though there is some exploitation of campesinos, the relations of cholos to campesinos are friendly. Their reaction to the hostility of the vecinos on the one side and the invasion of their status by increasing numbers of campesinos on the other, has reaffirmed their own distinctive identity. As one old cholo woman says:

We don't try to hide the fact that we are cholitas. We wear polleras and these hats, we work in the market or around it, and all our friends are cholitas.

For the most part they keep any negative feelings they may have toward vecinos and campesinos well under control. It is when they are drunk that they express their feelings of insecurity and resentment. The ambiguity of the campesino's status creates uncertainties that range from the important problems of his life, such as to whom to sell his coffee, to the everyday question of how to address a vecino. Before the revolution it was mandatory for a campesino to address any vecino he encountered. This was a stylized exchange in which the campesino would approach the vecino, but not too closely, remove his hat, greet him as "tata", father, and then ask about his health and the health of all members of his family. In the immediate aftermath of the revolution, when campesinos were being incited to eject the hacendados from the land, campesinos stopped greeting vecinos, even when spoken to, seldom used the deferential "tata" and even refused vecinos the right of way in the street. In town, at least, these expressions of open hostility have disappeared and campesinos and vecinos again greet each other. But it is not the old order that has returned. Vecinos now receive a casual "good morning" or "good morning, señor" with no use of deferential titles, while the campesinos are greeted in the same terms except for the "señor". A few campesinos still use more deferential forms of greeting, and some vary the expression of deference with what they take to be the status of the person. However, a person's status is no longer easily apparent and this makes the etiquette of greeting somewhat perplexing.

### Social Mobility

The mestizos who emerged as the new economic elite were in a position to profit from a decline of the decentes, and few people in Coroico any longer distinguish between the two, but group them together as vecinos. Many persons are aware that vecino ancestry is not so pure, that many have had chola mothers, but in the confused and changing status order of Coroico this is not a difference that counts for much any more.

The movement of social strata since the revolution has obliterated one stratum and narrowed the differences between all of them, and this simplification has been furthered by extensive individual mobility. A sufficient number of years have elapsed since the revolution to show that mobility occurs during a person's own life as well as from one generation to the next. In most of the cases of upward mobility the means has been money. An ex-campesino describes how he moved out of his father's stratum:

Before, the campesino was deceived. My father was a campesino and that's how I know. It isn't any good for a campesino to be looked down upon by others. I had a truck that my father bought me so that I would no longer be a campesino like him. With that truck I make trips to La Paz to sell various products. Little by little the people didn't look at me any more as the son of a campesino, but told me I was

good and generous. Afterwards, I bought a house in town, and then I was not considered a campesino any more. Even though later on I sold my truck, nobody looks at me as an indio now. Now there are no longer any marked differences.

This man, a successful cattle merchant, has become a new cholo, despite his campesino parentage. Others have not found it quite as easy; for example:

Juan Mamani was an hacienda peon who after the revolution left agriculture and with his two brothers bought a truck. By hard work he was able to expand his business and today is hauling produce for merchants of all the nearby towns to and from La Paz. He is considered a clever businessman, but is generally referred to as an indio, only infrequently as a cholo trucker. A chola in town says this is due to envy:

They call him an indio. He is, but he is civilized. He is nice, he tries to please, he is friendly and responsible. The people say bad things about him just because he is an indio, and he has had to take all sorts of opposition just on this account. People are envious because they cannot be as successful as he is. They won't work. He works, and that's why I'll buy from him and not from another. He works, and the others just think they own the world.

While Mamani is called an indio, his children will undoubtedly be new cholos, for already some vecinos and cholos do not treat him as an indio.

In contrast, one of the wealthiest men in town is an Indian whose name is Conde, the hispanicized version of Condori. He owns valuable property in Coroico and La Paz, lives modestly, dresses inconspicuously and associates with few people. His godson calls him a miser, but no one calls him an indio. He is referred to as a rich cholo.

It is quite possible that the children of well-to-do lower status families who will have had the advantages of education and will have acquired "civilized" manners may move as adults into the ranks of the vecino. There has been too little time for this to occur. As on most questions of status, opinions vary and agreement is small on such matters, reflecting the state of flux and the resulting lack of clarity in the system. For most campesinos anyone with money is a decente. For many cholos it is education and proper conduct that make one decente. For most decentes, you have to be born one.

Many decentes are no longer able to afford the style of life that once set the standard for their stratum, but they strongly resist redefinition of their status. As one decente explained:

Pure blancos, as long as they are blancos, are accepted. But take an indio, for instance, and give

him wealth. The people are still going to say he is an indio. You can't buy blood. Of course, this is changing more and more. Before, the families that were in top social positions were there due to name and wealth. Usually the two went hand-in-hand. Wealth was coffee. Now everyone meddles in coffee, and it is the only way to riches. And so people can earn more easily and they can gain position, but they don't have the other things the people formerly had: culture and higher style of living.

Here the importance of wealth is recognized, but it is subordinated to what money cannot buy or cannot buy easily -- proper ancestors and proper ways. In time the extension of elementary and higher educational opportunities to cholos and campesinos may diffuse the higher style of life just as occupation and wealth have already crossed old status barriers. However, local public education is not really adequate and it is also too early to assess its impact on mobility and social status.

The stress of decentes on immutable criteria of status leads them to insist that a decente can never cease being one. Given the extensive changes that have occurred among the decentes, this would be surprising if true, but it is not. Though infrequently discussed, there have been a number of decentes who have fallen all the way to the bottom of the social hierarchy in Coroico, have, in fact, quite passed out of sight. Having lost their possessions in the revolution and having no ability for other work, estranged from relatives or having none, they ended up on a little plot of land. Several of them married campesino girls and their way of life is indistinguishable from that of any other poor campesino. At least two decente women have married campesinos and are now "wives of indios".

In Coroico, as in Villa Abecia and Reyes, marriage can be an important factor in precipitating or reinforcing social mobility. However, since social status itself is ambiguous in Coroico, it is not always clear when an inter-strata marriage has occurred, and many marriages only compound existing status ambiguity. On the other hand, where the status differences are considerable, it does affect the status of both partners. Because many vecino boys go away to school or to work and never return, vecino girls increasingly must either seek a partner in the cities or accept marriage with persons of lower status. This presents an advantageous situation to the ambitious and successful cholo boy. Among the inter-strata marriages that have occurred there is one that is especially well known in the community and that reflects many of the developments in Coroico since the revolution. For this reason it is worth presenting in some detail.

### The Montes Family

Lorenzo Montes is the son and grandson of hacendados. The four haciendas that belonged to him at the time of the revolution

had been in his family for more than 160 years. They extended over 450 hectares, or a little over 1,100 acres, and produced coffee, coca, bananas and oranges. Montes recalls that he had many peons and had a generous income.

In 1922, at the age of 28, Lorenzo married a daughter of the locally distinguished Diaz family. They were married 11 years and had two children. In 1933 Montes divorced his wife and scandalized the community by marrying Julia Cerezo, a campesina from one of his haciendas. The marriage shocked local society. Lorenzo was strongly criticized, but life went on. Though now the wife of a wealthy hacendado and mistress of his big house, Señora Montes never appeared as the gracious hostess. When Lorenzo entertained he dined with his equals, while his wife ate in the kitchen. A priest who was a frequent visitor to the Montes home said: "It would have been an insult to the other guests to have an indio at the table."

In 1953 Montes was thrown off his hacienda by his own peons and he, his wife and the five children she had borne him, moved to town. Montes still cannot understand why this happened to him. He recalls that he was always generous and concerned for his campesinos:

The Law for Instruction of the Campesinos was passed in 1936. That meant that every hacienda had to construct a school, and each one brought teachers from the altiplano. But then, in 1938, a new law said that if an hacienda was less than three kilometers from town the campesino children would have to go to the public school. We were less than three kilometers from town, but even so I built a school for my people. I didn't have to do it, but I did.

The campesinos on the Montes haciendas saw the situation rather differently. Asked what working for Montes was like, a former peon replied:

Very difficult. The campesino had to work three days for the patrón and so did their women. Yes, that's three days from a family and that's too much. Besides that, we had to give them our produce. That's why we threw them out when the reforms came. All of us had arms and we made Montes leave. [A woman standing beside the campesino exclaimed at this point: "Him they hate!"]

In the complaint proceedings of 1955 before the Agrarian Reform Court, in which the campesinos applied for legal title to their share of the Montes property, Montes was accused of a variety of abuses. He was charged with having forced his peons to live in unhygienic housing, with having exploited their labor without compensation and having exposed them to the danger of death by making them cross the river to his properties during the rainy season, when many would be swept away and drowned. Today Montes complains:



Nobody in Coroico is sympathetic. They listen and then they say, "That's the way it goes". I had to put up with a lot. They took all I had after the reform. And because my wife is, really, of a different race, the adjustment has been hard. They resent her for being my wife and consequently they resent me. I don't get fair treatment from any quarter -- none at all, not even from my family. Look at me, picking up trash in the street! Ay, times are hard now. I'm not used to things like this. When I was growing up I had all the servants I needed and they showed me respect. Now I am nothing. Even in my house you see me doing this sort of thing, when it should be done by the women and children. I have to clean up the street, do work around here, and my family doesn't think anything of it.

One of his vecino nephews says, "Since he married the servant, 30 years or so ago, we've had nothing to do with them"; but other relatives have been kinder. Another nephew explains why he helps his uncle:

Lorenzo comes to visit me a lot. And he knows that if there is no noon meal at his house, for instance, he can come here and eat with us, even on the spur of the moment. And I know that I can go to their house. We don't have any business activities together, but he does come to me for help on all these legal matters that he has pending. [Montes seeks reparations from the government for his expropriated properties and the nephew is the notary public.] And, being a relative, and knowing that he does not have one cent, I write up the papers for him free. His condition is very serious, I would say, and this comes from his having married that younger woman. They have about ten kids now, and that means they have to get money from somewhere.

The nephew very discreetly avoids the status problem of his uncle's wife and concentrates on their economic problems, but his economic situation is not as serious as the nephew suggests. If today Montes is poor, he is poor only in relation to his former wealth, for in comparison with really poor families the Montes family lives rather well. His wife, Julia, takes the brunt of contempt and hostility. From all sides she draws disapproval: "Oh, that fatso, she's just an india"; "She is just a chola, and has mountains of children". A chola sums it up:

She thinks she is refined because she has picked up a lot of Spanish from the old man. But, she was just his servant, and even lived with him before they were married. She is nothing but a chola and she puts on so many airs. She is a real sinner, señorita. They never set foot in church, and she was just his mistress. Everyone

hates her, even her own mother. Oh, they're bad people. She looks just like a chola, doesn't she, with that hat sitting on her head? Just because she speaks Spanish she thinks she is something pretty special.

When Julia is called an india it is clear that the speakers are using this term as a pejorative, for even her enemies grudgingly acknowledge her chola status. If Lorenzo has come down in the social world of Coroico, his wife has very definitely come up. And if Lorenzo is no longer considered by some to be a decente, few would challenge his status as a vecino.

The social status of the Montes children is quite ambiguous. They are thought to be ill-bred and are disliked by most of their neighbors. One person says, "Lorenzo Montes is a vecino, and therefore his children are too". But another says, "He took his servant as his mistress, and all those children of theirs are just campesinos because they've got no education or culture". If the children had been carefully reared according to the old decente model, it is probable that they would be considered vecinos by everybody. It is the mother, however, who has had the active role in rearing the children. She is not in a position to teach them to become vecinos; in fact, seems quite insensitive about it. It is clear that she would rather have her children make money in the cholo fashion than try to become vecinos.

Sra. Montes works hard herself and sees to it that all the children do. She supervises the several economic enterprises of the family, including one of the seven commercial ovens in town. She rents out rooms, runs a small retail store, buys and sells flour and quina, runs a small bar, sells firewood and oversees the cultivation of a small parcel of land that is all that remains from the Montes haciendas. These activities are not making them rich, but they do provide them with a living sufficiently good to evoke envy among their neighbors. Lorenzo is 73, but he waits on customers in the family's bar. Each of the children has specific tasks in one or more of the family businesses, but none of them is paid wages. The girls buy groceries, prepare bread, cook and look after the two little boys. The oldest boy at home, in his early 20's, brings fruit and firewood from their land. The little boys sweep up and care for the rented rooms. Hired workers operate the oven. In addition to supervising all the different projects, Sra. Montes makes frequent trips to other towns to buy flour and bring supplies to be sold in the family store. Since most of the businesses, including the oven, are in their house, the family, with the exception of the mother, spend most of their time at home.

Indicative of the values of Sra. Montes is the scholastic situation of her children. Of the three Montes children of school age in 1965 none was in school. Two boys had failed so many subjects in primary school that they had dropped out until the next term when they would repeat the grade they had failed. The girl in high school wanted very much to continue, but her parents refused to buy the required uniform. When asked what

her parents thought about her not going to school, she replied:

They know. They don't care. I talked with my mother last night and told her why I was not going to school and she didn't say anything. She just agreed with me that I was not going. My father is too old. He can't work, and therefore he doesn't have any money. My mother has it.

He could ask her for the money but he doesn't want to. He doesn't care. He says it is better that girls go to work. They both want money, that's all. They don't care. My mother is a real bad one, isn't she, señorita? We have no time, no place to study, no light at night. If we try to study, she comes in and says, "What do you study for? It won't do you any good". And she makes fun of us. So we don't do well in our courses.

Six months later this girl moved to La Paz, found a job and enrolled in night school.

Since Sra. Montes is willing to work hard and assume responsibility for the family economy, the father, who is old and tires easily, is content to remain on the sidelines and let his wife run things. Her values dominate the household. A daughter who spends her days in school and her evenings studying means one less person to provide free labor to make the family businesses a success. While the mother moves from one task to another throughout the day, the father passes much of his time reading the La Paz newspapers. Around him are the shabby remnants of the expensive Victorian furniture that once graced his home, from which he also saved an old photograph of Julia. The portrait was almost unrecognizable. She was dressed in western style, not in the pollera and derby hat and with the braids she wears today. It is a picture of the status she could not attain.

The Montes family reminds the town of the fall of the hacendados, the rise of campesinos to cholo status and especially the mixing of social strata. As one old decente observed: "It's no longer possible to maintain one's prestige as a vecino. Today everyone mixes with everyone else and people aren't separated the way they used to be." And another adds: "Only 30 years ago there were still pure people in Coroico. But vecinos are taking Indian women, as Lorenzo Montes did, and vecino blood is getting mixed with that of cholos and campesinos."

## Chapter 4

### GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Coroico, like Reyes, is a community with a variety of groups and organizations in which overlapping membership should provide an important basis for community cohesion. In fact, little cohesion results from this pattern because membership in many of the groups and organizations is small. Membership turnover is high, and the attraction of members to their groups is not strong. In this situation the family is the one group in which durable relations are found, but even here strain and deep change have occurred in the past decade.

#### Family and Kinship Relations

A large proportion of Coroico households contain few persons. In Coroico, 25.9% of the households contain two persons or one, and 58.8% contain four or fewer, while in Reyes the comparable proportions are 7.8% and 28%, and in Villa Abecia, 17% and 38.2%. Among these very small households are both very new and very old families, and there are many families that consist of an aged couple living by themselves or an elderly person and an adult child. In Coroico, 12.9% of the population are 50 years old or older, while in Reyes only 8.6%, and in Villa Abecia only 8% are in that age range, in great part because older children and young adults leave the community. Because of limited secondary school facilities in Coroico and the proximity of La Paz, many vecino families send their children, especially their boys, to secondary school in the capital, so vecino children often begin to move out of the family while they are still in school. The capital is also a mecca, along with the booming colonization town of Caranavi, for ambitious cholo young men and even campesinos. Parents, especially elderly parents, complain of the loneliness and isolation when their children leave, but most of them accept the situation if, indeed, they do not encourage their children to leave for the cities, where the weight of the past will not bear so heavily on them.

Another factor contributing to small size, and even more importantly to the composition of the family, is the frequent absence of the father in cholo and campesino families. Cholos and campesinos dominate the trucking business and many are home only one or two nights out of the week. Others go to the gold fields, the oil fields, or any other place in Bolivia where there is more economic activity, and may be away for several months to a year at a time. The wives do not follow, for the work may be temporary and the future uncertain, or they stay in Coroico because they have a business of their own, a small tienda or a stall in the marketplace, or they make bread for sale. Absent husbands

often provide little support, so the mother must work to keep the family alive.

The separate business activities of cholas make them much less dependent on their husbands than either town campesino or vecino women are. There is frequently no pooling of earnings. The husband will give his wife the funds he thinks she requires to the extent that he is able, while the wife uses her earnings not only for her own and family expenses but may invest them in economic ventures of the husband, and they are often more successful. In contrast, vecino wives seldom work, their accepted place being at home. Some town campesinas work as servants or cooks, but they are generally not economic rivals of their husbands. Cholo wives, and to a lesser extent town campesino wives, are independent in the very form of marriage so usual among them. Vecino wives choose to marry under both civil and religious law, but many of the cholas and most of the campesinas are living in consensual unions, bound by no formal tie. Although some prestige is attached to formal marriage, many cholas point to the liability of having to give up their freedom and in having to accede to the demands of the husband.

Economic poverty, inferior education, sex adventuring, and an endemic addiction to alcohol, appear to be the principal influences undermining family stability. Many families live from day to day on the slenderest of resources, from which, however, men and women manage to eke out enough to drown their problems in alcohol. Men and women, old and young, everybody drinks. Asked why there was so much drinking in town, an elderly vecino merchant said:

It is because practically everything one does is done with a drink, whether selecting a compadre, thanking a compadre, celebrating a birth, celebrating a marriage, making a business deal, celebrating the purchase of a new car or house or what have you, to create friendships, or just to drink with friends. People drink to mark their success and also their poverty and grief, they drink for a dead person, for having received an inheritance, at fiestas, at civic celebrations. In sum, one drinks for everything. There is no way to escape alcohol. In spite of the fact that today liquor is expensive, I think it is safe to say that more is consumed now than before.

Probably more men drink more alcohol on more occasions, but the women are not far behind, and when husbands and wives get drunk they fight, sometimes brutally. The squandering of money on alcohol, and drunken physical assault and bawdry, cause most separations and divorces among cholos and town campesinos, the extramarital activity being common to both sexes. If there is no legal or religious bond, there is no formal obstacle to separation; but even when marriage has been formalized, the man who finds another woman more to his liking often simply leaves his family and sets up house with his new choice. Though vecino husbands drink as much and have greater means and presumably more

choices in venery, their families are more easily spared the knowledge, and what their wives see they studiously ignore.

In most families older children are expected to get a job and the younger children to work in the house. The work demanded of vecino children may be relatively light, especially in the case of boys, for they are expected to attend to their studies, but cholo and town campesino boys start early as helpers to their fathers. Cholo and campesino girls learn domestic skills at their mother's side in the kitchen, but vecino girls in growing numbers are sent to secondary school in La Paz for some form of business training.

The young man marries when he can afford it, usually in his early 20's, and his wife is but a few years younger. Vecino men marry somewhat later because they remain in school longer. Most vecinos of the older generation married townspeople, but now their sons and daughters are going to school in the cities and often remain to work after graduation, and many are therefore marrying into distant families. Even those vecino girls who remain at home are inclined to look to the cities, especially to La Paz, for good husbands. They are often coached in their pursuit by parents who see few worthwhile prospects in Coroico and, consequently, a danger of their daughter's marrying into a lower social stratum. What happens when danger impends is recounted by a chola shopkeeper:

Two or three years ago Jorge fell in love with a young girl who lives near the padre's house. When he went to talk to the girl's mother she told him there was no need for him to fall in love with her daughter, who happens to be attending secondary school in La Paz. She told him, "You disgraceful cholo, bothering my daughter, why don't you look for a chola like yourself?" Later he was attracted to another young girl and the same thing happened. For that reason, he won't bother with these girls who walk around well dressed but who have nothing inside them.

Many town campesinos came alone from the campo as far away as the altiplano and have few or no relatives in town. Many have never returned to their native communities and have seen nothing more of their parents or siblings. Many report their fathers dead, either from what their mothers told them or because they do not know who their fathers are. Others know neither parent, because both father and mother ran off and they were given to other relatives or to a cholo or vecino family as criados, as foster-child servants. In other cases the mother may never have been married and may have had each of her children by a different man. With limited or no inheritance, most campesino youngsters are forced out of the home to seek work as best they can, and are scattered throughout the country. In these circumstances few town campesinos are able to claim more than a wife and their own children, maybe a mother and an occasional sibling.

In the following statement a young vecino, who has worked as

a rescator and also a public employee but now makes shoes, reveals his own range of family ties and tells of the disrupting effect of differences of wealth in families:

To me, family means only my parents, my brothers and sisters and my grandparents. The rest are kin, but distant kin with whom one has occasional relations. They don't come to visit us and we don't go to see them. The persons that I am close to are my father and my brothers, but I have more to do with relatives in Coroico than with relatives who don't live in town. The latter one forgets and others can't travel here. Among my relatives, those that have money are very proud and at times they put you down. More than that, they say they aren't relatives. Why? Because you don't have money like them. Only when it is convenient for them do they call you a relative. That's not worth the bother. For example, this José Pineda, the tinterillo, occasionally says we are relatives and other times says we are not. His wife is my father's sister.

The value of close kin is that they can be counted on in emergencies, do favors, advance loans, provide social support and in general be counted on for aid, advice, and encouragement.

In Coroico as in the other communities, compadrazgo takes a number of different forms, but again the important ones are baptism, marriage, first communion and confirmation, in that order. Especially prominent in Coroico is the extreme secularization of compadrazgo as a means of raising money and goods for worthy causes or even for rather narrowly partisan activities. Older students are particularly adept at using compadrazgo to solicit support for recreation and school activities. A soccer team that needs to be outfitted solicits padrinos for shoes, shorts, shirts and balls. People who cannot afford contributions are not approached, but it is shameful to refuse when the request is obviously within the person's means.

Vecinos, today as before, select their compadres from among their own kin and other vecinos, and for all the usual reasons; and compadrazgo ties are important to the rescatadors for their commercial value. For many vecinos, however, the obligations of compadrazgo have become too expensive, the compensations too small. Campesino compadres coming into town on market day expect a meal and perhaps even lodging, but with their haciendas gone, they have little to do with agriculture and no need for close relations with campesinos. Now, too, gifts from campesino compadres have become fewer and smaller. Whereas before the revolution a campesino brought his vecino compadre several chickens, one or two dozen eggs or several bunches of bananas, now he brings one or two eggs, or a couple of bananas, and frequently nothing at all.

Among town campesinos ties of compadrazgo have become attenuated through both family instability and geographic distances. It

is not surprising that those who cannot name their fathers also cannot name a padrino. In some cases they never had any because they were not baptized. In other cases, the family broke up or the family of the padrino broke up, and one or more members moved away, so that a child never came to know his padrino. Similarly, the campesinos who have moved to Coroico frequently have little contact with their ahijados. One 59-year-old mason from an Indian community on the altiplano has more than 60 ahijados in his home town and in La Paz, but has seen none of them in the 16 years since he moved to Coroico. His comment indicates that even among the Indians the obligations of compadrazgo can be a strain:

With the number of ahijados and compadres that I had in Tihuanaco and La Paz, we had many celebrations, many drunken parties. That's the way we lived. For that reason I am content not to have compadres or ahijados to bother me. I am tired of attending to so many compadres.

The social importance of compadrazgo is not in the gifts that it produces but in the relations of assistance and support which it establishes. These are very similar to the relations between close kin. The relations between padrino and ahijado are more formal, which is consistent with the age difference between the persons involved. Compadres should respect each other, do each other favors, lend money or foodstuffs, give counsel when asked, and aid each other. This is the ideal, but there are many exceptions, as a town campesino who works as a tailor attests:

Once I had an urgent problem and went to Don Ignacio [a well-to-do cholo shopkeeper] to ask him to lend me 50,000 bolivianos [4.00]. Do you know what he said? "Look, ahijado, I would be pleased to make you a loan, but now we are poor because my wife has just bought things for the store that cost a lot of money. Ay, any other time I would make my godson a loan." You know why he wouldn't lend me the money? Because he had no confidence in me. If I had said, "Lend me 50,000 bolivianos and I will leave my sewing machine with you as security", he would have lent me the money in a flash. But I couldn't do that, because without the machine I cannot work.

Here in this town there are good compadres, who help, support one, who think well of a person, who respect a person, but at the same time there are some who are not worth anything, who are rich and right away forget the poor. It is three months since I have visited my padrino, Don Ignacio. What's the point of visiting someone who never will do a favor? I send one of my nephews to buy things from the store of Don Ignacio, like vanilla, noodles, rice, sugar, salt, candles, flour, and so on, but never is he man enough to give a gift, to say, "Take this little something to my ahijado".



To many persons compadrazgo means only "a mountain of obligation". One shopkeeper avoids it by saying she was not married in church and therefore the priests will not allow her to become a madrina. To make sure they get the message, she adds that she does not think much of those American priests and has poor relations with them.

### Friendship

There is a feeling in Coroico that friendships are not what they used to be. Old friends were scattered in the shattering of the old order and the town now seems too full of strangers and too full of social neighbors not worth bothering with. For most people a friend is a person with whom they pass the time gossiping. There are visits between families, invitations to parties, drinking companions in the cantinas; but friendships are as a tailor tells it:

Since I am a tailor by profession, there are always a lot of people coming to my house. With all the people of the town and the estancias, I am amigo de boca [casual friend], nothing more.

Close friendships have survived for some vecinos, but for cholos, rejected by vecinos and economically threatened by town campesinos, close friendships are too great a burden. For their part, town campesinos find the idea unrealistic, though they say they had close friends in their native villages. According to a town campesino barber:

Amigos de confianza don't exist any more. I have a lot of friends, but not intimate friends. Where are you going to find intimate friends in this day and age? It is impossible to confide in friends. You can't tell a person here anything about your problems without his leaving shortly and telling the whole town or having him make a joke of your problems. Anyone who thinks he can have intimate friends is a fool.

The rapid changes in the social order have produced unusual numbers who are socially isolated. These persons are mainly at the extremes of the status order, such as elderly vecinos and town campesinos, people with few or no relatives and no close friends, who prefer to remain on the margins of the social life of the town. Many are not absolutely alone, for they may have a spouse or a child, and some may be members and even officers of voluntary organizations and take part in civic affairs, but otherwise have almost no social relations. This is a striking thing in a community so small.

### Formal Associations

Coroico, though a small town, has a wide variety of voluntary

associations -- the fraternal Veterans of the Chaco War; educational organizations such as the Padres de Familia; several religious groups; many sports clubs; labor organizations and the several political parties; but these organizations have contributed little to the social cohesion of the community. Over half the adults belong to none, and those who join do so for narrowly perceived, short-range personal advantage. Few are willing to work for organizations as a means of collective power. As members find that an organization is unable to satisfy their specific interests they drop out, perhaps to join another seemingly more to their purposes. "Everyone who joins a group is looking out for his personal interests. It's all very individualistic."

The Veterans of the Chaco War has perhaps 80 members, but probably no more than 15 are active and most of these are campesinos, though the leaders are vecino, given to much squabbling but not to beneficial action. One veteran says:

It is a stupidity. The only thing it gets us is wasted time. The government hasn't come through with any effective help [meaning pensions].

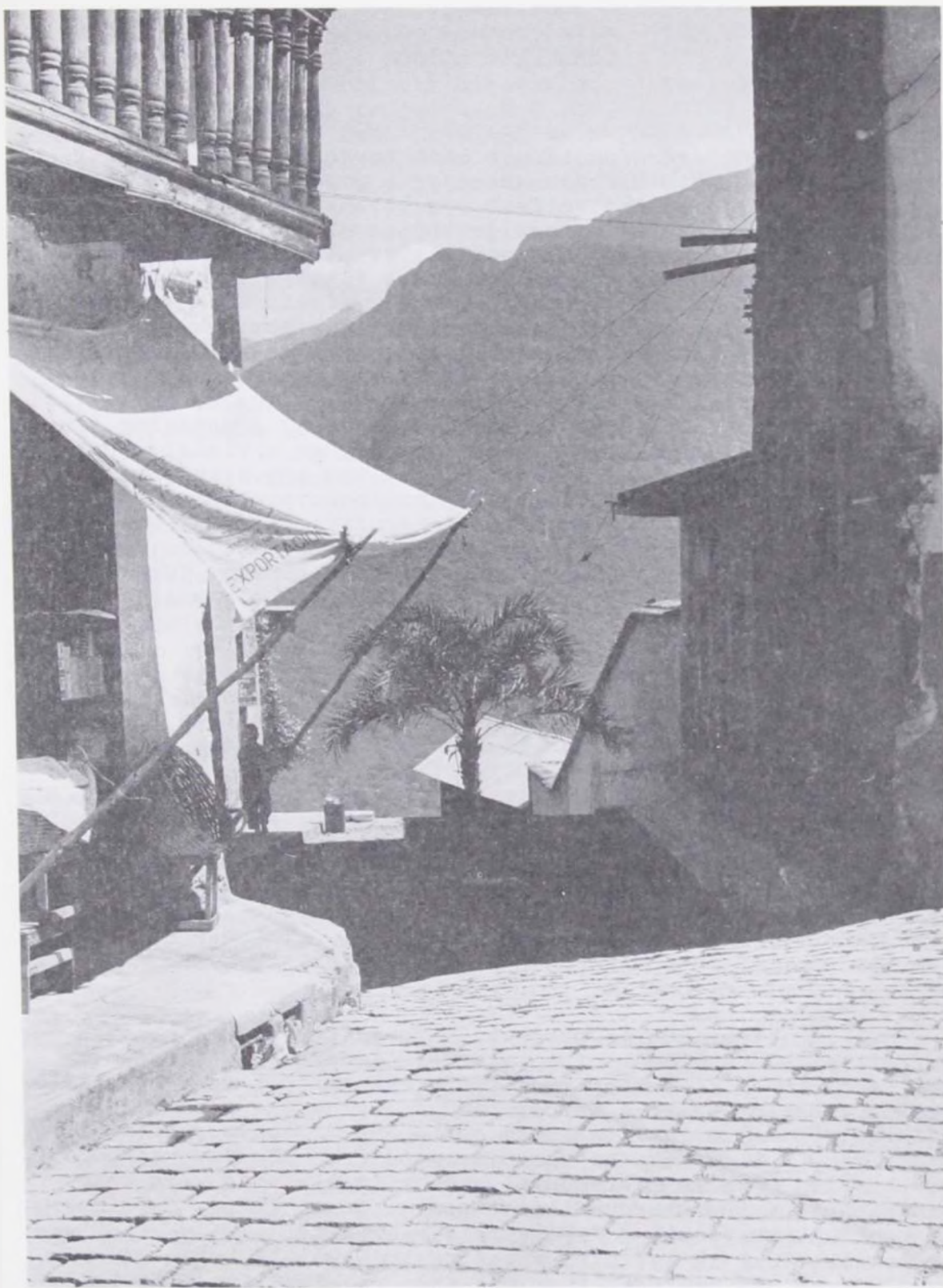
The Mutual Aid Society is an insurance-type association to help pay for medical and burial expenses. It has about 75 dues-paying members, but it suffers from misunderstandings among its members about the categories of aid for which they are eligible and the rules under which aid is made available. And it suffers further because of suspicion about the handling of considerable sums of money collected from its vecino and prosperous cholo members.

The religious associations are mostly for women, small, close-knit groups, but even so their membership turnover is very high. They receive religious instruction and are involved in the promotion of church policy. They would like to see more people at mass more regularly and fewer concubines and unbaptized children. The young girls, particularly, join church groups as a way to get out of the house for a time. In general, the nuns who direct and counsel these females are quite discouraged.

The sports groups take soccer alone seriously. The clubs frequently start out with ambitious plans for intellectual self-improvement and dedication to civic projects, but they end up playing ball. Members jump from one club to another, and few engage in serious practice. As in Reyes, membership is strongly governed by social status, but in contrast to Reyes there is a tendency in some clubs to take on a political coloring. The Uchumachi Club was reputed to be a Falangista stronghold.

While campesinos sindicatos have emerged as centers of power in the countryside, there are many other sindicatos of little national importance. In Coroico, there are sindicatos of local truck drivers, butchers and small-scale wholesale merchants who take farm produce to La Paz. These sindicatos regulate prices, work standards, adjudicate disputes between members and those who deal with them, and may have some control over jobs; in short,

they have a narrow trade-union orientation. Most of Coroico's organizations are tombs of apathy, carnivals of turnover and bedlams of distrust, torn by factionalism and bickering.



X

## Chapter 5

### COMMUNITY ACTION

There is a pattern of action common to many towns of intermediate importance in Bolivia whenever a move is made to improve or provide facilities that affect its living conditions, such as the building of a public market or the repair of a water system. Municipal projects are the responsibility of local government, but local governments lack means, cannot float a municipal bond issue, but can only seek the aid of the prefectural government or the national agencies. These are the only sources of sufficient revenue to finance municipal projects, the only possessors of the technical staffs necessary for their planning and construction. Local officials may divert some of their own limited funds and also attempt to stir local support by organizing committees and delegations to impress upon higher officials that the townspeople are committed to action, but the important thing is *muñeca*, the influence that local officials have at higher levels and the interest that one or more higher officials may have in the particular local officials. This makes for erratic development at the local level, but it does provide a means for redirecting at least a part of tax revenues to some communities.

#### The Potable Water Project

Coroico has been one of the towns that has profited from outside aid. It was given funds around 1920 to purchase an electric generator. Around 1930 it received funds to build a hydroelectric plant on the Coroico river, and in 1940 it got money for a limited sewer system. Major aid came through the Zuazo brothers, natives of the Yungas who became important figures in the MNR. Julio Zuazo Cuenca was a senator, and later a prefect of the Department of La Paz during the first MNR regime in the mid-1940's. With his support the town built a new primary school building and a large hotel, and got money for a hospital. Through his brother Eduardo, smaller sums were made available for improving the plaza and the streets around it.

These and other public projects were made possible because prefectural and national officials were interested. After the opening of the all-weather road to La Paz in 1936 many officials spent a pleasant weekend in Coroico, enjoying the warm climate so different from the rarified cold of La Paz. However, after the Revolution of 1952 Coroico was displaced from its favored political position. While prefectural and national funds were being channeled into the surrounding campesino communities, Coroiqueños endured what they called "12 years of neglect". The neglect was not total, since it was during the period 1961-63, when Eduardo Zuazo Cuenca was prefect, that the town received funds to improve the plaza and to continue the work on another, larger hydroelec-

tric plant at nearby Huarinella. But it is true that rather little money has been forthcoming for a long time.

The past decade has been a period of deterioration. The old hydroelectric plant operates sporadically. The hospital was never opened because its foundation sank at the start. What there was of it was partially dismantled so that the materials could be used on other projects, and the building is now but a shell. The public toilets have become a public nuisance, the streets are potholes covered by the trash and the slops that are thrown from the houses that line them. So much water escapes from breaks in the water system that during the dry season water frequently must be rationed. During the rainy season there is no shortage, even with the breaks in the line, but then the system is often filled with dirt, debris and dead animals.

After the fall of the MNR government in November of 1964, the new local FSB officials proclaimed that the era of deprivation was over and that Coroico could look forward to a renewed prosperity. In the following weeks there was considerable discussion of town problems, especially among vecinos. Alcalde Pablo Jimenez, his first deputy Apolinar Brambila, a druggist, and the sub-prefect, Ignacio Espinosa, brought in the non-local professionals for informal talks. Among them were the dentist, Anastacio Camacho; the town's only physician, Dr. Joaquin Galarza; the administrator of the large prefectural hotel, Martin Dominguez; one of the Franciscan priests, Padre Dionicio Martinez; and the local Peace Corps Volunteer, and finally, the distinguished vecinos, mostly middle-aged or elderly men, many of them at one time officials in the local government. With the health professionals and church seriously concerned with medical care, discussions turned to the health of the community and the run-down public facilities that threatened its health. Of particular concern were the inadequate and contaminated water system and the absence of a hospital, for La Paz is too distant for emergency medical attention. In addition, Dr. Galarza spoke of the severe problems of inadequate diet and the need for birth control.

By January of 1965 a group of approximately 15 men, drawn from three chief categories of residents, began regular meetings to discuss possible courses of action. At a meeting on the night of January 12 it was decided to launch a community action campaign, and the repair and expansion of the water system became the first project. The construction of several latrines was second, and the rebuilding of the hospital was third. The group agreed to hold a public rally on the following evening to explain their plans to the community and seek support. Padre Dionicio took the responsibility for organizing the rally and publicizing it. The following day he used the public address system to call all residents to the plaza that evening at eight o'clock to hear an important announcement, and he and the Peace Corps Volunteer, assisted by several townspeople, made signs to be carried at the rally. "Civic Action Committee" was lettered on most of them. That was the name Padre Dionicio had given the community action group.

Typical of Coroico, there were few people in the plaza at

eight o'clock, but by nine o'clock nearly 600 had assembled. To the surprise of the throng, they were treated to a parade led by a young man on a motorcycle. There was a drum corps of older school children and a campesino pipe and drum band. Padre Dionicio's "Civic Action Committee" wore arm bands with a picture of a faucet and the slogan, "Civic Action Committee, Potable Water". There were also marching groups of women and children, town campesino men and a contingent of teenagers, carrying a sign that read: "Always Friends Club: The youth of Coroico are ready to collaborate in civic action. Project number one, potable water." Bystanders cheered them on, shouting "Viva Coroico"; "Viva the people of Coroico, the vanguard of progress"; "What do we want? -- Potable Water! What do we want? -- Clean Water!"; "Viva civic action"; "Viva Peace Corps"; "Viva Franciscan Padres". The crowd was enjoying itself and there was even more cheering for the speeches that followed.

After the parade the civic action group assembled on the balcony of the government building. The alcalde began, emphasizing the new era that was opening for Coroico now that the MNR government had been deposed. He was followed by Dr. Galarza, who spoke of the water system and the need for a new hospital. The two main crowd pleasers were Dr. Camacho, the dentist, and especially Padre Dionicio, both skilled in the Latin American oratorical style. The padre is considered to be the best public speaker in town and was given the loudest applause of the evening. He told the crowd:

Civic Action is not a special group, but the whole town. The aim is not just potable water, but all necessary improvements. Potable water is first because health has a basic importance. The second project will be sewage and public latrines. The third will be a hospital. There will be others, but these are plenty for now.

If we can get aid from the prefecture, good. If we can get aid from the national government, good. If we can get aid from USAID or the Alliance for Progress, good. But we have applied for aid before, with the sad case of the Chobacollo highway, and we were ignored. This time we are ready to do what needs to be done with our own strength. Whatever aid we can get would be welcome, but I tell you, people of Coroico, the time has come for us to work on our own if necessary. As the famous Spanish philosopher said, "In unity there is strength, and in strength there is victory". The people of Coroico must unite for civic action, and win the victory of potable water, latrines and sewage and hospital. Win the victory of making our town the model city of Latin America.

The padre's speech got several minutes of shouted vivas. He concluded by calling for money contributions to the committee, pointing out that there would be many expenses. He also sought

to reassure his audience, always suspicious of corruption in the handling of public funds, by saying that he personally would handle all money received and would give a complete accounting to the community of how all donated funds were used.

On the following day Padre Dionicio organized a house-to-house collection. He assigned volunteer pairs of men to different blocks to call at each household and ask for donations. By the end of the day the several teams had collected almost one million bolivianos (\$83.33).

On the following Friday night, January 15, an open meeting was held on the potable water project in the town government building. It was late starting, and most of those who came were the same persons who had been active earlier. Much of the discussion was over proposals for raising funds. It was seen that voluntary contributions would never bring in enough to cover the operating costs of the project, so it was proposed that a tax be levied on trucks coming into the town and on beer, and that stiffer fines be exacted for drinking in the cemetery and for not displaying the flag when ordered by the town government to do so. Most favored the tax on trucking, but a decision could not be taken because local officials have no authority to originate new taxes.

The meeting was sidetracked for a time by the issue of the Chobacollo road project, in which townspeople the year before had volunteered their labor to improve an old road that would bring the Caranavi bypass directly through town. A committee collected funds and materials and the volunteer force cleared several sections of the road, but then encountered areas of rock that required heavy equipment and blasting and ravines they would have had to bridge. There being neither heavy equipment nor funds, this community effort came to a dead halt. Up to now the Chobacollo Road Committee has not accounted for the monies collected, with the result that some people who were approached for water project donations refused, on the grounds that it would only be another Chobacollo fiasco. It was also recalled at the meeting that the road committee received tools from the prefecture -- picks, shovels and wheelbarrows -- and that these would be needed for the water project, and some people wanted the alcalde or sub-prefect to summon the Chobacollo Road Committee to the police station and there require them to give an accounting. The alcalde, however, wanted no enemies, and argued for an informal meeting with the committee to resolve the outstanding questions. Others argued that this was a matter strictly for the local officials, that the Civic Action Committee was not concerned to bring other residents to justice, that this would only cause dissension and impede their own progress.

When someone proposed that a delegation be sent to La Paz to seek aid from the national government as well as USAID, Padre Dionicio commented:

What matters is that we start work. We don't need help from the government. Nor from USAID. Nor from the Alliance for Progress. I don't know where

the money is nor where it's to come from, but let's begin work so that we can go on even if they do cut us off. How many times have we waited for help from La Paz? How many times have they ignored our requests? This time it must be different. If we have already worked, we will be in a better position to get aid. We will be grateful if it is offered, but we mustn't ask for it, and then wait around for six months while they "make a study", and then find that it's been forgotten.

The final matter discussed was that the prefect was coming on the following day. Padre Dionicio realized that this was an opportunity not to be lost. Plans were made for an official reception, some were designated to speak on problems in the town, and it was decided to hold a community-wide rally in the prefect's honor. Most of Saturday was spent in awaiting his arrival, no one knew when; and since there are no telephones in the area, no one could know when. As it turned out, the prefect went first to inspect the hydroelectric plant so long under construction at Huarinilla, so he arrived in town late in the afternoon. It was then decided that the prefect -- an army colonel from Cochabamba -- and his party would go to the hotel for an informal meeting with town officials and civic action leaders over soda and pisco sours. The alcalde opened the session with a short comment on the town's 12 years of neglect, and on its hope for improvement with the change in national government. Padre Dionicio spoke about water contamination and the need to renovate the system. The alcalde got up again to speak of the need for new public latrines. Finally, Dr. Galarza discussed the need for a new hospital. The prefect made no response to any of these appeals, saying he would reserve his answer for the rally that evening.

Everyone left then for a walking tour of the town, so the prefect and his party might see sewage flowing along in open gutters, and piles of trash and filth every few blocks, and the run-down condition of the market, and the public latrines so smelly that close inspection was inadvisable, and the government building wall that is seriously cracked from top to bottom of its three stories, and offices without adequate furniture or supplies, and the aborted Chobacollo road which cost nearly \$50,000. The prefect promised to see whether any of the road funds could be recovered.

Later that evening there was another parade, and townspeople assembled in the plaza to see and hear the prefect. He was preceded by Civic Action spokesmen who restated all their pleas all over again for the edification and stimulation of the citizens. In his turn the prefect complimented the people on their civic interest, and in quick order he gave a personal check for one million bolivianos to the work of the Civic Action Committee, tools and cement to be applied to the potable water project, one-and-a-half million bolivianos to improve the public latrines, the promise that within six months a study would be made of the hospital problem, and a statement of intent to bring suit to recover as much of the money as possible that had been squandered



on the road. Even as he spoke, one truck loaded with picks, shovels and wheelbarrows was driven into the plaza, and a few minutes later another one appeared, loaded with bags of cement. Everyone was pleased, and there were many "vivas" for the prefect, for civic action, the Civic Action Committee and the town.

A few days later the alcalde levied taxes on vehicles coming into the town and on beer and liquor, beginning with the week of January 18, though he had not solicited authorization from La Paz to do so. This taxing effort lasted only a few days. Padre Dionicio had hoped that work might begin on renovating the water system during this week, but a large-scale community effort presented too many problems to permit such quick action.

On Friday of the week of the 18th an open meeting was held, well attended by vecinos, at which Padre Dionicio announced a work plan for voluntary groups that he had already organized. He had assigned the residents of each of the eight major streets and their adjoining sections to a single work group, and appointed one or two leading vecinos in each street to be responsible for their group. To each street he assigned one of the five working days of the week, when all the able-bodied male residents were to appear for work on the water project. He suggested that men who failed to appear be fined, not the minimal 5,000 bolivianos but at least 10,000 bolivianos, for otherwise everyone would pay and no one would do any work. The prefectural hotel administrator, Martin Dominguez, as head of the sports league, offered the collaboration of all soccer clubs. The meeting accepted the padre's work plan and he announced that work would begin on the following Monday, January 25. Finally, at this meeting the first steps were taken to organize the Civic Action group formally. Padre Dionicio was elected president, the alcalde was elected vice president, Apolinar Brambila, who was the deputy administrator of the town government, was elected general secretary, and Padre Evan Connors became treasurer.

Before work on the water project could begin, Coroico learned that General Barrientos, the new head of the national government, was coming for a visit. It was decided that a reception similar to that held for the prefect would be organized for the general. Unfortunately, again no one knew the hour, though he was expected in the early evening. Shortly after six o'clock the community public address system blared out a call for residents to assemble in the plaza, but by nine o'clock the general had still not appeared and many had gone home despite the exhortations of community leaders. The general's party appeared about 9:30, but having been on the road making speeches since six o'clock that morning, they were all tired and looking forward to a rest. However, the alcalde prevailed upon the general to make a brief appearance, so the group proceeded to the town hall on the plaza, followed by a crowd of townspeople.

The general and the town leaders climbed to the government building balcony and the alcalde opened with a welcoming speech, in the course of which he read a proclamation naming the general an honorary son of Coroico. He was followed by the sub-prefect,

Padre Dionicio and Dr. Camacho, and the general then spoke for 15 minutes, emphasizing national unity, the non-partisan character of his government, the junta's concern for development, and his personal belief in civic action. This talk was greeted with applause, and the presidential party and the town officials and prominent citizens adjourned to the government meeting room.

The room was crowded with as many townspeople as could fit in, backed against the walls and standing on chairs to get a better view of the general. Padre Dionicio addressed the meeting, reiterating the determination of the community to improve the town and describing again the three initial projects of Civic Action. He ended by calling for financial contributions, pointing out that the prefect had presented the town with a million bolivianos. The general responded by giving two million, to the enthusiastic applause of those assembled, while another half-million was collected from the members of the general's party. Finally, the alcalde called the members of the Civic Action Committee to step forward and be sworn by the general "to uphold the integrity of the community and work selflessly for the improvement of the community". The meeting broke up after this ceremony, and many came forward to embrace the general.

On the Monday after the general's visit work on the water system at last began. Coroico gets its water from about five kilometers above the town at a place where a stream leaps from the sheer mountainside in a waterfall. From a catch basin at the foot of the falls the water is carried several yards in an open ditch to a large cement pipe, and so to town. There it runs into a large brick-lined storage tank.

This water system, only 35 years old, has been completely neglected. The catch basin is full of rocks, tree branches and dirt. The filter at the mouth of the concrete conduit does not filter. At many places landslides have broken the pipe. The storage tank lacks a cover and is filled with debris, not water. Many Coroico houses are not piped, and in many of those that are, the piping has decayed beyond repair.

The first week of work was the height of the rainy season. Despite continuous downpour, groups of from 30 to 60 men regularly turned out to cut brush and dig along the water pipe. The alcalde himself was impressed: "No one gets a cent for all this work. It's simply remarkable." Each day the public address system announced the street that was to work that day and the street that would be working on the morrow. In the evening the names of those who went out to work were broadcast, as well as the names of those who did not appear. The street leaders visited each house on their assigned streets the night before their work party was due on the job, and for doing this they themselves were exempted from the work detail. Each household was required to send one man, or, if it had no man, had to pay for a man to go. By the end of the first week of work enthusiasm was running high. Despite the cross-section of vecinos and officials represented in civic action, most townspeople believed that Padre Dionicio and the Peace Corps Volunteer were the true leaders. In this they

were only partly correct, on the Peace Corps Volunteer's testimony:

I didn't have anything to do with this idea of civic action. I'm sure glad it happened, but it was all a big surprise to me. Really, it's all Padre Dionicio's doing. I just sort of got caught up in it and then swept along by it. I was looking for something and this seemed a good opportunity. So I just help any way I can.

The Peace Corps Volunteer was not being unduly modest. He was handicapped by limited Spanish and it was not very clear how he was to work in the community, a question that civic action answered for him. On Padre Dionicio's part, he clearly hoped that the Peace Corps Volunteer would be able to get help from United States agencies working in Bolivia.

On January 31, in the midst of this developing civic action, without fair warning, without credible explanation, on only two hours notice, Padre Dionicio left Coroico. By the following day the news had sped to every corner. Many were incredulous. The padre had been the subject of gossip, but so are most other residents; but no one offered anything like an adequate explanation. Hastily assembled prominent citizens called that same day on the bishop to request that the padre be returned. The bishop said Padre Dionicio had gone back to the United States for a vacation. He indicated that the matter was closed, that he would not discuss it further. The alcalde said in eulogy:

What a restless man! We need such a person, one who always feels he has to be doing something. And what a speaker! He made people jump from their beds. He had force, dynamism. It is a great loss.

With Padre Dionicio gone, the presidency of Civic Action passed to Padre Evan Connors. After twice postponing meetings, he presided over the civic activists on Saturday evening, February 5. By this time, the end of the second week of work, and six days after the departure of Padre Dionicio, defections from work on the water system had become a problem.

On one day a large group of men would appear, but on the next only a handful. There was talk of punishment and it was finally agreed that defaulters would be fined double the going rate of 10,000 bolivianos for a day's work. The meeting was told that the alcalde, the primary school director and the Peace Corps Volunteer had met with the USAID director of water projects, and that USAID was not interested in patching old water systems but would participate in the construction of a completely new system. The USAID representative estimated the cost at \$60,000, and said USAID would contribute up to 50% of this. But the other half -- \$30,000 -- was a far cry from the \$500 or so that the town had been able to raise.

To dissipate the depressing effect of this news, Padre Evan

exhorted the group to maintain enthusiasm and await a technical evaluation of the system. By this date the alcalde had suspended the informally arranged taxes on vehicles and liquor, but a number of other fund-raising possibilities were presented. Among the suggestions were community dances, the sale of food and beverages, raffles and auctions. The following three weeks all these different suggestions were tried out, with considerable success. Meanwhile the Civic Action Committee drafted a letter to USAID on February 7, requesting a technical evaluation. Work to clear the pipeline continued through the second and third weeks of the project, but the work force fell off. At the end of the third week of work the alcalde himself, shovel on shoulder, led the town officials and employees out to join the volunteers.

By the end of the fourth week the work crews were down to fewer than 20 men. In the meantime there had been a gradual shift in leadership within the Civic Action Committee. Padre Evan had little of Padre Dionicio's intense interest in community work, and even less of his driving spirit. Besides, the negotiations with USAID required the participation of a local government official, so the alcalde increasingly became the central directing force. It was also at this time that the alcalde was having his problems with the national government.

The Civic Action Committee held another meeting at the beginning of the fifth week of work, mainly to discuss defaulters. Padre Evan noted that in the past few days not more than five men had appeared to work and that this day, the beginning of the fifth week, only one man showed up. The alcalde reported that block leaders had not even handed in the names of those who were not appearing for work, and suggested that even heavier fines be imposed, or even that the water be cut off from the households of the defectors. The dentist, on the other hand, felt that the committee itself was in part responsible for the current situation, since it was holding fewer meetings and rallies. He and others argued for more intensive work to inform the community of the water project and to persuade everyone of its importance. This point of view prevailed, and several committee members were added to the publicity subcommittee, which decided to begin a house-to-house information campaign on the following day. The meeting also decided to reject the resignation of the head of the women's subcommittee, who wrote that she could not carry on because of lack of collaboration. On the following day a special commission headed by the alcalde called on her and persuaded her to stay, promising that she would be assisted by at least a half-dozen women.

On Tuesday, February 23, several Civic Action Committee members started a door-to-door campaign to remind residents that work on the water project was continuing and that it was necessary to keep up the volunteer work. The response was generally sympathetic, most pointing out that in fact they had been participating and would continue. Some women directed the committee members to specific houses from which, they charged, there had been no collaboration.

The civic action meeting that was to have been held the next day was postponed because the town's electric generator failed. Despite the renewed propaganda work by the Civic Action Committee, community participation continued to decline because of the pre-Lenten carnival starting on the coming weekend. When the committee meeting took place on Friday it was devoted almost exclusively to a fund-raising program for Sunday, when booths were to be set up in the central plaza for the sale of food and drink.

Beginning on Saturday, children and young adults returned from out-of-town schools, and relatives, friends, weekend visitors and tourists flocked into Coroico for the carnival holiday, which would continue to Ash Wednesday. The two hotels had been sold out for weeks, and every spare room in town was filled with visiting relatives, friends or paying guests. On Sunday morning the Civic Action Committee set up booths at the four corners of the plaza, and on Monday and Tuesday the members held fund-raising dances at the alcalde's house. All of these efforts were successful, but the sums raised were not large. Over the holiday, naturally, work on the water project came to a complete halt.

Toward the end of carnival week, the sixth week of the water project, work on the pipeline began to pick up. The alcalde was especially concerned that the interest of the townspeople be revived in time to insure that a large work party would go out on the following Monday, March 8, when the USAID engineers were to arrive. On Friday, March 5, some members of the publicity subcommittee toured the pipeline to be able to report to the community the progress that had been made to date. They found that the entire length of the line had been cleared of brush and that the catch basin at the upper end, as well as the storage tank at the lower, had been cleared of debris. In addition, approximately 1,700 yards of pipe had been excavated, though 2,100 yards remained to be uncovered. Sixty yards of pipe that had been uncovered had been again reburied under sliding mud and dirt. Unfortunately, the publicity subcommittee was not able to present their report to the town over the public address system because the town's hydroelectric plant was again out of action as a result of a landslide, and there was a new padre in town who would not authorize use of the church's generator, Padre Evan being absent in La Paz.

Anticipating the arrival of the USAID engineers on Monday, the alcalde dispatched five employees of the town government to augment the voluntary work crew, and the administrator of the hotel, a member of the Civic Action Committee, sent six of his employees. Even with these efforts to create a better impression there were no more than 36 men working that day. Padre Evan, returned from La Paz, agreed that the church generator be used to power the town public address system so that townspeople might be informed of the impending USAID visit. He also informed the civic action group that the USAID engineers could be expected around noon, but it was one o'clock before they arrived. Most of the officials and several committee members were on hand, and the engineers were taken out to inspect the pipeline, led by the

alcalde, one committee member and an employee of the Franciscan padres, who had been authorized by them to help supervise the work, although there had in fact been very little supervision. The party set out at three o'clock and did not return until 7:30. The engineers were astonished to find that there was no supervising engineer, and made little effort to conceal their opinion that much of the work to date was wasted.

An open meeting for civic action on the water project was called for that evening to hear a report from the engineers. It began at nine o'clock with about 20 adults and a few teenagers present. The engineers said they had not come to make promises nor to give anything away, but only to conduct a study that could serve as the basis for a plan for a potable water system. They pointed out that they intended to spend several days, for the plan would require census data and detailed mapping. When asked about timing, the engineers responded that it would require two months to prepare the technical report, but that by June this should be ready, and that work on the water system could begin in the latter part of the year. The engineers also discussed a number of technical matters, but the most important point was that, while voluntary labor could be counted as part of the required 50% contribution from the town, no work undertaken before the technical engineering program was implemented could be counted as part of the town's 50%. In short, none of the six weeks of labor that had thus far gone into clearing the pipeline would count for anything. In fact, the engineers emphasized that many of the breaks in the line were clearly caused by the workers. When asked point-blank whether the community should suspend the work, the engineers refused to take an unequivocal position, but the implication was clear.

The USAID engineers spent five days inspecting, mapping, census taking and interviewing officials. That done, they were skeptical. Said one:

I doubt whether all the land belongs to the municipality. Who knows what kinds of problems would arise once we started to work up there? And the matter of prefectural funds: I wonder how much they can hope to get from the prefecture. As for their own local resources, it seems they've hardly started collecting funds. Raffles and dances are all well and good, but they need contributions -- and large ones -- to make up the sum they'll need. They seem to be living in a dream, irresponsibly waiting for others to do everything for them. Well, they have a long way to go. The problem is that they are used to having everything come from above. Now they'll want to get money from the prefecture, and so on. They never think of their own resources. Corolico's not that poor a town.

The engineers were finished by Friday and returned to La Paz on Saturday. Their departure brought work to an end. It seemed clear that the only thing to do now was to await the report of the

engineers, but some people even at this stage doubted whether any good would come of it. On the night of their arrival the engineers had indicated that the cost simply of laying six kilometers of pipeline would be 300 million bolivianos, a sum many considered well out of reach of the town. In succeeding weeks there was little talk of civic action or potable water. When asked about the project a month later, the alcalde replied:

It's latent at the moment. We're just waiting for the report of the USAID engineers. But it looks as if it'll be extremely expensive. Maybe 300 million bolivianos. That would mean 150 million from the town. I don't see it. We'll have to find some other project more modest, something within our means. But we'll see when the report is completed.

A month later, in May, a town employee said of civic action: "It's dead. Completely terminated for total lack of interest among the townspeople." The alcalde, however, disagreed with him:

Ah, no, Carlos. More accurately, it's dormant. Since the visit of the USAID engineers, no one has wanted to invest work in the water project because we're waiting for their report. But as soon as they make their report -- it should be within a couple of weeks -- you'll see that the committee regains its life.

Two weeks later, on June 1, the alcalde received a telegram from USAID informing him that the engineers' report was completed. He left the same afternoon for La Paz, taking in a load of his coffee in one of his trucks. On the following afternoon he met with an official of the Potable Water Projects office of USAID and was informed that the estimated cost of a new water system for the town was 450 million bolivianos, which meant that the town would have to contribute 225 million. The alcalde thanked him and said that he thought the town could obtain a loan from the National Bank on the basis of the municipal agricultural tax, which yields one to two million bolivianos each month, and the income from the electric power that the new Huarinilla plant would produce, which should amount to nearly 20 million bolivianos each month. The USAID official agreed to prepare an official letter outlining the proposed water project collaboration between USAID and the town, which the alcalde needed to support his request for aid. After the meeting the alcalde commented that he hoped to have General Alfredo Ovando, co-President of the ruling junta with General Barrientos, authorize a loan from the state bank.

On the following Sunday, almost a week later, the alcalde called a meeting for the next day, June 7. The names of 32 persons were on his list, but only 10 to 12 showed up. Padre Carlos, who had recently come to town from the United States, explained that by subtracting the estimated materials and manpower that the town could provide, the water project would require 150 million bolivianos in cash from the town. He also reported that

donations as well as proceeds from fund-raising activities thus far totaled only about 12 million bolivianos. The alcalde reported that the prefecture was unable to offer any financial aid. The state bank was prepared to make a loan, but only if the town could provide evidence of financial solvency. Since the town treasurer had only recently reported that taxes and financial receipts were not even sufficient to pay the salaries of town government employees, this was an unlikely possibility. The alcalde, however, still held out hope that General Ovando might intercede on behalf of the town. There were few even among the civic action stalwarts who shared his optimism.

This was the last meeting of the Civic Action Committee on the potable water project. Life went on as before, and so did the officials. There were other problems, other concerns. A cholo shopkeeper summed up the feelings of many with this comment;

The alcalde told us that now we would have potable water, pure and clean, without microbes, without diseases, and so on. Everybody participated and made contributions. I gave 200,000 bolivianos and several days of work, but what came of it? Nothing. At best, there is less water available to the town than before working on the pipeline. And now there is nothing but silence. No one protests, no one says anything.

#### What Makes Civic Action

The ultimate failure of the civic action water project was perhaps inevitable, but only perhaps. Faced with the astronomical cost of 450 million bolivianos to rebuild a new drinking water system and the slight chance that any significant part of this sum could be obtained from the national government, both the alcalde and the other members of the Civic Action Committee regarded the prospects as hopeless and let the project die. It is quite possible that Padre Dionicio would not have accepted this setback, for he had always insisted that the water project must be basically dependent on the community, not on outside persons or agencies. However, Padre Dionicio was no longer present to champion this viewpoint.

There is in Coroico a pervasive willingness to accept disagreeable conditions. This is a pronounced characteristic of the community. There is no lack of complaining about streets filled with garbage and sewage; the run-down plaza; the malodorous public latrines; the government house of the subprefecture, falling to pieces; the water shortages in the dry season; the muddy, debris-filled water during the rainy season; the lack of economic movement, and so on and on. But in the next breath, instead of proposing solutions, critics berate the townspeople and say how hopeless it is to work with them. When one vecino was asked how Coroiqueños could improve the community, he replied:

Well, there is nothing to be done now because there is no unity among the townspeople. No one is inter-



ested in improvement. At this time it is very difficult to think of this community's progressing.

Added to the frequent criticism that the townspeople are disinterested, apathetic and unwilling, if not totally incapable of sustained collaboration, is the reiterated charge that only the politicians profit from community projects:

It is all money-making, all the money they obtain is only for themselves, and they don't do anything that benefits the town. In the 24 years that I have lived here I have never seen them do anything with the single exception of the repaving of the streets around the central plaza. I would be pleased to pay these and other taxes in addition, if I could see money from taxes used on projects to improve the town. But up to now the story is always that there is no money, that they can't do anything because they have no funds. I ask myself, where are the millions and millions of bolivianos going that are collected as taxes, aside from those taxes that go to the national government? The fact is that these officials are shameless thieves.

Against this background of adverse criticism and distrust, the carrying out of public works depends largely on the strength of a town official's "connections", on the classic pattern of strong *muñeca* between governmental levels. Drinking water systems, hydroelectric plants, hospitals and government buildings cannot be built by local labor alone, but require substantial sums of money. The successful local politician is one who knows the right people in the national government and who can use them at the right time. Since important local officials, like *alcaldes* or sub-prefects, are all appointees, these men by definition have some connections at higher levels. In addition, the proximity of Coroico to the national capital, as well as the taxable agricultural riches that surround the town, give it a competitive advantage over more distant, more isolated, poorer communities.

The various public projects that have been carried out in Coroico over the years are evidence of its favorable position. No doubt the politicians have profited from these projects, but so has the town. The 12 years of neglect so often mentioned must be seen as relative neglect, for there are many communities that have never in their history profited as much from government assistance as Coroico.

Suspiciousness about motives, assumptive chicanery of fellow citizens, especially local officials, and presumptuous expectations of outside assistance, make local self-help projects difficult to develop. Community projects can be got under way only by a leader who has the will and opportunity to devote considerable time to such activities, and a background and position above suspicion of private financial gain. Such persons do not happen along very often, but Padre Dionicio was one. To many

people he not only stood for civic action but personified it, and his associates were considered mere hangers-on. Even critics of the water project approved the central role Padre Dionicio played in civic action:

There was a gringo padre here who they say was Cuban. Well, one day this padre decided that he ought to work to get more water for the town. From that time he started a campaign to gain the cooperation of all the townspeople. This padre was a pretty fast worker and -- whether good or bad, at times dealing admirably and at other times insulting the townspeople -- he organized the work. Practically every person in town collaborated in one form or another.

He excited the townspeople with his flamboyant speeches. He was also trusted, which he recognized when he pointedly emphasized in one of his speeches to the community that he, personally, would handle the account for all monies donated to civic action. In contrast to the dominant political custom of seeking outside aid, Padre Dionicio impressed on everyone that the town must first depend on itself, first show by its action that it deserved outside assistance. When Padre Dionicio left the community -- probably for reasons unrelated to the water project -- he was replaced by another padre more in keeping with the dominant church style. The community regards the Franciscan mission as a great asset. They have one long-established school and have started another in a nearby former hacienda, wholly supported by the church. These activities benefit the townspeople but are completely operated by the church. Padre Dionicio's concern had been with cooperatives, with enterprises of benefit to large numbers of people, requiring their understanding, participation and membership. His successor, Padre Evan, found many reasons to postpone civic action meetings and many others for absenting himself altogether. Eventually he handed the job over to another padre, whose comment on civic action in June epitomized the change that had taken place in the church's attitude:

Our role in civic action is simply a vote of confidence in the community. We don't have much else to do with it.

The political style of the alcalde was early forced on Padre Dionicio and the Civic Action Committee by the unexpected visits of the prefect and the president during the early phase of civic action. Even Padre Dionicio appreciated that these were opportunities that could not be turned aside. On the other hand, they provided an excellent showcase for the new FSB alcalde, who was able to present the town as united behind him, sincerely concerned with overcoming its problems and thus deserving of aid. The distinguished and varied group of residents who spoke for civic action were indirectly speaking for the continued administration of the town by the Falangistas. If they had been successful in getting the support of high officials, it would have marked the alcalde as a successful politician and himself and his party as being worthy of backing by the townspeople. Since

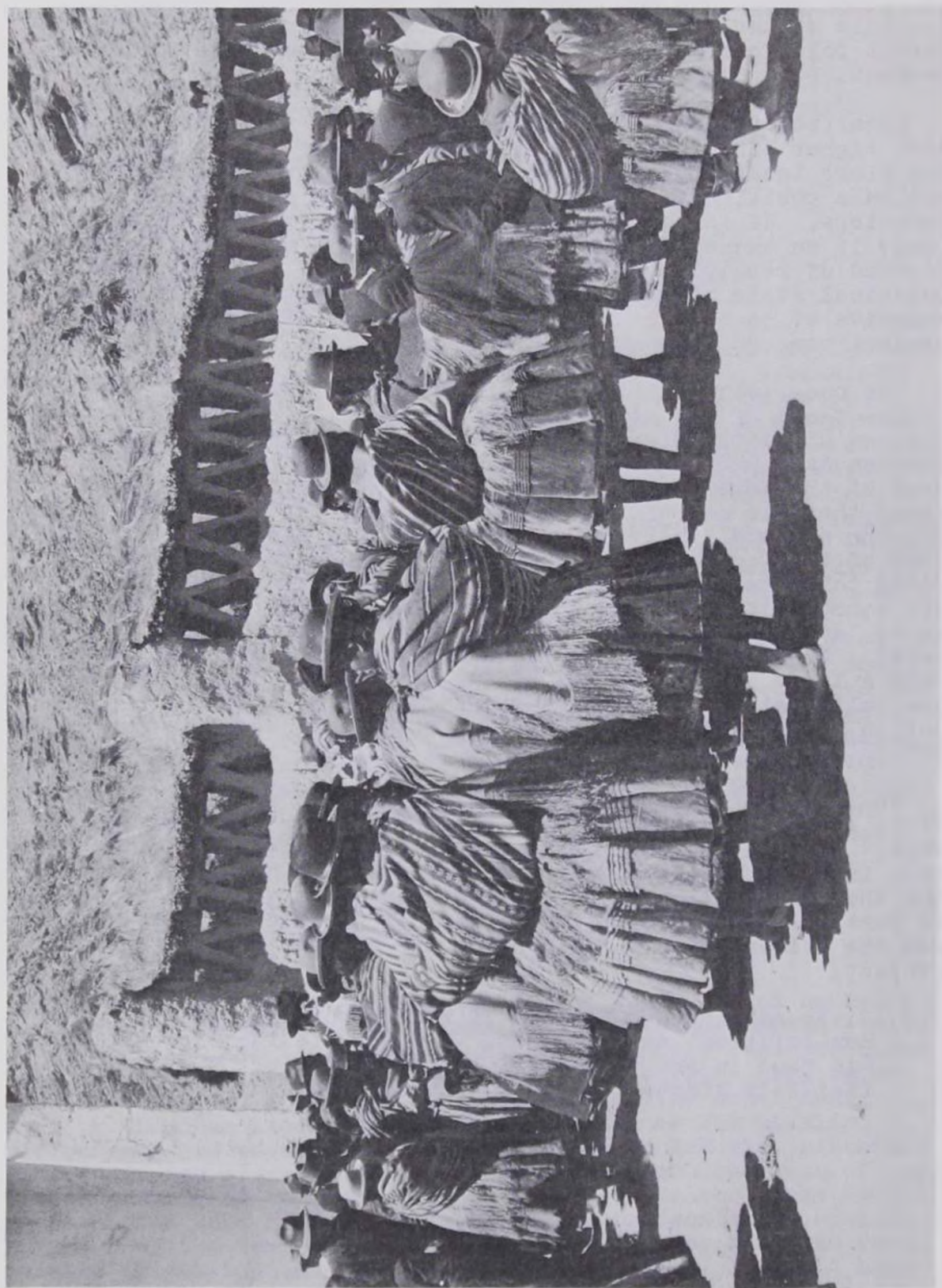
this was a period in Bolivia when military officers, for the most part without party affiliation, were holding most of the important positions and there was as yet no clear indication how this situation was going to affect the future of the different political parties, the alcalde's actions were tactically prudent.

Local politicians are most concerned with trying to discover what higher officials want to hear. The cues may be subtle, but the alert local official readily picks them up, because he is not in a position to argue. His job depends on pleasing his superiors. If the prefect wants to build a bridge instead of a road, if an agency director wants to build a new water system instead of repairing the old, so be it. This is the successful political style of the local politician, and the alcalde could conceive of no other. That the interest of AID in the water project came to nothing was simply one of the risks of the game.

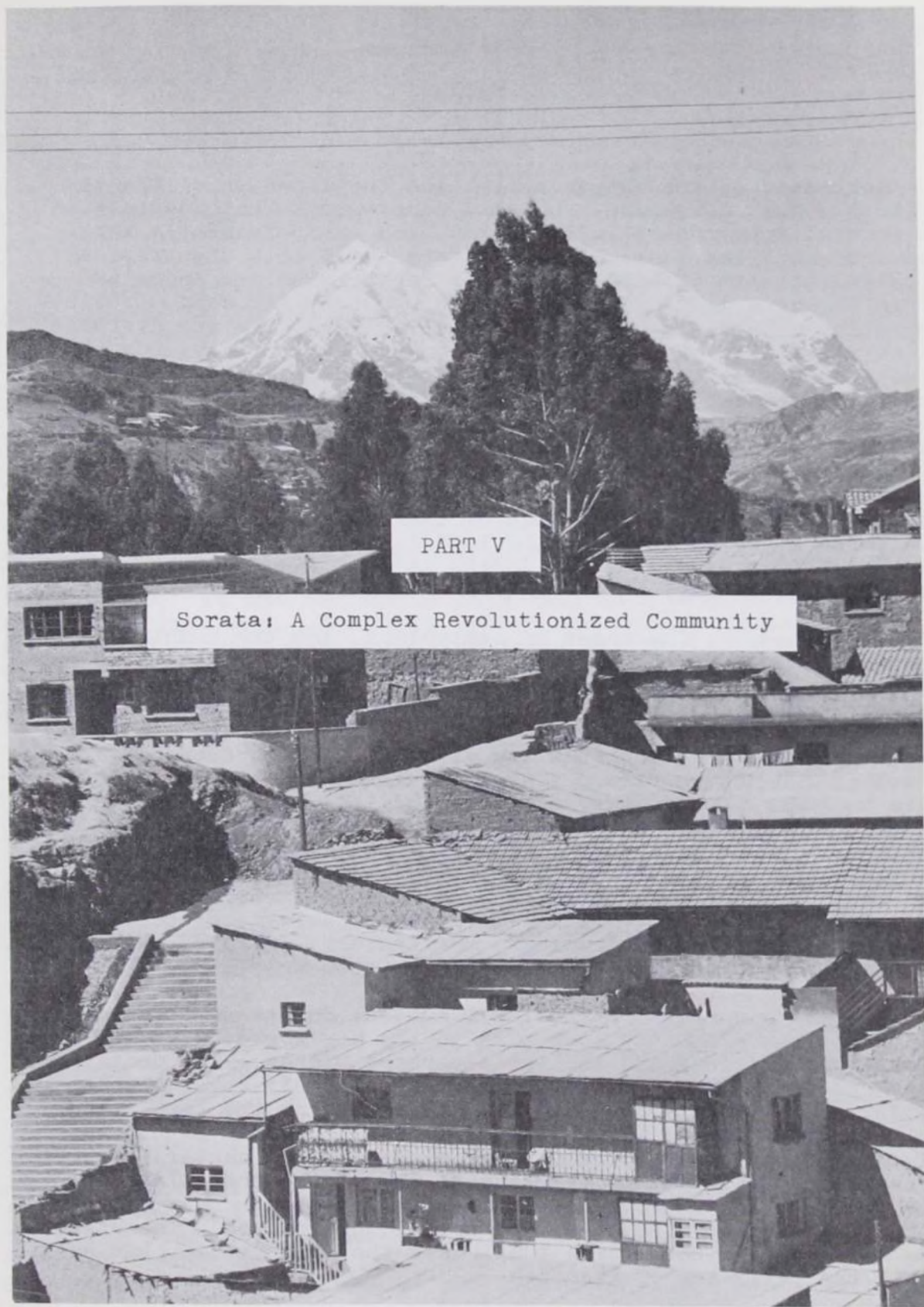
The uncertain political future of the FSB was also a factor in the death of the water project. The political neutrality of the new military rulers began to waver early in 1965, as General Barrientos sought a means of legitimating his position as the head of the government. Though it was not until many months later that his new MPC party began to organize locally in Coroico, the national political pattern had long since become clear. Some of the local FSB members hoped that General Barrientos would tolerate their continuing in power, but as 1966 came in and wore on it became more and more likely that this would not be so, and that the days of FSB control in Coroico were numbered. Thus, with the passing weeks the alcalde's hope to obtain a large loan in La Paz became increasingly unreal and his own political position increasingly insecure. The trouble lay not in his political approach, for it had succeeded in the past, but in that he was, unfortunately, a stalwart in the wrong party.

The dominant role of a politician like the alcalde in the Civic Action Committee also weakened the water project in other ways. When he approached the campesino villagers to assist the town in the work on the water system they did not refuse flatly; but they did not cooperate. Padre Dionicio might have been able to persuade them to help, but certainly not the alcalde. This was the comment of one resident on the alcalde's part in the project:

Civic action is a farce. It was supposed to be all non-political and all that. Now the alcalde's put his hand in and there will be no end to it. Now that he's started, civic action is dead.



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PART V

Sorata: A Complex Revolutionized Community

## Chapter 1

### THE SETTING

Northwest of the Yungas there is a continuation of the complicated belt of jagged mountains and valleys that descends in a generally northeastern direction from the permanently snow-covered mountain peaks of the eastern Andes into the tropical lowland. North of Lake Titicaca a road climbs the Andes and then begins a dizzying descent. In minutes, the cold, treeless, shrubless landscape gives way to tilled land. In the distance a narrow ribbon of water gleams from the canyon thousands of feet below. At one point the road reaches the end of a mountain spur and crosses to the other side to continue its descent. This side of the mountain looks just like the other, dotted by stands of tall eucalyptus trees between which are checkered squares of farm land. The land is sharply inclined, and hundreds of feet below is the river. Directly opposite, on the edge of a similar spur that forms the other side of the valley, is a large town. On three sides of the town the land falls sharply away for hundreds of feet, while on the fourth side it rises almost as steeply and as far.

Small houses, the homes of campesinos, dot the mountain slopes on all sides. Within sight of the town are a few campesino hamlets, each with its small chapel, and occasionally a new schoolhouse. Here and there the large manor house of a former hacienda can be seen. From an airplane many more farmhouses, farm villages and casas de hacienda are visible. Sorata commands a spectacular 270-degree view. A shallow valley and rising hillsides lie on the right, a deep valley on the left, and in front a broad valley which in the distance cuts through the mountains to enter the lower altitudes. In back of the town is majestic Illampu, highest mountain in Bolivia. The picturesque setting of the town is complemented by a mean annual temperature of 63° Fahrenheit, with few extreme variations. Rains cool the hot summer days, and the winter winds, particularly in July, chill the air enough to keep most people indoors when they blow.

Despite a somewhat aerie-ish location, Sorata conforms closely to the classic Spanish town plan in the New World, with its grid pattern of streets and its two separated plazas. The cutting edge of the spur on which the town lies is only three blocks wide, but where it backs against the mountains the town is seven blocks wide. There is great variation in the size of blocks. Those sloping up from the central plaza (at the center) vary from one-half to one-quarter the size of the blocks that slope down, leaving 19 blocks above the central plaza, though only nine in the lower half of the town, which is equal in area. The streets do not -- as in Coroico -- trail into the countryside, but end with the perimeter of the town.

The central plaza, filled with huge old palm trees, is walled with large buildings of two and three stories, some of which themselves enclose an entire block and have two or even three interior patios. On the plaza is a large church, and beside it the new, modern-styled quarters and offices of the resident priests. Along another side of the plaza are buildings owned by the local government, in which provincial and national agencies have their offices. The second plaza looks like the first, but is only half its size. As on the central plaza, many of the buildings here house tiendas as well as shops of various craftsmen, while in the upper stories and in the other parts of the buildings live their families and other renters.

The buildings at the center of town are large and very old, also massive in construction, with walls two to three feet thick. Many need paint and extensive repair. Most are heavily decorated in stuccowork architraves, and their windows are enclosed by elaborate iron grills. Toward the edges of town the houses become somewhat smaller, but most are still very old, two or three stories in height.

On a street off the plaza is the public market, a two-tiered area that has been carved out of the hillside and paved with concrete. The upper tier is a large roofed but open square with counters at which women comerciantes sell their foodstuffs. Down below, in a larger area, women vendors sit on the concrete beside their goods. At the far end of this tier is a covered stall reserved for butchers. One block onward the street breaks at a right angle to wind down into a barranca (ravine), and then climbs the far hillside to the campesino village of Laripata; but a footpath continues straight on from the end of the plaza street to clusters of new one-room and two-room houses built over the last 10 years to accommodate the immigrants from the campo.

Also lying close by are large houses built by well-to-do townspeople who wanted a more open setting, and old casas de hacienda still maintained as residences. On the road to Laripata is a soccer field flanked by a basketball court and a long-uncompleted swimming pool. Here and there within the town there are open lots planted with corn or fruit trees, while on the edges the continuous built-over pattern is occasionally broken where landslides have carried away walls and buildings.

### The People

Sorata had a population of 1,774 persons in 1965, distributed in 520 households. Another 68 persons (not interviewed) maintain permanent dwellings in Sorata but do not occupy them continuously, mostly campesinos whose regular homes are in the countryside, but who attend the weekly markets in town and stay two or three nights out of seven. Another 19 dwellings are owned either by families who have moved away, but who return each year for vacations and fiestas, sometimes spending two or three months in town, or by men who have left temporarily to work elsewhere. Some of the large buildings at the center of town contain as many

as 24 separate households in the space formerly occupied by a single family.

The culture and traditions of Reyes and Villa Abecia are essentially Spanish, as modified in the New World. The same is true of Coroico, despite an influx of a noticeable number of campesinos. Sorata, in contrast, is much more Indian in character. Only 54% of Sorata's residents were born in town, compared with 68% in Coroico and 77% in Reyes. In Sorata, 62% speak only Aymara, while in Coroico the comparative proportion is 14.8%. The population of Sorata is mainly cholo and indio, with only a remnant of Spanish-speaking blanco families remaining.

Sunday is the big market day in Sorata, so on Saturday and early Sunday the campesinos for miles around come by truck and afoot over the trails, bringing agricultural and craft products to sell and to buy staples for the week. On Sunday all the tiendas and all the government offices are open and the streets around the two plazas are full of people. At the corners of the central plaza and at other points along its edges traveling merchants set up stalls where they sell a variety of manufactured goods. The street in front of the public market is lined solidly with campesino vendors, and from mid-morning to early afternoon the area is packed solidly with people. On a much smaller scale this occurs again on Thursdays. Over the rest of the week there are times when the town appears almost deserted, particularly on Mondays and Tuesdays, the traditional days of rest. All stores and public offices are closed on Tuesdays and many stores shut on Monday afternoon. On these days families either stay indoors or go to the countryside for an outing. This open-shut pattern is rarely interrupted except for family fiestas and major local and national celebrations.

### Outside Communication

Sorata is the first town in the northern valleys between the Yungas and the Peruvian border that can be entered by road. Even before the turn of the century a road was completed into the Sorata valleys area from the old road running beside Lake Titicaca between the Peruvian border and La Paz. It did not reach Sorata, but only a nearby mountain ridge. A stagecoach service established at this time took three days, including two stopovers for lodging at night, to cover the distance between its local terminal, seven miles from Sorata, and La Paz. The seven miles to town had to be covered on mules or on foot. In 1920 the road was extended to the town itself, and around 1926 there came a motorized taxi service between Sorata and La Paz.

Today trucks and cars can reach Sorata by road throughout the year. It is an unimproved dirt road, wide enough in most places for only one vehicle. It twists and turns down the mountainsides, which at places are sheer drops of several thousand feet, without walls or guardrails. These heights of the road are sometimes shrouded in fog and vehicles not infrequently go over the edge, carrying many passengers to their deaths. Once down, most of the



85-mile distance to La Paz traverses the level altiplano. The trip can be made in under five hours in a lightweight vehicle, but heavily loaded trucks take half again as long.

There is no regular motor traffic beyond Sorata except for the trucks that go out to Laripata to pick up produce for the Sunday and Thursday markets. Nor, aside from the trucks, is there any regular motor traffic in or out of Sorata. There are no buses, no railroads, no airlines; and no one in town except the Franciscan priests possesses a private passenger vehicle. The trucks consequently enjoy a monopoly position in transport. Out of Sorata, trails radiate to the many estancias and campesino villages that cover the hillsides and valleys, and whatever is carried over them is on a person's back or on small burros. The outlying hamlets use the Sorata post and telegraph offices, but neither is very efficient. Many of the townspeople entrust their mail to truck drivers or to friends going to La Paz. Truckers returning from La Paz bring in newspapers and magazines, but illiteracy is high, so most of the population get their news by radio. Battery-operated sets are common throughout the countryside. For official communications the local government uses a bulletin board outside the alcaldia, and a town crier, a village Stentor, who roams the town, pausing at the busiest spots to bawl out his proclamations and announcements.

### In Time

In contrast to Coroico, which developed principally as a commercial center for an agricultural countryside, Sorata has been not only that, but also a point of embarkation for the exploitation of the metals and other raw materials in the interior lowlands. As the mountains drop away toward the northeast the climate changes within a distance of less than 20 miles from temperate to tropical. Along this northeasterly route, approximately 60 miles from Sorata, lies Tipuani, and 20 miles farther on, Guanay. To the northeast of them is Mapiiri. These are but three of the more important communities of a tropical interior for which Sorata has been a gateway, through which this interior contributed first gold, then rubber, then quinine, and today to a limited degree, gold again.

These interior gold fields were being worked in the days of the Incas, well before the arrival of the Spaniards. Thus the Sorata area was doubly attractive to the conquistadores, for those to whom existing Indian agricultural populations in a temperate climate were ready-made for hacienda settlement, and for those who needed a jumping off place into the gold fields. It seems likely that the present town was established by the Spanish before the end of the 16th Century.

Sorata has had periods of relatively great prosperity out of gold, cinchona bark and rubber. In 1638 the Spanish in Peru learned of the value of cinchona bark in the treatment of malaria, a scourge throughout the tropical land then being colonized by the European powers. Demand for the bark eventually led to a ruth-

less exploitation that threatened to exterminate the tree in South America. In the middle of the 19th Century several foreign firms established cinchona plantations in Sorata's tropical interior, such as that of Otto Rechter in Mapiri, a forerunner of the big commercial houses that were established in Sorata at the turn of the century to exploit natural rubber. Cinchona bark was brought out on mules to Sorata and then carried to the lake for shipment, while provisions for the plantations were brought in over the same route. Plantation cinchona production lasted for approximately half a century, but by 1902 there was a slackening of demand and Bolivian production could not compete with the large Indonesian and other Asian plantations [Pardo Valle, 1951, p. 124]. The plantations in Bolivia were abandoned and wild growth reabsorbed them.

In 1920, partly as a result of international competition in the European drug and chemical industries, the demand for cinchona bark in the world market greatly increased, and the Casa Brandt company, for example, one of the large foreign commercial houses of Sorata, established the Hacienda San Carlos on a tract reputed to have been more than 4,500,000 acres, on which they planted a million cinchona trees. Hacienda San Carlos produced more than 10,000 tons of dry bark each year. Despite heavy export taxes, it was a profitable business and endured for over 20 years. In 1943 a root disease appeared and quickly destroyed the plantation. At this time, also, quinine was synthesized (1944), and demand for bark fell away. The big trading houses in Sorata never recovered, and by the mid-1940's they had all departed. Their departure was hastened by protectionist economic policies of the national government, which tended to restrict international commerce, and by the reorganization and centralization of the customs offices in La Paz, which ended the flow of goods out of nearby lakeside ports and made it expedient for the trading houses to move to the capital.

In the tropical lands below Sorata wild rubber grew in abundance. At the turn of the century the rapidly increasing use of rubber drove the world price to new highs. In 1890 it was \$.67 per pound. By 1903 it had risen to \$1.00 per pound, and by 1910 to \$2.09 per pound [Knorr, 1945]. The boom in rubber drew large numbers of investors, entrepreneurs and adventurers to Bolivia, many of them European, and several large foreign trading houses were founded in Sorata. Prominent among these was the German Casa Brandt, the English Casa Boston, and the Spanish Casa Perez. With these firms came their top administrative and other key business personnel and their families. They brought rubber collected by local tappers out by mule train to Sorata, there prepared it for shipment, and again by mule sent it to one of the port towns on Lake Titicaca for transport by boat to Peru and abroad. On the return trip the mule trains brought in goods from overseas that were consumed in the town, and in a second stage took in provisions from Sorata to the lowland interior for sale to the rubber tappers. This commerce was profitable in both directions, and the large commercial houses prospered greatly.

While Bolivian rubber production steadily increased during the

decade between 1903 and 1913, it leveled off after this period. One of the causes was the introduction of an export duty on rubber in 1913, which made it a somewhat less profitable commodity. Of even greater importance was the increasingly unfavorable competitive position of wild rubber. By 1914 the more efficiently produced plantation rubber was beginning to have a significant impact on the world market. Thus, while 99.7% of the world's rubber produced in 1905 was wild, the proportion had fallen to 55% between 1909 and 1913, and to 5% between 1925 and 1929 [Pando Gutierrez, 1947, p. 221]. That Bolivian production, which was all wild rubber, did not similarly decline, but remained practically constant until 1920, is the result of the greatly increased demand for rubber that was stimulated by the first World War. However, by 1920, production of the more costly wild rubber began to decline to approximately 50% of its earlier levels. With the international economic depression of the 1930's, wild rubber production sank to lows from which it never has recovered. The big commercial houses in Sorata, however, did not experience a similar decline, for, fortunately for them, the market for quinine opened again.

Throughout all of these decades gold deposits were found, were mined out, and then new ones were sought in the tropical interior below Sorata, especially around Tipuani. Up until the 20th Century most of this mining was undertaken on a small-scale by individual entrepreneurs, such as Villamil de Rada of Sorata. However, beginning in the early 1900's, most of the Tipuani gold properties were acquired by the Aramayo Company, one of the three mining firms that came to dominate the exploitation of Bolivian ores. The mining of gold, in contrast to the exploitation of rubber and cinchona, did not have as strong an impact on the town as a whole, for it did not stimulate the development of important new forms of economic activity. No large amounts of gold came into Sorata. The quantities mined were not great, and besides, all gold was required by law to be sold only to state banks in La Paz. Sorata's trading houses benefited by selling provisions to the miners and by transporting heavy equipment into the mining areas, while some lesser merchants also profited from stolen gold brought out by miners and sold or traded in Sorata. However, much of the provisioning and transport business to the mines ended by 1947, when landing strips were built at Tipuani and Mapiri for direct flights to La Paz.

Closer to the town are rich deposits of other metals -- zinc, tin, copper, wolfram and lead. Small quantities of these ores have been taken out over the years by individual entrepreneurs using peons from the nearby haciendas. Some of these properties have been worked by Sorateños. The outstanding large-scale mining efforts in this area are the Matilde zinc and lead mines, once owned by the Hochschild Company, one of the big Bolivian mining corporations. The chief effect of these local operations on the town was to provide jobs. One of the important vecinos in the town today is a former Matilde mine administrator who married into an important land-owning family in Sorata.

Mining, especially gold mining, has had a much stronger impact

on Sorata since the Revolution of 1952. One of the first acts of the new MNR government was to nationalize the mining properties of Aramayo, Hochschild and Patiño, the giants of Bolivian mining. While arrangements were being made for the legal transfer of these properties and the formation of a government corporation (COMIBOL) to run them, the miners in the Tipuani gold mines seized the properties and organized a cooperative. When COMIBOL officials arrived to take over in Tipuani they were met by an armed contingent of miners who forced them to return by the same plane to La Paz. By a special national government order, the Tipuani miners were permitted to retain cooperative control of the mines but were required to deliver all gold to government representatives at the official price. These mine cooperatives have provided a greatly increased source of income to the mineworkers, many of whom are campesinos from the haciendas around Sorata, and a part of this income has found its way back to Sorata.

The big mines that were taken over by COMIBOL have had a rather different history. Operations in many of these had become antiquated and COMIBOL management was often inexperienced, its personnel inadequately prepared; and, in particular, its policies were designed more to benefit mining personnel than to provide government income. The Matilde mine, though reputed to contain up to three million tons of ore, closed in the turmoil of the revolution and was never reopened. In recent years the government has sought to interest foreign mining corporations in the Matilde mine, but it would need large-scale and expensive improvement. Early in 1966 excitement was stirred in Sorata by the announcement that Japanese and American firms had made offers to lease the Matilde mine. Such a development would likely mean the construction of one or more auxiliary plants close to Sorata itself, from which the town and its economy would profit in many different ways.

The Revolution of 1952 had a variety of more immediate economic, demographic and political effects on Sorata than those that flowed from the changes in the Tipuani and other mines. Many of these paralleled developments in the Coroico region. Most of the surrounding countryside was divided into large haciendas owned by a small group of families and worked by peons tied to the haciendas by strong economic and social bonds. The Quintana family owned well over 1,000 hectares. Their hacienda stretched from just outside town right to the top of the surrounding mountains and contained 120 campesino families. Another important local family, the Palacios, owned a hacienda of about 1,000 hectares, worked by about 50 campesino families. The hacienda Chilcani had over 100 campesino families. As in other areas, the hacienda peons were given the right to cultivate a small plot of land for their own use in exchange for their labor, which varied from three to five days each week, depending on the hacienda. In addition, each peon was subject along with his wife to a variety of further labor and other obligations.

As in Coroico, the revolution brought an end to the hacienda system, but the end here came neither so quickly nor was it as

complete. The extent of land seizure depended on the classification of property as small, medium or large. The productivity of the land in turn determined the definitions of these three categories. Most of the haciendas in the Sorata area were classed as medium properties. While most of the haciendas were broken up, the majority of the hacendados were able to keep a portion of the land they formerly had under cultivation. But under the agrarian reform they were forced to cultivate their land either with wage labor or under a sharecropping arrangement. This, in contrast to Coroico, they have done.

At the same time, Sorata hacienda peons were organized in campesino sindicatos. Leadership in this development was taken by MNR officials from La Paz and by local campesinos who had been miners and had had experience in the mining sindicatos. Geography in these more recent political changes has been important. The road into Sorata branches off the lakeside road on the altiplano at the town of Achacachi, known as one of the two major centers of campesino political militancy in Bolivia. With the armed, belligerent, anti-patrón, anti-blanco Achacachi sindicatos sitting astride communication into Sorata, Achacachi sindicato dirigentes exerted a strong influence on the sindicatos around Sorata to arm their members and to assert their political and economic rights. One of the most important outcomes of this development was the early replacement of townspeople by campesinos in the various offices of provincial and local government in Sorata. This in turn accelerated the emigration of blanco families, who had begun to leave Sorata almost a decade earlier, when the cinchona boom ended. Over the years, they have been replaced by growing numbers of campesinos, until today town campesinos comprise close to two-thirds of the Sorata population, while most of the remainder are cholos. Only a handful of the blanco families remained; the others have long since left for La Paz, Argentina, Brazil and other countries.

Many of the foreign businessmen who came in boom days married into old Spanish landowning families of the town and in this way the town's two principal forms of economic enterprise were joined together. It was the international commerce that was the major source of wealth. As in other parts of the New World, many of the patróns were land-poor. This was a period when money circulated freely. It is recalled as a kind of golden age. One elderly woman, who carried a distinguished family name, says:

Oh, in my generation, when I was a girl, around 1906, 1910, 1915, then Sorata was a booming town. Each trade house had at least fifteen employees, foreigners and their families. From Sorata they'd ship the cargoes to La Paz. The imports came directly from Lake Titicaca, and from there to Sorata. We drank the best kind of liquors. We traded with English sterling then, it ran so freely in town. We could afford to have whatever we wanted, and parties with real orchestras all the time.

The distinguished Palacios family, who divided their time

between La Paz and Sorata, used to house and entertain as many as 70 guests at a time, providing everything from linen to whisky during fiestas that lasted for as long as 20 days. Not only the once wealthy blancos, but also cholitas with their little tiendas, remember this as a period of affluence for themselves. According to one:

Once there was movement. In a little tienda just like this one, for instance, we always had lots of money on hand.

And according to another:

I myself notice this difference. I was left a widow, young, with lots of children. I had to work day and night. But there was selling then. I'd make a blouse one night and it would sell the next day. Now those blouses sit around.

These are only memories, but they live on to influence present outlook and action. In addition, the signs of decay on once palatial residences, the sight of a distinguished blanco couple waiting on campesinos in their tienda, and the presence of campesinos from the estancias as officials of the local government, are more objective evidence of the major changes that have occurred in the town in the past 20 years, and especially in the last decade.

While for some the golden age has long been dead, replaced by a period of decay and dislocation, others have a rather different view. For these the past is seen as a burden, while the present is a time of promise. In the following comment of a young campesino who has his home with his father and sister in Sorata, but lives and works on a nearby ex-hacienda, this view is expressed in terms of the changed relations between campesino and blancos, whom he calls vecinos:

Before 1952 the campesinos could not pass without offering a greeting to the vecinos. Even if the distance was great, one had to greet them, taking off his hat and bowing. And if the greeting was not acknowledged, my father told me to walk half-way around them to make sure they saw the greeting. Also, there were some vecinos who did not like campesinos to walk in front of their homes or their tiendas, and always made them go around the back of their buildings. That's the way it was before. Now? Well, now you don't pay attention to those things. When a vecino says, "That stupid campesino", we ask, "What's the matter? he's no more stupid than you". Or when they walk down the road as if they own it, never greeting anyone, we say, "He's just like an animal". Or, "What's the matter with that 'misti' [vecino]?" We dress the same, our head is the same, our belly is the same, our heart is the same. We're just not going to pay any attention to him and won't greet him either.

## Town Economy

Sorata is still a town of trade and commerce. However, the large-scale international commerce of a few big trading houses has been replaced by small-scale buying and selling by a large number of merchants geared to the surrounding area. Close to one-third of the labor force in town earn at least a part of their living by buying and selling goods. About half of this number are comerciantes, and at least two-thirds of these are women, though this estimate is particularly unstable because local selling is almost invariably a family enterprise, the man directing, his wife filling in for him behind the counter, and the older children may be augmenting the sales staff or watching the store during slack periods.

The town is full of small retail sales establishments, not only around the central plaza where they are traditionally located, but also in all the smallest, most peripheral streets. Around the two plazas and near the center of the town are the bigger tiendas, which carry a good stock of household necessities, like kerosene, candles, canned goods, noodles, sugar, flour and bread; but also flashlights, one or two transistor radios, china dishes, and similar more expensive and less frequently purchased items. Many also sell at wholesale to tienda comerciantes in the more distant hamlets. Scattered throughout the town is a second level of tiendas, which restrict their goods almost completely to household necessities. Finally, there is a third level of tienda, much more numerous than either of the other two, in which there is specialization in the sale of one or a few articles. Some of these sell only fruit, others only bread, others only noodles, some a combination, such as fruit and pan-citos. As with several types of work in town, especially those in which women are predominant, the smallest tienda is economically marginal, viable only because the woman's time is not considered a cost.

The other half of the comerciantes in Sorata are the traveling merchants. While a handful of these are men operating on a large scale, buying up truckloads of farm produce for sale to large retail dealers in La Paz, about 95% are women doing small-scale buying and selling of agricultural products, much of which goes to La Paz. For the majority of these women the buying and selling of agricultural produce is a prime means of support. Most have one or more small children to care for, and though in some cases they are married, the husband is frequently absent, working elsewhere, often in the Tipuani mining area. Most of these women comerciantes, but not all, belong to the Sindicato de Comerciantes Minoristas de La Paz. Non-members are required to pay a fee to the sindicato before they are permitted to travel with produce to La Paz. These minoristas, the female comerciantes, go by truck from Sorata to the nearby hacienda village of Laripata every Thursday and Sunday to buy their fruit and vegetables in wholesale quantity from the rescatadors who have brought it in by mule to the Laripata market. Working with little capital, they buy several bundles of seasonal produce and have it trucked back to Sorata.

If they are taking the produce to La Paz, they leave on trucks early Friday and Saturday mornings. The Sorata minoristas congregate on the same streets in a section of La Paz where the sidewalks are an open air vegetable market. They sell from Thursday afternoon until Saturday morning and from Monday afternoon until Wednesday morning. Early Saturday and Wednesday the trucks pick them up again for the return trip to Sorata. If they have not sold all of their produce by departure time, many of them will leave what remains with a local minorista who receives a part of the profits for whatever she sells.

The markets in Sorata each Sunday are jammed from early morning until early afternoon. On Calle Muñecas below the central plaza is the big formal market for vegetables, meats and fruits, such as bananas and chirimoyas. Most of the vendors there and in a triangular plot across the way are comerciantes, male and female, from the altiplano, mostly from Aymara lakeside communities. Most of the comerciantes in this three-cornered marketplace sell the same staples, fish, and whatever is being harvested from their irrigated lakeside plots, such as onions or carrots. Along the street between the two markets sit sellers of a variety of other things from the altiplano Indian communities -- reed flutes, leather thongs and ropes, flower and vegetable seeds, metal plow tips and other agricultural tools, and so on. From there up to the central plaza, cholo comerciantes from La Paz set up stands for the sale of manufactured clothing and derby and fedora hats.

As in the Corolco area, the hacienda system by which most of the land around Sorata was owned and worked was swept away in the early years following the revolution, and the former peons now have their own plots of land on which they plant one or two crops for sale. In the area around Sorata the major cash crop is maize, but wheat, squash, barley, beans, peas, peaches, pears, plums and apples are grown in small quantities. Many campesinos also raise pigs and chickens and sell eggs. A very few also have a cow or two, and at the higher altitudes some raise sheep. Potatoes are grown above Sorata, and in the lowlands the chief cash crops are tomatoes and citrus fruits.

The decline of agricultural production after the revolution, a decline exaggerated in reports by those opposed to agrarian reform, and assessed only in very inexact terms, seems attributable in part to the dislocation in the agricultural marketing mechanism. Some of the campesino agriculturalists in the Sorata area sell to the Sorata tienda comerciantes. Apart from the sale of crops to comerciantes, there is a great deal of minuscule trade in a few eggs, a chicken, a few peppers or some wild honey, a small bundle of potatoes or beans or a squash, sold or bartered in the tiendas for kerosene, matches or candles. Campesinos for whom Sorata is more than a day's walk are likely to make quantity sales to a campesino rescatador, who then takes his purchases once or twice each week to a market such as that in Laripata, where all will be sold in bulk to the minoristas. Sorata itself consumes but a small part of the agricultural produce of the region. But trade is active because of the emer-



gence since the revolution of the campesino rescata-dors and wholesale agricultural produce markets like that in Laripata, and because of the minoristas who trade with the cities -- a complex replacement for the hacienda marketing system, and a new and vital part of the agricultural economy.

Most crops in the Sorata area depend on rainfall alone. There is almost no irrigation. Fields are plowed and seeded in August and September to be ready for the rains that begin around November. With maize, once the plowing and seeding have been completed, there is relatively little work until the harvest, which usually begins the following April and may last until June. Some campesinos, in the free time between, work additional land in the Alto Beni colonization zone around Caranavi, and regularly move back and forth. A few of the younger men go to La Paz for some form of unskilled work, especially if they have a relative there, but the majority go to the mines, mostly to the Tipuani gold fields. In fact, mining is so prominent in the lives of both town and rural campesinos that it has become almost a symbol of a man's having come of age. Tipuani has become for the young men the exciting world beyond the familiar home and rural village, and they chafe to follow in the footsteps of their fathers and older brothers, leaving for the mines when they are 15 or 16, some even at 12.

In Tipuani there is work for all. Some of the mining is strip work, off the surface; but most of it involves tunneling, even under the river. The work is heavy, and the suffocating heat makes it even more strenuous. The shoring in the tunnels is often inadequate, and men who are not crushed in a collapse may well be drowned. Seventy men died in one tunnel disaster. In addition to such risks, the rainy season brings the threat of flooding from swollen streams, and there are disabling injuries and the chance of pulmonary disease. But beyond the hazards there are rewards. A laborer in Tipuani can earn \$1.00 to \$1.50 a day, almost twice what an unskilled worker receives in Sorata. Instead of wages, some laborers prefer to have a sack of tailing, which may yield up to \$300 in gold for a month's work; or the yield may be very small or nothing at all. These men are called voluntarios.

The veteran miners and the more affluent campesinos who have joined them are members of the cooperatives that run these mines for the government. A membership share in one of the cooperatives costs from \$160 to \$800, the price varying like corporate stock, rising and falling with the current earnings of the cooperative and with estimates of anticipated productivity. All shares are held by working members of the cooperatives, whether miners, haulers, weighers or accountants. Members have no rights to any particular job, but rotate through all of them.

At the end of each day each cooperative exchanges its ore for currency at the local branch of the Banco Minero, the state mining bank, the national government being the only legal purchaser of gold. The cooperative deducts costs and expenses and divides the remainder in equal sums along all its members. Shares may

double or triple in value, but much depends on chance, rich veins of gold becoming thinner and thinner until the daily earnings hardly pay the living expenses of the members. The campesino who joins a successful cooperative may stay for six to 10 months, but almost all return by September for the fiesta patronal and the plowing and planting. While many earn little or nothing beyond their daily expenses, some come out ahead, and a few are able to amass substantial sums. In any case, they are probably not worse off than before they went, for on the estancias or in town there are few opportunities for profitable work.

Most campesino miners who are very successful leave the campo entirely and settle in town. This has been going on since 1952, until today they constitute the largest occupational group in town after the two types of comerciantes, and, if only men are considered, they are the largest group. A great many of the houses once occupied by big foreign traders and hacienda patrones, the largest and most ostentatious of which are on the central plaza, have passed into the hands of campesino miners.

Most campesinos who go to the mines hope to earn enough over a period of several years to launch a new and permanent business enterprise. One of the most desired businesses is truck transportation. The large Toyota, popular with truckers, costs about \$5,500, a very substantial sum even for the luckiest miners, but generally more than half of this can be borrowed. There are now 15 trucks in town making the twice-weekly run between Sorata and La Paz, all of them owned by town campesinos or cholos, none by a vecino.

Most truck owners are also drivers. All of these owner-drivers live in Sorata, but they spend as much time on the road and in La Paz as in town. For this reason some keep their wives and children in La Paz where school facilities are better, and rent a room for themselves in Sorata. Carrying passengers and cargo, they make \$50 to \$60 a week. All drivers, including owners who are drivers, are organized in a sindicato which keeps tight control on transport activities. No truck is allowed to make the run to La Paz without sindicato authorization and the rules are that the trucks must line up in convoy order for departure on Friday and Monday mornings. Drivers are not permitted to take non-paying customers, are not allowed to compete for the minorista clients of other drivers, and must abide by a schedule of charges fixed by the sindicato.

A second occupational aspiration of the campesino miner is to become a tienda comerciante, but this is a riskier business. Miners invest in small stocks of goods and set up businesses, which are operated for the most part by their wives, while they continue to devote most of their time to mining. The varied buying and selling, the different conditions in the town, rural, and city markets, all require the learning of a varied set of new skills. The limited education of most campesinos has not prepared them for this type of work, but some have been quite successful. One of them operates one of the biggest tiendas in Sorata.

There are few of the old landowners left in town. Almost all have died or emigrated, but many more, as absentee owners, have the land that was left to them worked by campesinos. In the first few years following the revolution the efforts of the MNR government to organize the rural campesinos into sindicatos, the hostility toward the patróns that was engendered in this effort, and the unsettled conditions in the countryside, resulted in the abandonment of haciendas. After this early turmoil, and especially when it became clear that the Agrarian Reform Law was going to permit the patróns to retain a part of their haciendas, they began to reassert their rights. Different patróns placed different interpretations on just what those rights were, as did the different sindicatos. Their major problem was how to get their land cultivated.

The Agrarian Reform Law permitted two arrangements. Either the patrón could pay wages or give up half the harvest for campesino labor. In either case he was required to supply seed and tools. The patróns rarely pay wages because they no longer have the capital, so cultivation of their small parcels is all done on shares; though there are variations from the legally prescribed arrangements. Some patróns take 60% of the harvest, some take half, but do not provide seed or tools; and some take even more than 60% and still provide nothing. They invest little, and certainly not for improved agricultural methods. So the land around Sorata is worked as it has been for centuries. Fields are still cleared by cutting and burning them over, and while fertilizers were introduced in 1965, their use is limited.

Over a third of the town's work force is made up of skilled workers and craftsmen who supply the variety of skills and products typical of rural central market towns, including furniture. There are substantial numbers of masons, and woodcutters and carpenters who utilize the trees that are abundant below Sorata -- pine, cedar, myrtle, walnut, eucalyptus and palm. There are butchers and bakers, shoemakers, tailors and hatters in great numbers. Dressmaking is one of the important women's occupations, though it does not rank with shopkeeping or minorista trade. To eke out their income from dressmaking many women are weavers, almost as many as there are miners whose homes are in town. Some spin their own wool, others buy it ready-spun, but all do their own dyeing and designing. They all make aguayos, a vari-colored wool blanket approximately three feet by six feet, woven in a week or 10 days, and used as a sleeping blanket, as a shawl and as a bundle wrapper. Much of the produce brought up by the minoristas is carried to La Paz in aguayos.

In the early years after the revolution many local craftsmen were organized into a sindicato de gremiales, but it was never very active and has been defunct for many years, defying efforts to reorganize it in 1966. This is rather symptomatic of the economic situation of many craft workers. The Sorata crafts market has been oversupplied for some time, so craft workers and some skilled workers have had to seek sales outlets farther afield. Most shoemakers try to sell part of their production in other communities as far off as the adjoining provinces. Many

of the woodworkers spend only a part of the year in Sorata and then go to other woodcutting regions in search of temporary employment.

In addition to there being a limited market, there is marked cyclical buying. The big town fiestas are not only the recreation highpoints of the year but also the sales highpoints for comerciantes and craft producers. During slack periods a shoemaker will run a small tienda on the side, or a carpenter will double as a mason. The situation is further aggravated by the machine-made products that are pushing hand-made articles out of the local market. Finally, there is the larger number of campesinos and sons of campesinos seeking town jobs. Around 15% of the labor force is comprised of unskilled laborers, mostly town campesinos who attach themselves to skilled or craft workers for a nominal wage, and after a year or two of apprenticeship try to compete with their former teachers, further glutting the market.

The final occupational group of importance is that of the professionals and the empleados, the white collar-type workers. These are the higher professionals -- the doctor, the dentist, the two highest judges, the agricultural extension agent, the nurses occasionally present, the priests, the teaching nuns and the public school teachers -- all outsiders who do not expect to stay in Sorata. In some cases, though far from all, these professionals spend considerable time away from the town, either in the capital or in the towns from which they came. Then there are the quasi-professionals, the tinterillos who are self-taught lawyers, the midwives, and the curanderos, the traditional healers. Finally, there are the empleados who hold minor public jobs and clerical positions. All of the different professionals and empleados combined are less than 5% of the local work force.

Local economic enterprises stay small because, perhaps, of limited capital and little credit. Many of the persons who have here been termed comerciantes are simply individuals who may sell nothing more than pancitos, small rolls set on stands in the doorway, or have a half-dozen staple foods brought in by truckers to sell to campesinos from the countryside. The working capital of such comerciantes is no more than \$25. Even with ambition, and possibly talent, most would have great difficulty in raising capital, and if they could it would cost too much.

There are no banks in town. At one time there was a branch of the Banco Minero, the state bank authorized to purchase mineral ore, but it was closed in 1965. A few lend money, but interest rates are high, varying from 4% to 10% a month, and lenders almost always require that substantial assets be advanced as guarantees that loans will be repaid. More frequently, borrowers will go to friends or compadres who probably will not even ask for interest; but the sums that can be borrowed from friends and compadres are generally small.

With money in limited supply, some of the larger tienda comerciantes selectively sell on credit, but the small comerciantes

cannot, for credit sales involve considerable risk. Even the purchaser may be the loser in credit transactions, for often the comerciante keeps no records, and the debt is what he says it is. Gregorio Vogel, who operates what is left of the Casa Brandt, now a large tienda, by keeping exact accounts and being scrupulously fair, has earned so great a reputation for honesty that he is entrusted with some of the functions of a bank, cashing and holding monies for the repayment of loans. He conducts this banking business out of a huge antique safe, a remnant of the golden age of the Casa Brandt.



## Chapter 2

### POWER AND AUTHORITY

Sorata is a rural town similar to Coroico in many respects. They are the largest towns in their immediate areas, the chief marketplaces of their regions, and each is the capital of a province. They are both old Spanish towns, the commercial and administrative centers of countryside owned and worked for generations by Spanish hacienda patróns.

There are also structural and environmental resemblances, but as a consequence of the Revolution of 1952 there are now some very striking contrasts between the two towns. The emigration of vecino mercantile and landowning families has altered the character of Sorata's population, now primarily town campesino and cholo, with all the sociocultural changes that this implies. Other changes, political in character, have had equally profound effects. In the three towns thus far examined, each found more or less successful ways of coping with the realities of the Revolution of 1952. The impact of the revolution was minimal on Villa Abecia, somewhat greater on Reyes, while in Coroico the impact was serious indeed, and changes have been many and important. Nevertheless, much of the cultural and social tradition of the first two towns has been maintained in the face of radical challenges from national governmental legislation and programs, and even in Coroico a good part of it survives. Sorata is like Coroico, but unlike the other two towns, in having experienced drastic changes in the revolution. In contrast to Coroico and the other two towns, it has been more thoroughly transformed by these changes. Very little remains of the old Spanish town of Sorata. The town has for many years now been a pawn in the campesino play for power, and the effects of this are everywhere present.

#### Economic Power and Organizations

In Villa Abecia it was grapes, in Reyes cattle, and in Coroico coffee. In Sorata the first major source of real wealth was the goma (rubber), and then cinchona bark. The scale of international commerce in these products was profitable far beyond the counterpart enterprises in the other three towns, which made hacienda agriculture relatively less remunerative and less important to the wealthy families of the community. Further thrusting hacienda agriculture to secondary status was the lower productivity of the land at Sorata altitudes under dry-farming conditions.

The decline of goma and cinchona commerce has reduced the wealth of the town and the agrarian reform program has diffused it. Both of these changes have been significant in vitiating

economic power in the community. From being a strategic link in a large-scale commercial chain, Sorata has become a regional market town characterized by small-scale retail trade and small-crop agricultural commerce. The few great commercial houses have been replaced by many dozens of rescatadors and negociantes, town comerciantes and the minoristas, as well as by hundreds of buying-and-selling campesinos. Instead of a few dozen patrons who sent large quantities of agricultural produce to market, there are now hundreds of campesinos who participate both directly and indirectly. The rise in the number of participants in the agricultural market is reflected in the development of new wholesale markets, like that in Laripata. The inability of the local market to absorb the greater agricultural production, as well as the inability of local producers and intermediaries to deal with distant markets, led to the development of the minorista trade.

The combined process of declining scale and growing numbers in agriculture has been paralleled in town in the tiendas and related outlets for retail trade. In Coroico, the mini-scale production which followed agrarian reform and diffused the economic power of the haciendas was stabilized with less loss in gross value by the large-scale trading function of the coffee rescataador. In that case, concentrated economic power merely shifted from the pre-revolutionary hacendado to the post-revolutionary rescatador. In Sorata, no such countervailing mechanism developed. The trading intermediaries, the town comerciantes and the traveling minoristas, multiplied almost as fast as the campesino agricultural producers, with the result that the economic power potential in Sorata is rather thoroughly dispersed in the whole population.

Agricultural production and distribution, as well as the buying and selling of retail goods, vary considerably, but the range is from small to minuscule. Only three or four tiendas, some of whose owners are also buying and selling agricultural produce as well as transporting these and other goods, are high on the scale. Significantly, these few important comerciantes are almost equally divided among vecinos, cholos and town campesinos. In general, it has been the cholos and town campesinos who have inaugurated new enterprises, mainly trucking, perhaps invariably with Tipuani gold mine wages as capital.

With most vecinos either impoverished or living a marginal economic existence, with commerce dominated by cholos and town campesinos but highly fractionated, with the lowly campesino moving in increasing numbers into crafts and skilled jobs and entrepreneurial trucking and local commerce, there no longer exists an economic elite in Sorata, nor are the few outstanding entrepreneurs a socially homogeneous force. The result is that certain individuals are influential and many individual actions are influenced through economic forces, but few social relations are based on economic power. The stable economic differential on which the power relations were based between the big merchant and his employees, or the big merchant and his debtor clients, no longer exists. No group in Sorata any longer commands great economic resources, and the few individuals who have been successful

in recent years are still far from establishing themselves as dominant figures.

Collectively, however, there is economic power in the town sindicatos. There are two sindicatos presently active in Sorata, those of the minoristas and the transportistas. Both are branches operating under regulations set by parent organizations in La Paz, and both are concerned almost exclusively with economic issues, in contrast to the very politically-oriented campesino sindicatos. For the most part these issues are control of access to jobs and the regulation of charges and conditions of work in each occupation. The truckers' sindicato (Sindicato de Transportistas del Altiplano) has come to play a vital role, not only in the operation of the town's economy, but more generally in the linking of the town to the outside world, because the truckers provide the only means for moving people or things in or out of the town. In addition, the truckers are a relatively small group, which solidifies the influence of the sindicato. Finally, the sindicato secretary-general, its principal officer, is an energetic, outspoken, intelligent person, with experience as an official in the La Paz headquarters.

The truckers' sindicato has no regular schedule of meetings, but meets whenever the secretary-general or one of the other members raises a problem that requires action. Technically, only members are permitted to attend these meetings, generally held in the early morning just before the trucks depart from Sorata; but owners who regularly accompany their drivers are permitted to attend, along with anyone connected with the topic or problem behind the meeting. At these meetings hearings are held on the violation of rules, such as driving out of turn and picking up the regular passengers of another driver.

The violation of sindicato rules is regarded as a serious matter by almost all members. The punishment meted out is strongly affirmed by most members, and the violator generally accepts his punishment without complaint. The unceremonious dispatch with which this discussion and adjudication process takes place, so different from conduct in other town associations and organizations, is due not only to the firm leadership of Eduardo Soruco, the secretary-general, but also to the strong social bonds that have formed between the members of the sindicato. As one of the more prominent driver-owners says:

We must consider it a sacred duty to respect the rules because we issue them ourselves, and we must respect each other as brothers.

Similarly, on the proposed construction of a religious shrine with sindicato funds along the Sorata-La Paz route, another driver said:

We do this to give us good luck on our journeys, and also as a pledge of affection and harmony among the truck drivers.

Many of the regulations of the sindicato are means for con-



trolling potentially ruinous competition. Only members in good standing are permitted to operate along the main routes, and one of the major concerns of each branch sindicato is to prevent poaching by other sindicatos. The formal procedure for handling intrusions is to send a warning message to headquarters in La Paz, where it is forwarded to the infringing local. But this procedure is time-consuming, so most local sindicatos are likely to take direct action. For example, one day a driver from the Achacachi sindicato appeared in town and carried back to the lakeside communities near Achacachi the campesinos who had come to Sorata with their fish for the market day. A week later the same Achacachi driver appeared in Sorata and the sindicato immediately called him to a meeting. He argued that there was no law against a trucker's driving anywhere he chose, and that greater competition would result in improved transport services. The answer of the Sorata sindicato was:

You have to take into consideration that we work permanently on this route and that we provide the service under any conditions, no matter how many passengers or how much freight there is. Furthermore, we don't invade other people's routes.

The Sorata local had no power to fine the Achacachi driver, but he was warned off in bellicose terms and did not appear again.

Competition is avoided in the minorista passengers trade because the women are understood to be clients of specific drivers, and a violator of this understanding is liable to a sindicato fine of eight pesos. Regular passengers accept the system, even though it may not always be to their advantage. If they fail to play the game according to the truckers' rules they may find themselves fighting for a bit of space on top of a truck twice a week. Such punitive pressure on the minoristas has lessened over the years as the number of trucks and the space available for transport have increased, forcing truckers to provide competitive extra services for regular clients, like waiting for them when they are not ready at the regular departure time, or accepting heavier bundles for the same transport cost, all to hold their loyalty.

The truckers are quite aware of the importance of their work to the community, but they have also developed a marked sense of public responsibility. They are generally willing participants in any effort to aid the community as a whole, and most of them take pride in their efforts to improve the public welfare. A driver commented:

We always collaborate with our trucks in all the work or needs required by the community. We also cooperate financially with the community. Each of us tries to serve according to his capabilities.

When the alcalde told the sindicato that sand needed for the public swimming pool was available free near Achacachi there was unanimous agreement among the transportistas that each driver

would haul three truckloads without cost. When the welfare of the truckers is threatened the political power of the sindicato becomes apparent, as when the road from Sorata to Laripata had deteriorated too far to be ignored. While the construction and maintenance of roads is entrusted to a national agency, the Servicio Nacional de Caminos, its limited resources are stretched even in maintaining the major road network in the country, let alone minor roads. One night about eight o'clock 12 members of the truckers' sindicato, led by Eduardo Soruco, set out to find the local government official to see what could be done. In the plaza they found the sub-prefect, Fernando Campos, and the alcalde, Juan Roblis, with four important campesino sindicato leaders. Soruco greeted them and told the sub-prefect that he had a problem to discuss. He then added:

It is even better that the campesino leaders are present to hear our problem, because it concerns them also.

Campos suggested that they go to his office, and he turned to the campesino dirigentes and asked them to please wait for him. At this point one of the other important figures in the truckers' sindicato interjected:

No, why should we go to your office? We can talk better right here. It will be quicker, and afterwards you can continue as before.

Soruco seconded this, and immediately brought up the problem of the Laripata road, saying that the truck drivers felt it was the duty of the government to repair it. He emphasized the benefits of truck service to Sorata, Laripata and the surrounding campesino villages, and ended by announcing that the truckers had decided to suspend service to Laripata if the road were not to be repaired. The response of the government officials was that the problem was beyond their control. As sub-prefect Campos put it:

I can't do anything, because the campesinos refused to obey my orders. In fact, they have already complained once to the Highway Agency of the Ministry of Communication and Public Works, saying it was not my responsibility to make them work on the road. And the ministry didn't back me up. So, in the face of this, what can I do, even if it is a question of a service that involves the province?

The truckers have developed a direct, practical style of dealing, and were not prepared to let the problem rest because of some intra-governmental jurisdictional difficulty. First, Soruco rejected the response of the sub-prefect:

Companeros, we cannot accept such a thing, because it is the duty of the officials to take care of the welfare of the community. It would be like denying the authority of yourselves. By that criterion, where are we to go for help? If you refuse your

responsibility and at the same time are ignored by your superiors, what happens?

This brought a proposal by Ramon Sedano, one of the spokesmen of the truckers, that campesino road crews be taken on under their prestacion vial obligations:

It is very easy. You just ask the campesinos to repair the worst parts of the road and in exchange you give them the ticket of the prestacion vial. So we will have the road repaired and the campesinos will get their tickets, which they should have anyway.

The sub-prefect agreed. He might have suggested such a plan himself, an arrangement certainly familiar to him, but he is more concerned with building support for himself among the campesinos than he is in helping the truckers. The campesinos will not be happy at having to give time for road repair, and they represent hundreds of votes, while the truckers are only a handful. He might rather have done nothing, but the transport service to Laripata is as important to the campesinos in that area as it is to the minoristas traveling out from Sorata, something that the sub-prefect knows as well as Vicente Pelayo, the dirigente of the Laripata sindicato, who was in the company of the sub-prefect when the truckers approached. Given the propensity of the truckers for direct action, the threat of Soruco to suspend service until the road would be repaired was sufficient to impress upon the sub-prefect the logic of the truckers' solution.

### Political Power

Economic events in the recent past of Sorata, many of them associated with the revolution, have caused a variety of important changes in the community. Equally striking, and in some ways more important, have been the many political changes brought about by the revolution. As in Coroico, the politicalization of the Indian population on the haciendas introduced a new dimension to politics and the pattern of civic power. While political awareness has grown very unevenly in the area, Sorata has witnessed the development of a much more militant campesino political style, which has also taken the form of violent sindicato factionalism.

### Traditional Authority and New Sindicatos

In the past, the dominance of the town over the surrounding campesino population was based on the traditional authority of the patrón over the peon. This patrón-peon system did not differ essentially from the system that has been described for Villa Abecia and the pre-revolutionary era around Coroico. Peons had the use of small plots of land in exchange for specified numbers of days-per-week of labor, plus a variety of additional services and obligations that included not only themselves, but also their

wives and even their children. Further, the hacienda peon was subjected to much more than obligations of labor, for the patrón was virtually unrestricted by law. He was the law, as far as the peon was concerned. As one ex-peon tells it:

We always had something to do for the master, like carrying water or taking care of his animals. When the master asked you to do something you had to stop everything and obey him right away. We never had time to work our land.

The life of the peon under the autocratic authority of the patrón and his representative, the mayordomo, was hard. The profits of the haciendas depended on the driving force of the mayordomo, who not only thus secured his position but sometimes could profit personally by gouging more work from the peon. "He made us work until we dropped in our tracks from fatigue." Pushed beyond endurance, the peon might run away, but he knew only agriculture, and all the land familiar to him was already occupied. He had to take the pushing, and when he shirked his work he had to take the punishment. This was meted out by the patrón or his overseer in customary fashion.

That the patróns saw their absolute authority in a different light, in some cases as a responsibility, is revealed by the daughter of an important Sorata patrón, herself the owner of several small haciendas:

When my father was the master he was always very good with the campesinos. He used to settle their disputes. They'd come to him and say, "Patrón, you fix this, make it right, whip us". And he'd get out the little whip and lash them a bit. They'd go away happy, saying that now they had both had justice. But we were never harsh with them, never any hard lashes, no scars or sores. And every Sunday he'd call them all with the big gong we had and he'd line them all up, starting with the oldest down to the youngest, and give them some money to buy candies. Every night they would come to my father's bedroom and say, "Tata [father], we're here", and he would talk with them about the day's work and what they had to do tomorrow.

The peon was treated as a child who could distinguish right from wrong only dimly, who had to be guided, and when occasion required, punished. Even the traditional Indian vocabulary of patrón-peon relations presents the patrón as the all-powerful father. The hacienda system engendered not only an economic but also a psychological dependence of the peon on the patrón. Some of this can still be observed in elderly campesinos who dog the footsteps of an ex-patrón who is visiting his former hacienda, who still treat him with veneration. An ex-patrón says:

I hear the old ones say they'd like to return to the times before because, you see, they didn't

gain from the reform like the young ones did. They were used to having my father or my mother, and now no one is here. So when I come, they sit in the house just to be around. They miss this, and they still come to me with some of their problems.

This servility of peons was not everywhere typical. On some haciendas there was even a tradition of resistance to the authority of the patrón. Julio Martínez, campesino leader from Atahualpani, recalls that the campesinos of Atahualpani, who today have a formidable reputation for belligerence, resisted the tyranny of patróns before the revolution. When the patrón brought police from the town to enforce his authority, rebel peons occasionally sought refuge in the surrounding mountains, sometimes carrying an old firearm, forbidden to them by law.

During the early stages of the Revolution of 1952, representatives of the MNR government moved quickly into the Yungas, including Coroico, to inform peons of their new economic and political rights as campesinos, and to aid them in organizing sindicatos; but MNR representatives were rather slow in reaching Sorata. Sorata is farther from La Paz, somewhat more isolated from the political center of the country and, perhaps of greatest importance, the value of its haciendas was considerably less than those around Coroico. But news of peon uprisings in the Cochabamba valley and the northern altiplano reached Sorata by radio, newspaper and word of mouth, and at least part of the new rural social order was initiated around Sorata by campesinos themselves.

Most of the campesinos who took a leading part in the Sorata action had come in contact with the militant miners' sindicatos. Revolt was organized, and victory was made easier as patróns and their associates abandoned the haciendas in the early days of the fighting to flee to La Paz and elsewhere. In many instances, no further change apparently was desired by peons. Freed of their labor and service obligations, the majority turned their attention to their own chacras. There was little pillaging or destruction of hacienda property. Most casas de hacienda were allowed to stand, though in time they were thoroughly stripped and allowed to deteriorate. Even gardens, orchards, and lands of the patrón were often left undisturbed until the advent of the formal agrarian reform program. It was several years before the surveyors and agrarian judges reached Sorata, and it was not until 1956 that the legal tramites, the actions to reform the hacienda holdings, reached their peak.

As early as 1953 the campesinos on the more central haciendas organized in sindicatos, and this process spread throughout the province. Today there are about 150 campesino sindicatos in the province, grouped into 20 subcentrals linked to a single central. From among their members the campesinos elect a set of officials (secretarios), headed by a secretary-general who directs all activities. Each sindicato has its secretary of agriculture, secretary of justice, secretary of education, and so on. In the early years, age and experience were important criteria for election to a sindicato office, just as they were traditionally im-

portant for selection as jilakata, a community leader, or as an important official in one of the traditional campesino fiestas; but these new sindicato men were invariably illiterate, and in most cases were unable to adapt themselves to new conditions and new duties, for example, in representing their sindicato before higher officials, or in legal actions against the former patróns; so they were soon replaced by younger, more widely-traveled, better educated and more demanding campesinos, a process which reduced the status of older males, if indeed they were not wholly discredited.

For an area that has been thoroughly affected by the revolution there has been a striking amount of accommodation in relations between the hacienda campesinos and their former patróns, and in relations between the sindicato and the old patrón. In only a very few cases has there been a total abandonment of hacienda property. After a period of several years the majority of ex-patróns sought out the campesinos of their former haciendas, or almost as often were sought out by officials of the sindicato, to arrange for the disposition of the property. It was in the interests of both parties to get together, for both stood to profit. The campesinos could not legally take over that portion of his old holding to which the patrón had just received title, but neither could the patrón do much with this land without the assistance of the campesinos. In most cases some form of sharecropping plan has been adopted, often in violation, as described earlier, of official rules about sharecropping agreements. One patróna, faced with demands that she fulfill her obligations, weeps over ungrateful campesinos who would make such demands, then brushes aside campesino leaders to give the older, meeker campesinos an opening to side with her. In this way she has managed to avoid supplying seed and equipment for the cultivation of her land and has taken an illegally large share of the harvest. These deviations from the law are facilitated by the absence of work contracts that would specify the mutual obligations of patrón and peon, required by law but widely ignored. Another aged patróna, who rarely visits her sharecropped land except to collect the harvest, is adept in manipulating the social situation of officials of the local sindicato. She has influence over the campesinos because most of them are her ahijados (godchildren), but this is not all, as she herself tells:

I take part from time to time in the election of campesino leaders, suggesting the names of candidates. I say, "This man is fit", or "This one is lazy and capable only of criticizing. It would be good for him to learn to be a dirigente". Furthermore, the leader of the sindicato central, who comes here for the elections, also takes into account my suggestions, which obviously are for my own advantage rather than that of the peons. The fact is that I gain his cooperation. I invite him over for lunch and I sit him down to my own table. He feels very flattered, and then is very well disposed toward me. To this I sometimes add a few bolivianos, which he accepts with pleasure, and the trick is done.

This is one side of the Sorata rural campesino situation. In the struggle to obtain the benefits from the cultivation of the former patrón's parcel of land, the campesinos do not always come off best, or even come away with their legitimate share. For their part, the old patróns and their relatives have discovered that in many cases their authority may be gone, but their influence is still considerable. However, there is another side of the local sindicato situation, the political town and regional side, in which the former patróns have been less successful against the campesinos.

### Sindicato Politics

The local sindicatos are the base of a pyramidal organization which is topped by the Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos. The sindicatos, with a membership of over two million, are an important political feature of modern Bolivia. With the enfranchising of the campesinos after the Revolution of 1952 the sindicatos took a central place in the electoral dominance of the MNR, and thus had strong influence on the national government. The secretary-general of each local sindicato, and lesser secretaries as well, attend meetings of the central organization, and officials at the central level attend meetings of the departmental sindicato federation. The experience and the connections, the muñeca, lead to political careers even for campesinos.

While there is some flow of sindicato officials up the hierarchy, there is domination from above, in conformity with the centralist tendency in Bolivian governmental organization. With the sindicatos organized as an important political base for the MNR party, it follows that important MNR politicians were appointed to many of the leading posts at the higher sindicato levels. At intermediate and lower levels, it is not always clear whether an official has been appointed or elected. In general, sindicato officials must be approved at some higher level, and the higher the level of the office the more likely it is that it has been filled by appointment. It is not at all unusual even for the subcentral to intervene in the local sindicato to indicate a preference for one campesino over another. But to be approved for nomination or appointment, the candidate must generally demonstrate that he has the support of the rank and file. If an official loses support his position is very likely to be in jeopardy.

While the local-to-national sindicato structure can be drawn as a neat pyramid, it is probably more accurately viewed as a series of overlapping, shifting fields of forces. Regional campesino leaders have emerged on the national scene with strong followings and have attempted to extend their influence over ever wider sectors of the total sindicato structure. The same process has occurred at lower levels, down to the local. The high stakes in this game, and the considerable power at issue, have been matched by the intensity of the struggle. One of the national centers of this struggle has been Achacachi, which has influenced the sindicato political climate of the nearby Sorata area. In

the Sorata area itself, there has been a counterpart struggle between several of the individual sindicatos. One of the indicators of the intensity of the struggle is its record of violence.

In 1956 Delfo Perez Blanco, a Sorata vecino, but an old and prominent member of the MNR, was shot and killed on the central plaza. It was the day of the 16th of July national holiday and a civic parade was under way, led by MNR officials of the town and including large contingents of armed campesinos from the surrounding sindicatos. The sindicato from Atahualpani was heavily represented, led by Marcos Lupa, who had joined the MNR before the revolution and was one of the founders and first secretary-general of the provincial Campesino Central. It was a festive occasion with much drinking, especially by the campesinos, and as the parade entered the plaza a group of vecinos appeared at one corner, the women dressed in their urban-style dresses and the men in their tailored trousers and clean white shirts. Unfortunately, the "camisas blancas" had become a symbol employed by the MNR to identify the Falangista opposition to the revolution. At their sudden appearance, the "white shirts" were surrounded by the campesinos, many of whom were extremely drunk, and were forced to dance as the campesinos brandished their weapons and fired into the air and into the ground. When Perez Blanco saw what was happening he rushed over, shouting, "Comrades, don't be foolish! They belong to our party". Before he could say more he was shot down, a casualty of the political climate, with its strong anti-vecino, anti-patrón overtones, as sindicatos competed to establish militant reputations. No campesino was ever officially identified as responsible for the killing, but the vecinos of the town placed the blame on the Atahualpani sindicato.

In July, 1957, an intense struggle was going on at the national level between conservative elements seeking to re-establish Bolivia's international financial respectability and a leftwing faction led by Juan Lechin of the Central Obrero Boliviano (the Bolivian national labor union), more concerned with extending the revolution for the immediate benefit of the campesinos. Since both factions were struggling for grass roots support, clashes occurred at lower levels. In one of these clashes the Director of the Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos, Vincentes Alvarez Plata, was shot to death in a campesino ambush. Plata had attended a provincial meeting in Sorata at which the sindicatos of the towns of Atahualpani and Millipaya were in opposition, the former favoring Plata's faction, the latter favoring the leftwing faction headed at this provincial level by Toribio Salas of the Achacachi Central.

Alvarez Plata set out by car late in the afternoon on his return to La Paz, accompanied by two of his machine-gun-carrying bodyguards, by Carlos Palacios, a prominent Sorata vecino, also a prominent politician, and one or two other MNR politicians. When the group reached the campesino village of Atahualpani, on the hillside almost directly opposite Sorata, they found the road blocked by a truck loaded with armed campesinos, including some



from Achacachi. The campesinos attempted to seize Plata, but he resisted and was shot to death. In the confusion of the struggle and the failing light of sunset, the others in the car escaped down the mountainside, but the same conditions that had facilitated their escape made it difficult for them to describe exactly who had done what.

The news of the assassination naturally created a sensation, and brought further notoriety to Achacachi, Sorata, and especially Atahualpani. Marcos Lupa, who had supported Plata, was forced to resign as secretary-general of the Sorata Central and was replaced by a supporter of the Salas faction, Santiago Romero of Millipaya. An investigation was conducted and a few arrests were made, but all suspects were soon released and no further official action was ever taken.

Local factionalism sometimes mirrored national factionalism, but at times it grew out of local competition between aspiring campesino leaders, who were just as inclined to use national factionalism to further their own careers as national politicians were inclined to abet local factionalism in seeking support for themselves. In one of these incidents the campesinos of Atahualpani seized Fernando Campos and beat him until he agreed to sign his resignation as alcalde of Sorata. In another incident, campesinos from Atahualpani shot it out with others from Millipaya in an attempt to force the leaders of the latter sindicato to vacate the Sorata alcaldia.

In 1962, while Alvaro Diaz was alcalde, and his uncle, José Corona, was Jefe de Comando of the MNR in Sorata, the town was visited by an important MNR political trouble shooter. His mission was to gain support of the campesino sindicatos for President Paz Estenssoro, who was looking forward to the election of 1964, and to neutralize the support for Juan Lechin. He was assisted in his local politicking by a young Sorateño named Armando Montes, noted for his pugnaciousness and heavy drinking. While these qualities suited him for the task he was asked to perform, they did not endear him to many, and one foggy afternoon while he was walking down an apparently empty street he was shot and killed. It was rumored that the shots were meant for his boss, and even that the campesino government officials of Sorata were behind the attack, but the investigating commission from La Paz accused no one, and this, like many political murders, was left unsolved.

The decline in fortune of the patrón families of the Sorata area had been set in motion at least a decade before the revolution, and agrarian reform only served to accelerate the trend. The town has been turned upside down by the revolution to a degree never experienced in Coroico. The Sorata campesino sindicatos and their leaders quickly became involved in MNR politics and factionalism, which locally was focused not only on control of the provincial sindicato organization, the offices of the centrals and subcentrals, but also on control of the local government, primarily the alcaldia and the subprefecture. From 1952 until the present, the posts of sub-prefect and alcalde, as well

as many minor positions, have been filled chiefly by campesino leaders from one or another of the surrounding sindicatos, though infrequently a vecino who has been a prominent MNR supporter has held office for short periods of time.

### Party Politics and Political Change

Between the last half of 1964 and 1966, Sorata experienced a series of political events that not only polarized sindicato factionalism but also revived the struggle between town vecinos and the campesino sindicatos. All of these events took place within local party politics. In Sorata as in Coroico, the major political parties -- which had been the Liberals and the Republicans in the 1920's and the 1930's -- were the Movimientistas (MNR) and Falangistas (FSB) in the 1940's and 1950's. The MNR dominated the town from 1952 until 1964, depending in large part on the organized strength of the campesino sindicatos. MNR activists were also drawn from all social sectors of the town, and as long as the MNR controlled the national government the local party could count on the support of a large part of the community. To organize a mass party, the MNR established a hierarchical party structure with party chiefs at the departmental, provincial and local levels; and at each level there was also a unit of the MNR para-military comando.

A majority of the politically active vecinos of Sorata have supported the FSB since before the revolution. Not until 1964 did they have an opportunity to exercise any political power. At the end of that year the MNR government was overthrown, temporarily releasing provincial areas like Sorata from the overwhelming centralization of political power in Bolivia. This gave the various local groups an opportunity to reassert themselves, and the vecino-dominated FSB in Sorata attempted to regain control of local government from campesino sindicato leaders.

When news of the fall of the MNR came over the radio on November 4 there was a widespread impulse to prepare for civil disorder. Shopkeepers closed down, people shut themselves up in their houses and gathered with family and friends around transistor radios to learn the latest news from the capital. On the following day, when it was announced that Paz Estenssoro had fled the country and that General Barrientos had become the head of a temporary military government, the majority of the vecinos and all those who had suffered exploitation or oppression under the MNR viewed the coup with great satisfaction. Though the position of Barrientos on important national questions was unknown, it was assumed that a change in government would mean a change in national policies, and the traditional support by the army of the hacendados and the upper class reinforced the belief in all sectors of the population that many of the reform programs of the MNR would be halted or even reversed. The local MNR leaders made themselves as inconspicuous as possible.

The vecinos feared that armed contingents of the campesino sindicatos might stage a violent demonstration in protest against

the overthrow of Paz Estenssoro. To consider what should be done, they called a meeting of the Junta de Vecinos, an almost moribund association that before 1952 had a quasi-legal voice in public affairs as an advisory body to the local government. The meeting was open to all, and besides the junta, members of the Veterans of the Chaco War Association, the Sindicato de Gremiales, the Sindicato de Transportistas and others attended. No clear course of action was proposed, but a plan to replace campesino town officials by vecinos was agreed upon.

General Barrientos had announced that his aim was to restore the revolution by eliminating the victimization and graft that had developed under the MNR. In line with this, the meeting of the junta decided to form a Committee for the Restoration of the Revolution, which was made up of 10 vecinos, with Nicanor Hernandez, a prominent comerciante and truck owner, as chairman. The committee was authorized to guarantee the support of the town to General Barrientos and his government and to ask for replacement of campesino town officials by vecinos. At the end of the meeting some of the younger men ran through the plaza shouting, "Death to Paz Estenssoro and his collaborators! Let's take the weapons away from the campesinos! Let's destroy the sindicatos!"

While the vecinos were discussing how to re-establish their rule over the town, the sindicato campesinos were in a state of confusion and disarray. Some of their leaders went into hiding, while others tried to rally support. Alvaro Diaz locked the doors of his alcaldia on hearing that the government had fallen and fled to his home in Atahualpani. Amid this confusion, factionalism was already developing within the new military government, a great advantage to those who had the skill to put up a convincing front. Many vecinos had such skill, but so did some campesinos at this late date after the revolution. The campesino sub-prefect, Fernando Campos, was the first Sorateño to reach La Paz after the November coup, and on the strength of his leadership in the Sorata sindicatos and a statement of support for General Barrientos and the new government, his appointment as sub-prefect was reconfirmed. Armed with a letter of reappointment from the Ministry of Government, Campos returned to Sorata on November 15. Knowing that in the current uncertain situation many were hoping to be able to settle old scores and that tension was high, he did not return alone, but entered town at the head of 800 campesinos who could be expected to apply convincing force against any move to question the validity of the authoritative document he carried.

Whether to avoid an outbreak of violence that he might not be able to control, or because he was uncertain of the extent to which the new government would support him, the campesino force led by Campos was unarmed. Campos asked the police to assemble a delegation of vecinos to witness his reappointment. The captain of the police sent out invitations to several leading vecinos but none appeared. Two hours later Campos occupied his old office in the alcaldia building.

In the meantime, the vecino Committee for the Restoration of

the Revolution had decided to seek the appointment of Jaime Madrigal, a marginal vecino, as alcalde. A delegation from the committee, headed by Nabor Moran, a tienda owner, landowner and ex-patrón, and Eduardo Soruco, truck driver, head of the local truck drivers' sindicato, and a person with considerable muñeca, were sent to La Paz to call on officials of the Ministry of Government to appoint Madrigal. Soruco had to break away, however, summoned back from La Paz because of his work, and left the task of the delegation in the hands of Moran. On November 18, three days after Campos had returned to Sorata as sub-prefect, Moran rode back to town with an official appointment of a new alcalde in his pocket, naming himself to the office, not Madrigal.

Moran was not unopposed. He was suspected of having been especially corrupt when he had been alcalde many years before, and he was strongly opposed by campesino sindicato leaders. When he presented his document of appointment to the head of the local police, preparatory to his occupying the alcaldia, the police official demurred, saying that he had received many complaints about Moran's mismanagement of public office. Moran said he had records that would prove his innocence, but when the police official examined the documents the next day he declared them inadequate. That the head of the local police raised these objections suggests that he was being supported by higher officials, most probably the sub-prefect. Not to be denied the victory that was at hand, a group of vecinos headed by Nicanor Hernandez of the Committee for the Restoration of the Revolution broke into the alcaldia on a day when the sub-prefect was absent and installed Moran in office. About 100 townspeople assembled to hear him take the oath of office.

But Moran had still to contend with opposition. On November 22 a meeting was held, attended by 20 cholo comerciantes, 30 members of the Sindicato de Gremiales and some town campesinos. Some demanded an accounting from Moran, but there were tinterillos present who warned this group that they were committing slander in making unsupported charges. It was agreed that a hearing on evidence against Moran would be held on the following day. At this confused second meeting Moran succeeded less in proving his innocence than in having himself certified as alcalde. To the charges of corruption his response was a protestation of innocence and a questioning of the integrity of his antagonists. His trump was that he had his official appointment as alcalde, and he had a bit of luck in that an army officer had arrived in town to enlist conscripts. With his legal notice of appointment and this representative of higher officialdom present, Moran was able to force the sub-prefect to recognize him as alcalde.

In gaining the initial support by the new military government the sub-prefect risked repudiation by his campesino followers. Early in January a Sorateño worker commented:

I became a member of the MNR because my wife is from Atahualpani and everybody there is a member of this party. We always remember Paz Estenssoro and we hope

he will soon return. In the meantime, it is convenient to support Campos, but later when Paz Estenssoro returns we will remember that Campos became a partisan of the military government.

In the early months after the coup the sub-prefect faced little opposition from the campesinos or the sindicatos. Confusion was widespread throughout the rural campesino hamlets, and the MNR party seemed to be disintegrating. There was talk of a new government party, there was even talk that the land was to be given back to the ex-patrons. There was considerable suspicion of the new government and disillusionment at the turn of events. A campesino dirigente lamented:

I am tired and disheartened. I want to forget about politics, and many other campesino leaders feel the same way. The campesinos are bitter and they are right. Shares, contributions, fines, meetings, and all this for what? For nothing!

As the months passed and ex-patrons did not return, and the agrarian reform was not repealed, the campesino sindicatos and dirigentes began to regain confidence. At the same time and for the same reasons the vecinos lost some of theirs. The chairman of their Committee for the Restoration of the Revolution spoke prophetically:

In the Province of Larecaja the MNR has not disappeared with the fall of Paz Estenssoro. On the contrary, it is quite possible that it will be organized again with another name, maybe with that of the MPC.

The alcalde and sub-prefect were opposed at the center of political forces of change and uncertainty that dominated the last months of 1964 and the early months of 1965. Both men had to be prepared to protect their positions. In addition, the sub-prefect was faced with the complicated task of maintaining his campesino following when his very position as sub-prefect removed him from much direct contact with the campesinos, who were badly split and demoralized. A departmental congress of sindicatos was held in La Paz in February of 1966, and its deliberations showed that the recent political changes had seriously divided the campesinos. The sub-prefect summed up the meeting this way:

Frankly, the congress was a real fiasco, mainly because the campesinos split into two groups, one supporting Siles Zuazo [ex-president of Bolivia and ranking leader of the old MNR] and the other Barrientos. Of the comrades from Larecaja, only Santiago Romero betrayed us by taking the side of Siles Zuazo.

This congress was very badly organized. In fact, they should have called a provincial congress, then a departmental one, and finally one at the national level. Instead, they did the opposite, which re-

sulted in a fight among the campesinos. It was a real fracas, with stones being thrown and fist fights, but luckily only a few were injured.

This departmental meeting was followed by a provincial one, held in Sorata from March 13 to 16. This was to be the first test for Campos in his own bailiwick and he was determined to use it to strengthen his leadership of the provincial sindicatos. However, even within the province he faced opposition. Before the meeting took place, Santiago Romero attempted to have it nullified. He claimed that the meeting was organized without proper authorization, meaning that he as secretary-general of the provincial sindicato organization had not signed any meeting announcement. Campos countered this by enlisting the participation of the national sindicato organization in the person of its executive secretary, important central government officials like the executive secretary of the Ministry of Government, and the national coordinator of the new government-sponsored MPC. It was even rumored that General Barrientos himself would be present. In the face of this array of national power Romero could not afford to be absent, and the meeting took place.

From the standpoint of the sub-prefect the meeting itself progressed from an ominous beginning to a successful conclusion. When the officials from La Paz entered they were greeted by a forest of arms, hands making the sign of a V, the traditional salute of Paz Estenssoro and his MNR party. Then the campesinos proceeded to elect as chairman of the congress, not the executive secretary of the national campesino federation, who was being supported by Campos, but Vincente Pelayo, the dirigente of the Laripata sindicato who was playing both sides of the Campos-Romero conflict. Speeches by the visiting officials followed and these aided greatly in quieting the suspicion of the campesinos and creating support for General Barrientos. Throughout these speeches the speakers reiterated again and again that the general supported the reform program of the old MNR, that he particularly supported the agrarian reform program, that he was prepared to defend the new rights that had been given to the campesinos after the revolution, and that there would be no return of pre-revolution times.

This provincial campesino meeting had been instigated by the central government to enlist campesino support for General Barrientos and the new MPC party. The sub-prefect, a former MNR activist, had already declared for the MPC, and other politicians throughout the country were taking the same action. A more specific objective of the Sorata provincial meeting was to replace Santiago Romero as secretary-general, for he had already reaffirmed his support for the MNR and was challenging Campos in the province. The problem was how to oust Romero without dividing the sindicatos. Campos attempted to construct a united front through the support he had from the central government. When even old enemies of Campos, José Corona and Marcos Lupa, the Atahualpani dirigentes, sided with the sub-prefect, Romero gave in and resigned as secretary-general. At an evening meeting of

30 of the most important dirigentes, Campos was then elected, and the same group also gave him a vote of support as sub-prefect.

This victory of Campos was not completely unqualified, for Santiago Romero was elected by the same group as secretary of relations, the number two position in the provincial sindicato organization. It was also apparent from discussion and comment during the meeting that the Barrientos government and the MPC party had not gained the unqualified confidence of campesino leaders.

The campesino congress renewed the conflict between the campesino sindicatos and the town vecinos. On the last day of the meeting Moran was invited to attend, but was greeted by a barrage of accusations. He was charged with not recognizing campesino rights, with being a rightest FSB militant who wanted to reverse the reform programs of the revolution, and with being a thief in public office. He responded more or less in kind, attacking the dirigentes for political opportunism. He left the session under a barrage of invective, and the sub-prefect then promised the gathering that he would have Moran removed, along with the other vecinos who had taken office in the alcaldia. As their replacements, he promised to appoint Juan Roblis and Herminio Zepeda. Roblis was at that time the agrarian judge. A person of slight education and a sometime tailor by occupation, Roblis had served in a variety of local offices over much of the preceding decade and was known as a typical MNR politician. He was not a campesino, having been born in Sorata of a poor cholo family, but he had long been identified with campesino interests and sindicato politics. Zepeda has a similar background, except that he was better educated and his cholo family was formerly somewhat prominent in town. He too had a long career as a local MNR politician, and in fact was serving as deputy alcalde in Sorata when the MNR government was overthrown in 1964.

In the weeks following the campesino congress in Sorata the sub-prefect endeavored to keep his promise to return control of local government to the campesino sindicatos. He made several trips to La Paz for this purpose. Alcalde Moran in turn was going to the capital to keep himself in office, presenting letters of commendation and support from the Junta de Vecinos, the Veterans of the Chaco War and other associations, to Ministry of Government officials. All of these letters strongly asserted the importance of keeping Moran as alcalde, but then they all came from the vecino sector of the community. There is some indication that Moran might have continued in office if he had offered to switch from the FSB to the MPC, but more than a change of political party was involved here, for the importance of the change was to have an alcalde who could work with the sub-prefect and produce a united front within the provincial government in support of the MPC. Aside from his political sympathies and possible party allegiance, the alcalde could hardly join forces with the campesino sub-prefect and still retain his position as a leader of the vecinos, or even his social position within the community.

In the first week of July orders arrived from the central government in La Paz deposing Moran and naming the sub-prefect's candidate, Juan Roblis, as his successor. Roblis marched to the alcaaldia at the head of a group of campesinos and demanded that Moran turn the office and its keys over to him, but Moran refused. Instead, he called a meeting of the Junta de Vecinos and delivered the keys to the alcaaldia to the elderly president of this organization. The new alcalde and his supporters refused to accept this standoff and proceeded to break into the alcaaldia and occupy it. At this point the president of the Junta de Vecinos decided there was nothing more that could be done and on the following day he delivered the keys to the head of the local police, who in turn handed them over to the new alcalde. This brought to an end the brief period of vecino control of town government in Sorata.

This rise and fall of the FSB in Sorata repeats a pattern already described in Coroico. The fall of the national government temporarily released both towns from central political control. This in turn enabled the social elite of both communities to reassert their traditional dominance of town affairs. In both towns this sector of the community was sympathetic or allied with the FSB political party, and consequently in both cases the FSB replaced the MNR officials in the local government. But as the national political scene became stabilized, and especially after a new government-supported political party was formed, central government control was reasserted over the provincial capitals and a new political allegiance was demanded. When it became clear that the new military government did not intend to repudiate the revolution and its reform programs and, further, intended to seek campesino support, it became easier for the old MNR politicians to switch, but more difficult for those in the FSB. By the summer of 1965 the political lines were being drawn, and the old FSB militants in towns like Coroico and Sorata were losing hope and losing office. The FSB politicians in Coroico had to contend only with the central government, while those in Sorata had also to face the politicalized sindicato structure, which had in fact retained its hold over the provincial government of the subprefecture throughout this entire period.

### A National Election

At the campesino congress in Sorata in March, 1965, sub-prefect Campos promised campesino delegates that he would see to the reassertion of campesino power in the province by having vecino officials removed from the town government. By July he had succeeded, and once more both town and provincial governments were in the hands of campesino leaders. But politicking just as intense as that of the past eight months continued as the town became embroiled in preparations for national elections. The locus of activity was the countryside, for the new MPC party looked to the campesino dirigentes to deliver a massive vote in support of General Barrientos. In the thick of it were the sub-prefect, the alcalde and a few other local officials who by this time had become partisans of the MPC. These men felt that, despite the strong attachment of the campesinos to the MNR, at



least their sindicato leaders would see advantages in supporting the party that already held national power. One of the dirigentes from Atahualpani, even though he had long opposed Campos, said:

The obligation we assumed during the congress of March, 1965, to support General Barrientos and to organize the MPC in this province, represented a big step forward as far as politics is concerned. It had great importance in keeping political power for us, and in our favor.

National elections were set for July, 1966, and the organizing and maneuvering began in earnest in the spring. General Barrientos campaigned throughout the country, dramatically traveling by helicopter to many relatively inaccessible communities. On April 9 he arrived in Sorata by car, accompanied by the prefect of the department and by national officers of the MPC and the campesino confederation. The sub-prefect had notified sindicato leaders to make sure of a large turnout. Food and transportation were promised, and a fine of five bolivianos was threatened for those campesinos who would fail to appear.

The general and his party were met at the edge of town by the sub-prefect, the alcalde, the official mayor and several campesino dirigentes. The entire group marched to the central plaza where a dense mass of people awaited them. Most, perhaps four-fifths, were campesinos whose sindicato banners identified them: "Central Campesino de la Provincia Larecaja", "Subcentral Campesino de Laripata", "Subcentral Campesino de Ylabaya", "Subcentral Campesino de Tacacoma", "Subcentral Campesino de Quiabaya", "Subcentral Campesino de Sorejaya", "Subcentral Campesino de Atahualpani". And there were signs with political slogans: "General Barrientos, future President of Bolivia"; "No more campesino demagogues with Barrientos"; "With Barrientos grows the Agrarian Reform"; "Barrientos, the people of Sorata salute you". Few of those present were actually people of Sorata.

The general and his entourage mounted to the second-story balconies of the alcaldia, and there for an hour made speeches typical of such occasions. The alcalde and the sub-prefect opened the series with the usual words of praise and welcome. Both appeared nervous and ill at ease, and their presentations excited no one. They were followed by an official of the national campesino confederation, who spoke in Aymara and addressed his comments strictly to the campesinos, asserting that the general was the only real friend they had and that the old MNR politicians had helped themselves much more than they had helped the campesinos. He was followed by the official mayor of Sorata, who read a proclamation which declared that the campesino sindicatos of the province had voted unanimously to support General Barrientos for the presidency and Francisco Campos as national deputy to represent the province; and further, that all of the rest of the people of the province, including all the social classes, had resolved to support an identical resolution. This announcement met with astonishment, since no one knew of any meeting of the provincial sindicatos that could have voted such a resolution, and

the few vecinos present, who certainly were a part of "all the social classes", were even more certain that they had not assented to any such proclamation. The vecinos were incensed by this announcement that they supported Barrientos when, in fact, most of them opposed him.

General Barrientos came forward last, speaking briefly and concentrating on the evils of the old MNR rather than on promises to the campesinos. Only in his final sentences did he touch on rural problems, and then not in specific terms, pointing out the importance of economic development, the usefulness of roads to link the internal markets of the country, and the special need to improve rural education and agricultural technology, ending with a reminder that it was a civic obligation to vote on July 3. The sub-prefect and the visiting sindicato officials from La Paz led the crowd in cheering the general during his speech. Everyone applauded when he was done, but there was no great show of enthusiasm. The ceremony over, the official party crossed the plaza to the home of a prominent vecino for a very brief reception, after which the general and his party immediately set off for La Paz.

The general did not help his cause very much in Sorata, especially among the campesinos. They were less interested in hearing about the crimes of the MNR than about the future of agrarian reform and the protection and aid they could expect from the MPC. Meantime, sindicato leaders, refraining from any attack on the MNR, were stressing that the new MPC was but a continuation of the MNR. The same programs were to continue, only some of the names were to be changed. Indeed, even the names were remaining the same, as old MNR politicians reappeared under the MPC label. The level of befuddlement among the campesinos at this time is suggested by the fact that one of them said that he had been told to come to town that day to welcome Paz Estenssoro to Sorata. This campesino, who had never seen any president of Bolivia, went back to the ex-hacienda thinking that he had in fact seen Paz Estenssoro.

The sindicato dirigentes themselves were not so easily manipulated. That the general had failed in his visit to dispel the suspicion that he might betray the revolution became apparent on the first of May, when a meeting of dirigentes and officials was held in Sorata, called by the sub-prefect as secretary-general of the provincial sindicato organization. The aim of Campos in holding this meeting was to secure approval of his candidacy for the post of deputy in the national congress. It now became clear that the proclamation read during the Barrientos visit, in which the sindicatos were alleged to have declared themselves in favor of the sub-prefect as national deputy, was but a piece of political sleight-of-hand. It was in fact the national campesino confederation in La Paz that had picked Campos to run. But they were aware that he would have to have the support of the provincial dirigentes to have any effect on the campesino vote, and the proclamation had been a dodge to give the impression that he had dirigente backing. The dirigentes -- not the national campesino confederation -- controlled the campesino vote, and the national government and MPC officials had to have it to legalize their

regime. Campos stressed at the meeting that he was a candidate of the national campesino confederation, not of the MPC, and that his moving to higher office would be of great benefit to the campesinos of the province.

The meeting called by Campos disclosed uncertainty and dissatisfaction with him and with the MPC. It was typically chaotic. Seated at a table on one side of the patio of the alcaldia were the sub-prefect, the alcalde, the agrarian judge, the Laripata dirigente, Vicente Pelayo, and the Millipaya dirigente, Santiago Romero. Seated in groups around the courtyard were other sindicato dirigentes and delegates. The men seated at the central table successively addressed the group and a few dirigentes occasionally responded, but throughout the session there was a continuous murmur and hubbub, constant conversation and commenting, whether or not anyone had the floor.

Dirigentes from Ilabaya, Atahuallpani and Laripata attacked the sub-prefect, complaining of the lack of visible rewards for campesino support of the government over the years. Alonso Cullico of Ilabaya summed up the criticism: "We have always given our support, but for nothing. We have not been aided in any way." One campesino said, "Well spoken. Those are true words"; and another, "That's right. That and more ought to be told them". After many variations of this theme, Campos finally responded, pleading that he had done his best but was hampered by lack of resources:

You are right to complain, but you should consider that I never abused my office, as Toribio Salas did, who filled his house with gifts. If there is no money, nothing can be done. What should I do, rob a bank to get money?

After considerably more criticism, several of the chief dirigentes moved toward conciliation. Romero of Millipaya said:

If the confederation in La Paz has selected him for the panel of candidates, what is there for us to do?

Another dirigente emphasized the value of having a campesino deputy:

I am not happy to deliver my body and soul to politics, but the province must have a deputy. In this, the political parties ought to reward the campesinos.

Finally it was said that Campos would have to take his obligations to the campesinos seriously, and several suggested that he be required to commit to paper that he would work for what the campesinos wanted, for more teachers, for agricultural equipment and improved communications. Some dirigentes argued that the sindicato should support Campos only if he would run under the MNR label, but the more experienced recognized that this would threaten the influence of Sorata sindicatos in the national

government, and they succeeded in silencing this proposal. The agrarian judge then read a declaration giving the support of the Laricaja sindicatos to Campos. He read it in Spanish, leaving many not fully aware of what he had said. At this point it was late in the afternoon and most of the delegates were long since ready to begin their hike back to their own communities. There was no statement of opposition when the judge finished his reading, so the declaration was accepted. The dirigente from Atahualpani expressed the viewpoint of many when he said:

We agreed on the candidacy of Campos, but as a representative of the campesinos and not of the MPC. Once elected he will have to remain loyal to us and a firm defender of MNR ideals. We want to maintain the unity of the campesinos and take advantage of the circumstances to send to the national congress a large number of campesino delegates, since we don't know whether we will have another occasion like this one. But we are determined, also, to follow the policy of the MNR, even if it is in a concealed way.

Discussing the meeting on the following day, a dirigente from Atahualpani, now residing in Sorata, said:

To have supported the MNR would inevitably have meant loss of the influence and power we have in the province.

In the two months between this May meeting and the national elections on July 3 the sub-prefect spent most of his time visiting the campesino sindicato communities throughout the province. Aware of the dissatisfaction as well as the confusion caused by his having changed parties, he emphasized the continuity of the MPC with the MNR and the value of having campesino representatives in the national government. He was sometimes accompanied by the agrarian judge, who had been named the electoral judge for some of the cantons, and sometimes by the alcalde.

The law requires the registering of all adult citizens not later than 30 days before an election. An electoral judge must also be named for each province. For Laricaja, the juez instructor was named to this post, with the responsibility to uphold the electoral laws. In Sorata, 1,796 persons were registered, taking in all adult residents of the nearby campesino village of Laripata and campesinos on the surrounding ex-haciendas. This total included a small number of campesinos who were slipped in to register the night before the election on orders of the sub-prefect. This caused a flurry when it was discovered by MNR and FSB militants. They seized the registration book in a cloak-and-dagger operation, but agreed to turn it over to the electoral judge in exchange for a sworn statement about the events, to be used as a basis of formal complaint.

Six voting tables were set up in Sorata for the six separate lists of registered voters. The tables opened at 8:30, each manned by eight literate residents elected at a public meeting,

and voting went on for eight hours. Contrary to law, representatives of all parties -- including the sub-prefect, the alcalde and the official mayor -- continued electioneering efforts among the registrants who were waiting in line to vote. At the start of the voting, soldiers of a detachment that had been sent to the town to avert violence were stationed at each of the voting tables and at the main plaza intersections. Spokesmen of the minority parties objected that this was a heavy-handed show of force, meant to intimidate the voters, especially the campesinos, so the electoral judge ordered them away from the voting lines.

The outcome of the election in Sorata approximated the outcome widely predicted at both national and local levels. The MPC coalition received 58% of the votes, the MNR 24%, the FSB 15%. There were two other MNR groups involved in the election, one called the MRP, while the factions headed by Siles Zuazo, Lechin, and other important national MNR leaders, had asked their followers to cast a white ballot in protest. The MRP and white ballots accounted for the remaining 3%. While a detailed analysis of voting patterns among Sorata residents alone is not possible, the registration of voters in sets of 300 makes it possible to contrast a town list with a Laripata campesino list. The Laripata campesinos overwhelmingly voted for the MPC, giving it 79%, compared to 18% for the MNR and 3% for the FSB. In contrast, town voters strongly supported each of the three major local parties, giving the MPC 39%, the MNR 29% and the FSB 26%. While no white or MRP ballots were cast by the Laripata campesinos, 5% in Sorata cast white ballots. Thus the Laripata sindicato delivered a sizeable majority vote for the new MPC party. The confusion in switching the sindicato campesinos from the MNR to a new party was successfully overcome. Even in the town itself, MPC leaders, who were also the major local government officials, were able to persuade a majority of the townsmen to vote for the new party. However, the old MNR and the FSB have strong political leadership, and both were able to obtain a substantial vote.

On the local level, the national election was a victory for the sub-prefect and his leadership of the MPC. It was also a victory for the campesinos over the vecinos of Sorata. Campos became national deputy for the province, and he was replaced as sub-prefect by a campesino dirigente from Ilabaya, one of a panel of three nominated by the May campesino meeting in Sorata. In this somewhat tortuous and uncertain transition from one national administration to another, from one government political party to a new one, the campesino dirigentes managed to maintain their political ascendancy in the province of Larecaja and continued their domination of the town.

### Governing the Town

The formal structure of local government in Sorata, as a provincial capital, is identical to that described for Coroico and the other two communities, but some of the problems affecting the operation of local government in the other towns are even greater in Sorata. The occupancy of local government office by sindicato

campesino leaders is viewed as a reward for party work. In addition, campesino sindicato influence frequently places barely literate campesinos in local government, rather than town vecinos who are the educated elite of the community. Further, sindicato factionalism makes for sudden changes of officeholders.

In addition to the familiar problems of overlapping jurisdiction, lack of training, insecure tenure, underfinancing and the self-serving of officeholders, there are special differences in Sorata that are attributable to campesino control of government. A campesino official is likely to have his residence, or at least his primary residence, in a campesino village. In addition, he generally owns land in his village. For both of these reasons campesino officials are frequently absent from the town and hence are out of touch with townspeople, many of whom already resent them as outsiders, as crude "indios". Since these officials are relatively isolated in the community, and sensitive to the sindicatos as their source of power, they are not responsive to the desires of townspeople. The campesino point of view in the conflict between townspeople, meaning the vecinos who once controlled the local government, and the new officials who represent the sindicatos, is expressed in the following comment by a campesino on the activities of the former vecino alcalde:

It is true that Moran pruned the plaza shrubs and trees and painted the alcaldia, but we campesinos don't eat better for what the alcalde did. What's the use of these works? What we need are more seeds and more tools.

The great differences in education, style of life and social status, and therefore in social and civic interests and objectives, between town vecinos and campesino officials give rise to unremitting conflict that oscillates between outspoken re-primations and a studied ignoring of the opposition. Criticism of campesino officials by vecinos among themselves is continuous and intense, directed at incompetence, corruption, boorish manners and drunkenness. With the lengthening of time since the vecinos were in power, a pattern of destructive criticism and general obstructionism has developed among them. They have become a passive opposition, active only to complain or ridicule. The officials are privately sensitive to vecino criticism, but in their official activities they ignore it completely, though from time to time they make overtures to vecinos to participate in civic celebrations for a show of unity. For the most part, vecinos ignore these overtures and are conspicuous by their absence. For example, on the July 16 Independence Day celebration of 1966 the alcalde, Juan Roblis, put up posters around town inviting everyone to a reception at the alcaldia. Commenting on the absence of vecinos, Campos said:

The only ones who didn't take part were the vecinos, because they don't want to get involved with "those indios". But we don't pay any attention. After so many years of living here, we know how they behave.

When vecinos are stimulated to act on some community issue they generally attempt to do so quite independently. When the Bolivian Automobile Club announced that one of their series of road races would be run between La Paz and Sorata, the vecinos realized that this would bring national attention to the town and perhaps result in improvement of the road, so they formed a committee to raise funds and organize a fiesta at the conclusion of the race. On the day of the race the vecino committee formed a welcoming group at the edge of town, while town officials waited at the alcaldia to greet the racers with nothing more than a brief ceremony. The big event of the day was a splendid dinner and party given by the vecinos at the large prefectural hotel. Everyone in town was invited, but while vecinos dined and danced in the hotel with the racers, the less distinguished townspeople, including government officials, drank and danced in the courtyard. Similarly, an impending visit of inspection by the prefect of the department was announced to local officials by a vecino forastero as if it were a personal visit to himself, he adding that the vecinos would hold a meeting with the prefect. The official mayor commented:

This guy would like to show the prefect that the authorities here in Sorata are asleep, while he is the only one who does anything. Imagine, when we called a meeting to organize a reception and to prepare a list of requests to submit to the prefect, this fellow called another meeting of vecinos to take place at the same time at the public school.

Since it was an official visit, the prefect attended the meeting called by the local authorities. Later in the day, while the prefect was inspecting the town in the company of the local officials and a few prominent vecinos, Roblis, the alcalde, pointed to the community swimming pool then being completed and boasted of his initiative in this project. He had hardly closed his mouth when Soruco, the head of the truckers' sindicato and a marginal vecino, broke out with this statement:

Allow me, señor prefect, but I think that you have the right to know that the only thing that the alcalde, together with his official mayor, is able to do is drink all day long. Even in the case of the swimming pool, the truck drivers are the ones who carried the sand from Achacachi without cost, and he didn't even mention that. It would be much better if this man here were dismissed because, as an alcalde, he's no good.

There is some indication that campesino officials would like an end to this conflict, would prefer collaboration. But their wish is ignored. Though the vecinos, through their criticism and hostility, isolate themselves from the center of political power in the area, they retain a little of their former prestige.

The formal structure of justice in Sorata is identical to that of the three provincial capitals already described. There are

the two levels of judges, juez de partido and juez instructor, professional lawyers who are assisted by full-time clerks. There are also four parochial judges, who certify signatures and take depositions. And there is the agrarian judge, concerned with agrarian reform and land disputes, though he was formerly a surveyor and has had no legal training. As in the other three towns, the enforcement of law is an activity of any local official. The professional law enforcers consisted until 1965 of a small unit of the national police, the Carbineros. After the coup of November, 1964, the new military government reorganized the Carbineros in two separate branches, the Guardia de Seguridad Nacional and the Direccion de Investigacion Criminal, with the former responsible for law enforcement and the latter responsible for the investigation of crime. This added a second police officer to the local scene and further complicated the jurisdictional problem. Besides their having the informal and vague judicial authority that almost any local government official may assume, police officers are authorized to sit as judges in minor cases.

Aside from summary justice dispensed by local officials, there is not much judicial activity. In 1964 there were 41 civil and criminal cases heard by the two local judges, and in 1965 they heard 17; but these figures may be an inexact indication of formal legal action, for there are no venue limitations on the jurisdiction of courts. A case may be taken to any part of the country. There may be advantages in this regulation. Vecinos prefer not to air their problems before local judges and therefore initiate legal actions in La Paz. Similarly, country campesinos avoid the courts in town whenever possible, for they suspect the quality of local justice. Further, a wide range of both civil and criminal cases are resolved in the campesino villages either by dirigentes, much as local government officials hear cases in the town, or by their sindicato's secretario de justicia.

Mainly only town campesinos and a few cholos appear in civil and criminal courts in town. Criminal cases predominate, mostly charges of physical assault, while marital desertion and separation account for a majority of the civil cases. The participants have available as counsel only the tinterillos. There are six full-time tinterillos, all middle-aged to elderly men, plus three or four young men who occasionally take cases. Most of the tinterillos have had less than a complete primary school education and know little formal law. Instead, they depend on good personal relations with the judges. Judges and tinterillos see much of each other. They drink and dine together and pass many hours in informal chatting. Such relations make it easy to settle on procedures and reach a judgment before a case is called. The formal moves, such as the filing of a writ, are frequently not undertaken by the advocate tinterillo but by the judge, for he is the only one who knows the proper form. Under this system it is not unusual for both plaintiff and defendant to suffer alike through informal agreements reached between the contending tinterillos on the one hand and the presiding judge on the other.

The tinterillos have no fixed fees, but charge what the client can afford or what the case appears to be worth. Actions con-



tinue for weeks, months, even years, and at each successive stage the tinterillo expects some payment. Higher payments stir his diligence and often ensure favorable decisions. The modest salaries of judges, which provide them with a very meager livelihood, make them sympathetic and persuadable.

In 1966 a small campesino merchant went to La Paz on business, leaving his tienda in charge of his two adolescent daughters. One night during the father's absence five town campesino boys got into the house, had sexual relations with the two girls and took \$80 from the till when they left. On the following day the boys came back for more, but their noisy coming and going and the rumpus in the tienda aroused the suspicion of a neighbor, who blocked the doorway, forcing the boys to go out a back window. On the father's return the neighbor told him what had been going on. After questioning his daughters the father went to the police and denounced the boys for theft and sexual abuse of minors, the two girls giving evidence. The police captain arrested all five of the boys and locked them in the local jail.

The police captain turned the case over to the juez de partido for disposition. The case actually belonged to the juez instructor, but since he was absent from town the police captain decided to give it to the other judge. In the meantime, one of the tinterillos was asked to defend two of the boys and he invited the judge and captain to his house to discuss the case. The captain brought with him the two young clients of the tinterillo. There at the house, after an hour or so of pleasant drinking, the three decided that an informal settlement out of court was the best solution, and ordered the families of the two boys to pay damages of \$16 each and to return the stolen \$80. The judge then persuaded the father of the two girls to drop his complaints. It is not known who received what part of the damages. When the parents of the other three boys heard of the settlement they went to the sub-prefect and alcalde and asked that their sons be released until the juez instructor could hear the case. By the time the juez instructor came back all five families had accepted the settlement and the father of the girls had dropped his complaint.

## Chapter 3

### SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Until the middle of this century Sorata had a classical rural Bolivian stratification order. At the top were the gente decente, the families of European ancestry who owned or managed the large trading houses and the large haciendas. There were perhaps 50 such families in Sorata. They were somewhat more heterogeneous in terms of original nationality than their counterparts in Coroico, for not only were there families of Spanish origin, but also many who had come from Germany, England and other European countries. These are the families who spoke Spanish, who had university educations, and who occupied the large mansions on or near the central plaza. They dressed in clothing imported from Europe, furnished their houses with articles from Europe, modeled their living and lives after European high culture and society, and were at their very best in the century between 1850 and 1950, the period of great mercantile affluence. This is how one of the elderly decentes, a woman whose family has abandoned Sorata and who now lives with her adult children in La Paz, recalls those times:

After work, around six o'clock, all the gente buena would go home and change into their summer clothes to parade around the plaza -- the women with their parasols, their light cotton summer dresses down to their ankles, strolling around, the children playing in the park. There would be a band playing and everyone would be walking around. Then, after that they would go to the club to dance and drink. It had carpeted floors, not wood, and the best furniture, brought from Vienna. And grand pianos. There were people who knew how to play then. They would go there to drink and to listen to good music.

We drank the best kinds of liquors: champagne from France, wine from Spain, whiskey from England. Anything we wanted. That whiskey cost three bolivianos and twenty centavos, a lot then. The champagne cost twelve bolivianos, also a lot. But we traded in English sterling at that time. It was used freely in town and everybody had money. In those days we could afford to have whatever we wanted, like parties with real bands all the time. The preserves and food that were brought in was another fantastic thing. No one in La Paz could get or even knew of these brands. We had smoked fish from Norway in huge cans and olive oil from Italy. There were crackers, candies, and cheeses from Switzerland and Holland. There was everything we wanted, and the people came from La Paz to buy these things.

For the dances the women carried feathered fans for the quadrilles and wore long white gloves. They wore dresses brought from France, made from the best velvet. And they wore their hair high. It reminds me of the current pouf styles. There were tiny shoes, made of leather so fine that you could double them over, that were just for dancing, and in any color that you wanted. The men wore smoking jackets for these parties, with black tie, white gloves, also for the quadrille. And they would bring in orchestras from La Paz on mule back. People would come from La Paz just to shop in these stores. And for the fiestas, the best families would come out from La Paz and stay for weeks in the big houses like ours, or that of the Palacios, or the Gunthers. Oh, there was constant activity, and the young people could always find work and diversion.

The decentes of that time had the wealth, the power and authority. They dominated government and had authority over the campesino population. They were also the prestige elite in both town and countryside. Below the decentes were the two mixed strata, the mestizos and then the cholos, both racially mixed, the mestizos usually the offspring of decente fathers. The fourth and bottom rung of the hierarchy was occupied by the indios.

### Changing the Stratification Order

In the late 1930's and 1940's the internal and international commerce from which the decente families drew the major share of their income began to decline, and since hacienda profits could not compensate for the losses in trade, decente families sought opportunities elsewhere. This process had hardly begun when the Revolution of 1952 occurred and greatly accelerated the gente decente exodus. Although apparently rather little physical violence occurred on the haciendas, the anti-hacendado and pro-campesino slogans and statements of the MNR leaders, the land reform policies of the new government, and the economic and political agitation among the campesino population made it expedient for most decentes to abandon their haciendas. One of the few decentes remaining in town comments:

The hacienda is a long way from town, and for five years there was that fear of the campesinos. My mother told us to leave the haciendas alone, that running them was not worth the risk of being killed by the campesinos. We didn't come back for five whole years for fear of them. They took over the hacienda house and ruined it.

It was several years before decente families had enough confidence to assert their rights to land that remained to them, but by that time most had established themselves in the cities. One elderly decente, now a resident of La Paz, explains what happened:

Here in Sorata, this used to be my home. I had that big house that is now the public primary school. I sold that. Then we also had property way up in the mountains that we sold. And we sold our villa down at the canto to the Urtados because my children went to La Paz to be educated. Then they found work there and they no longer came back to Sorata. It's a problem to maintain the properties, and we sold the fincas to pay for the education of the children. Now there is nothing here. There are no youth because they can't find jobs here. There is no activity at all. It's vacant. I even note a difference with this generation. They don't look the same. They are all mixed now. But before, they were blancos and they were tall. That was my generation. Now I'm old and sad because I knew what Sorata was like.

When the revolution freed the peons they went off in increasing numbers to the Tipuani and Mapiri gold fields, and the lucky ones returned to settle in the town. AS one of the cholos puts it:

Today the only ones who are in a good position are these indios, who are into everything. Don't you see that they are the only ones buying houses on the plaza, trucks, houses in La Paz, with all that money that they take out of Tipuani. In contrast, the vecinos are ruined and they are behind, like the dull-witted. The reason is that they are poor and are selling everything, while the indios have money and are better off than we vecinos. There used to be gente decente of the real society here in Sorata, but now it's all these indios.

As a result of economic and political changes and subsequent demographic changes, the foundations of the traditional stratification order were largely destroyed, the means of recruitment to status radically altered; and the conditions and symbols of status have changed until they conflict rather than reinforce each other. The symmetry in wealth, power and prestige seen in a stable, little-changing stratification system like that of Villa Abecia has disappeared in Sorata. No stratum or social group has survived that can claim significant measures of the several elements of status.

While racial terms like blanco and indio are still in widespread use locally, the congruity of race and status has virtually disappeared. The European types who once constituted the vecinos are almost all gone, while those of mixed race have begun to intermarry with the remnant blancos and are moving up into the vecino stratum. There is also increasing intermarriage of former Indian peons with cholos and mestizos. Race has ceased to be an important justification for the stratification order and has become mainly a vehicle of protest utilized by those who have been threatened or who have suffered from the changes that followed the revolution. Language, occupation, education, dress, and

other cultural attributes have also become ambiguous in defining status. Whereas campesinos once received little or no education, campesino children are now required, at least under law, to attend public school. This has been an important factor in the movement of campesinos to the towns, where the schools are better than in the countryside. Today the public primary school has many more children of campesino and former campesino families in it than children of any other stratum. A prominent comerciante describes what has happened:

None of the Sorateños of my age [45-50 years old] knows how to read or write. I myself was unable to attend school because campesinos were prohibited from going to classes. When we would venture to enter the classrooms the school children as well as the teachers kicked us and mistreated us until we would leave. In my time hardly any campesinos could go to school, but today, thanks to God, all that has changed. In the church school and in the public school, more than four-fifths of the students are children of campesinos and cholos. If it is true that education here has not progressed much, nevertheless we can say that we now enjoy much more freedom to educate our children.

The advanced education that was taken for granted among the old decentes has become an important goal of many cholos and town campesinos. Many of the more prosperous cholo and town campesino families are sending their children to the universities in La Paz and other centers.

As a result of some exposure to formal education, of greater freedom of movement and new social contacts, the Aymara speaker in town is learning Spanish. Aymara is still widely used in the home, the marketplace and the tiendas, especially by women, but there is a growing awareness among town campesinos that their language reveals their peon origin and they have become quite intent upon the use of Spanish. For example, a town campesino came to the office of the public notary and in broken Spanish asked for a document he needed. A vecino who could speak Aymara questioned him, using Aymara; but before he could complete his sentence the town campesino interrupted to say that he could speak perfectly well and preferred to discuss his business in Spanish.

As with education and language, so with the strata distinctiveness of dress and other aspects of life style. Almost all men in town wear the same type of manufactured clothing, different only in cleanliness and condition. Western-style dress is also being adopted by the women, though it has far from displaced the traditional pollera.

In the past decade all of the remaining decentes have suffered a decline in their standard of living. All have financial problems, for some more serious than for others. Many have had to engage in hard physical work for the first time in their lives. As their friends have moved away or died, as their living

conditions have declined and their economic problems continually press in on them, and as the town and its residents have changed, the old decentes have become resigned to a bleak future, but most have become withdrawn and bitter, an attitude well expressed in the following comment by one of them:

Look how those indios have progressed. Before they had only straw on the roofs of their houses and now they have corrugated metal. There are some indios who are good, respectful, loving and deferential. Others think a lot of themselves, think they are señores. Imagine, they do not even greet the gente blanca. Before, the indios would affectionately greet the vecinos, but today the indios want the vecinos to greet them first. What a barbarity! How people have changed!

Look at the town, once the pride of Bolivia, now a town of indios. Most of the vecinos have died or have left it. In a little while only indios are going to own the town. Obviously, they have the money and can buy what they please. It is all right that the campesinos live in good houses, but it is painful to see the town populated by indios when before there were only caballeros, dressed in cashmere clothes and well off.

I do not believe those times will ever return. I do not believe we will see again those good days when the vecinos, cholos and indios all kept to their own places. Today everything has changed. Vecinos, cholos and indios are all mixed together. You have seen that vecinos have married cholos, and indios have married cholos. Yes, today there is no justice. There is no sense of responsibility. The government is against the patrons. There is no loyalty. Hate and rancor dominate the dirigentes. I do not know what is to become of Bolivia. Life is becoming more difficult because there are no guarantees for anyone.

Most of the few decentes still in town are granted vecino status, though often qualified; but this survival of status does not necessarily extend to their children. Another social type that is generally accorded vecino status is the outside professional. This would include the doctor, the dentist, the agronomist, the water resources engineer and the judges. In communities where there is a substantial, cohesive vecino stratum, such outsiders are generally accorded vecino status, but separate and slightly below that of the local vecino. He is the vecino forastero, and will continue to be considered an outsider no matter how long he remains in town, generally kept at a distance by true vecinos. Since there are so few traditional vecinos in Sorata, these outside professionals are much more readily accepted among them, though some, such as the judges, may find that their work brings them together with the local government campesinos and cholos, and this clouds their status.

In a situation where so many of the old vecinos have little money and a negative outlook, the enterprising, positive character of the successful comerciante cholos has made them prominent in the community and has earned them a measure of vecino status, even though old vecinos as well as others are apt to disparage them as "only cholos".

The same instability of status that characterizes the vecinos applies also to the other 90% of the population. A large proportion of these townspeople are cholos. An even larger proportion are campesino immigrants from the surrounding countryside. Many of these families are different from the campesinos of the villages and ex-haciendas in dress, speech and manner. Most can be readily distinguished from the rural campesino who comes to town only on market days. While some are still engaged in agriculture, the majority by far now work at town jobs, the same jobs that were once a monopoly of the cholos, like small-scale buying and selling, craft work and skilled labor. The female minoristas come not only from cholo families but from former campesino families. The tailors, the shoemakers, the truck drivers, the carpenters, are not alone cholos, but former campesinos.

Many terms are current to differentiate town campesinos from the rural campesinos -- campesino refinado, chuta, medio, indio, indio refinado, and mozo. However, the distinctions implied by these terms are mainly observed at the extremes. A blending of town campesino with cholo has been speeded by a decreasing distinctiveness in the cholos themselves, whose special forms of dress, forms of Spanish speech, and forms of conduct are disappearing as they adopt vecino-like ways. There are townspeople who are clearly identifiable by their speech, dress, and manner as having a campesino background. On the other hand, there are growing numbers of persons from both cholo and campesino families who are now indistinguishable, not only from each other but also from the old vecinos. These persons are no longer cholos or campesinos, but neither are they as yet vecinos.

### Mobility and Status Relations

Status change, radical social mobility, is on all sides, both up and down, blurring the concepts and assignment of position, as shown in the following question and answer discussion:

I don't understand all the differences that exist.  
There is de pollera, de vestido, gente buena.

Q: Can you tell me what they all mean?

All right. I will because I know. First of all,  
an indio is an indio, no matter what.

Q: How can you tell?

By the way he looks, his face, and the way he speaks.  
One just knows. And you know what his background is.  
Then there are cholos, who are refined indios, like

this one next door. She is a chola.

Q: Does she wear pollera?

Yes, she does, but her daughters don't. They are trying to raise themselves up, but they can't because they have a chola mother. You can't change what you are. Why, there are even cases of indias here in town trying to put on vestidos. Other indios tell them to take those clothes off and not to try to put on airs.

Q: What about this Tola family?

Indios. They come from the interior, and were nothing but panderos when they first came. I saw them then, so I know how they were. But they worked hard and lifted themselves up. Now she has a tienda. But they were nothing but panderos who started out with a sack of flour and a tin of lard and worked like dogs.

Q: Now explain to me about the gente decente. Can they ever lose their position?

Never. Don't you see? Take the race, any race -- you for instance are a gringo. Even if you put on Indian clothes and wore the worst poncho they would still call you a gringo. But they'd say, "oh, look at the poor gringuita". That's the way it is with the gente buena here too. They can lose all their money and not dress nicely, but you still recognize them for what they are.

Q: How?

Because they speak well, they act well. The people still hold a respect for them because of these qualities that one retains no matter what situation he is in. A caballero, born a caballero, is always a caballero.

Q: What if they marry an india or a chola?

No, they can't.

Q: But what if they do? Aren't there some cases like that?

Not that I know of. [The husband of the daughter of a well-known vecino family walks by.]

Q: What about that fellow who just walked by?

Ah, yes. Now there is an example. That Quintana girl married him and, well, he's really not of the gente buena. His mother is nothing but an india.



And the thing with the wife is that her first husband was below her too. His mother still lives down by the market, that old cholita who is in mourning all the time. I remember when the girl wanted to marry the first husband. Her family told her not to, that he was nothing more than a cholo, but she didn't listen to them. They say that the old mother ran him out of town, down to the mines. They got a divorce.

Q: What about the present marriage?

Well, as I said, he's below her, but you have to look at it this way. She was so thin before, poor little thing. Her waist was no bigger than a branch. Since she's married to him, she's gotten fatter and happier, you can tell. I guess it's a case of la vida buena sin orgullo. Oh, I have another example for you. You know the woman on the corner? Well, she is contrabando de la cocina! Her father was some vecino in town, but he was fooling around with the cook, a common india, in the kitchen, and she was the result. She put on polleras, then de vestidos. She couldn't make up her mind what she was.

Q: How do the people of the town refer to her?

Those of us who know call her the cholita! Then she married just another of her kind, some indio from the interior. They are "ordinary" people. [She sees Antonio Paso walk by.] You see him? There's another example of a cholo.

Q: How do you mean?

He's sort of a refined indio. He and his wife come from the interior.

This brief discussion illustrates many of the varieties of status mobility taking place in Sorata. One is the movement from campesino to cholo-like status. An example was Paso, the refined indio who is now considered a cholo. He has been successful economically, runs a small hotel, sells gasoline and has several other commercial activities. His arrival as a cholo was symbolized when he was the preste, the formal host, a very costly and honorific role, for one of the major town fiestas. Another route to status is political. There are several men in town now who currently or in past years have been important political figures, who came from the campesino villages but are now considered townsmen with an ambiguous cholo rather than campesino status. Most have profited economically from political success, but this prosperity has not always proved very durable.

Aside from the general decline of the old vecino stratum as a whole, there has been considerable variation in the extent of individual or family downward mobility. One or two families have survived with much of their former prestige still intact, the

last survivals of the real social elite of the community, but most have had their claims to old elite status compromised in varying degrees. Such is the case of the family of Alfredo Quintana, who in a previous chapter was shot by campesinos during a civic celebration.

Quintana was a brother of the woman who chose "la vida buena sin orgullo" in the question and answer discussion. The Quintana family is a distinguished one in Sorata, but today only fragments remain, an elderly widowed mother and her three daughters, two married and one single. The mother occupies a large house at the corner of the plaza, but because she has no land and little money she rents rooms to female schoolteachers. The husbands of both of the married daughters come from cholo families, though neither is identified as a traditional cholo. However, neither are they vecinos. The marriages have been a constant source of humiliation and displeasure for the mother. One married daughter was married previously to a cholo, with the following familial effect:

In her first marriage she married a man of cholo background, son of a señora de pollera, which was the basis of constant hostility on the part of her relatives. They kept telling her, "you have married a cholo", and always referred to him as "el cholito Espinosa". Finally the husband couldn't take it any longer and deserted the family to go to Tipuani in search of his fortune, in order to bring about some change in his life. Embittered by that family, he died in the gold fields. The widow then married again, a man who was also of cholo background.

Both the mother and single daughter are extremely outspoken in disparaging everyone who is cholo or campesino. They let pass few opportunities to criticize or demean those whom they consider their social inferiors, which is almost everyone in town. Indeed, one of the prominent features of the Sorata status order is the antagonism shown toward those of different status. One form of this is the negative stereotype. Vecinos say of campesinos that they smell bad, that they have limited abilities and are not good for much except simple agricultural work, that they are dangerous and violent, that they are like animals in their behavior. Another form of this antagonism is ridicule, making fun of campesinos who ask for letters at the post office in the name of the sender instead of the receiver. A third form is abuse. A vecino widow who has a small tienda on the plaza presents an example. The local government had undertaken to prune the large trees in the central plaza in preparation for the July 16 Independence Day celebration, and one afternoon three days before the big event several men appeared with machetes and started chopping. The widow stood at the front of her tienda on the plaza, ranting:

Indios! that's all they are. Ignorantes! Burros! Lackeys! They don't even think. Ay, we used to have a nice town of vecinos, not people from the outside. They were people who cared, and now they

are nothing who are running this city. [A young man, her nephew, walks up and the widow tells him in strong, grating tones to look at the mess being made of the plaza.] The worst of them all is that guy Zepeda. He couldn't make it when we vecinos were in power, but now he's here and taking advantage of the campesinos. But I ask him who he thinks he is.

Hey you, Zepeda [said in a most offensive way], what are you doing to the plaza? A bunch of brutes you're employing to fix up those trees. You should go and see with what fondness they care for their trees in Cochabamba and La Paz. [Zepeda hears her, looks over, then turns his back again. She continues to yell at him. Everyone along the plaza can hear her yelling, but he won't turn and face her. As she calls out, he moves away and walks down through the plaza.] Che, burro! Don't go away, don't run away. He always runs whenever you confront him to his face. He's a coward. That's the way they all are, brutes, ignorantes, not a brain in their head.

Another form of antagonism is social rejection. One mobile young man from a cholo family complains sadly that he told his vecino wife before their marriage that she was not to be upset if she heard his enemies call him a cholo. Now, he says that when his young wife gets mad at him she calls him a cholo. But he also is very ambivalent about his cholo relatives. It bothers him that his mother wears pollera. In talking of his mother, he tells of her dignity and good manners and how well she wears the pollera, but in the next sentence asserts that she is too good to be wearing pollera. The traditional cholo identifies with the traditional vecino, as the following discussion indicates:

Q: Do you people ever get together with the vecinos?

No, we always have our reunions apart.

Q: What is the reason for that?

As you must know, the aristocracy are different and it is difficult for them to mix with craftsmen and workers.

Q: What about the town campesinos? Do you ever get together with them, for example, at some fiesta or social occasion?

Well, just as the principal vecinos don't mix with the craftsmen, neither do we mix with the town campesinos. We call them indios refinados. Since they do the same kinds of work they try to approach me. From time to time they will tell me, "Let's have a beer", but I always find some pretext to avoid them, like saying I'm not well.

Q: What would happen if you accepted such an invitation?

There would be a lot of talk. The other craftsmen would say to me, "What's the matter with you? You must be degenerating". Besides, I don't mix with them because they're very forward and ill-bred, and because they are always getting drunk and bothering the blancos.

In Sorata, as in Coroico, the status order has undergone a series of major changes, but in Sorata these have been more profound. This is vividly expressed in the following comment by an elderly member of an old cholo family:

We say, "The toad is on the balcony and the eagle is in the dirt". That suits them. Don't you see? This means that the people give undue importance to the lowly people, to the campesinos, and they forget the really good people, who are at the bottom now, like the eagle.



## Chapter 4

### GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

There is in Sorata the same range of groups and organizations already encountered in Reyes and Coroico. And again, most of the formal groups and organizations are of limited importance to their members and of even less importance to town affairs as a whole, though there is an exception in the sindicato de transportistas. The significant groups tend to be those formed on the basis of kinship, and secondarily, friendship. But even in these groups there is much conflict, physical violence, and rupture of relations.

#### Family and Kin

The strongest social bonds are those between close kin, between husband and wife and parents and their children. In this nuclear family there are the stronger and more enduring relations of affection, cooperation and support. The tendency toward small family size observed in Coroico is even greater in Sorata. While 25.9% of the households in Coroico have two or less persons and 58.8% have four or less, the comparable proportions in Sorata are 36.2% and 71.3%, respectively.

This is in part the result of several trends in the past decade. One is the increased tendency of young adults to leave Sorata for the cities, especially La Paz, because of few job opportunities at home. Town campesino families send their daughters to La Paz to work as servants, and their brothers look for unskilled work, or jobs as apprentices to skilled craftsmen. At the other end of the status scale, young vecino adults more often leave town to pursue an advanced education, but the importance of education is also widely recognized beyond the old vecino families. As one of the most successful of the town campesino merchants puts it:

In relation to the future of my children, I hope to give them a secondary education. With that they will be able to defend themselves, since I have no house or land or cattle to leave them as inheritance.

The effect of the departure of young adults is a large number of two-person families, of couples ranging in age from the mid-30's on.

Another trend affecting family size is that men seek work in the mines of the lowland interior. The single largest occupational category in town consists of miners. Boys begin work in the mines while still teenagers or even earlier, either attracted by adventure, wealth and adult status, or sent off by their families to reduce the burdens of life. Not only young men, but men

in their 30's, 40's and 50's go to the Tipuani mines. In 13% of the households of the town a woman is the head of the family. This figure greatly underestimates the proportion of female-run households, for while some husbands are absent from Sorata only two to three months of the year, others are present for only two to three months. During the peak periods of the yearly mining cycle, entire blocks are almost without adult males. Further, a high incidence of tuberculosis and fatal accidents among miners contributes to a high proportion of single-person households (15%) -- of women alone. Many of these women take in a criado, a servant foster child, who can help around the house and run errands. Daughters place children with widowed mothers, though in several instances it was clear that the daughter gave up the child to its grandmother to relieve herself of a burden. Sometimes it is an aunt rather than a mother who is the dubious beneficiary of a criado. There were at least 20 such arrangements in Sorata, several of which were criticized by neighbors who said these stand-in parents did not properly supervise the children, but let them run wild and misbehave.

As in Coroico, many of the one-person households of men are campesinos who have recently moved to town to work, but who have wives and children in the countryside to care for their chacra. Another important stream of migrants is made up of the young men who return from the mine fields and rent a room or buy a house in town rather than go back to the ex-hacienda.

Some Sorateños who go off to the mines send money to their wives, but living costs are extremely high in Tipuani and many of the men spend heavily on alcohol, gambling and women, and may even be robbed in the bargain. Many miners barely get by, so the consequence back in Sorata is that the mother is required to work to maintain the family. While local, small-scale retail selling and weaving are important women's occupations, more women work as minoristas, spending about half their time away from home. If there is an older child in the family, he or she takes charge; if not, the children are left with a relative or a neighborhood friend.

In families at all status levels wives are expected to assist husbands and children to assist parents. A wife may operate a small tienda while her husband is driving his truck, or wives and older daughters weave while the husbands and older sons make shoes or do carpentry. Or they all together run a family enterprise, a tienda in which husband and wife work full-time, assisted by their older children. Close cooperation in work is illustrated in the following report by one of the project workers about a relatively poor family:

At the tienda of Francisco Preciado I stopped to chat for a while. It was ten minutes after ten and I found Señora Preciado very busy at her daily work, kneading dough for the rolls they sell daily. She said to me: "You know, Pacito, every day we have to do something to earn a little money. We have to begin at three o'clock in the morning to start our work, and later go to the oven. At that

hour we start the water boiling, and meanwhile Francisco goes to Alonso at the oven to get flour. Afterwards we begin to prepare the dough for the rolls. By five o'clock, or six at the latest, the rolls are ready to be taken from the oven. At that hour I open the tienda, and my customers start coming to buy rolls, sugar, coffee, or some other small thing. The people on this street know that by six o'clock in the morning we will have opened the tienda and they start coming for their purchases. At that early hour it is also time for them to start work. No? Every day it's the same for us poor ones."

In this family there are three children ranging in age from three to seven. They are no help now, but when they are older they will be put to work in the shop.

The pattern of cooperative work in families does not always end when the children grow up and move away. One elderly cholo woman has seven adult children, none at home. She lives alone and supports herself by making women's blouses, but she is in this business with two of her married daughters who live in La Paz. After the big September 14 Saint's Day Fiesta she reported:

Why, just during this fiesta I sold 450 pesos worth of blouses. A man who travels into the Yungas bought the whole lot. My older daughters and I have an arrangement in making blouses. I send the specifications of embroidering to my two daughters in La Paz and they send back the finished embroidered part of the blouse. Since most of those that I sold during the fiesta were made by my daughters, I sent them the money. Of course, that man also bought 300 pesos worth of my own blouses. Now I am sending some more specifications and we will split the profits, my daughters and I.

There are also many strains in family relations, the more likely to cause breakdown the longer the periods are when men are away from their wives and children. Men at the mines seek other women, and back in Sorata many wives behave in like manner. Ill-considered, hasty mating, as well as the form of marriage itself, are factors in the breakup of families. Ideally, most families seek sons-in-law who are hard workers, men of exemplary moral conduct. Vecinos and marginal vecinos expect a good deal in terms of education, job prospects and good manners. Women, in turn, are expected to be accomplished homemakers and attentive to the ways of husbands. Daughters of vecino families are expected to be chaste, so their families devote considerable attention to keeping them from casual encounters with men, especially those who would not be acceptable as husbands; but town campesinos and cholos are less concerned about a girl's sexual history than with her capacity to work.

In few instances are marriages arranged by parents any more, especially in families of lower social status. Market days, weekend athletic events and fiestas are important occasions for

the meeting of the sexes, and these encounters occasionally lead to sudden marriage, as in the following case:

I had to get married when I was fourteen years old. You know how crazy young people are. I fell in love with a young boy who was nineteen and told my parents. Instead of opposing the idea and separating me until I had forgotten about him, my father with his old ideas said, "My daughter might get out with some man. It is better that she marries". And so he married me off.

Most early marriages take place in cholo and town campesino families and are all the easier because there is frequently no formal ceremony at all, nothing but agreement to live together, and possibly at some later date pay the fees of a civil marriage. Few have a religious marriage because the ceremony, the wedding fiesta and the related celebrations are costly. In many cases marriages of this sort are quickly regretted:

We lived in the same neighborhood, and one day he said to me, "let's live together". I was just a young girl and hadn't thought much about it. My mother was opposed, and it was on a whim that I married him. I did it just to make my mother mad. It was sure bad judgment. My husband was a real rascal. He never helped out and I had to continue working. After living with him for a year I asked myself, "What have I done to be married to this man?" It seemed like a bad dream.

Among town campesinos there is also a somewhat Saturnalian way of acquiring a spouse. A young town campesino wife describes it:

Sometimes, after knowing each other for a while, a fiesta arrives, the pair get drunk, and they start living together. Sometimes the girl goes to live with the man. Other times the man gets drunk and the girl takes him to her house. Then her mother tells him, "You have been seeing to my daughter for some time and now you have placed her in a predicament". They don't let him leave, so they just start living together. After the September fiesta you are going to see a lot of marriages. Why? Because a lot of couples are going to get drunk.

Heavy drinking is prevalent throughout the population, at fiestas, parties, celebrations and family ceremonies. One of the most distinguished families in town is notorious for continual drinking, which begins early in the morning and goes on throughout the day, day in and day out. It is said that anyone who has business with this family must see them before noon because after that they will be too far gone to think. A large proportion of the older vecino women are constant heavy drinkers, have servants to do all the work in the house and take care of them when they are drunk. Some are able to conceal the extent of



their drinking, but it nevertheless causes family friction, as one of these women confessed:

That day before the baptism, the 16th it was, some compadres, indios from the interior and cholos, came with their cocktails and I began to drink in the kitchen with them. We had beer, which I invited them to drink, and then they invited me to drink their alcohol. It came time for my old man to come home and I went into the kitchen to be out of the way so that he wouldn't see that I was drunk. Rotten luck! I fell over backwards and passed out just as he walked in.

The little servant couldn't take care of me by herself, and there I was unconscious on the kitchen floor. That is the first time that ever happened in all of the years I have drunk until dawn -- drunk, but never passed out. I was so ashamed. I don't remember anything. They tell me they tried to get me into bed, but I kept saying, "I don't want to". Somehow I got up, went into my daughter's room and slept there. Then in the morning I was so ashamed that I didn't want to leave that room. My old man didn't speak to me for three full days.

The wife of a former minor official in local government is considering leaving her husband because of his drinking.

You ought to see my husband. His drinking is like a sickness. He cannot resist it. If you just begin to get near him you can smell the alcohol. I am thinking of going with my children to Cochabamba, or to the south where my oldest daughter lives. I am sure I can find work there and will be able at least to earn enough to educate my children. I can't take any more here in Sorata. At eight o'clock in the morning the people are beginning to drink, and my husband, who never has to be asked, is there drinking right alongside all of them. Frankly, I don't know what to do about my husband. It grieves me that he is in such a state. People have suggested to me various remedies against alcohol, but none has cured him.

In one town campesino family in which the husband was constantly drunk the wife's parents took her and her four children back to live with them. Before such separations are reached there may be days or weeks of brawling violence. Marital conflict occurs at all status levels in the community, though its expression in violence is disproportionately associated with families of lower social status. It occurs between all of the significant pairs in the nuclear family, between couples, between siblings, between parents and children, as well as between those relatives most closely related to the nuclear family, the grandparents and grandparents-in-law. Much of the more serious conflict between couples occurs in disagreement over connubial

rights and sexual duties. Husbands assert exclusive right to their wives' sexual favors. Wives make no such claim, but nevertheless resent the involvement -- or even possible involvement -- of their husbands with other women. There is an example in a young marginal vecino couple who have two pre-school children. The husband is a personable fellow who is not disinclined to become acquainted with young single women -- school teachers, for instance. That his wife is suspicious can clearly be seen in the following account of an incident described by one of the husband's unattached female friends:

One night after Ramon [the husband] had come by to visit, and Ana and I were doing our laundry under the tap in the patio, Ramon's wife came in from the street. She did not greet us -- Ramon, Ana or me -- but went upstairs where Señora Peralta lives. She was there only a few minutes and then left, again without saying a word to us. Another evening several days later Ramon dropped by with some nails to help us put up curtains. He told us about a big fight he had had with his wife. He had been out until late, and when he got home his wife was still up waiting for him. She grabbed him by his clothes and tore them. She hit him and scratched him. There was a lot of commotion, neighbors came to see what was happening, and he finally got away from her and left the house. He said that his wife had become too jealous, that she was jealous if he talked to any other woman. She was always accusing him, scolding him, until he could hardly stand it.

It is not always the case of the jealous wife and the wandering husband. Wives also have affairs, more frequently among cholos than vecinos, and most frequently among town campesinos, for it is these women whose husbands are absent for the longest periods of time -- the miners and woodcutters. They take up with another man or take to prostitution.

A man who neglects his wife and family or who beats his wife is likely to find his mother-in-law and other members of his wife's family bearing down on him, and be the target of considerable verbal abuse. The wife who neglects her children or takes up with other men can expect similar abuse from her husband's mother and his close relatives.

Family conflict extends also to adult siblings, where the issue is frequently the apportionment of an inheritance. Dissatisfaction with the division of property, especially among town campesinos, may end in violence. Many of the issues behind family conflict culminating in violence -- jealousy, extramarital affairs, inadequate economic support, heavy drinking, child neglect, and meddling in-laws -- occurred over a short period in a single nuclear family. This was the family of Francisco Chambila and his wife Elba. The couple are in their mid-twenties. Their civil marriage took place five years ago and they have two children, a little girl of four years and a boy almost one. Francisco is a miner in Tipuani, spends most of the year there, but

returns to Sorata for all the big fiestas and stays home for a few weeks. Elba makes blouses for sale and also runs a small general tienda, which her husband has stocked. This sort of life is not Elba's idea of a good time. When a project field worker visited Elba she was listening to a Javier Soliz record on her phonograph, seated on the floor, leaning against the door jamb of the entrance way, making a blouse.

Ay, señorita, when I hear this music, I become unhappy and want to travel. But when I tell my husband, he says I must stay married to him. About my children? The littlest one I'd leave with his grandmother, my husband's mother. The little girl I'll take with me, and the older boy I'll leave with my own mother. But oh, señorita, the littlest one is so sick. He's going to die, I think. It's better that he die, isn't it? There is no one really to look after him. I get so tired, I really do. I want to get away and have nothing to do with my family or my children. About my husband? All he does is beat me. Really, he's so bad. He comes at me with the bottle when he's been drinking. He never appreciates anything I do. Do you know, in the time since we've been married he's not bought me one little thing. I have had to use the pollera that I had before I was married. Imagine that!

Elba greatly exaggerates lack of support from her husband. In fact, he gives her money and jewelry, and the profits from the tienda are hers to use. She also mentions another son, a boy about seven years old, an illegitimate child who lives a few houses away with Elba's mother, her father and her unmarried younger sister. He is assumed by neighbors to be a criado, and he has been taught to call Elba by her first name, not "mother". She has upset her mother with her talk of wanting to be rid of her children.

Elba stocks beer in her tienda and enjoys having a few of her chola friends over to drink and pass the time. Neighbors say, too, that they have seen men coming out of the tienda at late hours. Elba's extramarital activities eventually brought her into conflict with her sister. This young girl had been keeping company with a young truck driver and was beginning to think seriously about him when she heard rumors that he was also acquainted with Elba -- the more experienced, the more willing to please.

She spied on Elba's tienda from another shop across the street for days, until one afternoon she saw her novio enter and go into the back room. After several minutes she went over and caught the two of them in bed. In the uproar that ensued the truck driver escaped, but the neighbors were treated to an ear-splitting eruption of cursing, and bottle-throwing and smashing, that spilled out into the street.

Less than a month after the battle between the sisters Elba's husband returned for the big September 14 fiesta. In the mean-

time, her sister had taken her weaving to Tipuani to sell and remained there to keep house for her father, then working in the mines. This was in part to escape from neighborhood gossip after the fight. The embarrassment was such, indeed, that both she and the father decided not to come back for the big fiesta. Francisco himself heard tales in Tipuani about Elba's neglect of the children, the little boy having died, and of her affairs with men, passed on to him by friends from Sorata and in letters from relatives in town, and Elba's mother had cautioned her daughter to prepare for his arrival:

Hija, what you must do is forget the truck driver. We know that your husband has already heard the news of the death of the baby. A letter has come from Tipuani saying that he was crying and screaming and said that he had to come out of the mines to be with his wife. So, hija, things have to be in good order when he comes back. Neither your father nor I want your husband to find you with another man. He's going to arrive and you must be alone, there with your children, and working hard.

On his return, Francisco's relatives filled him with details and surmises concerning his wife's neglect of the family and her fun and games. He found the tienda almost empty of merchandise. Some of the jewelry he had given Elba was gone and there was almost no money in the house. The reunion was guardedly hostile, but on the first day of the fiesta Francisco tried to draw Elba into the dancing, drinking and partying. Elba rejected him, and late in the afternoon, after a brief angry exchange, he went off to drink with his male friends. In the early evening he returned to the tienda drunk. He and Elba started quarreling and he gave her a vicious beating. A project field worker reported:

I was walking in front of the church in the early evening when the little daughter of Elba Chambila came running up to me and said breathlessly, "Daddy hit Mommy with a bottle right here on the front of the mouth, and she's bleeding and crying".

On the following morning I visited Elba. Where are you hurt? I asked her. "I ache all over," she said, moaning. "He hit me on the arms and legs." She removed the covers and pulled up her underslips, exposing her knees, which were all swollen and black and blue. "It hurts awfully. I'm all swollen and it hurts so much. I want to die I hurt so much."

Later that day the mother went to see the doctor and had him go to the tienda to examine Elba. He treated her and later gave the mother a signed statement about the injuries, which she thought might be useful in obtaining a divorce for her daughter, or at least as a threat to hold over Francisco, who was now contrite and keen on making amends. He promised to have the two front teeth that he had knocked loose fixed, or replaced by gold ones if necessary. He admitted being at fault, but claimed provocation:

Well, I was drunk and I beat her up. She was saying all those things to me and so I hit her. Then she hit me too. [He had a huge black eye.] Ay, I was drunk and thinking of all the things people had told me. I don't know what to believe, and when I'm like that she is a shrew. She eggs me on. Well, a man can't just stand there like a woman and take that, so I hit her. It's that everyone has been telling me that she's been mixing with other men. Then she had this fight with her sister over a man. I don't know whom to believe. I heard it down in the mines, and they even told me she was with another man who helped to kill our baby boy.

A few days after the end of the fiesta Francisco returned to Tipuani. He wanted Elba to return with him because he did not want a divorce and felt that he could not leave her alone. She promised to follow him some weeks later, but instead of that she packed her things and went to La Paz, doing what she had wanted to do for some time.

The recent history of the Chambila family exemplifies several features of family life in Sorata, especially characteristic of town campesinos and lower cholos. Elba's behavior, however, was extreme, for few mothers appear deliberately to neglect their children, though death may be wished on a young child who is chronically ill. Even mothers without the problems and interests of Elba express this wish, conditioned as they are by a very high infant mortality rate.

### Extended Kin and Compadrazgo

Immigration, emigration, and mobility of the town's population have greatly affected relations between kin. The moving forces behind geographic mobility for the different parts of the population in town, coupled with the widespread expectation that each nuclear family will occupy its own household, have resulted in considerable physical separation between even close kin. Vecino and cholo children tend to set up separate households in the cities, and their rural campesino counterparts have moved to Sorata. This has reduced the active membership of many of the old vecino families and has added many new, unrelated persons to the town. Nevertheless, it is still possible to find a kinship relation between almost all of the old vecinos as well as among many of the marginal vecinos who have married into the old families. Such kinship relations, however, have only slight contemporary significance, calling for little more than customary respectful behavior, and are really more strongly impelled by status than by kinship. Returning from a velorio, a wake, a member of an old vecino family revealed this type of tie:

My good friend, who died recently, was the granddaughter of this old lady that just died. In fact I am distantly related to the old lady myself. We are parientes, but remotely. We are related through great-grandfathers and are some kind of fifth cousins, something like that.

As in the preceding towns, there are customs of cooperation between kin, and the closer the kinship relation the greater the cooperation. In an elective situation that involves kin and non-kin, other things being equal, the kin are likely to receive preferential treatment. However, other things generally are not equal. Estrangement and hostility are found between the closest of kin, and therefore it is not surprising that relations between more distant kin are extremely variable. The extension of kinship in the form of *compadrazgo* appears to be a more important basis of social relations than distant kinship.

*Compadres*, unlike kin, are voluntarily chosen, and those who are chosen usually are persons who already have some close tie to the chooser. While impeccable moral and religious character is considered ideal, in practice a person of substance, someone with power, money and status, is sought as a *compadre*. These considerations are much less obvious in the choices made by *vecinos*, for they select from among friends and close relatives, who are almost invariably people of substance in the community. As in Corolico, the lower strata tend to select *padrinos* from among persons in higher strata, but this tendency is weak here in comparison with Reyes, and especially with Villa Abecia, because it is now necessary in Sorata to ask, high in what respect? Wealth? Manners? Political power? Prestige? These qualities are no longer held by the same persons. The chance of forming *compadrazgo* ties is also lessened by refusals to accept the relationship because of the financial cost, which the old *vecinos* in particular cannot afford, as the following exchange indicates:

Before, we never did decline to be godparents, but now we have to. Why? Money! Before, we'd accept all who came, and they were many. And my family, we had money then, we'd give each godchild a present for Christmas. We did this until they reached their tenth year. Now that's not possible, for there's no money to make those kinds of gifts. Ay, we used to have the gifts stacked up to the ceiling, but now nothing.

In addition to its reinforcing some existing significant relationships, *compadrazgo* in Sorata, as in the other communities, is important for the mutual aid it encourages. Hardly anyone seeks out the role and obligations of *compadre*. The exceptions are the rising *cholo* and town *campesino* merchants, and it is the rural *campesino* whom they encourage to make the request. For *comerciante* and rural *campesino* it can be mutually beneficial. Rural *campesinos* also seek local officials or the *tinterillos* for *compadres*, for these men can assist and protect when legal problems arise, advancing money to pay a fine or interceding with the police to keep a man out of jail. With town *campesinos*, however, this calculated approach to *compadrazgo* is not typical.

### Friendship

Friendship is an important component of highly cohesive but informal groups, several of which bring together men of the same

occupation -- butchers, truck drivers, etc. Other groups are of men of the same political party, such as the group made up of some local government officials. Others are not so narrowly based, but still attract persons of similar economic status, and political characteristics. These congregations of men are distinguishable as friendship groups by what they do, by gathering, sometimes on a predictable schedule, and passing an hour or two or more -- sometimes a great deal more -- chatting, drinking and playing such games as generala or sapo. The reigning consideration is fellowship. Those whose work and income permit considerable discretion in the use of leisure can be found in the more prominent friendship groups, those that assemble daily in one of the four better-known drinking spots on or just off the plaza.

Every day at the cocktail hour I go to the plaza to play generala and drink with my friends. They never fail to be there each day. When I was younger I used to play soccer for the Atletico Sorata sports club, but now I am not able to play, so I dedicate myself to the sport of drink and generala.

A central activity of these friendship groups is drinking. From the meeting places on the plaza it is easy to keep an eye on the arrivals and departures from the town, to keep the alcaldia and the church under observation, and to watch activity in the public market. These amusements are overlaid with a good deal of gossiping about family problems, sexual affairs and miscellaneous crises of other people -- discussed in detail. Many of the tiendas throughout the town sell beer and alcohol, and town campesino friends go to these rather than to the pensiones and bars on the plaza.

Friendships are sometimes initiated with the expectation that they will provide some advantage or assistance. A number of the friends of one of the more important comerciantes in town are rather clearly motivated by self-interest, but most friendships of this sort rarely develop to the point of real advantage. In other instances friendship is used as a means of mutual benefit; for example: An elderly, distinguished vecino was very friendly with a young, poor, marginal vecino. The younger man was skilled in repairing machinery and found himself on constant call to repair things in the old man's house. In turn, the older man sat on a committee that employed the younger one, who could thus be more independent and do almost as he pleased with his job without fear of reprisal.

The mutual support of friends is also important in both the prevention and resolution of conflict. There is a tendency to avoid antagonizing a person who is linked through a close friend, and friends are expected to assist in a conflict problem. After Elba's fight with her sister she invited three of her friends to come to the tienda and spend the rest of the day and evening with her. They sat around drinking, listening to Elba's side of the story and saying sympathetic things. In another case, a young marginal vecino returned home drunk one night and beat his wife severely. On the following day he invited two of his best

friends into his house without telling them anything of the incident. Then he called his wife into the central room and apologized to her and begged her forgiveness, asking his friends to witness his shame and contrition. Both friends gently remonstrated him and cautioned him to avoid such heavy drinking. The husband shed as many tears as penance demanded, and then poured a round of drinks for all.

There is an almost continuous series of occasions throughout the year for people to get together to drink. Some of these are quasi-religious or have a religious aspect. Others are national holidays. Some are neighborhood fiestas, like the Abaroa Day Fiesta on Calle Abaroa, or the Obispo Bosque Fiesta in the smaller plaza of that name. Other fiestas are associated with occupational groups, with the yearly blessing of the trucks of the transportistas, which includes a procession to the Christ statue on the side of the valley opposite Sorata. Then there are marriages, birthdays, baptisms, all celebrated with fiestas. A person's going away, or returning, or his starting a new business enterprise, are times of fiestas. Finally, parties are held just to have a party. The important community and family fiestas last two to three days, sometimes longer, and at every one the supply of liquor is adequate for even the thirstiest guest. The drinks are beer and straight alcohol, the latter usually mixed with a little fruit juice, enough to color and flavor without seriously diluting. Both men and women are expected to drink, and the combination of beer with alcohol produces a state of drunkenness while the evening is yet young.

At cholo or town campesino fiestas, women bearing pitchers of straight alcohol offer each male guest a shot glass of it. The offering cannot be refused without giving offense, and the glass must be immediately drained, for she waits to see that it is before going on to the next man. As she moves on, another comes with a similar offering. With many such women circulating at a fiesta, intoxication spreads rapidly. Friends will gather late in the morning of the day after to compare heads, stomachs and eyes, and go to their favorite bar for a glass of the universal remedy. More friends come in, and soon a generala game is under way to see who will pay for the drinks.

### Formal Groups and Associations

The range of formal associations in Sorata is not essentially different from that described in Coroico and Reyes. There are the sports clubs, the religious associations, a Padres de Familia organization for each school, the Chaco Veterans organization, art and culture groups, civic associations, as well as the sindicatos and political parties already discussed. The major difference between these organizations and their counterparts in the other two towns is that they are even weaker and more unstable. Membership is highly variable and uncertain, interest is fragile, and leadership is often characterized by conflict and sudden change. Long periods of organizational somnolence alternate with episodes of energetic activity as a new leader or leadership group revives membership interest and develops purposeful



activities. These episodes end in disagreement, resignations and further disillusionment.

The changes in population and the other changes discussed have all contributed to a decline in community social cohesion. Vecinos and marginal vecinos are disproportionately dominant in almost all the voluntary organizations except town sindicatos, but with the departure of many vecino families in the 1940's and 1950's, and the departure of younger vecinos since, much of the traditional base of membership and leadership in organizations has been drastically narrowed. The recent past of Sorata is littered with defunct organizations whose members moved away, who could no longer recruit socially qualified persons, whose activities had declining relevance in post-1952 Sorata. These included chess, ping-pong and shooting clubs, as well as the more typical soccer clubs. There were also several artistic and social clubs. Today there are only a couple of sports clubs of young men, and they have a rather irregular character. There is only one Catholic women's association, in contrast to several in both Coroico and Reyes, and even this one has membership problems. The Veterans of the Chaco War are rarely heard from except for their appearance at the major national holiday parades. Few organizations except the town sindicatos have been able to develop strong membership commitment, but even with the sindicatos this has occurred only as they have been successful as trade unions, and thus significant to the work of the members.

The problems and conditions of voluntary organizations are also applicable to the civic groups. Events subsequent to 1952 have made the Junta de Vecinos an historical relic. Its extra-legal powers as an advisory group of the leading citizens of the community have disappeared as a result of political and social stratification changes. The junta exists more as a vague memory than as a current fact, though it still occasionally meets to elect officers. Its only recent activity occurred in the aftermath of the 1964 coup, when it was used to provide a quasi-legal format for effecting a change of officials in the local government. Even this instance reveals the insignificance of the junta, for it was clearly used expediently by a small number of vecinos opposed to the MNR, and disappeared from view after that one meeting. There have been other civic groups formed more recently, similar in form to the citizens' associations that have been described in both Reyes and Coroico. These, such as the Amigos de Sorata, have followed a course more similar to that of the other voluntary organizations in Sorata than to the comparable organizations in the other two towns, as will be seen in the following chapter.

## Chapter 5

### COMMUNITY ACTION

In November of 1964, Nabor Moran took office as a vecino alcalde, the first in many years. On the following New Year's Day he celebrated by inviting a group of vecinos and cholos to a party at the alcaldia. About 50 persons showed up for drinks and small talk, and there were several impromptu speeches. A Sorateño who teaches in the public primary school had this to say:

Señores, sometimes one must be frank. One of the greatest problems of our town is the quagmire in which we find ourselves. Why can't we all join the political party of progress? Why can't we forget the hate and rancor between brothers? Why can't we unite and work for the progress of the town? There are some persons who like to incite disorder and then step back as if they had done nothing. We must face the problem that we are not united. We want the government, local and national, to do everything for us. No, señores, we are very wrong. If we expect that, you can be sure that the town of Sorata will never progress. I ask all of you present here to get together to do something for the town. Neglect, apathy, laziness, lack of interest, irresponsibility and lack of discipline are some of the worst traits that keep Sorata in its present diseased state. But now we have liberty, and we must fight this disease by our own actions and our own unselfish work. Thank you.

The "diseases" of the town are the many problems that affect the general health and welfare of the population. While the parochial primary school is housed in a new church building, both the public primary and public secondary schools have no quarters of their own. The public primary school occupies a big townhouse that belonged to one of the old vecino families, an old, run-down building of small, dark rooms, not conducive to teaching and learning. The public secondary school is no better off, occupying a couple of rooms in the alcaldia building.

Health and sanitation facilities are bad. Toilets, latrines -- most families use a corner of the patio, the corral or the garden. There are only two public latrines and these are in such poor condition that hardly anyone uses them, but all roads and paths leading into town are freely used and liberally contaminated with human waste. Many townspeople simply relieve themselves in a gutter or against a wall. The stench, especially on hot days, is formidable.

A hospital is needed. There has been a sanitary post in town for some years, occupying a former private home. A sanitarian is stationed there, and occasionally there are nurses posted by the Ministry of Health. Frequently, but intermittently, a young physician serves part of his año de provincia at this post. There is very little equipment, and this is likely not to be in working order. In short, there are no facilities for dealing with serious or emergency medical cases. The situation was alleviated somewhat when the Franciscans moved into a new parish house in 1966 and offered the old one as a health center. The local but temporary doctor and dentist thought that this building, which was in good condition, would not only provide adequate space for an out-patient clinic, but also enough extra rooms for in-patient beds, as well as quarters for nurses.

Beyond these problems is a series of others just as important but possibly less pressing. The water piped into town is occasionally cut off by landslides or arrives in a murky condition that suggests the possibility of contamination. Since the water is not treated, this is not an idle possibility. Electricity supplied by a small hydroelectric plant is both weak and irregular, and in recent years power has been fed in only from about 6 P.M. until about 11. When there is an important fiesta or some special celebration the plant is kept going for a few extra hours, but the current is generally so weak that the glow of a light bulb is considerably less than that of a match. Many householders do not bother with electricity.

These are some of the more obvious problems affecting the general welfare in Sorata. It is obvious that this town sometimes has been able to solve some of its problems, for it did build the now well worn hydroelectric plant; but problems affecting the public well-being are solved only by following a pattern that must by now be familiar. The major form of this pattern is the attainment by a Sorateño of a high political office, which can subsequently lead to the availability of national funds for local projects. One does not necessarily follow the other, but there is a reasonably good chance that it will. The minor form is the attainment of high local office by a Sorateño who has excellent muñeca with important national officials and who is willing to use that muñeca to advance local projects. General Enrique Peñaranda, former president of Bolivia, was from the Sorata area, and during his administration provided funds for a public market and for the improvement of the central plaza, now named for him. Through other important politicians from Sorata the town built its hydroelectric plant and its water supply system, the latter largely with United States funds as part of the Inter-American Public Health Program.

Not all of the problems of Sorata are great, requiring massive resources for their solution. Many, like the refuse in the street problem, are well within the capacity of the local population. Moreover, as seen in Villa Abecia and especially Reyes, even the building of schools and roads is not beyond the capacity of these towns. However, there is an especially critical difference between Sorata and the other two communities. In the effort at community action in Reyes, the organization of vecinos suc-

cessfully took over certain functions of the local government. In Coroico, the reverse took place. It was the local government, the alcalde, who took over the vecino organization. In Sorata, on the other hand, there is almost continual antagonism and conflict between the local government and the vecino group. Having lost their traditional leadership role, the vecinos have become disinterested in the fate of the town:

This morning the doctor came looking for me to get my help in organizing a health committee for the town. We have decided to call a meeting of the townspeople for this purpose, but I doubt whether anyone will come. How often I have called them together to select new officers of the Junta de Vecinos! But no one ever comes. This lack of meetings of the Junta de Vecinos, and the little or no interest that townspeople have in improving their welfare, means that organizations like this lose their effectiveness in promoting the progress of the community.

Vecinos are unrelenting in their criticism of local government officials. Officials are criticized for an almost endless series of faults, many having little to do with their performing their jobs, such as that they are not natives to the town or do not speak good Spanish. Other accusations, that they neglect town needs, for example, are to a large extent valid. Local government officials since 1952 have not exerted themselves very much, because their basic interest is not in the town.

The long period of antagonism appears to have had a marked effect on the short-lived administration of alcalde Moran. His few months in office were devoted in large part to establishing a record of good works:

In the two months of my administration of the municipal government we have had the central plaza cleaned and the iron fence around it painted. We are repairing some of the streets. With the help of the police we are improving the organization of the market. Finally, we have just finished painting the alcaldia building. I also have pending several projects that I hope to be able to undertake. I am interested in the construction of a municipal building that would serve as a market. I also want to remodel the municipal jail, and see whether it may be possible to construct a new building for the public school.

A month later the alcalde was pointing to a newspaper reading stand that he had installed in the alcaldia for public use. He also had three masons and two helpers busily putting in steps and railings and making other repairs, some of them safety measures, in the building occupied by the public primary school. The alcalde was proud of these achievements, but he also never let pass the opportunity for invidious comparison of his few months with previous years of neglect:

Seven bags of cement have been used on these repairs, and all of this is paid for with money from the alcaldia. This same work could have been done by those indios who were the authorities before, but they devoted themselves exclusively to their personal interests. They have no interest at all in the town.

Moran had also had the salon in the alcaldia repaired and re-decorated. His comment on this was, "In this salon are held the most important social reunions of the town, but when the indios were here it was like a pig pen."

To a degree even greater than in Coroico, the fall of the MNR government was followed in Sorata by a surge of optimism among the vecinos. At last it was to be possible to rid themselves of the hated indios in the alcaldia. However, the new era was even shorter in Sorata than in Coroico. Within a few months Moran was out of office, and campesinos and their confederates were filling the positions in local government. That neither this new alcalde nor the official mayor came from a campesino village, and that the latter belonged to a cholo family, made no difference, for both were allies of the campesino sub-prefect and associated with campesinos and sindicato politics. To vecinos, they were all "indios, no mas". Moran was not in office long enough to demonstrate whether the change that he represented would have been sufficient in itself to have altered the disinterest and apathy that are so much commented on in Sorata. Moran felt that he might have made a difference:

Sorata is a good town. If you understand how to treat the people it is possible to accomplish many progressive works. It is true that at this time the town is very divided by political affairs. Nevertheless, as I have just said, by organizing a good group of vecinos it is possible to work for the development of the town.

In the other towns that have been discussed, a "good group of vecinos" has in fact been a crucial element in community action. It is possible for a vecino-like group to play an even more important role than the local government, as in Reyes; but Sorata vecinos no longer respond to that type of challenge. Their ranks have been shattered by death and emigration. Many of them manage little more than to keep alive, and none has important wealth. Their political power is almost nil. Their future is not promising. It is not surprising that the formation of community action groups from among vecinos is as hazardous an enterprise as one marginal vecino notes:

Frankly, we can't do anything about health problems because there is no collaboration among vecinos. At the beginning they are enthusiastic to do something, but unfortunately they never persevere. From the experience we have, it is better not to get involved in organizing committees, or that kind of thing, because, for example, whenever you try to

collect funds all the members disappear. And when they do make any contributions, then they accuse the leaders of not doing anything or of pilfering the treasury. They leave everything for the leaders to do, from contributing money to contributing time, while all the others just stand around with folded arms.

In this rather unpromising situation there still occurred an attempt by vecinos to organize to promote community projects. In November, 1965, vecinos formed the Amigos de Sorata. At its founding meeting hardly more than a dozen persons were present, two of whom were cholos. It was announced as an open group, but the lower social strata were not encouraged to join. A seven-man directorate was established in the hope that this would result in a more stable organization, less dependent on the energies of one man. Nevertheless, one person, the juez instructor, took the lead in making policy for the Amigos.

The stated purpose of the Amigos de Sorata was "to work for the good and development of Sorata". The initial project was the improvement of the central plaza, including a general cleanup and putting water and fish in an unused pond. Further projects were to be the improvement of the soccer field and the cleaning of town streets. Performance even on some of these small projects was very uneven. Most Amigos had no thought of going out to wield a pick and shovel, but rather saw themselves as promoting and then supervising. The juez instructor was in the best position to do exactly this, for he would take prisoners from the jail and put them to work.

In the early discussions among the Amigos great emphasis was placed on the non-political character of their motives and organization. Two of the seven members of the organization directorate had well-known reputations for being apolitical, but the situation in Sorata made it impossible for the organization to maintain this position. While the Amigos told themselves that their work was above politics, local government officials understandably did not see it that way. Among the Amigos were several of their harshest critics, Nabor Moran for one; and many of the projects selected by the Amigos, such as the cleaning of the streets, were implicitly critical of local officials. Among some members of the Amigos there was very explicit criticism. It was proposed that educational films be obtained from foreign embassies in La Paz for showing in town. A letter of request was prepared and the members of the directorate signed it. When it was pointed out that a letter which would also bear signatures of town officials might receive a better hearing, the Amigos demurred. According to one of the directors:

It isn't a matter of being egoistic. It is that the alcalde never wants to do anything, and we want to show him what can be done for the town.

The alcalde's own attitudes were harsher:

Do I have any collaboration from townspeople? Abso-

lutely no one. With the exception of my official mayor, who is a key aide, no one wants to help. We have the Amigos de Sorata, but they also don't do anything. Instead, they are concerned with politics. It is a stupidity talking to them, and it is difficult, because there is nothing that can be done with these people. There is no unity in this town, and for that reason I have to do everything myself.

Shortly after their having organized, the Amigos were forced into collaboration with town officials. An important prefectural and national political figure, the official mayor of La Paz, who also happens to be a Sorateño, came for a short visit. He was sought out by several Amigos directors and taken on a tour to discuss projects. Somewhat later he was joined by the alcalde and other local government officials. Before leaving, the visiting official mayor agreed to contribute 30 bags of cement, several meters of metal pipe, some cement pipe, and several dozen ornamental plants. These materials would come to the local government, but the alcalde was directed to collaborate with the Amigos.

Shortly after this visit, the juez instructor, who had been a prime mover among the Amigos, resigned his position and returned to La Paz. Some projects continued, but there was a gradual slackening of interest and effort. An exception was the swimming pool and nearby children's playground, but this project had become as much a project of the alcaldia as of the Amigos.

In June a leading member of the Amigos was reassigned by his superiors to another community. Toward the end of August one of the directors commented:

Is there still an Amigos de Sorata group? Yes, but it's not functioning. It more or less died when judge what's-his-name left. He was active in everything, but now I think the only ones left are the agronomist, the captain and myself. But it's nothing any more.

By August a number of other changes had taken place in Sorata. A new sub-prefect, in place of Campos who had become a national deputy as a result of the July elections, designated several projects that he hoped to accomplish while in office. Among these he listed the construction of a new primary school, the construction of a road into the Mapiri gold fields (which would also go through his own hometown), the construction of a hospital, and the remodeling of the alcaldia. Aware of the dissension and conflict in the town, he commented:

I did not know the reason why previous officials have not gotten on well with the vecinos of this town. I think that it is time to put aside the despotism, the negligence, the concern of who is in my party and who is in some other party. I hope to get along with everybody. I think that I

can get the collaboration of all the townspeople, and once that is done, whatever project we undertake will be a lot easier.

The response of the alcalde to this statement was:

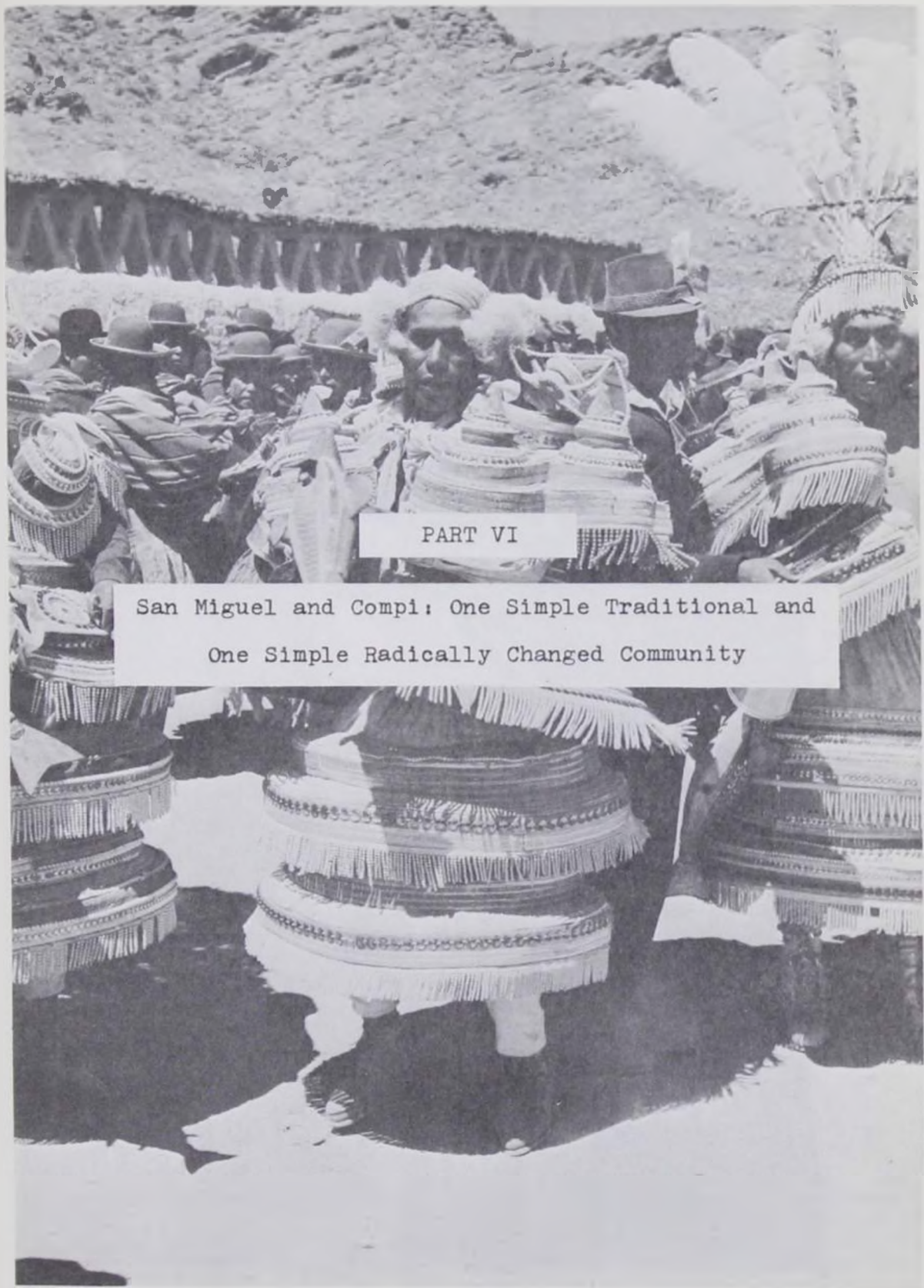
It's not possible to work with these Falangistas. They are obstinate. They think that the alcaldia has a lot of money, and that all we do is spend it for our own amusement.

And the sub-prefect replied:

No, Juan, first you have to reach an understanding, leaving aside politics. When everyone is in agreement, then it is possible to think of doing something. Your problem is that your first concern is always the person's politics, and only afterwards do you ask what can be done. With that outlook you will not get anywhere.

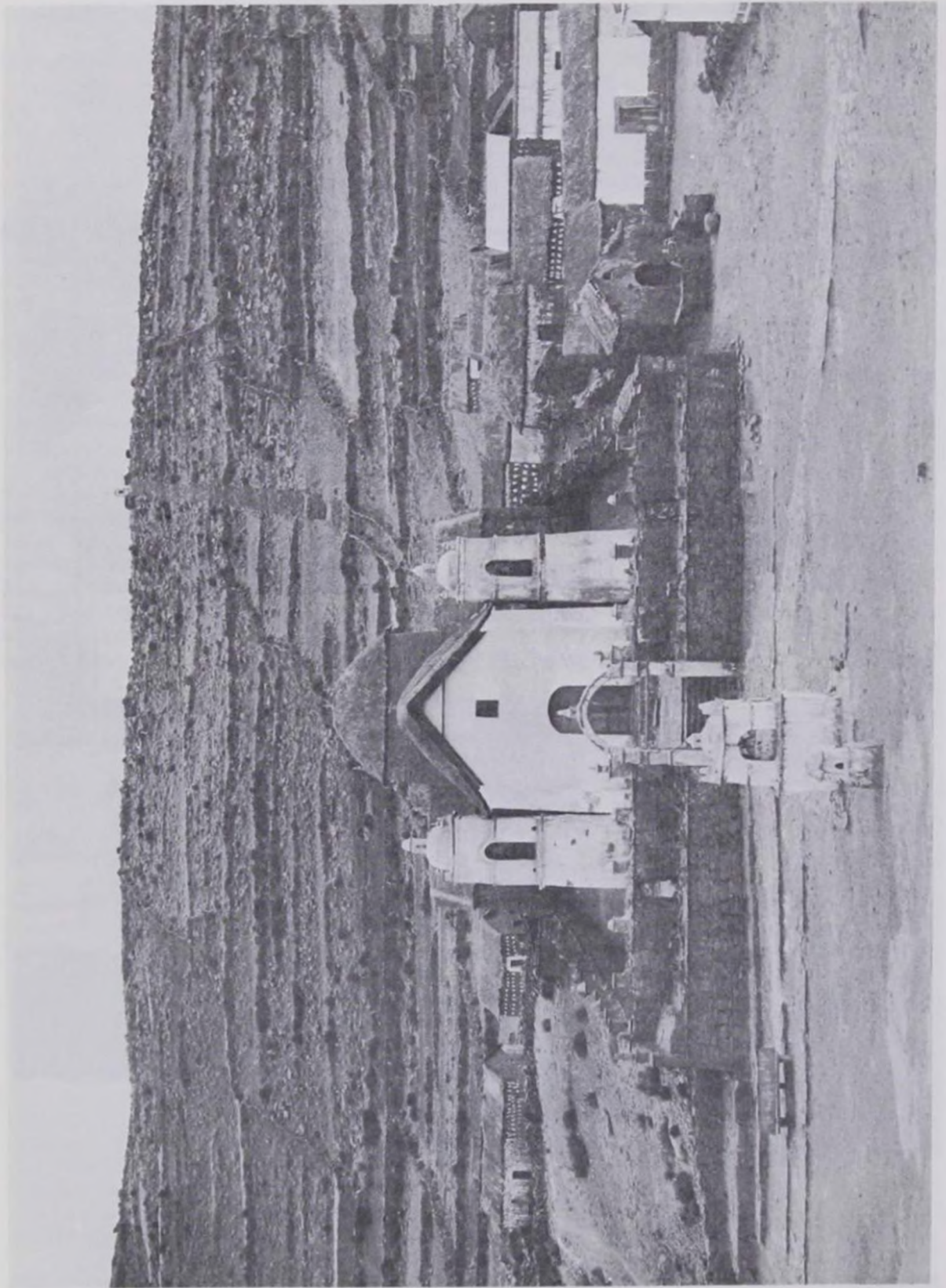
These words of reconciliation were echoed several times by the old sub-prefect, now national deputy. He too called for the people of the town to unite, to set aside political differences, to work on common problems for the good of all. Unfortunately, the conflicts are old and deep. They are not just a matter of differences in political party, even though the alcalde speaks of "those Falangistas". Rather, the conflicts reflect the fundamental social reshuffling that has occurred, in which some have experienced significant losses of prestige, power, and wealth.





PART VI

San Miguel and Compi: One Simple Traditional and  
One Simple Radically Changed Community



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## Chapter 1

### THE SETTING

The four communities discussed thus far differ in many ways, but despite these differences they are basically similar and represent a type of community in Bolivia, the rural town. They are all government centers, all regional market towns in which a wide range of skills and services are to be found, and in all four there are complex social stratification orders.

The last two communities of this study, San Miguel and Compi, are a distinctly different type, the agricultural village in which virtually the entire adult male labor force is engaged in agriculture as small-scale peasant farmers. Some of the communities of this type, like San Miguel, have public markets, but these are so small as to be insignificant regionally, and there are few or no specialized skills to be found among their residents. There is but one basic social stratum in each of them. A further marked contrast between the two agricultural villages and the four towns is that the villagers are Aymara-speaking Indians. The two communities differ in themselves as well, San Miguel being a free community, in the sense that its people were never in peonage, while Compi is an ex-hacienda community, a distinction of long-standing importance, in that so many of the more radical MNR reform programs were directed at the haciendas, leaving the free communities less likely to become involved in the rural politicalization process. It so happens, however, that Compi, though an ex-hacienda community, has not become as highly politicalized as some of the ex-haciendas in the Sorata and Cochabamba areas [Patch, 1958]. Nevertheless, Compi is an agricultural village that has, unlike San Miguel, felt the full impact of MNR reform programs, and therefore represents rural communities that have been strongly affected by the Revolution of 1952.

#### San Miguel

The Department of Oruro, almost square, is bounded on the west and east by Andean ranges. Much of the central section of the department is quite flat. In the southern half there are two large shallow lakes and several dry lake beds extending over large areas. To the north, a range of hills extends from the western cordillera to the center of the department. The flat pampa is again east and north of these hills. Just off the pampa lies the community of San Miguel.

A steep dirt road rises several hundred feet to a relatively flat shelf, and there it enters the village as a narrow street. The settlement is a dense cluster of more than 250 one-story adobe houses with thatch roofs. Some have two or three very

small rooms, but most have only one. There are the two separate plazas, a lesser and a greater, traditional to New World Spanish towns, each dominated by a small church. But beyond these features traditional pattern breaks. There are only two streets, approximately parallel, cutting through the smaller, more central plaza and forming two of its sides. Some houses are grouped in twos and threes, forming courtyards closed in by walls of free-standing stone. Especially on the eastern side of town these compounds abut one another without any intervening streets. Within a few of them are corrals of rock walls for llamas and sheep. Surrounding the community are the small chacras, the farm plots of the villagers, separated by the free-standing walls built of stones readily available on the surface of the hills.

Although there are more than 250 dwellings of various sizes in San Miguel, rarely are more than a handful of adults seen in the village except on special occasions. Most of the dwellings are padlocked, closed for days, weeks, even months at a time, the reason being that they are second homes, the headquarters village homes of families whose working time is spent in the 11 other major and three minor settlements that constitute the whole of the San Miguelean community. A few of these settlements are on the pampa at the foot of the hills in front of San Miguel, but most of them are scattered in the hills to the sides of the central settlement. There are crude roads over open land or in temporarily dry river beds by which -- with caution -- motorcars can reach a few of the outer settlements, but most of them can be reached only on foot, walking time varying from about 20 minutes to upwards of three hours.

A few of the larger outer settlements have a dense arrangement of dwellings like that of San Miguel, though the number of buildings is considerably smaller. Most of these larger settlements also have a small church as well as a one-room government building, but no streets at all because the dwelling compounds are joined one to another. In the smaller settlements the dwelling compounds are dispersed and surrounded by agricultural fields. The terrain over which the settlements are scattered varies greatly. Some are on the edge of the immense, flat pampa, which stretches north and south as far as eye can see. Others are in small valleys in the hills, some close to streams, and others are on the rolling puna uplands west of the main settlement. In all these different settings the vegetation is sparse, for the pampa is about 13,000 feet above sea level, and most of the settlements probably lie between 13,500 and 14,500 feet. A lone tree stands in the small central plaza of San Miguel, but the landscape beyond is treeless. Clumps of short grass make good pasture for sheep and llamas down on the sandy pampa, and though the upland puna bears only scattered clumps of thola, a low evergreen shrub, and the paja brava, a bristly knee-high grass, it also is widely used as pasture.

There are springs, streams and wells throughout the settlement area, but water is not abundant. Most plant growth depends on sparse rainfall in the summer months from December through March. As autumn gives way to winter, the streams recede and some go dry. While the sun even during the winter months is

warm, lack of sunshine even during the summer chills everything. Winter temperatures regularly drop below freezing, and few houses are very secure against the bitterly cold winds. Finally, there is snow for a few days of the year, though it generally melts quickly.

A resident of San Miguel is simultaneously a member of an estancia, of one of the four ayllus in which the canton of San Miguel is divided, and of the canton itself. Two of the four ayllus contain four major estancias while each of the other two contains three. These 14 estancias are the primary units of settlement. The population of the whole canton of San Miguel is about 1,200. This figure can only be an approximation. A census cannot claim comprehensiveness for a population in which as many as 25% of the male heads of households are absent from the canton with some part of their families at the height of the inactive agricultural season. Accurate census is further hindered by the complex dispersal of the population.

The estancias are not grouped in the several ayllus in an orderly fashion. Some are closer and more accessible to estancias of other ayllus, and in fact collaborate with these, isolating themselves from their own ayllu. Many families have houses or huts, not only in their estancia settlements but also in their ayllu settlements and in the canton headquarters settlement of San Miguel village, which is in itself an estancia of one of the four ayllus. In San Miguel as well as in Compi, and perhaps in most of the highland Indian communities, this complex settlement pattern has evolved over a long period of time, the result of a continuous process of fission and amalgamation.

Although the population of San Miguel canton is as large as that of any of the towns studied, the people live in very small groups. In the three largest estancias, each in a different ayllu, there are 54, 37 and 33 households listed as members, and in the smallest there are but four or five. Some people regarded as members of estancias have left home, but are carried on the rosters of the settlements because they still own land in them. Many members, too, are likely to be absent temporarily, either at San Miguel village fulfilling a canton responsibility, or away at work in Oruro, Cochabamba or La Paz. Since the only complete primary school in the canton is in the canton headquarters settlement, families in the more distant estancias often settle mothers and children in their canton houses for the school year.

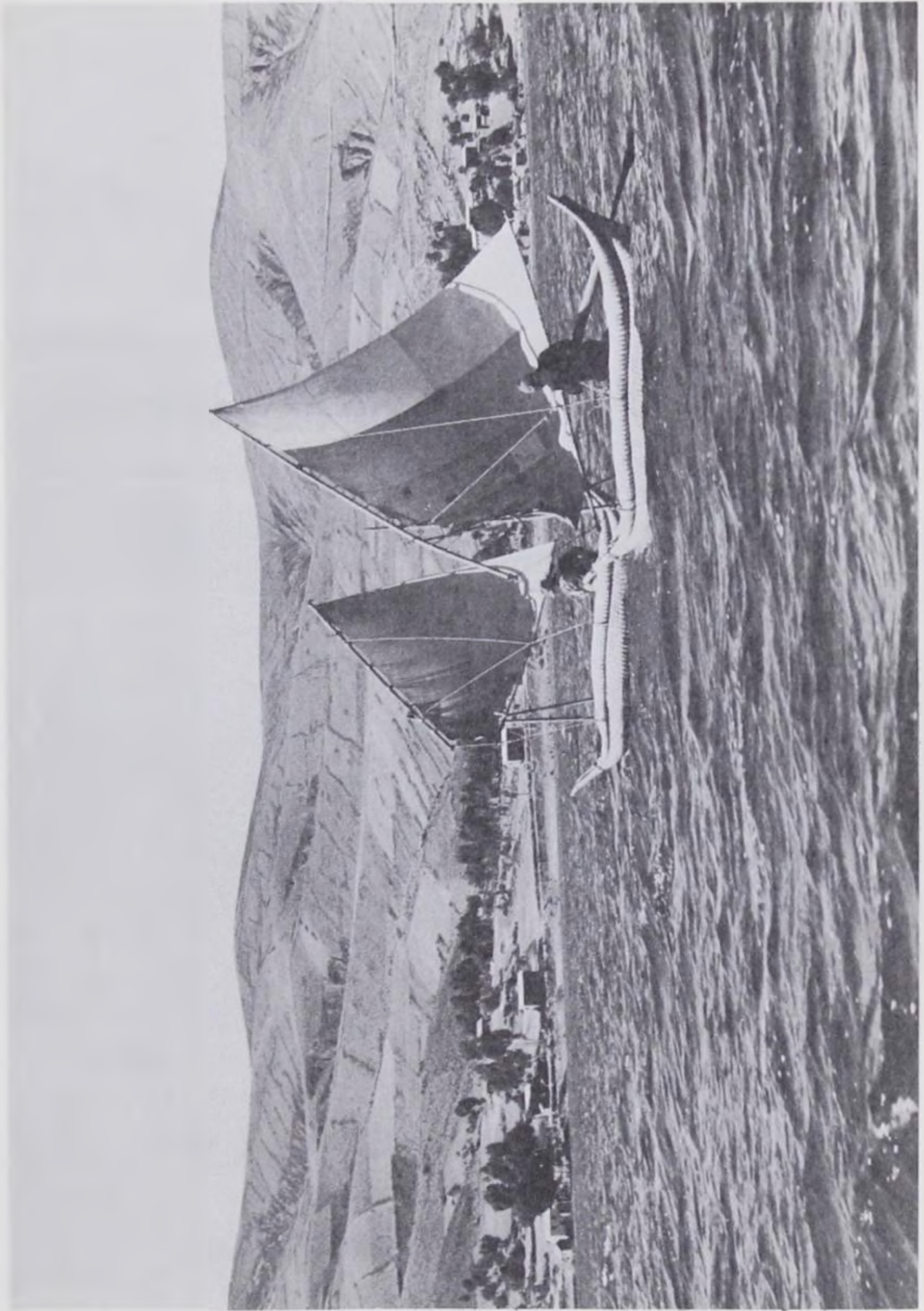
San Miguel is on the southern frontier of the Aymara-speaking region of Bolivia. Taking only adult males, all speak Aymara, 26% are bilingual in Aymara and Spanish, and 47% speak a third language, Quechua. Again taking only adult males, only 25% have had no education at all, while 73% have received some primary schooling.

Fifty miles away on the eastern side of the pampa is the city of Oruro. The road is unimproved, but the going can be steady on the flat pampa except for the Rio Desaguadero, which is too deep or too soft for fording, but is crossable at a number of points on barges. Only the weather may be a serious obstacle.

Since the pampa is crisscrossed with truck tracks and there are no posted signs, direction is maintained by sight. In darkness or bad weather direction becomes a problem, and in a hard rain the flat pampa will disappear under water in a few minutes. Not only do the road tracks disappear, but traction itself vanishes. During the dry season a truck from Oruro stops twice a week at San Miguel for goods and passengers. In the rainy season it does not come at all. Many households have bicycles, on which the trip to Oruro can be made in about four hours -- more quickly than the truck, which stops to load and unload so often that its trip may take six to seven hours.

While the city of Oruro is the most important regional community for San Miguel, there are others of some importance that are closer. Corque lies 30 miles almost due south. This is the capital of the province, with a sub-prefect and sub-prefectural government similar to that seen in the four towns already described, and with jurisdiction over the other settlements of the province, including San Miguel. Closer at hand are three other canton settlements all larger than the headquarters settlement of San Miguel. About eight miles to the southeast, on the road to Corque, is Llanquera. Six miles in the opposite direction, to the northwest, is Chuquichambi, and 10 more miles in the same direction is Huayllamarca. All of these villages have markets and fiestas that residents of some of the San Miguel estancias attend from time to time. Huayllamarca is particularly important as the location of the nearest provincial law official, the intendente. There, also, is a new 29-bed hospital run by a Catholic order. Finally, about 15 miles to the northeast of Huayllamarca, is Papelpampa, which has one of the biggest regional markets in the area, and an annual fiesta attended by numerous buyers and sellers from San Miguel.





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## Compi

Lake Titicaca, 138 miles long and 70 miles wide at its widest points, covers a large part of the northwestern perimeter of the northern altiplano. Dotted the coastline are villages, small towns and a few lake ports. Compi is one of these lakeside communities.

This part of the altiplano is quite in contrast with the bleakness of San Miguel. The fresh water of the lake supports a heavy growth of totora rushes along the shallow edges. Here the land gently rises to low hills. Compi, not as high as San Miguel, is at an elevation of approximately 12,500 feet. Winter nights are freezing cold, but the slightly lower elevation and the waters of the lake are moderating influences. An abundance of water and the somewhat softer climate permit more intensive cultivation of the land along the lake and nurture more wild vegetation on the small amounts of land not cultivated. Groves of eucalyptus trees, more intensive planting and greater natural vegetation impart an almost lush appearance to the otherwise bleak altiplano environment.

Like San Miguel, Compi is a community of several settlements. As an hacienda before the revolution, it was made up of five separate estancias, comparable in many ways to the estancias of San Miguel. Just as in San Miguel, families live in compounds, usually of two or three small one-room and two-room adobe houses with thatched roofs. Since the revolution some families have built second houses along the main road that passes near the lake, often two-story adobe buildings with corrugated tin roofs. Since the main church of Compi and the public primary school are also near this road, this recent house construction has begun to give a part of the community something of a clumpy roadside shape. But aside from this, there is even less concentration of dwellings on the former hacienda of Compi than there is on any of the San Miguel estancias. Although the very small size of farm plots frequently has resulted in compounds relatively close together, each is set in the midst of its own land and on none of the estancias is there a compact settlement.

In 1965 there were 269 households on the ex-hacienda, with a total resident population of 1,404. This figure does not include the small number of families that were temporarily absent, nor the much larger proportion still considered members of the community because they have land in Compi, but actually resident elsewhere, mainly in the cities or colonization zones.

In Compi, 57% of male heads of household have had no education, over twice the proportion of San Miguel, for most of these men grew up under hacienda authority before the Revolution of 1952. There are also language differences between Compi and San Miguel. The Compi population has not had the long exposure to Quechua that is found in San Miguel. On the other hand, it has had long exposure to Spanish, but even here it proves to be a more isolated community linguistically than San Miguel. Sixty-three percent of the adult men in Compi speak only Aymara, while 37% are bilingual in Aymara and Spanish. Since adult men are

most likely to have been exposed to bilingual situations, they under-represent Compi's language conservatism. Taking the entire population, 85% speak only Aymara and only 15% are bilingual, quite in contrast to their exposure to outside influences.

The road along the lake on which Compi's new houses are being built is a good all-weather transport route that runs easterly to Huarina, where it joins the main road out of La Paz, and northwest to Achacachi, and along the northern side of the lake to the Peruvian frontier. This road branches off at Achacachi, the provincial capital of the Compi area, and on to Sorata. To the west of the hacienda, the road continues to the mile-wide Strait of Tiquina, where large sailboat ferries carry trucks and other vehicles over to a road that traverses the peninsula to Copacabana and goes on to the Peruvian border. Since the revolution there has been daily truck traffic over this route to La Paz, and a daily bus service between Copacabana and the capital. The trip from Compi to La Paz takes from two to three hours.

Just beyond the western borders of Compi lies the village of Jank'o Amaya, once part of an hacienda, but since 1965 the headquarters settlement and administrative center of the canton to which Compi belongs, analogous to the canton headquarters settlement of San Miguel. Jank'o Amaya is Compi's nearest marketplace. Relations between Compi and Achacachi, the provincial capital, are not very close, chiefly because the most direct route to the capital is an all-day hike over the hills. Along the lake, about half-way between Compi and Huarina, is the large village of Huatajata, which has one of the largest weekly markets in the area and is only 30 minutes by bicycle from Compi. For many years Huatajata has also been an important center of Protestant missionary activity, which in this area has emphasized education and medical care. A Canadian Baptist Mission station operates an infirmary with a permanent nurse and a once-a-week physician. This is the closest facility to Compi that offers any sort of modern medical care.

Compi has no telephones or telegraph, nor does it receive magazines or periodicals regularly; but many families have transistor radios and there are regular broadcasts in Aymara. Being on a main road to the national capital, Compi is much more in the stream of national Bolivian life than San Miguel. San Miguel not only lacks all the same means of emergency communication, but is also completely isolated for long periods during each year.

### In Time

San Miguel and Compi in the past occupied very different positions in the regional socio-economic organizations of the alti-plano, and have been subjected to rather different forces in their distant as well as more recent past. This is clear, even though historical data are lacking and interpretation must rely on oral testimony and tangential information. Although the age of neither community is known, it is known that the regions of both villages had been absorbed by the Inca empire well before the Spanish Conquest. From both Inca and pre-Inca periods, San

Miguel and Compi derive a good many of the beliefs, action patterns and forms of organization that they hold in common. After the Spanish Conquest both villages underwent many important changes as a result of the imposition of Spanish rule and the development of Spanish colonial society.

It seems probable that early in the post-conquest period the estancias in the region of San Miguel were given in encomienda to a shipbuilder in Spain, but there was probably little profit to be had in the form of agricultural or any other kind of tribute from the barren lands of western Oruro, and it appears that the grant was allowed to lapse. San Miguel, for the same profitless reasons, never became the object of colonial encroachment, but remained a free Indian community.

Although untouched by the continual expansion of the hacienda system on the altiplano, San Miguel has not been a static Indian community. When the Department of Oruro was created in 1826, over half the department was in a single province. The provincial capital, then as today, was Corque. At that time the estancias of San Miguel were considered to be part of a single ayllu. Toward the end of the 19th Century, perhaps a little later, the ayllu was divided into two parts. In the early 1950's the second of the two ayllus divided itself into two ayllus and in 1956 the first of the original two divided itself into two ayllus. At the time of these changes in the 1950's, the four ayllus of San Miguel took their present names. This process of subdivision possibly relates to population growth, but it more likely reflects the changed political scene and a change in political awareness in San Miguel itself.

Some of the most important reforms of the MNR government had little or no effect on San Miguel. A few of San Miguel's comunarios have worked in the Oruro mines, but too few to have been of any political importance to San Miguel, and -- being a free community -- the impact of the land reform program was nil. One of the most important corollaries of the land reform, the organization of the campesino sindicatos, was not restricted to the haciendas, but it was unlikely to take hold in the free communities. There is no indication that an effort to organize a sindicato was ever made in San Miguel. Even though the enfranchising of the adult population included the free Indian communities, and further, even though San Miguel's contact with a city like Oruro -- a center of politically radical and militant trade unionism -- has conveyed a certain political awareness to the community, the political impact of the MNR government could only have been slight without the organization and new leadership that the sindicatos provided on the ex-haciendas.

The one reform that seems to have aroused the greatest interest with great effect was that of education. The special interest of the new government in the education of the rural population was indicated in the separation of rural from urban education and in assigning the administration of it to the Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos. In the years following the revolution there occurred in the heavily populated regions an extension of formal government organization, especially on the

ex-haciendas, but since the resources of the national government are always inadequate, only the most important localities were likely to receive assistance from many of the new programs. Importance in this sense partly means being visible from the higher levels of national government, which in turn means having a distinguished government status, such as being a canton. From this it can be seen that the subdividing of the San Miguel estancias into four separate ayllus is probably best understood as a maneuver to attract recognition. San Miguel achieved this recognition in 1959. Its recognition as a canton enabled it to become the nucleo, the headquarters, of a school district, while the larger neighboring villages of Llanquera and Chuquichambi are only sections of school districts. The advantage to the nucleo community is that the district director spends most of his time there.

San Miguel appears, on balance, to have undergone few of the radical changes associated with the MNR government after 1952, or to have felt earlier any of the major economic changes that occurred in some of the other areas that have been discussed. As a somewhat isolated Indian village living by subsistence agriculture, it has occupied a remote position in the national economic and political system. For some of its people, however, it is important that San Miguel has long had important dependent relations on outside population centers like Oruro. Over the years Oruro has become an increasingly important source of short-term work and, to a much lesser extent, a place of permanent relocation. This contact with Oruro does not seem to have changed the community very much, but it has changed many of the comunarios. Thus, while San Miguel appears relatively little changed in the spectrum of change occurring in Bolivia today, neither is it an unchanging community.

Compi, on the other hand, was subjected to different influences following the conquest. The greater fertility of the land and the more moderate climate of the lakeside area attracted the Spanish. Although precise historical documentation is lacking, it is probable that much of this zone was given as encomienda and later, in the 17th Century, made the transition to hacienda-type ownership. No one can recall a time when Compi was not an hacienda, or when the haciendas of Chua on the east and of Jank'o Amaya on the west did not exist.

About the middle of the 19th Century, Compi hacienda appears to have consisted of little more than the estancia of Compi. At that time the estancia of Capalaya was an independent hacienda, while Cawaya, Kalamaya and Tauca were all part of the free community of Tauca, which also included a fourth estancia, Llamacachi, just west of Compi. Throughout much of the 18th and 19th centuries, and continuing into the 20th Century, a continual process of hacienda encroachment on free Indian land took place on the altiplano [Urquidi, 1966, pp. 208-209]. Toward the latter part of this period there also appears a process of hacienda consolidation. Both of these developments occurred in the Compi area.

In the late 1800's great pressure, both legal and extra-legal,

was exerted by the patrón of Chua hacienda to force the comunarios of Llamacachi to sell him their land. The comunarios resisted for several years, but finally most of them sold. Nevertheless, the comunarios of Llamacachi proved so recalcitrant to hacienda exploitation that the patrón of Chua agreed nine years later to sell their land back to them, keeping only a fertile strip along the lake shore.

During this same period of the latter 1800's it appears that the Compi hacienda was similarly expanding, partly through consolidation with the adjoining Capilaya hacienda, and partly by absorbing the land of comunarios on the nearby free community estancias. As in the case of the Llamacachi estancia, this constant encroachment on free community land by the haciendas was frequently resisted, for it disrupted traditions of work, of land tenure, of inheritance and basic social relations. The antagonism and deprivation that this process probably engendered is at least one of the important factors in the outbreak of widespread violence that occurred in this area in the first few years of the 20th Century.

For several years the area was plagued by pitched battles between comunarios of the free communities and colonos of the haciendas. The weapons were often only rocks, but there were wounds and even deaths. The issue at the forefront of this fighting was disputed land, but an important contributory factor was conflict among the heirs of the Compi hacienda. Some of the comunarios wanted to follow the example of Llamacachi and get back the land they had sold to the hacienda, in which they were encouraged by dissident heirs to the Compi estancia. In the end, the comunarios were defeated, and all of the free land of the estancias between hacienda Chua and hacienda Jank'o Amaya was absorbed by Compi, except for the small free community of Llamacachi.

As an hacienda, Compi followed the classic pattern of work organization. Each colono was assigned a plot of land for his personal use, in exchange for which he gave the hacienda specific quotas of general and special work. The over-all administration of work on the hacienda was in the hands of a mayordomo, while direct supervising was done by jilakatas and alcaldes on the larger estancias, and alcaldes alone on the smaller estancias. All of these officials were appointed by the patrón, who sometimes involved himself directly in the administration of the hacienda. Under the last of all the patróns, another level of hacienda supervision was instituted, the sot'a. Two sot'as served as assistants to the mayordomo and directly supervised the jilakatas and alcaldes. The importance of this in connection with hacienda work is that the labor obligations on the hacienda became increasingly burdensome for the colono. Over a period of years, the obligations of each family were increased from one person for three days per week, to two persons for three days per week, to four persons for six days per week. These labor increases forced many families to accept smaller pieces of land for their own use, with correspondingly smaller labor obligations. Families that were unable to subsist emigrated permanently, either to the cities or into the nearby, less densely populated valleys.

The increasing pressure of hacienda demands on the colonos was abruptly terminated by the Revolution of 1952. Beginning in 1950, there had been a slight decrease in hacienda labor requirements when the American owner of the neighboring hacienda of Chua rented Compi and introduced agricultural machinery. He demanded as many days of work, but fewer hours. It was not until after the revolution that really radical changes occurred.

Because of Compi's proximity to La Paz and the presence of something like an émigré colony in the federal capital, the meaning of the revolution was quickly sensed on the hacienda. Within a few months the colonos rejected all control over their personal plots of land and denounced all labor obligations; but they did not, as happened elsewhere, seize the hacienda. Arrangements were made to sharecrop the patrón's lands, but soon the colonos also initiated legal action to obtain his land for themselves. This was a slow procedure, but by 1957 the hacienda had been declared a latifundia and was divided among the working colonos and a few of the dispossessed emigrants.

Another revolutionary change was the shift from subsistence agriculture to commercial production, which remarkably increased available quantities of food. For example, two trucks were sufficient to carry the patrón's hacienda produce to La Paz, but now eight trucks are necessary. The new MNR government contributed to this shift to a market orientation by setting up special markets in La Paz so that campesinos could bypass the retail middleman and sell directly to consumers. Another important change has been the replacement of the potato by the onion as the major sales commodity grown by the campesinos, the advantage being that the onion yields a continuous crop.

Paralleling the agricultural and economic changes were important organizational changes. The responsibility given to the sindicatos in implementing agrarian reform decrees quickly established for them a central place in community affairs. Cooperative organizations were also introduced, and in the government's anxiety to counteract any decline in agricultural production following the disorders and uncertainties created by the revolution, mechanized agriculture was promoted. However, little technical support was available to assist the campesinos in the use of the machinery. Equipment disappeared or rusted away. In addition, cooperatives were mulcted and otherwise mismanaged, and most of them withered away.

As in San Miguel, the revolution brought school facilities to the hacienda community. Compi now has a public primary school, and education is one of the major concerns of the community.

These are some of the changes in Compi that have resulted from the Revolution of 1952. It altered the economic and political organization of the community, drew the people into a very active dependency on La Paz, and involved the community in the national politics of the MNR government. If Compi has not developed the political militancy associated with some of the Cochabamba campesino communities, it now has a practical awareness of national politics that distinguishes it from itself in the past and from

more traditional communities like San Miguel.

### Economy

All male heads of households in both San Miguel and Compi are agriculturalists, but San Miguel is oriented far more strongly to subsistence agriculture than Compi, which directs itself to the urban market. Still, agriculture is the singular preoccupation of both communities, giving them a uniformity of interest and activity that contrasts with the diverse economic activities of the four towns of this study.

In San Miguel, planting time is from August to November, after which the rains set in. The first plantings are of beans, oka, papalisa, esaña, alberja, lettuce and onions. In September, while there is still run-off from melted snows, potatoes and some quinoa are put in. By October the weather is dry, ready for the planting of barley, wheat and corn. The most important of these crops are potatoes, wheat, beans and oka. Very little corn, lettuce or onions are grown.

Beginning with the planting season in August, the family herds of sheep and llamas, with perhaps a cow, are driven to the communal pasture in the puna. Shepherding is generally the responsibility of older children. The animals are kept on the communal lands until May, when they are brought in to graze on the straw stumps in newly harvested grain fields, or they are driven to grass on the lower pampa.

During the rainy season from December to March as many as 25% of the adult men leave the community for Oruro, La Paz, Cochabamba and the former Bolivian port of Arica in Chile, to work as assistants to masons, carpenters and electricians -- if they are lucky -- and may earn from 55¢ to as much as \$2.00 a day. A few go to new agricultural zones in the Yungas to work for other campesinos. Teenage boys, too, frequently seek temporary work in Oruro, some as house servants, for which they get little besides board and room -- but then their absence from home reduces family living costs. Few of these migrant workers remain away from the community for more than a few weeks at a time, though they may go away more than once in the year, and most return for the harvest.

The harvest season runs through April, May and June. In March the rains taper off, and by late April the days are sunny and warm. In May the winds and the cold nights return, and in June the temperature drops to freezing again. During July and August snow can be expected, wind-whipped over the grazing lands, and there is a second decline in agricultural work, during which some comunarios again go to the cities. By the end of August they are back for the planting.

Agriculture in San Miguel is family labor. Even women with small children help in the fields, carrying infants on their backs in aguayos, or they leave a small child at the edge of a field to play. Children as young as six become assistant shep-

herds, and the teenage boys pitch in beside their fathers in the fields. Hired labor is negligible, though there is some exchange of work service among the comunarios when a large plot is to be planted or harvested. In these instances the comunario pays no wages, but is expected to return an equal amount of labor to each of those who aided him.

The men plow with oxen, using iron-tipped wooden shares, guiding their teams by leather thongs attached to the outside horns. Wives follow behind with seed in the folds of uplifted skirts. A clump of thola shrub is tied to the lower part of the plow, and as a second parallel furrow is uncovered the shrub pushes back the soil turned up by the plow along the first furrow, covering the seed. In an observed instance, plowing and planting began about 11 a.m., broke off at about 4:30 p.m., with about three-quarters of an hour taken for the midday meal. This was a day's work on a chacra of about one-quarter of an acre, one of the larger plots among the 22 separate chacras of varying size owned by one man. In smaller chacras it is not practical to use oxen, so the comunario yokes himself to the plow and his wife or older son guides and pushes.

Since no measurements of landholdings have ever been made -- at least not within living memory -- there are no reliable production data in relation to the size of landholdings. The relatively large holdings in San Miguel, compared with Compi, suggest that the land is not highly productive. A comunario in estancia Gisca Llacsa estimated that he owned 10 hectares, approximately 25 acres, divided into many small chacras. Of his 10 hectares, he cultivates three each year, resting the other seven because "the land gets tired with the cold". To maximize production he plants several crops in the same field, occasionally fertilizing with sheep droppings.

The father in every landowning household is obliged to give land to his son when he marries, but ultimately all male children receive equal shares of the cultivated land through inheritance. One of the comunarios explains the system of land acquisition:

A man has three sons and fifteen chacras. When his first son is old enough to get married he must calculate how much he will give him so as to be left with enough for himself, as well as enough to give equal portions to the rest of his sons when they get married. He may give his first son two chacras. Then, when his second son is ready to marry, the father will give him land either of equal size or equal productivity, and then his third son the same. If he makes more sons after the first gets married, the father will still have enough to give them equal portions at marriage. The newly married son will find, of course, that this small portion of land is not enough to live on. But the family stays close together, so that even the married son still works with his father and gets a share of his father's harvest, while at the same time having his own land. Sometimes, if the father doesn't have



enough land, the married son goes to Oruro to work, coming back only for the planting and the harvest. But still his father must give him some land, and thus the son becomes a comunario.

A few men do not marry, but may still be given a share of land and certainly inherit a full share when the father dies. Land is also acquired through marriage, even though daughters do not directly inherit. A man may marry a widow who possesses her former husband's personal share of land, or he may marry a girl without brothers, and instead of bringing his wife home to live with his family he goes to live with hers, and receives a share of his father-in-law's land.

Some comunarios who have more land than they can work may let a chacra for one-half of the harvest, or rent on a cash basis, the amount of rent being determined by the time required to plant the chacra. If a chacra can be planted in one day, the rent is 20 pesos (\$1.60) a year. Cash rent, sharecropping (partir), receiving one's own chacras, or sharing in the harvest of the father's land, are the several ways of obtaining access to land. For younger men particularly, all of these possibilities are inadequate for reasonable subsistence, forcing them to seek temporary employment in the agricultural off-seasons. Some emigrate permanently, allowing their brothers to cultivate the complete set of family chacras in return for half of the harvest taken from the land to which they were entitled.

A small stream, Rio Lacamara, winds through the canton, permitting irrigation on some of the chacras. Ditches carry water from the stream to catch basins as well, holding it in reserve. Irrigation begins in June or early July, becomes unnecessary by the end of December. The maintenance of the ditches and rules for the sharing of water are the responsibility of the individual ayllus. The alcalde de campo, a canton official, is formally responsible for surveillance of the irrigation system in the canton, but his attention is rarely required, for the comunarios are extremely watchful of breaks.

Every family keeps a few chickens and guinea pigs in the house, and all have herds of llamas and sheep. Some have one or two cows and burros. All grazing animals are marked over a three-day period every year, much of the time being given to fiesta activity. The shearing of llamas and sheep is done by the women with knives made from tin cans. This knife does a less than efficient job and leaves the beast in tatters, but a woman can shear 12 to 15 animals in half a morning. In 1964 a federal program for agricultural improvement built sheep dips in three estancias of San Miguel in an effort to help the comunarios improve their herds. Now a fourth estancia has expressed interest in building a dip of its own.

While many of the adult men work in the cities during land-idle periods, many more find work at other jobs in San Miguel itself, some as stonecutters in a quarry near the canton settlement. Stone is used for foundations. A number of comunarios do work as masons, making the adobe as well. Unskilled labor is

often provided by the owner and his family, while the construction specialist supervises and does the more skilled tasks. Many men work as tailors and weavers, and others produce stucco from material called poke lomanake, found on the surface in the hills around San Miguel. This material is easily removed by pick or dynamite, is baked in large ovens to soften it, then is ground by hand between huge stones, and finally is sifted and is ready for sale. Stucco production halts in the rainy season because the wood used in the ovens must be very dry. Six stucco ovens were in operation in 1966. Two to three men, generally members of a single family, are sufficient for all the separate operations, and produce five to 10 quintales (500 to 1,000 pounds) a day. Truckers from Oruro and other nearby towns buy it for about 20¢ a quintal. Carpentry is done by several comunarios. Another is able to do a bit of soldering, while two others have some skill in fixing the simple household equipment. But no one makes a living or could support a family on these jobs alone.

There are six tiendas in the central canton settlement, usually open every day but frequently for only a few hours, and all compete in the same goods: matches, candles, kerosene, soap, dyes, sugar, coca leaves, bottled beer, bottled papaya juice, and cane alcohol. Sales volume is low but relatively steady. Prices are set at a meeting of the tienda owners. A few families in the central settlement, some of whom are also operators of tiendas, bake rolls for sale now and then. One reports that his profit from a day's baking is about 20%. There are also a few tiendas out in the ayllu settlement.

There is a weekly market in the main plaza of the central settlement on every Wednesday that is not too windy, but there are not often more than 12 to 15 vendors, men and women. Three of these are operators of local tiendas, a few are comunarios from other San Miguel ayllus, but the majority are residents of nearby cantons. This weekly market offers some of the items found in the tiendas, in addition to bananas, hot peppers, oranges, herbs and medicines, pencils and paper, and candy. The afternoon of market day is one of the few times when San Miguel appears to be a bustling settlement.

Many of the closest communities are villages like San Miguel, and though their markets are not much more ample, each also has an annual market feria, so there are many occasions throughout the year when a large, active market takes place within range of San Miguel. There are local ferias through the year, except in October and from February to May.

The biggest market of all is held at the annual fiesta patronal, the feast of Arcángel Miguel, on September 29. Buyers and sellers come from as far off as the adjoining provinces, and especially from Oruro, and every manufactured item that a comunario could possibly want is available -- from clothing, cloth in bulk, hats and shoes, to agricultural implements, cattle and llamas.

While all the men of San Miguel depend directly on agricul-

ture, profit varies, for some have more land or better land. In parts of the community water is more accessible, in other parts the land is more sheltered, and some men have fewer brothers with whom they must share the land. Most of the comunarios who leave the community for temporary work do so because of necessity and return just as soon as they can. In short, there are material differences, but for the most part these are hardly more than slight. In dress, housing, possessions, there are many variations, but mostly minor. Even in land and animals no differences are great. San Miguel is a community with a relatively undifferentiated village economy.

Compi too is basically an agricultural community, sharing cultural, technological, environmental and economic similarities with San Miguel. But there are also some important differences between the two communities, and it is these that will receive the greatest share of attention here.

The lakeside location gives Compi more productive soil and a more moderate climate, and hence longer growing periods. Except for wheat in San Miguel, and barley and onions in Compi, the most important crops are the same. The onion, from having been a minor crop in the period before the revolution, has come to occupy a central place in Compi agriculture because it is a major source of cash in the La Paz market. Onions may be planted at almost any time on irrigated land, yielding a continuous harvest, and most Compi families ship to La Paz once or twice a month, some more frequently.

Since the revolution the government has permitted campesinos to sell produce on certain streets in the capital on Saturdays and Sundays without paying a fee. In addition, the more active sellers from the Compi estancias have organized a cooperative that rents space in one of the important markets in La Paz, and permit other residents from Compi to sell there for a small fee. Like the minoristas in Sorata, the Compi campesinos get their onions to La Paz by buying space in the large open trucks of the Achacachi Sindicato de Transportistas that serve the lakeside route. Five to eight of them regularly carry the Compi onion cargo to the city. There the campesinos unload at the tambos, large patios that have been converted into storehouses, and most of them find lodging with relatives or go to houses of their own.

The more temperate climate of the lakeside affects all crops. Growth begins a month or more before planting is possible in the San Miguel area. September through November are the important planting months, but the long slack season between December and April in San Miguel is narrowed to February and March in Compi. For some campesinos there is barley to be harvested in January, and potatoes, okas and beans in March through April and May. Chuño is made in June, barley is planted in July, and broadbeans and potatoes in August. Planting and harvesting go on throughout a good part of the year. Technology and labor are essentially the same as in San Miguel. Compi farmers also raise animals, but again with certain differences. The herds are smaller than in San Miguel, and sheep are more numerous than llamas. Another difference is that most Compi families raise pigs for sale in

nearby markets. Animals are pastured on community land in the hills, tended -- as in San Miguel -- by women and children.

Despite a generally richer soil and a more moderate climate, and even though irrigation is possible in two of the three open valleys that constitute the Compi hinterland, and lakeside land receives an abundance of water, the campesinos of Compi are not appreciably better off than the comunarios of San Miguel. The chief reason is that few campesinos have more than one hectare (2.471 acres) of land, made up of numerous and scattered plots. Many of them hold but a series of furrows, each furrow in a different field.

The pressure of the Indian population on the land has been intense, erupting in the considerable emigration that has characterized this community for as long as residents remember. Some emigrants wanted to return to Compi when the government, in the early years following the revolution, promised the return of land to all campesinos who had been forced off the haciendas, but when hacienda land was divided among the campesinos none was kept for any of the emigrants, and very few ever managed to re-establish themselves in Compi. Despite access to some additional land, the pressure continues unabated, aggravated by inheritance practices. Since the revolution inheritance of land at Compi has been according to national law, and all children, including girls, inherit equally, so the son who marries can now expect to receive no more than a fardel of furrows from his father. As a consequence of the land squeeze few can live by agriculture alone, and three-quarters of the men have secondary occupations. Large numbers work in building construction as masons and carpenters. Another large group are merchants, some taking meat from the altiplano to the Yungas and others buying coca in the Yungas for sale in La Paz and the lakeside area. Others do weaving and tailoring. Some are musicians and a few are fishermen. For most men in Compi, secondary work is carried on more or less simultaneously with agriculture, as the demands of their patches of land permit.

Compi has a couple of tiendas, much the same as those in San Miguel, but no public market. Close by, however, the new canton settlement of Jank'o Amaya has developed rapidly in recent years as a local commercial center. It has an active weekly market and several large tiendas. On the other side of Compi, not as close, is Huatajata, which also has a large and active weekly market as well as several tiendas. These facilities not being sufficient, the campesinos of Compi have the huge public markets and stores of La Paz which stock the total range of manufactured goods available in Bolivia. Most of these goods are beyond the means of the average campesino, but there he can buy the flashlights, bicycles and transistor radios so common in the community.

## Chapter 2

### POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

In the communities studied there is similarity between town and village, between municipal and cantonal governments, in that these governments have similar sets of officials with similar prescribed duties. But this likeness is to a large extent superficial, for there are in fact very fundamental differences between town and village governments in the way officials are selected, in the way a resident qualifies for office, in the way officials carry out their offices, and in the rights and responsibilities of community members. In analyzing political organization in the towns, attention was focused on social groups and organizations that held disproportionate economic and political power. Local government in the towns was seen as an ill-defined structure with limited authority, functioning in a manner which reflects to an important extent the organization of power in these communities. In San Miguel, local government comes close to being the power organization in the community, and is not distinct from, or a reflection of, any other power bases. This follows in part from the absence of significant economic differentiation and of social stratification. Further, many of the characteristics of local government stem from the distinctive cultural tradition of San Miguel as a free Indian community. Though the community has adopted some of the national forms, there has been no significant alteration of its traditional political organization.

#### San Miguel: Government Officials

In the national political structure San Miguel is a canton -- the lowest level of governmental jurisdiction under national law -- one of the several political subdivisions of the province of Carangas, which in turn is one of the several provinces of the Department of Oruro. This makes San Miguel immediately responsible to the sub-prefect in the provincial capital of Corque, and then, one step beyond, to the prefect in the department capital city of Oruro.

The chief responsibilities of the canton are the administration of law and public services within its jurisdiction. Close dependence of cantons on provincial and departmental capitals -- at least under the law -- is ensured by making canton offices subject to the appointive authority of the sub-prefect. This power is in fact not exercised in respect of San Miguel, an indication of the community's marginal political significance to provincial and departmental authorities. Nevertheless, its complement of officials compares very favorably to the other communities. There are 10 canton offices and 21 officials in San Miguel. Most of the offices derive from Spanish colonial times, and a few

from the period of the Incas, though some have been re-defined. At the top of this canton hierarchy is the corregidor, an office parallel in the canton with that of the sub-prefect in the province and the prefect in the department. His duties, beyond enforcement of law and collection of taxes, include supervision of the registration of births and deaths, supervision of the public market, and provision of facilities for voting in national elections. In addition, the corregidor has charge of community projects, presides over civic celebrations, and acts as a judge in local disputes from time to time. However, he has an unofficial responsibility to obtain for the canton all possible aid from both the regional and central government. The corregidor's presence in San Miguel as a representative of national government gives the community a favorably recognized voice in appealing for a share of whatever largess the higher levels of government may be inclined to bestow. Because the hope of educational, medical and agricultural grants-in-aid depends on his office, the community was not only willing but anxious to forgo traditional government practices and accept some reorganization of the ayllus, thereby conforming to the national pattern.

While the corregidor is officially the chief representative of the national government in a canton, to the people of the canton he is primarily the ambassador of the community to outside officials and government at all levels. He must represent the community at all meetings or in all negotiations with outside officials. His is the authority in decisions and actions that must be reported to higher officials, and his signature is required on the documents of such decisions. He must, therefore, be literate, which would disqualify for that office a good many of the older men in the community. The office of corregidor is broadly defined, not carefully delineated. The character of the incumbent shapes the conduct of the office.

Second to the corregidor in the canton is the agente municipal, a relatively new office that has been subject to various interpretations. He is officially responsible for the supervision and regulation of community conditions that are regulated under law in the public interest. This theoretically covers a wide range of matters, but in San Miguel it means his keeping the streets in a state of reasonable repair, setting hours when the tiendas must remain open, supervising the public market, issuing commercial licenses and collecting fees. The agente municipal has his own one-room office building on the central plaza opposite the church, separate from the casa de gobierno, another one-room building that serves the corregidor and local government as headquarters.

Outside the official hierarchy are four jilakatas, one for each of the ayllus. The jilakatas are not recognized as government officials under national law, but this has no effect on their actual authority in the community. The role of the jilakata in canton government is to represent his ayllu, meaning constituent estancias and their populations of comunarios. Jilakatas, like the other officials, are expected to reside in the canton settlement. The traditional authority of the jilakatas is greater than the official authority of the corregidor or agente

municipal, and their prestige is generally considerably greater. They are the leaders of cohesive constituencies in the San Miguel ayllu, while the other officials -- as canton officials -- find that their positions tend to isolate them from, rather than strengthen their influence over, the comunarios.

Next in the hierarchy are the three jueces parroquiales, the parochial judges, called first, second and third juez, but there is no other official distinction among them. They preside over all classes of civil and criminal legal proceedings within the canton, there being no recourse to higher levels of legal jurisdiction except, it would seem, in the most serious instances of criminal violence and murder.

As in the towns already described, most of the major offices in San Miguel government intrude upon the authority of the judiciary. A person seeking justice customarily appeals to a judge who is a member of his own ayllu. If none of the three judges is of his ayllu, he will address himself to any official who is; or -- if there be none who is -- he will seek out a judge or other high official who is not from the same ayllu as his legal opponent. The comunario assumes that social relations inevitably bias judgment, so each party to a dispute attempts to maximize the bias in his favor. However, the very suspicion that this is so has generated much cautiousness in judges and higher officials and flagrant judicial miscarriages seem to occur infrequently.

The judges are also responsible for keeping records of the participation by comunarios in canton projects. Their lists tell who has worked, when and on which project, in compliance with community work obligations. The judges are sometimes approached to make decisions about community matters. They may be asked by local officials to select a site for a school or a sanitary post, or some such thing, a ticklish business, because there is no vacant or unused community land, and some comunario will have to give up his property, and because it will be put to community use, will get no compensation.

Rather low in the hierarchy are four other officials, two comisarios and two alcaldes de campo, adjuvants to the higher officials, especially the jueces, whose decisions it is their job to enforce. However, since the other officials above the jueces also hear disputes and pass judgments, the comisarios work just as closely with the jilakatas, the agente municipal and the corregidor. Enforcement in San Miguel generally means bringing in a person who has ignored a court summons, or it means going out to collect a fine. The comisarios are the bailiffs, the catchpoles, and should not be mistaken for policemen. In San Miguel there are no policemen.

The alcaldes de campo are a sort of comisario. They too are responsible for enforcing the decisions of the jueces, but are in part distinguished from the comisarios in that they are concerned largely with affairs of the land. An alcalde de campo is sent by a juez to check on a complaint that a neighbor's cow is damaging crops. Later, perhaps, he summons one or both parties to appear in court. The alcalde de campo is also traditionally

responsible for seeing that community land rules are obeyed, especially concerning irrigation ditch maintenance and water rights. Finally, it is a duty of the alcaldes de campo to give notice in the ayllus of public meetings to be held in the canton settlement. Since there are no telephones, each alcalde walks to two of the ayllus, delivering his announcements in person.

The office of cacique cobrador is charged solely with the collection of the annual land tax and its delivery to Oruro. Having a limited, specific task is a common characteristic of less important offices in canton government, and officials who hold them have less prestige and are much less consulted on the broader issues of canton leadership; but the cacique cobrador differs significantly from this pattern in that he is generally a comunario of great prestige, most likely an elderly man who has already held many if not all of the offices in local government. The selection of such a person for so limited an office reflects the importance of his one task, the collection of the land tax. Though the advanced age of the cacique cobrador may prevent his active participation in government affairs, he has prestige, and occupies a position relatively high in the hierarchy.

The canton public primary school is the specific responsibility of four alcaldes escolares, one for each of the ayllus in the canton. They are the representatives of the ayllus to the school in the headquarters settlement, representing the interests of the ayllus in how the school is run -- although with no authority over it -- and are responsible for aid to the school in general. The interest of the community in the school and in education can be seen in the new school building that was constructed with community labor and mostly community materials, and the construction later of a small apartment building for the teachers. The alcaldes escolares supervise planting and harvesting on the lands set aside by the community for the schools, and they are also truant officers.

Finally, on the lowest rungs of the governmental hierarchy are two offices of simple limited duties. The more important of these is the notario, the compiler of the vital statistics of birth, death and marriage, for which he is permitted to charge fees. The marriage fee is a not insubstantial 40 pesos, which results in a delay of several years in the registration of most couples. The notario is also responsible for the registration of voters for national elections, for which there is no fee. The other office is that of the correo. His job is to deliver the mail -- only a few pieces in a whole year.

These are the 10 offices that, with 21 incumbents, constitute the government of the canton-wide community of San Miguel. Two of the offices, that of jilakata and alcalde de campo, are traditional in the community but are not recognized by the national government. Two other offices, the cacique cobrador and the comisario, are also traditional, but these are recognized by the national government. Many of the other posts in the canton government are not traditional, but overlap other traditional offices. This is the case of the corregidor, for example, vis-a-vis the jilakata. The rather recent formation of a canton-type



government in the community and the consequent necessity to adapt the traditional ways of government to the requirements of national law account for some of the anomalies of prestige and authority in relation to the different offices.

The ambiguities of authority and indistinctness in jurisdiction among offices, so conspicuous in the towns, pose no serious problems in the effective operation of San Miguel local government because of the transcendent traditional, collaborative concept of the nature of office. While it is possible in varying degrees to specify the respective responsibilities of the different offices, in accord with the way they are defined at superior levels of government, none of the higher offices in San Miguel in fact operates independently of the others. Instead, the conduct of offices and the actions of officials are governed by an implicit commitment to rule by consensus. Officials do not act on their own, but only in concert, and within the group there is no fixed hierarchy of influence. Certain offices bear greater prestige than others, but incumbents at any given time differ considerably in age, ability, experience and established prestige. These attributes may outweigh the authority and prestige that a specific office confers. Regardless of titles, the men who constitute the working local government operate as a collective unit. These men see each other frequently, raise with each other any problems or issues that they think require their attention as authorities, and discuss all suggested courses of action until there is agreement among them. When referring to the local government or government acts, comunarios speak of "the authorities" rather than "the corregidor" or any other specific office. Indeed, this is appropriate, for -- except for the conduct of routine tasks -- no official, from the highest to the lowest, has a prerogative in raising issues, making proposals or expressing opinion. Everyone may speak and be heard, though in practice the lower officials speak less than the higher.

On Wednesday of every week in late afternoon or early evening, "the authorities" meet at the casa de gobierno. All 21 officials are required to attend. He who fails is liable to a fine of four pesos, though this does not appear ever to have been levied. Since distances between some of the estancias and ayllus and the canton settlement are considerable for a man on foot, officials are expected to move to the canton settlement during the year they hold office. Many of them will already have a house in the canton settlement, and part of the family is there during the school year, so this is easy. But no one is forced to move, so there is generally some official who is absent from the weekly meeting, and the lower the rank the more likely that he is a frequent absentee. In 1966 the corregidor did not move to the canton settlement and was frequently absent. He was widely criticized.

There are no fixed agenda for the weekly meetings of the canton authorities. They discuss whatever is currently confronting the community and any official is free to raise any topics that interest him. Two or more officials frequently will already have discussed a problem informally, and they will then present it to the group. If there is an issue of considerable importance that

directly affects the comunarios, the authorities issue a call for a public assembly in the canton settlement. The alcaldes de campo carry the word to the ayllus, and all comunarios are expected to attend or pay a four-peso fine, though again, no one appears ever to have paid it. At these assemblies every comunario has an opportunity to speak his mind.

The essential difference between political office in the towns and in San Miguel is that in the latter community official position entails obligation without privilege. The offices endow the holders with prestige and present opportunities to exercise leadership, but they also require sacrifices, particularly of time. In this community in which every man is a campesino, officials are required to devote time to political office that could be given to their agricultural work. In the towns, all officeholders, even the lowliest, expect to profit to some degree from their office. In San Miguel, one of the few certainties of officeholding is that it will be costly to the incumbent. There are no revenues available to the local government. The land tax goes to the department. The limited number of fees go to the specific offices that concern them. Since there are no funds to be disposed of, there is no budget. Money is appropriated as need arises.

If there are no funds available to the local government, what monies can be expended? This, it turns out, is one of the onerous businesses of office. Comunarios do not expect to be assessed to pay for the activities or projects of the authorities. Rather, they think the authorities should finance whatever activities they authorize. That is the way it goes, as the following exchange at a gathering of 10 of the leading authorities shows:

Corregidor: What should we do about money to entertain our guests at the fiesta [September 29]?

Juez Parroquial: We'll have to put a levy on ourselves. [All agree.]

Several ask: How much? Two pesos each? [All agree.]

The discussion shifts briefly to another topic and then comes back to the question of money for the fiesta, and an official of ayllu Pueblo points out that a levy of two pesos will amount to only 42 pesos:

Corregidor: That won't be enough. Let's make it three pesos each. [They all agree.]

The cost of holding office is highly variable, cannot be estimated with much certainty, but it has been put at around 500 pesos per year for each official. This is a considerable sum for most comunarios. Moreover, the cost appears to be going up. Throughout the community and especially among the

authorities there are signs of a promotional zeal for progress. In the recent past, in addition to the school and housing for the teachers, they have laid a pipeline to bring water to the central plaza of the canton settlement. In 1966 there was talk of, among other things, a telephone line from the canton to Oruro.

The community is able to call on its members to contribute labor to community projects, but almost all of them require some outlay of funds, so the cost of progress to those who hold office has become increasingly formidable, and is forcing them to look outside the canton for assistance. For this reason there has been a drive to establish San Miguel as a second section of the province of Carangas. In 1966 the national government was considering the establishment of a second section in Carangas, and San Miguel was one of four canton communities considered as the capital. The other three communities -- Chuquichambi, Huayllamarca and Llanquera -- are all larger than San Miguel, but San Miguel appears to have been most eager to secure the nomination. Most of the authorities in San Miguel see increased government assistance coming from such a change, not only of benefit to the community but also to themselves. Their concern to attract outside interest and support impels them to struggle through the composition of letters to the Minister of Health and the Director of the Institute of Rural Development. In these approaches they are seeking the advantages of the larger society for the community, though what these are is not clearly perceived.

The authorities of the canton are represented in miniature in each of the four ayllus. In three of these the local ayllu government has a corregidor auxiliar, an agente auxiliar, and an alcalde de campo auxiliar. The character of these offices parallels that of their counterparts on the canton level, but the scope of the office is restricted to the affairs of the ayllu. There are no regular duties for any of these officials. They act as occasion demands. There are no regular meetings of ayllu authorities, but the likelihood is that they will see each other daily in the normal course of their lives anyway.

Comunarios must collaborate on ayllu projects also, and are called out to repair the chapel and the irrigation ditches. Some ayllus, socially more cohesive than others, plan rather ambitious projects, but again, there are no public funds available.

Though the ayllu jilakata resides in the canton settlement during his term of office he must spend considerable time in his ayllu because his fields are there and some of his family may still be living there. His position as representative of his ayllu gives him considerably more prestige than any of the other ayllu officials has. He is "the authority" to his fellow comunarios. In short, the notion of hierarchy is much clearer and much more decisive with respect to ayllu officials than to those of the canton. For example, the agente auxiliar called a meeting of musicians in one of the ayllus, but at the last minute it was postponed for a week. Responding to questions,

one of the comunarios explained:

The jilakata wants to wait until after the fiesta of San Andres. [But the agente auxiliar wanted it tonight, and didn't he advise some people to be here?] Yes, but that was before he had discussed it with the jilakata. [Why did the jilakata want to postpone it?] He said the people had just finished with one fiesta and now had to get ready for San Andres. It would be too much. Everything will be quiet next week and it would be better to do it then. [Suppose the agente auxiliar insisted that the session be held tonight?] No, he would not insist. He would not insist against the jilakata, for the jilakata has much more respect. He has had more offices and holds a position in which one receives the respect of the people.

This respect for the jilakata in his community is the basis of his traditional high rank among the canton authorities.

Ayllu Pueblo, in which the canton settlement lies, is a little different from the others in the form of its political organization. Ayllu Pueblo consists of three primary estancias, Pueblo, Condoriri and Vilaque. In the canton government the ayllu is represented by a jilakata and by one of the alcaldes escolares. But of the usual other three ayllu authorities, not all are found in two of ayllu Pueblo's estancias, and not any in the third, estancia Pueblo, which is the canton headquarters settlement. This estancia conducts its affairs under the direction of a political society headed by a president. The reason for this arrangement in ayllu Pueblo is not at all apparent. In a community in which the equality of rights and obligations is a fundamental element of local political organization, the choice of one estancia as a headquarters has created a situation of inequality which disturbs the community as a whole. While the canton now has a complete primary school, housing for its teachers, and a new sanitary post, all of them are in one ayllu in one estancia. While many families have houses in the canton settlement and spend time there, there is no denying that those who live in estancia Pueblo and nearby benefit to a greater extent from the development of the canton than those comunarios who live at a distance.

### Ayllu Independence

The authorities of San Miguel canton, in contrast to those in towns, are not merely functionaries sent from on high to a community wherein they have but superficial relations with the people and a highly restricted formal authority over them. The authorities of the canton are all comunarios. Most comunarios will at some time be in authority, all take part in the election of canton authorities, and all are responsive to the authority of these officials. There are no policemen or soldiers in San Miguel. No official carries a gun. The authorities

tend to avoid even any suggestion of force.

The ayllus are root and branch of the cantonal structure. The mita, the voluntary community work that every comunario owes to the canton, is determined on an ayllu basis. Canton authorities decide how many men are needed for how many days for any given project. A request for one-quarter of this number is then sent to each of the four ayllus, each being expected to contribute an equal number of men. Election to canton office is on an ayllu basis. All comunarios are eligible to hold office, but there is a strict cycle of rotation of offices between ayllus. Thus, in a given year, certain ayllus must supply candidates for specific offices and other ayllus candidates for other offices, the order of rotation being fixed. This does not result in an equal distribution of officeholders among the ayllus in any year. For example, in the election of 1966, Alianza, the largest ayllu, supplied only three officials; Bolivar supplied four; while Pueblo and Luzapata each supplied five, the latter being the smallest of the four.

The basic separateness of the ayllu in the canton is also symbolized at the weekly meetings of canton authorities. The officials from ayllus Pueblo and Luzapata sit on one side of the meeting room in the casa de gobierno, while those from ayllus Bolivar and Alianza sit on the other. The corregidor sits at a table at one end of the room, while the two sets of officials sit on benches along the two sides. Each year as offices rotate from one ayllu to another, the sitting places of officials will change in the room, but not the position of the ayllu itself. Each ayllu has its own authorities for managing itself. While each ayllu sends some of its members to serve in the canton government each year, and most of these are expected to serve the canton and not their particular ayllu, the jilakata serves in the canton solely as a representative of his ayllu. In the conduct of canton affairs, canton authorities not infrequently give way to ayllu interests. A working example of this deference to the ayllus occurred when a survey of the canton community was proposed by the research group.

The canton authorities heard the original proposal for the survey and then agreed to call an assembly of the canton comunarios to discuss it. Because survey interviews would impose on individual comunarios, canton authorities were not prepared to make a decision one way or the other without their consent. Only about 35 comunarios actually attended the assembly called to consider the proposal, but at this meeting the matter was thoroughly aired. Spring planting was about to begin, and long interviews with a large proportion of all comunarios loomed as a disruptive force. Characteristically, comunarios and authorities focused on the potential advantages. In the eyes of the comunarios, the research group was not distinguished clearly from government agencies or international programs; rather, was in the large class of "external groups" seen as sources of assistance to the community. The research group recognized the real hardships that carrying out the survey on schedule entailed and was prepared to help the community with some of its projects by supplying materials.

At the first meeting a decision was reached by the comunarios and their leaders to cooperate with the survey. Questions about what assistance should be asked of the research group, and especially how such assistance should be apportioned in the community, were difficult to resolve, so a second meeting was arranged for the following day. At this meeting the main issue was whether all assistance should go to the canton or be divided among the ayllus. This brought out the chronic complaint from the ayllus that no aid received, and no project completed by canton authorities, is ever seen in the ayllus. The comunarios and some canton authorities were opposed to having only the canton benefit from collaboration with the survey, so it was decided to accept the proposal only on condition that each ayllu negotiate directly with the survey team and make its own arrangements for the conditions of collaboration. By this arrangement the canton did not sacrifice all benefit to itself, but accepted a reduced share, since the canton settlement would profit as a part of ayllu Pueblo.

The determination to have independence of action in the ayllus has led to talk of separation from the canton in some of them, and the development of an apparently separatist policy in at least one, Bolivar. Because subdividing and regrouping have had a long history among the Aymara settlements on the alti-plano, and San Miguel itself is a rather recent produce of subdivisions grouped as a canton, allegiance to the community called San Miguel is too slight to be a strong cohesion factor. Further, three ayllus see ayllu Pueblo, more specifically, estancia Pueblo, the canton settlement, as benefiting much more than themselves from assistance obtained by the canton. The other ayllus, meaning the big estancias in these ayllus, would like to have schools of their very own. There is a widespread belief that more and different aid will be coming, which they too would like to get, and the way to get more for themselves -- as they see it -- is to have their own set of canton officials to deal directly with government agencies.

Before 1958, separatist-minded ayllu Bolivar was one of the estancias of ayllu Alianza. At that time it separated from Alianza, thinking, it is said, that it would thus be able to acquire its own school. Since then Bolivar has built a one-room school and a small chapel, and recently started construction of a central ayllu settlement to bring its widely dispersed population together.

These developments bear the marks of a thought-out plan. To become a canton, the ayllu must look as if it deserved this status. Every effort is being made to match the San Miguel canton settlement and even improve on the model; hence the school, the chapel, the new central settlement, and proposals for a sanitary post. A further preliminary part of the plan is to free Bolivar from participation in canton services that it wishes to provide for itself. The ayllu supports one teacher in its local primary school, though there are barely enough students to justify a teacher.

In its move toward independence Bolivar attempted in 1965 to

seize one of the stucco deposits and operate it for the benefit of the ayllu. The several deposits in the hills around the canton are regulated by the canton, and the attempt was rebuffed in a physical clash between comunarios from ayllus Bolivar and Pueblo. In this and in its other moves, Bolivar has provoked considerable antagonism in the other ayllus, and when the corregidor of 1966, a man from Bolivar, continued to reside in his own ayllu instead of moving to the canton settlement, even missed meetings of the authorities, this was interpreted as an expression of independence and he was accused of violating his responsibility as a canton official.

Bolivar, however, is not the only ayllu that apparently has aspirations for independence. Two of the other biggest estancias, Caicoma in Alianza and Condoriri in Pueblo, are reported to want independence also. They have not aroused the criticism and antagonism directed at Bolivar, for neither has taken concrete steps to bring about any change.

The weakness of some of the ties of the ayllus to the canton, as well as the pressures for independence that threaten to disrupt ayllu-canton ties, are at least partially counter-balanced by conditions that tend to weaken the position of the ayllu on the one hand, and by relations that bind the ayllu into the canton system on the other. One of the conditions unfavorable to independence is the limited social cohesion within the several ayllus. Ownership of land is the basis of membership in a specific ayllu, but ayllu land-owners are not always neighbors, only sometimes, because holdings are fragmented, and the settlements in which holders of adjoining lands live are often far apart. An important force for cohesion is the sharing of water, which is allotted on an ayllu basis. Only those who own land in an ayllu have any right to water there, though others may be permitted to use it. The sharing of water establishes a strong basis for collaboration among the comunarios. But it is not possible at present for all parcels of land to receive water, and therefore in all ayllus there are some comunarios to whom the sharing of it is of no concern, who do not on this account cohere.

Besides the division between those with and those without water, there is frequently another division within the ayllus between big and small estancias. Of the four main estancias in Bolivar, Llacsá contains more comunarios than all of the others combined, and Zescallacsá is much closer to ayllu Alianza than to the center of its own ayllu, and would prefer to be a part of that ayllu. The other two estancias, Piñeto and Culco-Condoriri, both small, are distant from the new Bolivar ayllu center and are estranged from ayllu leadership. The position of the smaller estancias is not enviable. Partly as a result of numbers alone, comunarios from the big estancias are more likely to supply officials for both ayllu and canton governments. In the management of ayllu affairs, even if one of the ayllu authorities is from one of the smaller estancias, the smaller estancias are frequently not consulted on ayllu matters, but merely informed of decisions that have been taken. Both physical separation and strained relations affect collaborative work within the

ayllu, which in turn affects social cohesion among the comunarios of the ayllu.

The quasi-independent attitude of the ayllus is sometimes seen in interrelations. Ayllu Bolivar, for example, allows some of the comunarios of ayllu Pueblo to share Bolivar water, but only if they will send their children to the Bolivar primary school, because the school must have 30 children to qualify for a teacher, and often there are not enough first-grade Bolivar children to start. The arrangement continues until these children are graduated, then their fathers are summarily deprived of water and have no redress.

Chauvinistic feelings notwithstanding, there are factors in the canton political system that militate against independence for the ayllus. One of these is the canton's established role as the mediator in respect to the outside world, especially the government and its agencies. It has a protective function, also, for the canton authorities are in a position to ward off external interference. More appreciated is the acquisition function -- teachers to staff a complete primary school of six grades, having San Miguel named a school district with a director posted to the canton, and so on. Canton authorities had an important part in obtaining free food from Caritas, a Catholic aid organization operating in Bolivia, and they have other requests at government agencies for other forms of assistance.

A second link between ayllu and canton is political cargo, the office system. Except for the office of jilakata, which is also an ayllu office, all of the canton offices carry greater prestige than their counterparts in the ayllu. In a community with minimal social differentiation the political office system is one of the few means to obtain distinction, and therefore the canton office system has become a strong cohesive force in the community. Every married man with land is a comunario and has a right to speak and be listened to at ayllu and canton meetings, but officeholders have the prestige and influence. Every comunario will have an opportunity at some time to take at least a minor office, and there are strong incentives.

The fiesta office system has a similar bonding effect. There are quasi-religious fiestas in the ayllus and in some estancias, national holiday celebrations and the patronal fiesta, all of them occasions for heavy drinking, music and dancing. All have important cohesive effects.

The patronal fiesta in 1966 ran night and day for six continuous days, a fulfilling experience for most participants, though some said the fiesta is not what it used to be. Several bands were brought in and they played night and day. There were masses of food and even larger quantities of alcohol, all free. Many merchants and guests from other communities swelled the throng. Most families with second houses in the canton settlement were obliged to give them up to visiting relatives, compadres or friends. For this big fiesta each ayllu strives to better the others by presenting the best band, the best costumed and most practised dance troop, the most appetizing food in the



most generous quantities, and the greatest flow of alcohol.

The sponsors, called pasantes, bear with their relatives the cost of this celebration. For the September 29th fiesta there are eight pasantes, four of whom are mayordomos, four alferados. The pasantes are selected by the jilakatas in the four ayllus from among those comunarios who have not served. As with political offices, the pasante offices rotate among the ayllus. The pasantes have a year in which to meet their obligations to the fiesta. In this year they are supposed to meet weekly in the canton to pray together at one of the two churches, but these meetings are often skipped because they must devote their time to earning money. In ultimate costs, the burden of the mayordomos is considerably greater than that of the alferados. They are required to supply the bands and dance troops imported from Oruro at an estimated \$175 for each. When the large quantities of food and alcohol are added to this, each mayordomo can expect to have to pay \$300 to \$400, so some men will have to work for much of the year in Oruro to accumulate the necessary cash. Also, their families give the year to handicrafts to earn ready money. Fiesta sponsorship calls for the fullest support of the family and all close kin, and often compadres and padrinos as well. The preparation and serving of meals and drinks frequently call for material and financial contributions.

For the larger fiestas the resources of the family may be taxed to the limit. In such circumstances ample property and a large family are of great value. In San Miguel a nearly blind comunario was named a pasante for a fiesta and accepted it as his obligation. Since he could not afford to be a pasante without raising additional funds, he left for Oruro to beg in the streets, the only way of making money that his physical condition permitted.

The reward for the great expense and effort on the part of the pasantes and their relatives is the tremendous prestige the pasante gains from the event. Fiesta office, like political office, is obligatory for the comunario, but if the costs are quite beyond a person's means he will not be asked to serve. There are many other fiestas in the canton, all of them smaller than the September 29th affair, and more within the means of more comunarios. They also convey prestige, though to lesser degrees. The jilakata of Caicoma describes the system:

All are expected to hold offices, but some cannot hold very many, while others can. It is according to their means. Everybody wants to take many cargos, but some are able to take more, others less. Everybody wants an office, but when one has just had one he needs time to recuperate from his expenditures of the year before. People know that he does not want another office right away. He does not have to say he cannot afford it, but everybody will know and not ask him.

The central place of the cargo, the political and religious office system, in the life of the community is suggested by the

The central place of the cargo, the political and religious office system, in the life of the community is suggested by the fact that approximately 25% of the comunarios in any given year hold either a political or fiesta office. Both types of cargos confer community prestige. There is a broad fiesta office base in the estancias and ayllus, and hence a more pyramiding effect here than in the political office system, as a comunario moves from holding a minor fiesta office in the estancia to an ayllu, and finally to the big canton fiesta, each time accumulating a greater quantity of prestige. This pyramidal cargo structure in part cuts across estancia divisions, and thus acts as a cohesive inter-community force in the canton political system.

Within the canton the ayllu occupies a strategic but not overpowering position. The organizational form of San Miguel today is certainly not what it was many years ago, nor will it necessarily remain unchanged even in the near future. The same may be said of many of the Aymara communities on the altiplano. A major reason is the growing impact of the national society on these communities, especially since the Revolution of 1952. San Miguel lacks most of the obvious signs of change produced by the revolution. Yet, the governing authorities of the canton have progress very much on their minds, and their position between the ayllus and national agencies is a weighty element in maintaining the political system as it is; but there are simultaneous tendencies, one toward increased canton centralization, and the other toward decentralization. This ambivalence is seen in the still amorphous but developing division of the more outspoken comunarios into progressive and conservative factions. The progressives see their future in terms of a strong canton that will be able to deal more effectively with the national government and get a secondary school, or perhaps a hospital, for the community. They think the canton, to accomplish this, must be unified, strengthened at the expense of the independence of the ayllus and even the estancias. The progressives tend to minimize the importance of the fiesta cargo system and attempt to avoid such offices. The conservatives want the advantages of outside aid, but they want them for their own ayllus or their own estancias. They are probably less realistic. These conservatives more readily accept fiesta cargos. The conflict between these factions extends to other matters, such as the mita, the community work obligation. A progressive canton authority defines the problem:

If we were a strong central organization, the canton authorities could make more demands on the comunarios. The same people always come to the mita. Some people never come. We [the canton authorities] have the right to fine those who never come, but we never do fine them. They simply ignore it, and the ayllus and estancias do nothing about it.

This is not a problem unique to the canton. It occurs at ayllu and estancia levels, the consequence of a gradual shift from a traditional social order, in which a shared morality has been the central mechanism by which conformity to social obligations was ensured, to a secular order in which persuasion and punish-

ment must be applied to obtain conformity to now secular rules.

### The Position of the Comunario

In the towns the majority of men are related to the political system only marginally, as objects of aggrandizement, almost as if they were exterior to the civic body. In San Miguel, a comunario is an integral part of the political order, as much as any of the authorities. Every comunario has a set of obligations to the canton community, as well as to ayllu and estancia sub-communities, and also has a set of rights.

Every comunario has a mita obligation, which requires him to provide his labor for community projects. There is yearly work to be done on the roads, the irrigation ditches, the public buildings, and there are special projects. Some of these obligations arise annually in the canton and in the ayllus, while others occur intermittently on both these levels and in the estancias. Canton projects are usually organized in November and December, when there is little agricultural work, but they can come at any time. The canton authorities decide among themselves how many men will be needed for how many days, and then each ayllu is asked to supply one-quarter of the number.

The number of days of canton mita required from the comunarios varies from year to year, depending on the range of projects. Each ayllu maintains an official roster of its comunarios, and mita assignments both for the canton and for the ayllu are rotated so that each man serves an equal number of days. This equality obtains, however, only within each ayllu, for comunarios in the smaller ayllus will necessarily find their names coming up for canton work more frequently than those in the larger ones. How the mita obligation works out in practice is noted by a comunario from the estancia Calcoma in ayllu Alianza:

We had about four days work before the 21st of November, fixing up the lower plaza, and about two days putting the roof on the church of the upper plaza, the church of San Miguel. I worked only about three days. I had to go to Oruro before the 21st. [Did anyone work in your place?] No, I have nobody that I could send. [Do you have to make up the lost three days?] No, the ayllu had many people there, more than the others. In general, I work the mita in the canton whenever there is a call. If I miss a few days, it's not important.

If a comunario is absent from the community, ill or preoccupied, and not able to attend a mita call, it is permissible to send a replacement. Most often he is an adult son, but many comunarios have no grown sons and therefore cannot but default. Sometimes he balks because he disagrees about the merits of a project. In any case, response to the mita request is not reflexive. Ayllu Bolivar, for example, has had considerable difficulty with its projects. One of the ayllu officials complained:

The comunarios have had many expenditures this year. Most of it was for the church. We get no help from anybody. The people from Culco come to work, but they do not pay the quotas. The people from Piñeto neither help with the work nor pay the quotas.

Here the problem is compounded of the ambitious course that ayllu Bolivar has set for itself and of disaffection in the smaller estancias within the ayllu. In this case there seems to be less evasion of canton mita than ayllu mita, but even for the canton some comunarios are not inclined to give. There is some indication that in such cases a fine is imposed at the end of the year in the form of a sheep or some other contribution satisfactory to the authorities. But it is clear that authorities at all levels are reluctant to punish. Authorities talk as if formal retribution always follows social deviance, but the comunarios see it rather differently:

If a man never comes to a mita call, then it is up to the authorities of the ayllu to make him aware that he has been missed. [Suppose he doesn't care. Can the ayllu authorities do anything about it?] Sometimes when they talk to a man he then starts to come. Sometimes he continues to ignore them. [Then what do they do?] Usually nothing. They could fine him, but they don't. [Why don't they?] Well, a person in the same ayllu is a neighbor, and nobody wants to start trouble.

Mita obligations are complicated by the fact that many comunarios own land in more than one estancia and some in more than one ayllu. A comunario was asked about his separate obligations to two estancias:

[What obligations do you have to Condoriri?] I go there every year during the fiesta of the 25th of July. If there is some work to do, I help out. [When there is a meeting of the estancia, do you attend?] If I happen to be there I attend, but they never inform me of meetings when I'm not there. Or if there is an estancia mita, they sometimes inform me, but not always. [But do they expect you to work when there is an estancia mita?] Yes, they expect me to help. Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't.

The second important obligation of all comunarios is that of fiesta office. One generally begins to sponsor fiestas as a young man between 18 and 20 years of age. Fathers who can afford it will sometimes offer a minor son as a fiesta sponsor to save the son the expense of this duty at a later date. In this way some comunarios hold their first fiesta office when they are only 13 or 14 years old. The holding of fiesta offices normally precedes political officeholding. The fiestas provide a setting in which the comunario can distinguish himself, bring himself to the attention of others beyond his own estancia and ayllu. Some

offices are within the reach of all, for their cost is minimal. Others are relatively costly and the most prestigious are exceedingly costly, which eliminates the poorer comunarios from consideration. Age is not an important criterion for even the most important offices and some occupants of these offices are indeed quite young. In a few of the canton political offices there is, however, a premium on literacy. There is concern lest a comunario be incompetent for office. This is seen in the following discussion with a comunario from Caicoma:

[If Fernando does not speak very much and he does not have good ideas, why was he elected agente auxilliar?] Because he knows what to do and he does it. That is the way with most people who are authorities. [Does that mean you don't choose persons with special qualities for certain offices?] Sometimes we do, but mostly we don't. We cannot choose somebody who cannot write for registro or corregidor. Or we cannot choose somebody who hasn't the head for an office. But otherwise, if he can do it we elect him. We are very few people. Sometimes we elect somebody who barely has the head to do a job, but he follows the others and gets by.

The principle of first among equals characterizes the San Miguel political order. The authorities are not an elite. They are the comunarios who happen to be in office that year. Next year there will be another set and in the following year another set. It is, therefore, important to keep qualification requirements within their mean, and to accept authorities with mediocre abilities or worse, because to eliminate such persons would mean that a few would have community responsibilities that should be shouldered by all.

There are important differences in the ways that political and fiesta offices are filled. Responsibility for canton fiestas rotates among the four ayllus. The jilakata selects the pasantes who represent the ayllu, and does not select persons who have recently held either type of office, or who obviously cannot afford to accept an office. On the other hand, a comunario can refuse the jilakata's request that he serve as a pasante. He may give any of a variety of reasons, and his own decision is final. Political election is more complicated, more formal. Candidates are selected in the ayllu, with all comunarios participating. Just as offices rotate among ayllus, so they often rotate among estancias, so it is known from whence the candidates are to come. A comunario from Caicoma describes this process with respect to his own ayllu, Alianza:

In Alianza, for example, there will be nominations for corregidor, since it is Alianza's turn to have the corregidor this year. They will nominate three people and the canton assembly will elect one of them. The three nominations are finally made at an ayllu assembly, but it is the estancias that initially present the candidates. This year Tica Belen will present two candidates and Caicoma will present

one. Next year, when the ayllu will nominate candidates for juez parroquial, Caicoma will present two candidates and Tica Belen one. After the nominations have been made in the various estancias there is an assembly of the total ayllu and they approve the nominations. The assembly never rejects the nominations of an estancia.

In this process it is clear that every comunario has a right to speak and be heard, but some are heard better than others. This is apparent in the following discussion with a young comunario:

Yes, everybody is equal in talking at the assemblies. [How about you?] Yes, I talk, but not as much as some of the older people. [Why is that?] Because they have more experience. For that reason younger people don't talk so much. Sometimes young people speak, but mostly the business of the ayllu is handled by the older people. [Is this because of respect for the older people?] It is partly out of respect, but it is also because the older people have been authorities several times and they know how to deal with problems.

In contrast to fiesta office, nomination to political office is not easy to reject. Some, it is said, escape to Oruro. If they are elected anyway, they may plead lack of funds or lack of time and ask the authorities to relieve them of office. In general, however, comunarios accept political office obligation. As one put it: "In one's lifetime one must. It is expected." A comunario who finds he cannot avoid an office he does not want may be able to make it tolerable in his own fashion. This is seen in the following discussion with a 24-year-old comunario who has been elected to his first political office, that of comisario:

The comisario has very little to do. Manuel Tola, who was comisario from Caicoma this past year, rarely ever attended the meetings of the authorities and almost never went to the ceremonies. Once in a while, when there is a demand, when the accused refuses to come to the juez to be judged, the comisarios have to bring him in, but that rarely happens. [But don't you always have to go to the meetings of the authorities?] Yes, but Manuel and Diego [comisario in 1965] hardly ever went to those meetings unless there was something special to be discussed. I will go when I have the time, but I have much work to do in the house and in the fields. I have no grown sons to look after my work the way some people do. I cannot spend most of my time in the canton settlement. I will go to the meetings when I can, at least at first, to get some experience. Then I will see.

Sometime after the community elections in December of each

year the sub-prefect in Corque comes to San Miguel in official recognition of the new authorities. A second and more important ratification of the new officials occurs when the old authorities meet with the new ones in a ritual celebration of the transfer of office. Old and new authorities go to the canton church for a brief prayer and then, in succession and procession, they visit the patios of the new authorities, each of whom will have killed several animals, sheep or llamas. In the patios the new and old officials eat together, chew coca and drink, alcohol being essential to ritual occasions. During the coca chewing and drinking a short prayer is said again and again to the Pachamama, the Aymara earth goddess and central god in the Aymara pantheon. On this day both old and new authorities carry black silver-headed canes, the symbol of office, all much the same. These canes are not passed from old to new officials. Most families have one, kept out of sight until one of its members is elected to office.

The financial hardships associated with office have been evaded by a minority in recent years by their simply opting out of the fiesta system. The method is to embrace Protestantism, which -- in the fundamentalist versions advocated in Bolivia -- forbids the chewing of coca or the drinking of alcohol. Tulapugro, a small estancia of a half-dozen families down on the edge of the pampa in ayllu Luzapata, has become an adventista estancia. The pampa land is some of the poorest in the area and this is one of the poorest estancias. As adventistas these comunarios reject the fiesta system. They will not serve as pasantes or kill animals for sacrifice. On the other hand, they are willing, even eager, to accept political offices. Since these also involve the drinking and coca chewing ceremonies as well as extensive participation in fiestas, they can serve only by significantly altering conduct in these offices.

Since their number is so small, they have not yet posed a serious threat to the cargo system, but they have aroused much hostility and antagonism. Some have lost parcels of land that they held in other ayllus and one family had their house in the canton settlement burned. While there is little evidence of much interest throughout the canton in the new religion, a good many other comunarios have become highly conscious of the financial cost of the fiesta system and of how the adventistas in Tulapugro are profiting by rejecting it.

The pressure of office obligations is a subtle factor in maintaining the central position of the ayllu in the political system. Marrying into families with land, and shifting estancias from one ayllu to another to form new ayllus, have created possibilities for multiple ayllu membership and the blurring of ayllu lines. However, the comunario holding land in more than one ayllu would necessarily be subject to cargo obligations of two or more ayllus, doubling his burden of offices and mita obligations. Very few comunarios in San Miguel have accepted such double obligations. Most comunarios avoid this by selling land held in other ayllus.

## Community Leaders

While the holding of one of the more important political or fiesta offices gives prestige and more potential for influence, being an officeholder is not necessary to a man's being influential in the community. Insofar as comunarios are socially distinguished, it is just as important to have held office as to be occupying an office. One earns distinction, prestige, and the respect of the community by devoting one's self to a series of offices over the years. As a result, there exists in the community at any given time a prestige pyramid in which all comunarios have a place. At the apex of this pyramid are men who not only have had experience in many offices but who also have leadership abilities, men who are good planners, willing to devote time to the community, intelligent, articulate, and often somewhat aggressive. No serious decisions are made in the community without consulting these men.

An influential comunario revealed how personal qualities severely condition practical chances for leadership. He considered the jilakata of Alianza to be influential in the ayllu because "the jilakata's voice carries weight", but he thought two other men in Alianza were more influential, though not currently occupying a political office. Of these two, one is not as influential as the other because, "he is not so able or clever as Fernando and he is a fool when he is drunk". He brushed aside the jilakata from Luzupata as "a nice little man on whom cargos are placed because he takes them and because the ayllu is very small".

The acquisition of experience, development of abilities and accumulation of prestige through fiesta and political offices is a continual process covering a good part of the life span of every comunario. Therefore, it is somewhat misleading to speak of a set of leaders, for there are always some comunarios starting out on the route to leadership, as well as others who are well on their way, have not quite arrived, but who are often energetic, willing to serve, and full of ideas. Some senior and junior leaders alike are outspoken in their dissatisfaction with things as they are. One of the minor canton authorities complained:

The juez parroquial does nothing as juez until a man comes to him to adjudicate a case. The cor-regidor does not initiate anything. He just takes care of routine business. The agente does traditional jobs. All canton political offices are traditional posts. Nothing is initiated from them.

Out of their dissatisfaction has come their first supplemental form of political organization in the community, the Junta Vecinal. The Junta Vecinal was inaugurated on August 6, 1966, during the Independence Day celebration in the canton settlement. This is an extension of the Junta de Vecinos organization already encountered in several of the towns. The junta is an authorized part of town government under Bolivian law, but its political status is presently ambiguous. The inauguration



announcement stated that the plan to organize the junta had been approved by national government agencies in Oruro and by the prefect of the department. Three speakers described the new organization to the fiesta crowds, the previous year's corregidor, the current corregidor, and a junior leader who had been chosen as vice president of the junta.

The junta has 23 members, each of whom occupies an official position. In its organization it has a closer resemblance to a campesino sindicato than to a Junta de Vecinos. In addition to a president, a vice president, and a secretary-general, there are secretaries of specific activities -- secretaries of actas, justice, sports, public works, agriculture, cattle, music and propaganda. Finally, there are four delegates and four vocales. Pueblo, and nearby Luzapata, the smallest ayllu, have seven and six members respectively, while Alianza has four and Bolivar has three. Four members are currently canton authorities. Other members have held political offices as well as fiesta offices, and there are also several junior leaders.

The junta clearly intends to foment community action in San Miguel. How it is to do this is not clear. Some of the barriers to action are only too evident, marked in the following comment by the junta president:

There are many things we could do, but the people don't want to spend any money. For instance, we could build a good dam on this river and have much more water, but the people do not want to pay for the cement. They don't understand yet that it would be a sacrifice for one year, but afterwards they would gain. We would also like to start a cooperative, but it is hard to get the people to understand that a cooperative would benefit them. With a cooperative, we would plant things according to the best possibilities of production and then exchange among ourselves. For instance, if in a certain place you get good potatoes, the owner should plant potatoes. If all his land is good for potatoes, he should plant only potatoes, and then he could trade with those whose land is good mostly for quinua or okas. This would immediately increase production.

In early December, four months later, there was no sign that the junta was having any impact on the community. They had held a couple of meetings but attendance was spotty. The inauguration speakers on August 6 said the junta was an agency to "produce well-being in the community" and promote an "advanced and prosperous community", but the comunarios thought the junta was not doing what it had said it would do, or they had no idea even of what it was supposed to be doing:

I thought it was going to tell the comunarios how to do things with their cattle, sheep and land. So far they have told us nothing. They were supposed to study these questions and tell us, but I

don't think they are studying, I think they are sleeping. I don't know what the junta vecinal is supposed to do. It has done nothing since the inauguration on the sixth of August, so I don't know what they are doing, or what they are supposed to do. [A number of the members of the junta are on your soccer team. Do you ever discuss the activities of the junta with them?]  
This is the first discussion of the junta that I have had with anyone.

The new junta has no power. It cannot command the comunarios to collaborate. Its membership is composed primarily of the progressives, who favor the dominance of the canton over the ayllus. The junta is really a redundant organization, in that the affairs of the community are the responsibility of the traditional authorities. There is not a single matter raised by the junta that had not been discussed by the canton authorities. The junta has tried to distinguish itself as being more oriented to technical matters by having various specialized secretaries, but it is mainly distinguished from the traditional authorities in having declared that it favors more and faster action on already recognized community objectives. It remains to be seen whether the junta will develop support in the community or wither away like its counterparts in the towns.

### Party Politics

Since the Revolution of 1952 the chief instrument for engaging the altiplano Indians in partisan political activity has been the campesino sindicato, but there are no sindicatos or political parties in San Miguel. There is not, however, a complete absence of party politics.

In the 1964 national elections 422 adults registered and presumably voted. In the national elections of 1966 the figure dropped to 378, but this was an unofficial tally and the official total may have been somewhat larger. Beyond this, 21% of the comunarios admit to membership in one of the political parties. This is the smallest proportion encountered in any of the six communities studied, but still not an insignificant number. Forty-three percent claim to prefer one party over all of the others, which again is the smallest proportion found among the study communities, but still indicates substantial awareness of partisan politics at the national level.

National political affairs are not as popular a subject of conversation in San Miguel as in certain sectors of town populations, probably a reflection of lower educational levels in San Miguel and of communications limitations. Very little reading matter reaches San Miguel, though many families have radios and news broadcasts are widely listened to. When the subject of national politics is raised with comunarios the most common response is a complaint about broken promises.

General Barrientos won in San Miguel in the elections of 1966.

The unofficial count was 213 for Barrientos, 115 for the FSB, and 50 for the MNR. The distribution of this vote reflects the political sensitivity of the community as a canton. The comunarios, through the authorities, look increasingly to the national government for aid. This gave Barrientos an important edge over all of his competitors. The large vote for the FSB possibly reflects no more than the comunarios' political inexperience for some were impressed when representatives of the MPC and FSB stayed longer, talked to more people, and "said some nice things".

### Community Action

The authorities in San Miguel are in general more preoccupied with community welfare than their counterparts in the four towns, the first reason being that the authorities of San Miguel are much more representative of the population; another is that the comunario has a working role in government. Then, too, the mita system is much more effective than the limited prestacion vial of the towns, which can always be avoided through payment of a fee. Each town project evokes only an ad hoc effort that dies with a project's completion, though in Reyes traditional organizational forms may be applied in community action.

The authorities are now discussing seriously the redesigning of the canton settlement because the few streets are too narrow for the trucks that come for the fiestas and many of the housing compounds are juxtaposed haphazardly. The proposal that a large area of housing should be torn down to align a set of streets in a grid pattern not unexpectedly met fierce opposition from property owners and was not adopted. But a compromise appears to have a better chance of success. This would enlarge the settlement in a grid pattern and open up new housing sites for many of the estancia members who want a house in the canton settlement but lack the land.

The mita system makes available a not inconsiderable though relatively unskilled labor pool. The enlargement of the atrio at the Church of the Patrocina required the removal of stone from the approach to the church, and that a stone wall be moved. For four days over 100 men from all of the ayllus worked on this project. But when the task is a small and possibly urgent one, such as the need to repair the frozen water line coming into town, the authorities may undertake the job themselves. The repair of the water pipe required little labor. It had not been buried, but simply rested on the top of the ground, which explains why it froze. All the authorities themselves had to do was to separate the lengths of pipe so they could be soldered, and for that they imported a skilled solderer from a nearby community. He was paid by the authorities themselves as an obligation of their office. There being no government rents or salaries, costs arise almost entirely from the community projects the authorities decide to undertake. In recent years these costs have grown. The labor to construct the new primary school building was recruited entirely through the mita system and the Ministry of Education gave some materials. But in most cases, as

projects have become bigger so has their cost to the authorities, creating difficult personal problems for them and undermining their status in the community.

By tradition the authorities can assess the community only their labor, not their cash. This tradition has occasionally been breeched, but the authorities are still far from ordering a cash levy on the population. There is no tradition for it and no mechanism for undertaking it. But if the entire community is not to pay, the small group of authorities must. This is an issue far from decided, and has raised one serious furor over a food gift. Gifts from outside agencies or the national government are received by canton authorities in the name of the community. Such aid may be held, used, or even sold by the authorities. Trouble occurred in 1966 in the disposition of Caritas food, mostly flour and cooking oil that the community had solicited from an international Catholic relief organization which operates in Bolivia. A first allotment had been received the year before without any complications, but in the latter part of 1966 Caritas introduced a rule requiring beneficiary communities to pay 50 pesos for each monthly shipment to offset some of the costs of transportation. In November the authorities faced a crisis. Five months of food allotments were about to arrive, for the months of December through March, since access to the community would shortly be interrupted by the rainy season, so the authorities were faced with a 250-peso bill, plus another 50 pesos due on the November shipment. The gift food previously received had been distributed equally among the comunarios, except for a small quantity held for community use, but when faced with the need to raise a large sum to pay shipping charges the authorities came up with a radical modification:

Corregidor: Have we still got any of the food from the shipment of this past month?

Juez: Yes, we have not yet used any of it.

Corregidor: Why not sell it to raise the 300 pesos. [No dissenters.] We will sell last month's shipment. You, Mauricio [the juez from Caicoma], advise your people. You, Santiago [juez from Luzapata], advise your people. And you, Víctor [juez from Pueblo], advise your people.

All agreed with the corregidor's suggestion that they sell the food gift to raise money for the transportation charges. Only Bolívar was omitted from the corregidor's instructions, but since he himself is from that ayllu he presumably took it upon himself to inform that ayllu.

The sale of gift food to local shops to raise funds to pay transportation charges for the next several shipments denied some immediate aid to the comunarios but was a means to continue this aid program. Certainly the authorities were not profiting

from the sale, except in a negative sense. But in this sense the complaint arose two days later when the big food shipment arrived in the canton settlement from Oruro. One of the Bolivar senior leaders, who was not in office, asked the field worker what had arrived in the Caritas shipment:

Field worker: Twenty sacks of flour, ten sacks of cereal and ten boxes of cans of cooking oil. [The Bolivar leader took out a pencil and scrap of paper and wrote the information down.] Why do you want to know such details?

Bolivar leader: Because we want the authorities to distribute it among the ayllus. We know that the authorities know how to cheat.

Field worker: Why should the authorities cheat you? You have representatives from Bolivar there to see that you are not cheated.

Bolivar leader: The authorities sell the food and keep the money for themselves.

Field worker: Have they ever cheated you before?

Bolivar leader: Yes. Last year when the Caritas things came, they sold it and put the money in their own pocket.

Field worker: Did they put the money in their own pocket or use it to do something for the community?

Bolivar leader: It is the same thing. What is the meaning of cargos if they get the money to do things from outside, from things that really belong to us? The authorities always cheat us.

Field worker: But you were an authority many times. Did the authorities then always cheat the comunarios?

Bolivar leader: We did not have things like Caritas food with which to cheat the comunarios.

Field worker: Do you think it would be proper if the authorities kept a few quintales to sell to pay for their activities?

Bolivar leader: No. They should pay for it themselves.

The authorities have to do things for the community out of their own pockets.

Two changes have altered the close correspondence between fiesta offices and government offices. One is the increase in a new kind of cost arising from community improvement projects. As parts of the community and parts of its leadership press forward to obtain new benefits within reach, these involve the community and especially its officials in unprecedented demands for money. A second change was the incorporation of new kinds of governmental offices (corregidor and agente) into the traditional system. The necessity to deal with outside officials, to write and interpret official documents, has frequently drawn into these positions young men who are not senior leaders in the community. These men are more sensitive to the cost of the office and less moved by the traditional obligation of the officeholder to pay all the costs of his office. Some of the authorities today would never reach canton political office under this requirement, just as they will never reach the pinnacle of the fiesta hierarchy, for they do not have adequate economic resources. These changes seem to have convinced at least some authorities that traditional arrangements are no longer appropriate.

Since the mita project at the Church of the Patrocina was under way when the big Caritas shipment arrived, a large proportion of the comunarios of all ayllus not only knew of the arrival but of the contents of the shipment as well. This was very opportune for those who were opposed to what the authorities planned to do with the food shipment and put the authorities in a rather difficult position. They held several meetings in an attempt to reach a decision. One of them described the deliberations:

We are still talking about the way the Caritas food should be distributed but we haven't solved the problem. Since we expect to distribute the food tomorrow we will meet again tomorrow morning. [What is the problem?] Some of the authorities feel that the food should be used by the authorities for the canton. Others want to distribute it among the comunarios. It is mainly the people from Bolivar who want to distribute it among the comunarios. They say that some of their comunarios have threatened to denounce the canton to Caritas for selling the food if it is not distributed among them. For the most part it is the Bolivar authorities who want to distribute it among the comunarios, but practically everybody else wants to use the food for something in the canton. [What do you think the outcome will be?] We will distribute the food to the comunarios through their ayllus. We know how many comunarios there are in each ayllu and we will give each ayllu a portion of the food that corresponds to the number of comunarios they have. Then the ayllu will decide for itself whether to distribute it or use it for

some ayllu project, I want the authorities to have it. After all, we asked to get it, not the comunarios.

Later in the day the corregidor gave the same story, but he -- being from Bolivar -- was happier with what appeared to be the probable outcome. He added that the authorities were going to withhold two quintales of flour, one quintal of the food, and one box of cooking oil, which would be used by the authorities to cover their heavy expenses during the year for trips to La Paz.

As the community follows its new course of promoting improvement projects, as it pursues outside assistance to promote internal development, it risks new problems. The financial responsibility of the political offices may be one of these. There is already some resistance to the financial cost of fiesta office. Any change in the financial responsibility of the political offices would probably also have some effect on the fiesta offices.

### Conflict, Violence and Justice

Minor damage claims are generally settled by direct agreement between the comunarios involved. For example, if animals of one comunario get into the fields of another and eat the crops, the two will get together and negotiate. A comunario from Bolivar describes such a case:

When I see some of my neighbor's animals around, I will look over my chacras in the morning to see if any of his animals got into them. Today I found a couple of burros got into my field of alfalfa. I took the animals out, considered the damage, and reported it to my neighbor. He acknowledged that he owes me two nights of feeding for two of my animals. We write this out on paper in two copies, which both of us sign. He keeps one and I keep the other. If a couple of my animals get into his pasture some night, then we are even. If this happens many times, then I take it to the authorities and he has to pay, and maybe pay a fine too.

If an offense exceeds minor proportions it will be taken to the authorities for judgment. There are three judges and the selection of any one is a matter of personal preference and social calculation. One selects a judge who will be sympathetic, a relative, or one who belongs to the same estancia or ayllu. If disputing comunarios cannot agree on a settlement, or if the complaint is sufficiently serious but not too serious, it will probably be taken to an ayllu official. Only if a problem is very serious will it be taken to canton officials.

Property damage, conflict over land rights, and interpersonal difficulties are three of the problems that frequently come

before canton officials, and many of them are heard by the three judges. For example, a wife caught her husband visiting a widow and brought her complaint to one of the judges. He called in the husband and fined him 50 pesos after he admitted consorting with the widow.

In all of these cases there is great concern not to antagonize other people, not to make them angry. Comunarios will not press a complaint if they think it may arouse hostility. This is not to say that there is not a great deal of hostility in the community, but its appearance is almost ritualistic in character. There is little evidence of hostility in the form of gossip, criticism or arguing. The exceptions are the arguments and fights that take place during fiestas.

Fiestas are times of eating and dancing to exhaustion and drinking to a state of unconsciousness. There is no fiesta without alcohol, no fiesta without fighting. This occurs almost always between men. Only their poor coordination while drunk and the pacification efforts of relatives and friends saves some of these fights from a very destructive end. As it is, the post-fiesta headache frequently hurts less than bruised limbs, blackened eyes and torn faces.

The fiesta over, little is ever said about this fighting. The sobered battlers carry on as if nothing at all had happened. Rarely are there consequences, though there are occasionally exceptions. The one exception encountered during the period of this study concerns Fernando Quispe, who got into a fight with two comunarios at a fiesta. Unfortunately for Quispe, one of the men he assaulted was a canton judge with whom Quispe had had a disagreement. Sometime before, Quispe accused a comunario of stealing from him, but the judge found the man innocent. Quispe charged the judge with unfairness, with deciding against him because the other man was from the judge's ayllu. Then the fiesta took place, and Quispe attacked the judge.

Quispe was summoned to appear before canton authorities but he ignored them. The comisarios, who had the job of informing Quispe that he was to appear, had the right to force him to come in, but they were reluctant to attempt it because Quispe has a reputation as a fighter. Canton authorities then decided to seek help from the intendente in Huayllamarca. The judge and the man Quispe had accused of theft went there to request police aid to bring Quispe to justice. The intendente listened and agreed to send his sergeant. On the way back the judge told the sergeant the type of man he had to deal with:

He has no kids, but he has many cattle. Normally, he does not work, for he has other people herd his cattle and do his work for him. But he is always hitting people and claiming afterwards that he has been insulted. There is no way to make this man a good comunario. He takes no post as an authority, nor does he help with the mita either in his ayllu or in the canton. He is a real savage.



The sergeant asked the judge what it was that the authorities now wanted him to do. Was he to apprehend Quispe and take him to jail in Huayllamarca, or just what? The judge said that they hoped to settle the case themselves in San Miguel. They would like the sergeant to be on hand so that if Quispe refused to accept the judgment of the authorities the sergeant could then take him away to jail. The sergeant and the two comisarios set out to apprehend Quispe, but they found no one at his house. However, they seized two of Quispe's sheep and delivered them to the authorities back in the canton settlement.

The end of the case was something of a surprise. About a week later Quispe turned himself in to the police in Corque, the provincial capital. San Miguel was notified, and one of the authorities was sent to help dispose of the case. The Corque intendente fined Quispe 150 pesos. San Miguel had to pay Corque 50 pesos for the cost of the action and had to pay one sheep to the intendente in Huayllamarca. A San Miguel official who witnessed the proceeding in Corque suggested that Quispe must have given the intendente a bribe of at least 500 pesos to have got off so lightly. Since the canton had seized two of Quispe's sheep, in effect it broke even, and while there was some muttering among the canton officials about the outcome, most were satisfied that Quispe had been sufficiently punished.

Quispe's offense was not in fighting, for that is a common fiesta occurrence. Quispe's crime was partly that of impugning the integrity of the judge and then in physically attacking him, an official of the community. Most importantly, Quispe had avoided or refused his obligations as a comunario. It was Quispe's social irresponsibility that brought the authorities to move against him. One of the community leaders made the point this way:

We want to shame the person who is troublesome to the community, but we also want the community to gain. What is the use of only punishing without the community's gaining? Let people know that such and such an article in the government house was purchased with the money from the person's fine, and he is constantly reminded of his shame. [How often do people repeat offenses?] Very rarely. Quispe has never before been called to account for his offenses. After this I do not think he will repeat them.

Most of the residents of the community who are called before one of the judges or some other official appear promptly, and accept the decision handed down. The punishment almost always is a fine of some sort, generally in sheep or llamas. The authorities infrequently resort to outside agencies in these cases, but even when they do they attempt to keep them in the background. The only exceptions would be in truly serious crimes of violence, in which canton authorities would hand over the persons involved to higher authorities for hearing and judgment. Otherwise, San Miguel is still so isolated that national law agencies have very little bearing on the community.

## Compi

The political organization of San Miguel has been seen as an essentially traditional authority system which presumably has existed for centuries. The strength of this traditional system is shown in its having adapted to the imposed pattern of canton status with but slight alteration of established patterns.

For Compi, the years since 1952 have been a decisive break with the past. Much of the political organization of the hacienda has been swept away, and the part that remains has been extensively changed. Compi's status as an hacienda exposed the community to the full effect of the reform programs of the MNR, and the location of Compi, just a few hours out of La Paz and even closer to the militant campesino center of Achacachi, exposed her colonos to changes introduced by the revolutionary government in ways and measures unknown to the comunarios of San Miguel. Since the range of change has been so much greater in Compi, it is necessary to an understanding of the present system there that the community's politics be examined over different time periods.

### Hacienda Political Organization

Before 1952 hacienda Compi was governed by a small hierarchy of officials whose positions and activities did not differ in any important ways from activities of hacienda officials discussed in relation to two of the towns. At the top of the hierarchy was the patrón, below him the mayordomo, and below these two were the jilakatas and other lesser officials drawn from the ranks of the peons.

The legal authority of the patrón covered only the economic arrangements and activities under which the colonos received land from the hacienda and gave labor. In fact, however, the authority of the patrón was traditionally much broader. The economic, the social and the personal lives of the colonos were traditionally his to determine. Family problems, disputes between neighbors, crime and punishment, all were legitimate concerns of the patrón. That his authority was perhaps as often appealed to by the colono as it was asserted by the patrón is an indication of the rootedness of this tradition.

The mayordomo, chief assistant to the patrón, represented him in his absence. The position and role of the mayordomo varied considerably, depending on whether the patrón was always on hand or was almost always absent. Compi knew both of these types, as well as variations between. Both the patrón and the mayordomo had force behind their authority. Refractory colonos often were flogged. Flight was their only recourse in the face of harsh treatment on the hacienda. A considerable number fled, having found themselves hopelessly in debt, with no chance to balance their hacienda obligations against their need to eat to survive. The possible loss of colonos by flight was sometimes and in some places a restraint on the temper of the patrón, but more in areas of lower population density, like the Yungas.

Compi seems never to have suffered in the slightest from labor shortage.

The patróns were decentes, and the mayordomos were mestizos or cholos from the towns. Only the jilakata was locally recruited, and he occupied an ambiguous position. In such a free community as San Miguel the jilakata is himself an authority. He has a voice in the community, has judicial powers, makes decisions, and is under no man's orders; but on the hacienda he was very much an instrument of control. The patrón or the mayordomo gave orders to the jilakata, and the jilakata saw to it that the colonos carried them out. He was the whip in the hierarchy of hacienda officials. That his authority was drawn from the patrón rather than from the colonos -- in contrast to his place in the traditional communities -- explains his disappearance from so many ex-hacienda communities after the revolution.

There is some evidence that at Compi, up to a few decades before the revolution, the position of the jilakata was strongly anchored in the community traditions of the peon population. The dual fiesta and political office system existed there, in which men earned honor and prestige by accepting obligations of community status. There also appears to have been a rotation pattern, such as that described for the ayllus in San Miguel, in which each of five subcommunities on hacienda Compi supplied the jilakata in a fixed order.

The feudalistic development of haciendas in the immediate Compi area was marked by increasing pressure on free landowning comunarios and eventually, at Compi particularly, exploitative rationalization of hacienda administration. Both developments disrupted traditional patterns of comunario political organization. In the years just prior to the revolution the highest colono officials at Compi were the jilakatas, one from each of the two largest subcommunities, the estancias Compi and Capilaya. Five alcaldes were assistants to the jilakatas, one in each of the full five estancias. A third type of official was the alcalde de campo, much lower and most numerous, there being as many as there were fields to inspect, who saw that cattle did not stray and who reported offenses.

In the singular interest of the patrón the jilakata was the assigner and supervisor of daily work, but to the colonos he was also a traditional judge in minor offenses and a leader of ritual ceremonies. A colono generally advanced through each of the three offices in a fixed order of succession. Immediately below the jilakata was another supervisory office, that of the aljiri, who supervised other colonos when they were sent to work on another hacienda owned by the patrón. It was traditional for an aljiri of one year to become the jilakata of the next.

Paralleling these political offices was a fiesta office hierarchy, differing only in minor details from that in San Miguel. The holding of fiesta offices here, as there, was an essential condition for attaining honor and prestige in the community.

In this early period there were probably the same pressures

of obligation to accept fiesta and political offices that are present in San Miguel, and the selection of candidates was still probably made by the colonos themselves. In later years, approaching the revolution, patróns increasingly intervened in the selection of colono officials. Tradition was ignored, and colono officials came to be appointed strictly on the basis of whether they pleased the patrón. Even tenure periods came to be disregarded. If the patrón was dissatisfied for any reason with the performance of a jilakata he would replace him then and there. Age, prestige and reputation among the colonos came to count for nothing, and such officials as pleased the patrón held their positions for years at a time.

Finally, the last of the patróns at Compi created a new position in the political organization, that of the sot'a, whose place in the hacienda hierarchy lay between the mayordomo and the jilakata. There were two sot'as, and they held their office at the pleasure of the patrón. One was closely connected to the patrón as his utawawa, his adopted child. The other was a colono who had ingratiated himself with the patrón by showing him how he could increase his profits at the expense of the colonos. One advised both the patrón and mayordomo on when certain work should be done as well as how it should be done, and also directly supervised field work. The other sot'a was something of an hacienda bookkeeper and supply clerk. He distributed the seed and received the harvest, keeping records of both outgoing and incoming materials. Though the colonos apparently regarded the sot'as suspiciously, one who still lives in Compi estancia today, now an old man, is treated with great respect.

In contrast to San Miguel, the organization of Compi hacienda was truly hierarchic in its strict levels of authoritative command and in a certain amount of job specialization, bearing some resemblance to an industrial hierarchy. In the free community, on the other hand, there is rather little specialization of activity and nothing of an appointive authority system at the discretion of a single ruler. The main governing positions were quite out of reach of colonos at Compi, and all of the self-governing power of a San Miguel political system was quite erased.

Before the revolution, hacienda Compi was a part of the canton of Santiago de Huata, that covered much of the peninsula west of Achacachi. The chief official of the canton was the corregidor, responsible under the law for the application of national laws throughout the canton, including the haciendas. In actuality, the corregidor did not concern himself with the haciendas except at the request of a patrón who might, for example, want a show of official force in laying heavier burdens on the colonos. Otherwise, only major crimes on the hacienda brought in the corregidor to sit and judge. In the daily life of the colono and the normal activities of the hacienda the corregidor and the canton played little or no part.

#### Political Organization Following the Revolution

The early years following the revolution were a period of

confusion, rapid change and developing conflict over land. News of agrarian reform under the MNR government reached Compi quickly and led to prompt revolt against the hacienda obligatory labor system. Now began a struggle of several years duration over ownership of colono land parcels and the remaining hacienda land, but there was no seizure of hacienda property by the ex-colonos. The patrón adapted to the new situation by hiring ex-colonos to work the more fertile fields beside the lake and by arranging with other ex-colonos to sharecrop the less fertile land away from the lake. Sharecroppers took 60% of the harvest when they supplied their own tools and 50% later on when the patrón supplied the tools. In 1957, five years after the revolution, the sharecropping arrangement came to an end when hacienda lands away from the lakeside were classed as latifundia and were given to the ex-colonos.

The best land along the lake was declared a medium-property, was not expropriated, and was inherited by the children of the patrón, who had died. It became increasingly difficult for them to get workers, however, because they could not always meet the wages they had now to pay, so they organized a cooperative with a group of ex-colonos. This arrangement proved less than satisfactory, and in 1961 they sold their remaining property to comunarios from the small adjoining free community of Llamacachi.

Though all of the land that had been worked for the patrón eventually was divided among campesinos, the results were not at all simple. Under agrarian reform the government had announced that all dispossessed colonos would have a share of land, so many émigrés returned to Compi, but only to find that land they supposed would be theirs had long since been assigned to others and that none was available. This gave rise to conflicts that continue to the present day. Some of these émigrés had strong influence on the character of the campesino sindicato established in Compi under the revolutionary regime.

The sindicato that took over governing authority on the hacienda only a few months after the revolution had been organized in La Paz by colonos who had fled from the hacienda, men who were activists, now motivated by the government's announcement that dispossessed colonos would be given land on the haciendas where they had once resided. The emigrants went so far as to select the officers of the sindicato, though they exercised a certain prudence in deciding to apportion half of the posts among hacienda residents and half among themselves. In carefully planned strategy, they gave a resident of the hacienda the central office of secretary-general, but their choice was a colono who had several relatives in the emigrant colony.

In prescribed form, every local sindicato has 13 officials, the most important being the secretary-general, the head, the chief spokesman, the one official generally responsible for all sindicato activities. Depending on the person as well as the situation, the secretary-general may run the sindicato like a dictator, perform as first among equals with his fellow officials, or find a workable style somewhere between these extremes. Four of the other officials are concerned with organi-

zational tasks. These are the secretary of relations, who is a kind of assistant to the secretary-general, and the secretaries of finance, of justice, and of records. The remaining secretaries specialize in important community activities, as the secretaries of agriculture, of livestock, of education, of health, of roads, and so on. From just this listing of officials it is apparent that the campesino sindicato was intended to be more than simply the legal instrument of the colonos in their obtaining land titles, though this was initially the sindicato's stated concern. In practice it provided a relatively comprehensive framework for community government.

In assuming a position as litigant for the colonos in their claims to land, the sindicato quickly became the public forum for the discussion of hacienda-wide issues, and sindicato officials became the central figures of authority on the ex-hacienda. Because very few of the returning emigrants obtained land parcels, most of them returned at last to the city, and with their departure sindicato offices passed to residents of the estancias. These men reverted to traditional manners of selecting leaders, and soon all five estancias were fairly represented in the distribution of sindicato offices, though not in the rotation pattern of San Miguel.

Emphasis in the early years had been placed on literacy and fluency in Spanish as essential requirements for sindicato office because a primary responsibility of the leaders was to deal with mestizo and blanco outsiders from the government and its agencies. This had put many young men in important offices, especially men who had been educated during years in La Paz, but who otherwise would never have qualified. But after the agrarian court's decisions on land claims had been handed down and the sindicato had turned to the parochial routine functions of the estancias, there was less need for officials with the skills of a mestizo, of men who, for that very reason, were different from the rest of the community. The selection of new sindicato officials was made on the basis of prestige, by popular vote in open meeting. As in San Miguel, prestige comes from holding community office. Increasingly, the important secretarios are now chosen from among men who have held fiesta and political offices, though wealth, education and facility in Spanish are qualifications recognized in Compi as they have never been in San Miguel.

When the sindicato's land reform work was completed in 1957 its unifying element disappeared. Even before this the sindicato had begun to divide because of inter-estancia competition and conflict. An ex-colono from estancia Tauca had held the position of secretary-general since 1952, and the other estancias felt that he was favoring his estancia over the others. By 1956 feelings were so high that the two biggest estancias, Compi and Capilaya, decided to form a separate sindicato, but within two years they were squabbling between themselves, and in 1958 they broke up. The two small estancias, Cawaya and Kalamaya, continued with estancia Tauca for several more years. However, the same kind of dissatisfaction bothered these ex-colonos, and in 1963 Cawaya left Tauca to form a separate sin-

dicato, and shortly after Cawaya also broke away. With the exception of Cawaya, each of the other four estancias now has its own secretary-general.

With the divisions of the original sindicato over a period of years, the estancias have moved a long way toward independence of each other. The set of local officials that was described earlier now exists on each separate estancia. The different sets are not identical, but each estancia has some sindicato officials, some of the earlier traditional officials, and some of the newer officials. On all of the estancias except Kalamaya the secretary-general of the sindicato is the leading official. Election takes place within each estancia and candidates are drawn from married men with property, as in San Miguel. The usual tenure is one year, but there are some variations.

There has been a steady decline in the vitality of most sindicato offices in Compi. Today only the positions of the secretaries-general and the secretaries of education and sports are significantly active. All of the others have become empty of meaning and without functional importance. They carry no responsibilities, are difficult to fill, have no prestige value. The secretaries of education and sports have survived because they represent areas of community activity that have developed since the revolution, activity greatly promoted by these offices. Formal education, non-existent on the hacienda before the revolution, is now a major preoccupation of Compi campesinos, and sports are the center of leisure interest. The Compi estancias field a soccer team for which the sindicato sports secretary arranges matches even with teams from La Paz, and supervises training.

The chief sindicato office has not merely survived. The secretary-general still occupies the central position of authority among the ex-colonos. He calls public meetings and is a key spokesman for the community. His job is that of adviser, promoter, conciliator, judge and central ceremonial figure in fiestas and such ritual occasions as weddings and funerals. The office has the same diffuse character that the major political offices in San Miguel have collectively. He is not, however, a village Cromwell, for the traditional colono offices of jilakata, alcalde and alcalde de campo have all continued to the present day, an indication of a weaker impact of the sindicato form of organization in Compi than in other places, where strong sindicatos have tended to pale or even obliterate traditional offices. In Compi the jilakata is clearly subordinate to the secretary-general, but he ranks as the number two official in the community and sometimes replaces the secretary-general in most of the latter's community activities, having a special role in religious rituals. Though the offices of alcalde and alcalde de campo are distinctly minor, they have become, as in San Miguel, nearly irrelevant, except that they help to qualify a person for senior office.

New offices of the post-revolution period are those of the alcalde escolar, the president of the Junta Vecinal, and the president of the Junta Auxiliar. A public primary school has

been built on the hacienda and all five estancias send their children to it and work to support it. Interestingly, the job of the president of the Junta Vecinal corresponds almost exactly to that of the alcalde escolar in San Miguel, while alcaldes escolares, one from each of the five estancias, assist him in rounding up truants and in notifying families of meetings. The president is the link between the school and its teachers and the campesino families. He is responsible for attendance and for agricultural work on the lands set aside for the school. Both the Junta Vecinal and the Junta Auxiliar are rather nebulous organizations in which younger, energetic men attempt to play a leadership role in the community.

It should be mentioned here that sindicato authority might have diminished less in Compi if the effort of the national government to organize cooperatives on the ex-haciendas as a means of stimulating agricultural production in the face of a possibly disastrous decline in the confusion and chaos of the revolution had been successful. At Compi, a buyers' cooperative was organized for the community's five estancias, and for Llamacachi on the east and peons from hacienda Jank'o Amaya on the west. Residents bought shares and were permitted to make purchases through the cooperative according to the number of their shares. The cooperative in turn was assisted by the government to buy staple articles at low cost. Since few residents had any managerial skills, La Paz emigrants played a crucial role in the cooperative's enterprises. These early years were a period of runaway inflation in Bolivia and the cooperative was soon involved in one of the biggest money-making activities of the time, smuggling goods to Peru. Ex-colonos also found themselves being cheated on their purchases, and officers of the cooperative developed the suspicious habit of leaving office without accounting for receipts. When inflation was halted and the government discontinued its purchase support program the cooperative collapsed.

Initially, after the expropriation of the patrón's hacienda land, each of the five estancias farmed its share of the land in cooperative enterprises. After sale of the harvest, each ex-colono was paid by estancia officials in proportion to the number of days worked, and the money left over was pooled by all estancias for the building of a primary school and a church. All of these estancia cooperatives also ran into troubles which forced most of them to allot their land to member families for farming, but even then there were problems in collecting rent and the cooperative's share of the harvest. These cooperatives contributed nothing to community cohesion; rather, they created problems, provoked conflict, and in general operated as divisive forces.

As in San Miguel, an informal group of leaders grows up in each of the estancias out of their having held fiesta and political offices. These, together with current officials, canvass the estancia for eligible and willing men to be candidates for office, and their names are then put forward at an open assembly. This system operates less smoothly than in San Miguel, for there is often a reluctance to accept nomination, a sign of



declining social cohesion as a result of gradually broadening interests, such as the strong ties among the members of many split families, part on the estancias, part in La Paz, and the many exterior commercial relationships of the ex-colonos. A more positive political effect of the city upon Compi has been the appearance of leaders with new and useful experience and skills gained from life in La Paz.

The financial burden of political office is considerably less on the Compi estancias than in San Miguel, there being no obligation on officials to finance their activities out of their own pockets. They are the leaders, but all important matters are submitted to the ex-colonos for discussion and decision at meetings of the male heads of households. Women are permitted to act in place of absent husbands. These assemblies are held in each estancia, but there are also occasions when the estancias are called together for a collective meeting. All household heads are expected to be present, but not all ever are. They straggle in a few at a time, and at some point the secretary-general decides that there are enough to begin. Men of little prestige say little at these assemblies, but traditional rule requires consensus for any decision. There is a pattern of discussion. Positions are taken on an issue, alternatives are offered, and the various possibilities are sifted. If no agreement is reached, the issue is shelved for later consideration.

The reaching for consensus at these meetings is not so much a strain for unanimity as an effort to choke open opposition. Some may not agree with a proposal, but it may be adopted if they agree not to disagree. Obstruction of community action by minorities plagues several of the estancias. Some ex-colonos have become avocational oppositionists. They speak out against almost any proposal made by the authorities and are adamant, nurturing dissension, forcing issues to be dropped, greatly reducing the effectiveness of the assemblies.

Some ex-colonos on the several estancias never attend any assemblies and ignore all rulings with apparent impunity. Such rogues in San Miguel are eventually brought before the authorities and punished, and public ridicule follows, putting the comunario effectively on notice that his transgressions will not be tolerated. The looser and more open community organization of the Compi estancias is not able to exert this kind of social pressure, but neither has the community modified its traditional seeking for decisions by consensus.

Land reform is no longer an issue, but land rights litigations continue. One of the most recent and serious was a dispute between estancia Compi and the neighboring free community of Llamacachi over lakeside land the patrón had sold to comunarios in Llamacachi and to some of the few comunarios left on the hacienda estancias. In 1965 some of the ex-colonos of estancia Compi, where much of this land was located, decided to contest this sale and demand the return of the hacienda land to the ex-colonos.

Both sides argued that law was on their side. The land had

been assigned by the agrarian court to the patrón and he had, therefore, a right to dispose of it. That comunarios, rather than colonos, had bought it, was in one sense irrelevant, for they had acquired good legal title. On the other hand, it was hacienda land, and under the law the ex-colonos should have been given first option to purchase. It is quite possible that the ex-colonos had an opportunity to buy the land, but ignored it for reasons of cost. However, they now charged that they were not given an opportunity to buy. The conflict dragged on. Fist fights occurred and a house was burned. Urgent assemblies were held on the estancias. National agencies in La Paz and provincial authorities in Achacachi became involved. No end to this problem is in sight, and possibly there is no satisfactory solution. In the meantime, the resources and energies of the estancias and ex-colonos are being drained.

On the Compi estancias, as in so many Indian communities on the altiplano and in the valleys, introduction of an education program by the MNR was received with enthusiasm, but it was not until 1958 that the five estancias, together with Llamacachi, were able to build a public primary school. Great energy was expended in this enterprise but the resources proved insufficient. One of the estancia leaders obtained the promise of aid from a Catholic organization, but this was unsatisfactory to Protestant families and even to the head of the province sindicato organization in Achacachi. Nevertheless, a complete primary school was opened, though the building is still not finished. The estancias are divided about which among themselves should aid most, and about whose outside aid they would be willing to accept.

For most small communities the higher levels of national government were always physically distant, and their activities had little bearing on day-to-day life. This situation was rather thoroughly shaken by the Revolution of 1952. The new MNR government, as no government before it in independent Bolivia, attempted to reach local populations with its programs and involve them in the larger plans for national development. As part of this effort, the national government broke up the large cantons, the basic unit of local government, into smaller and more functional units. This effort was especially pronounced on the altiplano, where the largest proportion of isolated local communities lay.

By a realignment of estancias and ayllus, San Miguel was able to transform itself into a canton and achieve a recognizable political position within the nation. Subsequently, the community has attempted to utilize this position to obtain a variety of benefits, such as schools. In the process, San Miguel has become, at least for the present, several communities in one. There is a real if limited canton community, which is a face-to-face interacting network of comunarios with reciprocal obligations. There is a similar ayllu community, also limited but real, made up of sets of estancias. Then there are the estancias themselves, the only neighborhood-like communities, also limited, in lacking formal offices for the exercise of leadership and responsibility. In San Miguel these communities within

communities exist in a state of rather tense balance that could shift in the near future and probably will. Such a shift would increase the cohesion of each of these communities at the expense of the larger community.

In Compi, it was possible before the revolution to distinguish three levels of organization -- canton, hacienda and estancia. Since the revolution the hacienda community has in part disappeared and in part has been severely weakened. Today the estancias constitute the primary community for the ex-colonos, while the collective set of the five ex-hacienda estancias has lost much of its cohesiveness as a community. It has only limited influence on its members, exerted mainly through the fiesta system and the school.

While there is little balance between the Compi communities comparable to that between San Miguel communities, change since the revolution has not all been in the direction of division and toward the weakening of the larger community. The major change in the strengthening direction has been the establishment of a new canton, paralleling what took place in San Miguel. Both the form and the consequences of this development differ, however, from what occurred in San Miguel.

The pre-revolution canton of Santiago de Huata contained numerous haciendas and free communities. As the possibilities for canton status were expanded by the MNR government in the later years of the reform period, many of these populations sought canton status. All three of the adjoining haciendas in the Compi area -- Jank'o Amaya, Compi and Chua -- sought to qualify by designating a central settlement and then building such a settlement along town lines, with a market plaza, parallel streets, and one or more buildings for government offices. Compi designated a part of its expropriated land for such a settlement. Characteristically, there was disagreement among the ex-colonos over this project, and it faltered for want of consensus. Meanwhile, the other two ex-haciendas went ahead with their projects. Jank'o Amaya ex-colonos, in particular, devoted themselves to qualifying for canton status. They established their central settlement as early as 1955 and laid it out along the classic grid pattern with the help of a professional topographer. House plots in the new settlement were allotted to all ex-colonos of each of the hacienda estancias who could be expected to have the funds to construct a house. A weekly market was established in the new settlement, attracting merchants from La Paz, many of whom were emigrants from Jank'o Amaya. Then, in 1960, the former hacienda was strategically successful in having the MNR presidential candidate appear for the inauguration of the new market. Before this, Jank'o Amaya leaders engaged the services of a tinterillo from La Paz, who had many compadres on the hacienda, to help them secure canton status. At the inauguration of the market the community leaders petitioned the presidential candidate to grant them local governmental status, and shortly afterward Jank'o Amaya was designated as capital of a canton, which included not only its own hacienda estancias but also those of Compi, Chua, Llamacachi and others.

The officials of the new canton are fewer and somewhat differently ordered than those in San Miguel. In Jank'o Amaya the officials, in order, are the intendente, the corregidor, the notario, and the jueces parroquiales. The notario and jueces have the same functions in Jank'o Amaya as in San Miguel. The intendente, who is head of local law enforcement, has no counterpart in San Miguel. The intendente in Jank'o Amaya completely overshadows the corregidor, whose job has been reduced largely to being his assistant, and the intendente has expanded his office beyond law enforcement to include his performing as a judge and playing a leading role in canton affairs.

This local government variation follows from a lack of governmental training in the local population, even among its most experienced members, and a related lack of information, attention and responsibility at higher governmental levels. None of the offices is very strictly defined in the canton, so much official action depends on the person and the situation, but there are some specific rules that govern the intendente's conduct. Serious crimes and land actions are handled by other government jurisdictions, and the intendente would normally only pass these on to other officials. A very important restriction on his authority is the principle of multiple jurisdictions in Bolivian government, permitting legal problems to be taken to other localities at the discretion of the interested parties. Since Jank'o Amaya and its component communities are on a main transportation route, they have alternatives to the local intendente.

At first all of the offices of the canton government were filled with men from Jank'o Amaya. The tinterillo who had aided the ex-hacienda in becoming a canton center was elected intendente and was given a parcel of land. This monopoly of the offices not unexpectedly provoked an outcry from the leaders of the other communities, Chua going so far as to blockade the road to the canton settlement on market day in retaliation. The tinterillo held office for the first two years and was followed by a police official appointed from La Paz. Then a comunario from Llamacachi was elected. In 1964 another resident of Jank'o Amaya was elected intendente, but his selection was protested by some of the other communities and the matter was taken to the provincial capital. The dispute dragged on for several weeks until a leader from Compi appeared in the canton capital with a document from the La Paz police, naming him to the office. He was finally accepted by the authorities of all the communities. In 1965 a resident of Jank'o Amaya was again in the intendente's office, a young leader from Compi was elected corregidor, and the post of notario went to a resident of Marca Chua.

The holding of canton office in Jank'o Amaya is not the community-wide responsibility that it is in San Miguel; neither is there the same degree of participation by heads of families, nor any kind of canton development program or work obligations or fiesta pattern to link the component communities. The canton is just another settlement and market village, a place where certain limited governmental activities take place, and a stage for some of the politically ambitious.

There is some indication that the rather moderate involvement of Compi in national politics is the result of hostility between the people of the ex-hacienda and the provincial sindicato leadership. For several years the provincial sindicato organization was led by Toribio Salas, whose influence covered the entire northern lake and valleys area and who was a major figure on the national scene. Salas is reported to have thought that the people of several of the lakeside communities, including Compi, had smeared him as a Communist and he threatened to invade the communities with his militia. Since Salas had such power, the threat created great fear and consternation and poisoned relations between Compi and the provincial political leadership, until the coup of 1964 and Salas's flight from the country.

Despite Compi's partial estrangement from national politics, the ex-colonos were nevertheless in a better position to be politically informed and active than the comunarios of San Miguel. For example, during the final days of Paz Estenssoro the Compi sindicatos were asked to send their members to aid in the defense of the government. Most of the sindicatos ignored the request, but a few campesinos went and were caught in the fighting in the capital. These experiences are evident in the current national political attachments of the ex-colonos. While 57% of the comunarios in San Miguel and 47% of the residents of Coroico have no party preference, only 38% of the ex-colonos in Compi expressed no preference for a political party. Similarly, 83% of the comunarios and 77% of the Coroiqueños say they have never been a member of a political party, but only 58% of Compeños indicate this.

Some Compeños are closely involved with national political matters. Several were stalwarts of the MNR, were given jobs as local or regional representatives of national agencies from which they could profit financially, and exerted for a time great influence over ex-colonos by virtue of their national political connections. As an index of their national political sophistication, some switched to the FSB when the MNR fell from power, and then signed on with the MPC as soon as that party was formed. One of these men is said to have in his house the literature, posters, and membership cards of all the major parties, which presumably provide him with protection against any unforeseen political development.

There are supporters of all of the major parties among the ex-colonos. Some actively work at promoting their party and in enlisting new members. The more ambitious, like the young Compi leader who was elected canton corregidor for 1966, hold a party appointment as local or regional organizer. While the comunarios of San Miguel have become very much aware of the importance of the national government in their lives, they have considerably less appreciation than their Compi counterparts of the role that partisan politics plays in the government, and of the now strategic position of the campesino in party politics.

Party politics, which does cut across estancia social boundaries, is not a cohesive force comparable to the system of mutual community obligations to which the comunarios of San Miguel are

still committed. Such a system is largely absent from the hacienda community, and most of the developments since the revolution have tended to weaken the few remaining ties to it. Within the estancias, largely traditional social mechanisms produce a set of community authorities, some traditional and some modern, but the authority of these officials has been weakened considerably. Increasing involvement of the ex-colonos in the urban political world of La Paz and, secondarily, in the new canton, has also weakened local ties. While the campesinos of Compi still have a considerable distance to go, they have already gone far toward eliminating their traditional political organization in favor of a national version.



XX

## Chapter 3

### GROUPS AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

The multiplicity of family relations, the strength of bonds that these establish, and their everyday value in meeting the problems of living, establish the family as the pre-eminent social group for both comunario and ex-colono. Despite the many and important differences between the free community and the ex-hacienda, which have increased since the revolution, the family continues as the central group in both Compi and San Miguel, and even most of the important characteristics of family relations are shared between the two contrasting Indian communities. In view of this, the present discussion of the family, kinship, and certain other social relations, will not distinguish between San Miguel and Compi except where important differences do in fact occur.

#### Family and Kinship

As in the towns, there is a distinction between close and distant kin. The family consists of parents, children, spouses of children and grandchildren. Collateral and affinal relatives are counted as distant kin, not as members of the family. Family members generally have free access to one another's possessions and may freely call upon one another for assistance. Distant kin have no such license, but do join with the family on ceremonial occasions and are expected to aid in fiesta sponsorship.

Families live in compounds consisting of two or more one-room buildings clustered around a patio otherwise closed in by sheep or llama pens and rock walls. The enclosure of windowless adobe buildings with their single small door, and with various rock walls and animal pens, effectively isolates these compounds from casual intrusion. They are ideally occupied by parents and their children alone. One building may serve as dormitory, another as a kitchen, a third for storage. If the family has a large number of children, two buildings may be used as dormitories. Most of the daily activities of family life take place out of doors in the patio. When children marry, girls leave their family compounds for those of their husbands, and wives of sons move in. By the time the parents die a compound is likely to consist of male siblings and their wives and children, sometimes rather crowded. In San Miguel, for example, a father and mother live in one house of a compound, three unmarried daughters and a son live in a second, and a married son, his wife and two children in a third. In another three-house compound were a man and his wife and five children, the man's brother, and the wife and five children of a third brother who had recently died.

In many parts of the northern altiplano, especially near Lake Titicaca, there is much new housing, not the small, one-room, thatched roof variety of older type campesino housing. These new houses are larger, some having even a second story topped by a corrugated metal roof, evidence of increasing commerce and greater agricultural prosperity with the disappearance of serf labor.

In Compi the new house trend is having an effect on compound life. Married sons still bring their wives home, but even before the arrival of a child they may move into their own new house, perhaps beside the road, convenient for keeping an eye on bundles of produce piled there awaiting truck transport to the La Paz market. More than this, the new house is becoming a standard for younger campesinos. It is now considered demeaning for a married couple to have to live with the husband's parents.

Daughters are undeniably members of the family and close kin, but the residence rule tends to transform them into distant kin and may even eliminate them from the family. The rule is that wives be taken into their husband's families, and with many married daughters living fairly far from their parents' compound, often in a different estancia, there may be relatively little communication with her own parents except on a few special occasions during the year. There is one common exception to this gradual estrangement of daughters from their original family group. Sons of poorer families look for wives who have no brothers, so that they may inherit land. These men leave their families to live with their in-laws.

The son who marries receives land but not enough to support him, and therefore must continue to help with the father's agricultural work. Even then, he is not guaranteed a share of the harvest but gets what the father chooses to give him. If he gets what he considers to be too little he has no legitimate grounds for complaint or any means of redress. The position is clear in the statement by a comunario from ayllu Bolivar in San Miguel:

My father has given my brother land and he has given me land. Each of us works his own land and then we help my father with his land. Now my father doesn't do much work on his land because he is old, and also because he is the jilakata and spends much of his time in the canton settlement. My brother and I divide the work on our father's land. Sometimes, if the field is big, we work together. If the field is small, either he does it or I do it. We do an equal amount. From the land that my father gave me when I got married I will take all the harvest. From my father's land which I help work he will give me a part of the harvest. How much, I don't know. It depends on him. Last year he gave me a few quintales and he gave my brother the same.



In San Miguel the only significant property inherited by daughters is a share of the sheep and llama herds. In Compi, on the other hand, daughters also inherit land, though not as much usually as sons receive, and it is conditional upon their providing some help to the parents each year. If a daughter's obligations after she has married do not permit this, then the furrows she received will again be farmed by the father or allotted to someone else. Likewise, an emigrant married son loses his share if he does not from time to time aid the family.

Permanent emigration from Compi has a long history, in contrast to temporary migration in San Miguel. The main stimulus behind emigration from Compi was the shortage of land, but there were also the increasing hardships of hacienda labor. The main refuge of the migrants was La Paz, and over the years a permanent colony of ex-Compeños has grown up in that city. Since the revolution, the ties between ex-hacienda estancias and La Paz have been greatly extended and strengthened with the shift to cash crop production and its sale in La Paz. Today most Compi men know the city, and many of the women have also traveled to La Paz to sell in the market. Among the younger people of Compi a strong attraction for the city and its ways has developed, contributing to the weakening of the family. While the old land and work arrangements still bind parents and their married sons, some of the changes produced by the revolution are beginning to weaken the family unit seriously.

The demands of agricultural work impose cohesion on the family through the daily round of activities. They get up around five o'clock, have a quick breakfast and set to work. The men go immediately to the fields, while their wives first do household chores. Older children take the herds to pasture and the younger leave for school. Pre-school children are taken to the fields, where the women work beside the men.

In San Miguel it is extremely difficult for a single unassisted man to exist. There was only one bachelor in the entire community. Without someone to prepare meals, weave and make clothes, assist with the agricultural work and the herding, in which children are an important aid, the solitary male is hard pressed to survive.

Work in the fields continues until twelve or one o'clock, when all sit for an hour or so to eat the meal that the wife has brought along. Work is then resumed until about four o'clock, when all return to their compound. While the wife prepares dinner the husband attends to the animals. Dinner is eaten around six, and unless a visitor arrives or there is some special occasion, the family is off to bed about seven.

In this daily routine the members of a San Miguel family are frequently separated. Older children may be sent to the puna or pampa with the sheep and llama herds for a few days, to live by themselves in a crude shelter. If there are no older children for this task, the wife may be sent to do it. Adult men, while holding political office, spend time at meetings and on community projects, and live in the family's ayllu or canton

house, the rest of the family remaining at the estancia compound. In both communities, but especially San Miguel, the family compound constitutes a separate and private world. Outside of the special occasions that bring non-kin together, there is often little contact between non-relatives.

A very different, very important family activity is religious ritual. The Catholic church in Compi is quite new, those in San Miguel are old, but in none is there a resident priest. San Miguel is visited but once or twice a year by a priest from one of the nearby cantons. In his absence the two churches are under the care of capileros, appointed for life, who have no special religious training though they occasionally preside over ceremonial activities. Most religious activity in San Miguel and Compi takes place outside the Catholic church, Christianity being but an aspect of religious belief among these people.

Religion in both San Miguel and Compi is a complex blend of Catholicism and Aymara beliefs. The figures of saints are worshipped alongside a set of nature spirits. Pre-eminent among all, and a central figure in ritual, is Pachamama, goddess of the earth, who provides for man and punishes him. Ritual supplication of Pachamama takes place prior to all major community activities, such as mita work on a canton project, at the start of the planting season, at marriages, baptisms and funerals, and with the beginning of the day's agricultural work. Ritual supplication of Pachamama is a characteristic part of every fiesta, even though it be a feast of the Roman Church.

The ritual is simple. A short prayer is addressed to Pachamama, followed by the supplicant's chewing of coca leaves. Prayer is repeated, a bit of alcohol is poured on the ground and a bit of it is drunk. That is all, except that in some cases prayer is offered also to the one God of Christians as well as to Pachamama. A comunario of San Miguel describes the ritual start of his day:

I got up at six o'clock in the morning, stirred the fire for my wife and went out for water. Afterwards I got my tools ready for the work in the fields. In the meantime my wife was preparing breakfast as well as getting a dry meal ready to take to the fields. We ate breakfast and then I watered the bull. The field was a quarter of a legua from the house and it was nine-thirty before we began to work. Before starting the work, as is the custom, I served myself a little coca and a little alcohol and prayed that God aid us and that the Pachamama of the earth receive our niggardly offering, that our work would go well and that the seed would not dry out.

Much religious ritual activity centers on the family. In San Miguel, the larger kinship unit that includes both close and distant kin has a family saint chosen from the Christian calendar. On the saint's day all relatives at a compound with a household chapel celebrate the occasion. In the household,

ritual ceremonies are also held from time to time, primarily devoted to Pachamama. Added to the standard ritual in these cases is the burning of copal, which serves as a form of incense. At marriages, baptisms, funerals and on birthdays, especially plentiful meals are prepared and larger quantities of alcohol are drunk than on simpler occasions.

Ritual observances are directed at a variety of immediate ends, ranging from supplications for a good harvest, to protection of the health of a child, to honoring the dead. Bonds of family affection, cooperation and obligation are constantly being strengthened by these observances, while those that bring together non-kin tend to strengthen bonds between members of the estancia, between the authorities, between the ayllus and the canton.

Almost all couples are under 25 when they marry, many under 20. Men are increasingly concerned with compatibility, while his parents are more concerned with a wife's capacity for work. In the ordinary course of life in the community young men and women have numerous opportunities to become acquainted. Fiestas are important occasions for encounters, and there is hardly a month without a fiesta somewhere. Boy meets girl going for water, going to the tienda, going on an errand, or going to the fields. Many young persons become acquainted while they are out herding the family's sheep and llamas.

Marriage is generally an after the fact formalization of a couple's status as husband and wife. Being an expensive affair, it is often postponed for years. A civil ceremony, which is the formal arrangement accepted by most couples when they accept any, costs 40 to 50 pesos and consists simply in being registered by the notario of the canton in his marriage records. Few choose a church ceremony, for though the fee is not greater than that required by the notario, the fiesta celebration is often an intolerable financial burden. Agreement to marry is generally the business of the young man and his girl, but this is not always the case in San Miguel. There the parents tend to influence the selection of marital partners, as a comunario somewhat ruefully describes in the following passage:

I married very young, about eight years ago, when I was 17 years old. I hardly knew my wife, though I had seen her around many times. I was more or less forced to marry her. My father and her father were good friends. They made arrangements during carnival when they were both drunk. I was not even asked for my opinion. I did not want to marry her. I wanted to marry somebody else. I told my father this, but he said I was too young to understand about marriage. He said that both my wife and I were too young to make such an important decision, so they made it for us.

It is not typical that the interests and wishes of the young people are completely disregarded. However, the interests and wishes of the parents are still an important factor, though

decreasingly so in Compi. In most cases, parents will try to cooperate with the young couple. After a young man persuades a girl to accept him, they then inform their parents and the parents get together and discuss the matter. A comunario from ayllu Bolivar in San Miguel describes what happened in his case:

About a year ago I married a girl from Bolivar. I have known her all my life. One day we decided to tell our parents that we wanted to get married. Of course, everyone knew that we were going to get married eventually, for we had been close for a long time. We told our parents and then her father visited my father. They talked it over and were in agreement. My father was asked how much land he was going to give me after the marriage, how many animals I had, and how I was going to support his daughter. We knew that she wasn't going to bring in land, but it was a question of the animals she had. My father asked how many animals she would bring. It really wouldn't have made any difference if she didn't bring any, although she did bring some sheep, because I wanted to marry her. Her father insisted that within three months we should actually get married. Everything was agreed to and then my wife came to live with me. This was about a year ago and we haven't gotten married yet. It costs a lot of money to get married, but we will do it someday soon. Her father has not complained, for he can see that we are going to stay together.

Most young men are eager to marry. They will have no land of their own, no independence, until they do. However, alternate possibilities are opening up for the young men and women of Compi. Routes to greater independence are now available through enlistment in the army or by going to live with a relative in La Paz.

### Compadrazgo

There are two other types of social relations in the two communities, but neither is the basis for significant grouping. The one is compadrazgo and the other is friendship. Compadrazgo has the same basis in Catholic doctrine in these two communities as it does in the four towns. In the towns, compadrazgo relations have become increasingly secularized and socially important beyond their religious intent, but this is much less the case in San Miguel and Compi.

As in the towns, the primary compadrazgo relations are those based on baptism and marriage, but because formal marriage and even baptisms are often long delayed, ceremonies may never take place, so no ties of compadrazgo are established. Compadrazgo ties between padrino and ahijado are the most important. A padrino must accept real responsibility to aid his ahijado, which may mean assisting him in sponsoring a fiesta or even in serving

as pasante for a fiesta at the estancia of the ahijado. A compadre may be asked to supply similar assistance, but the obligation is less intense.

The relative weakness of formal Catholicism in San Miguel and Compi may account in part for there being a less prominent position for compadrazgo in these communities than in the towns. On the other hand, the continued strength and importance of the family and the resulting dominance of kinship relations also suggest why compadrazgo in these communities has not become the kinship substitute it is in the towns.

### Friendship

Friendship has no special importance as a social relation in San Miguel and Compi. Too many important activities are organized around other relations, mainly kinship, which leaves rather little room for friendship. This is not to say that friendships do not occur. Compi is becoming an exception in this respect. As family members are exposed to more non-kin, friendship relations begin to have a new importance, especially among the young adults.

Friends among the young men are usually companions in recreation. In Compi, in particular, friends are the men a man drinks with -- outside of ritual drinking. Young Compeños have begun to adopt the urban practice of gathering at a local tienda or cantina to drink, and they also travel frequently to the nearby towns in search of excitement. Such adventures are generally taken with friends, for it is not unlikely that they will receive an unfriendly or even hostile reception from the local young men. In such situations it is unwise and even dangerous to be alone.

The friendships established in youth and young adulthood may continue throughout a man's life, but there are no strong obligations between friends. They may occasionally help out within their means in an emergency. Such cooperation is quite voluntary without obligation, and is not within the deeper meaning of friendship as it is understood in some of the towns.

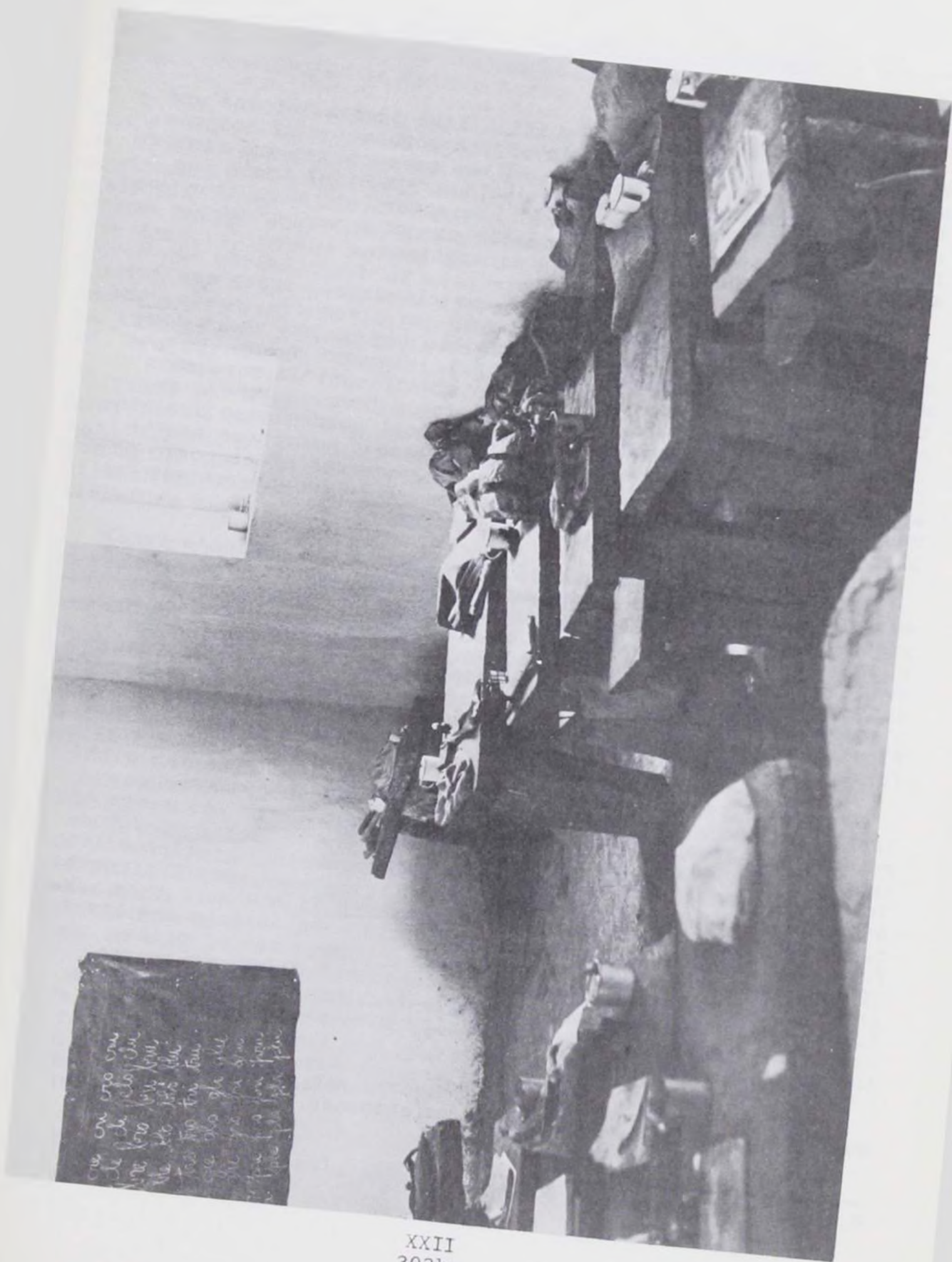
In both San Miguel and Compi the nets of social relations are both fewer and simpler compared to the towns. Excepting political relations, kinship dominates, and the family is the only significant social group. This dominance is being strained in Compi, but it continues unabated in San Miguel. In both cases the Revolution of 1952 has had little direct effect, although indirectly it is responsible for much of the change in family and kinship that is now taking place.

LOS 7 PRINCIPIOS DEL COOPERATIVISMO 

LIBRE ADMISION  
CONTROL DEMOCRATICO  
DISTRIBUCION DE EXCEDENTES  
INTERESES LIMITADOS SOBRE  
EL CAPITAL  
NEUTRALIDAD POLITICA, RACIAL  
Y RELIGIOSA  
VENTAS AL CONTADO  
EDUCACION COOPERATIVA

PART VII

Conclusion



XXII  
303b

## COMMUNITY ANALYSIS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION

Most of the world's peoples still live in small towns and villages. More than two-thirds of the population of Bolivia are found in such communities, and the proportions are similar in other predominantly agrarian nations. Many of these communities retain their traditional character, yet more than ever, in a technologically and politically changing world, people are aware of new needs and have new aspirations.

In Bolivia's rural communities, as elsewhere, there are major health, economic and social problems. As elsewhere, again, the solutions of many of these problems lie beyond the small community -- in the region or the nation. Broader sweeps in national development are essential to significant improvements of living levels in the small community. However, there are problems that can be dealt with when local communities are given technical and effective manpower assistance. Improved health and education, agricultural technology, aspects of economic production, distribution and organization, all lend themselves to planning for action at the community level.

The Bolivian Revolution of 1952 affected the nation's rural society in many ways. Perhaps most significant for action programs, the reforms initiated by the MNR government created a stimulus for further change. As traditional social orders were swept away, new horizons opened up. Expectations were often dashed, but the momentum of agrarian and electoral reform thrust a volatile ingredient into many areas of rural society. In this situation, similar to others throughout the world, the potential for community problem-solving is greatly enhanced.

Community organization is the central factor in coping with local problems. The basic assumption of the Bolivia Project research was that the effectiveness of Peace Corps aid rests on understanding the local community and on the capacity of Volunteers to identify features important to community problem-solving action. Bolivian rural communities, like others, are confronted by certain basic problems, and vary widely in how well they perform, and in their capacity for self-aid. To sustain the lives of their members they must cope with a common set of needs: physical and health maintenance, economic, education, recreational-aesthetic and administrative-regulatory. These are the broad basic demands that a community must satisfy if it is to thrive.\*

A major part of the present research was directed at one community function, that of health maintenance. The health of the

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\* Adapted from Nadel, 1951, p. 35.



community is partly environmental, in terms of sanitation and hygiene; and administrative in the provision of adequate health care. A series of key indicators of health were selected for the epidemiological research. A companion epidemiological volume in this study project documents variations in health among the six communities in detail.\*

In all of the communities there are serious health problems. There is poor management of the physical environment in all of them, though this is variant. This situation creates greater environmental health problems in tropical Reyes than in the mid-altitude communities of Coroico, Sorata, and Villa Abecia, and fewest in the high altitude communities of Compi and San Miguel. For example, in the warmer and wetter communities (Coroico, Reyes and Sorata) lack of adequate environmental control leads to high rates of parasitic disease. Tuberculous infection is serious in Compi and San Miguel, but even more so in Coroico. To tuberculous infection in Coroico, histoplasmosis can be added, another chronic lung disease, even more common in Reyes.

There is varying evidence of malnutrition in all these communities -- and this in populations engaged in, or close to, agricultural production. Malnutrition is a multi-faceted problem which illustrates the interrelatedness of community life. It both affects and is affected by other health problems, and therefore must be considered in relation to them.

Recent research has established that severe protein-calorie malnutrition in early life may produce irreversible mental changes, as well as retard physical growth. Nutritional deficiency has come to be recognized as a serious factor in childhood mortality from infectious disease. The two factors -- malnutrition and infectious disease -- interact to produce a joint or "synergistic effect." Adequate health care is thus inseparable from adequate nutrition. Levels of nutrition are linked to food habits and cultural beliefs as well as to levels of social and economic development.

Malnutrition is sometimes the sum of a variety of cultural concepts and practices concerning what is edible food, methods of food handling and preparation, and who eats how much of what, but is often not separable from the technology and economics of production and distribution.\*\* In terms of food production there are a number of major contrasts between the communities. The two Indian villages are more restricted in their range of foods in comparison with the towns, which are market centers. However, as Indian communities are drawn into regional commerce, as is happening to Compi, such restrictions decrease. An extensive analysis could be developed around the health implications of foods that would show the range and quantity of foodstuffs available, seasonal variations in availability, transport and economic limits to availability, the occasions for the use of

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\* Omran, McEwen and Zaki, 1967.

\*\* Kelly, n.d., passim.

different foods (e.g., every day, contrasted with special occasions), beliefs concerning foods (e.g., that some foods are especially healthful or harmful, that some are luxury items, or that some are especially filling), and methods of food preparation.\*

Preventable disease, such as parasitosis and diseases of malnutrition, are indirect indicators of the effectiveness of the physical and health maintenance function in the six communities, but established health services, as a means in the community for coping with disease, are a direct measure of this function. The details on community health services, and more generally, the cultural and social complex that exists in each community for coping with health problems, have been presented in the companion epidemiology volume (see Chapter 6). All six communities reveal major deficiencies in their methods of controlling preventable disease. The two Indian communities provide somewhat less effective methods than the towns, but this difference is not as great as might be supposed. Some of the concepts of modern medical care are characteristic of all the communities. But so too are a variety of folk concepts. Of special relevance to any effort to alter health methods is the strongly pragmatic approach to health problems prevalent in all the communities, the willingness to accept modern medicine when available and effective.

Since the epidemiologic research was specifically concerned with the Peace Corps health program, extensive information was collected regarding this aspect of community life, and both direct and indirect measures of the performance of the community health function are now available. This information makes possible an evaluation of the health function in the different types of communities, as well as a specification of just where the major sources of difficulty lie. This type of information, so essential to program planning, has not been available for Bolivia.

The health maintenance function in the Bolivian communities is not the only one that is inadequate. The earlier sections delineate the limitations of the local economy, local government, the educational system, and the recreational-aesthetic dimension of community life. Lack of job opportunities, underemployment, lack of capital resources, low agricultural productivity, inefficient land allotments, are some of the more severe economic limitations.

Male heads of households in each of the communities were questioned about what they considered the major community problems or needs. Their responses supply very important information on perceived needs, and clues to some of the most serious problems.

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\* For an analysis of food and diet as the basis for a program to combat malnutrition, even more topics than those mentioned here would need to be investigated. Bonvil, 1962.

Table 1. Number of Serious Community Problems, by Community\*

Number of Serious Community Problems	<u>Community</u>						
	San Miguel	Compi	Villa Abecia	Reyes	Coroico	Sorata	
0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	
1	26	13	20	15	9	13	
2	29	39	40	33	34	41	
3	29	35	26	33	35	29	
4	12	10	7	13	16	9	
5	3	2	7	2	4	2	
6	1	0	1	2	2	4	
7+	1	1	0	0	0	1	
	N=	(159)	(135)	(91)	(255)	(207)	(276)

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\* Question: ¿"Cuales son los problemas o necesidades mas serias que tiene este pueblo?"

Table 2. Most Serious Type of Community Problem, by Community\*

Type of Community Problem	<u>Community</u>					
	San Miguel	Compi	Villa Abecia	Reyes	Coroico	Sorata
Health	0%	7%	2%	19%	44%	20%
Water	60	20	16	54	37	31
Electricity	6	38	51	0	13	25
Civic	2	2	11	4	1	3
Communication	5	0	1	9	6	3
Education	11	14	1	3	0	4
Financial	2	1	1	2	0	0
Agricultural	14	17	5	1	0	9
Economic Situation	0	2	11	8	1	5
N=**	(148)	(117)	(88)	(249)	(200)	(240)

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\*Question: "(Si el individuo menciona varios problemas preguntar):  
¿CUAL DE ESTOS PROBLEMAS CREE VD: QUÉ ES EL MAS SERIO  
PARA EL PUEBLO?"

\*\*Responses that did not single out a specific problem as the "most serious for the community" are not included in this table (Total N in survey=1123; N in Table II=1012).

Striking, if not surprising, is the extent of awareness of community problems revealed by the survey. Only three persons of the 1,123 queried said there were no serious problems or needs in their community (see Table 1). The majority in all communities named not one, but two or three problems they considered to be serious. Only in San Miguel (26%) and Villa Abecia (20%) did a substantial number name only one problem. These are the two most traditional communities of the six, the one being Indian in over-all culture and the other mestizo. On the other hand, not insignificant minorities in all communities (ranging from 13% in Compi to 22% in Coroico) named four, five, or even more.

In Table 2 the specific problems that were named have been grouped to permit comparison, but the groupings are empirical, reflecting the specific problems named. In addition, this table reports the one most serious problem named by each person, to eliminate the bias introduced by those who gave large numbers of problems.

In all communities there is a focus of concern on a small range of problems. Generally only three or four types of problems receive any substantial attention. In some communities one type of problem stands out: water in San Miguel, water in Reyes, electricity in Villa Abecia. In other communities, like Sorata and Compi, concern tends to be divided equally among several perceived problems. There are also some important substantive contrasts. The health problems rank high only in the three big towns. Health services in these towns are probably better rather than worse than those in the other three communities. On the other hand, the physical environment of the three big towns is more hazardous to health. Water ranks high in all the communities, the single problem to achieve this distinction. Since this generally refers either to an adequate supply for consumption and household use or to safe drinking water, this problem area is related to health. This degree of concentration on this particular set of problems suggests that physical survival is still the fundamental problem confronting Bolivia's rural communities. Awareness of these problems is based on legitimate community needs.

Environmental deficiencies have been listed by the WHO as the leading health problem in 90 countries of the world.\* Water-borne and water-transmitted diseases are a major factor in low levels of health. Potable water is consequently a key element in the control of disease and preventive health programs must take into account the problem of water supply.

Both San Miguel and Compi emphasize agricultural problems, but otherwise these two Indian villages are rather dissimilar in their community concerns. Perhaps of greatest import is the

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\* Scrimshaw, Nevin S.; and Gordon, Taylor; Interactions of Nutrition and Infection. World Health Organization, Monograph No. 57.

concentration of concern in all communities on the same delimited range of felt needs. Health, water, and electricity account for not less than 65% of community concern (Compi) and as much as 94% (Coroico).

Awareness of community problems by their members is not itself sufficient measure of community function, compared, for example, to the epidemiological measures of the health maintenance function. There is a relation between awareness and performance of function. If the types of problems are considered from this standpoint, the first three (health, water, and electricity) are aspects of the health function, the last three refer to the economic function, and civic and communication problems to the administrative function. On direct questioning, people do not identify the field range of problems revealed by the research.

Six of the nine types of problems that community members concern themselves with refer to only two of the community functions. The recreational function is omitted entirely, while the administrative-regulative and education functions are poorly elaborated. Also, it is only those problems that refer to the health function that receive much attention, because this function is poorly performed in all communities.

Expressions of concern about community problems, even if not all-inclusive, provide important information for action programs. They identify the areas in which concern for change is already developed in the community, and which are likely targets for initial programs. Why certain community problems, and thus only certain functions, are recognized as requiring corrective or developmental action, can be understood in terms of the particular type of rural community and the situation generally of the Bolivian rural community. Thus the farming communities attend to agricultural problems, while the market towns give more attention to economic situation problems. The rural Indian communities have been the objects of MNR educational reform, and this is reflected in the emphasis they give to educational problems, which are quite ignored by the four towns, despite the poor repute in which their schools are held.

The overriding attention to water needs, and secondarily to electricity and health problems, reflects the marginal position generally of the rural community. In a nation long distinguished by limited industrial development, great inequality of incomes, inadequate financing and limited managerial and organizational skills, the position of the rural community has long been marginal and insecure in the national system. The focus of attention in these communities is on the most elemental conditions of living. Electricity in all five communities means electric lighting service. A poor electric service exists in both Coroico and Sorata, the inadequacy of which is indicated by its appearance as a major problem in both towns. Water, as noted, means adequate safe drinking water in all six communities. Water for crops is classified under agricultural problems. Health means a hospital in Coroico, sewage disposal and a hospital in Sorata, and sanitation and medicine in Reyes. Con-

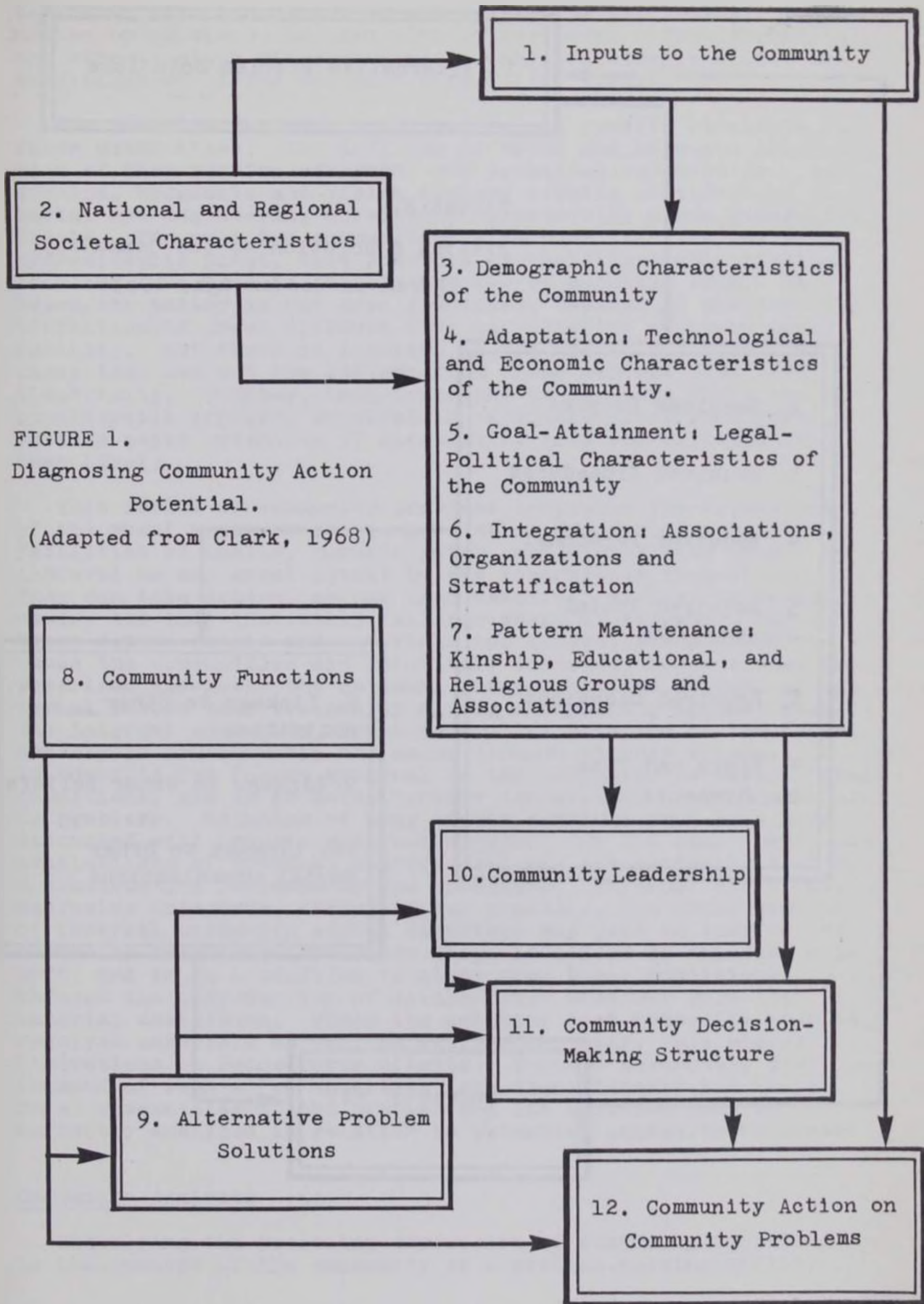


FIGURE 1.  
Diagnosing Community Action  
Potential.  
(Adapted from Clark, 1968)

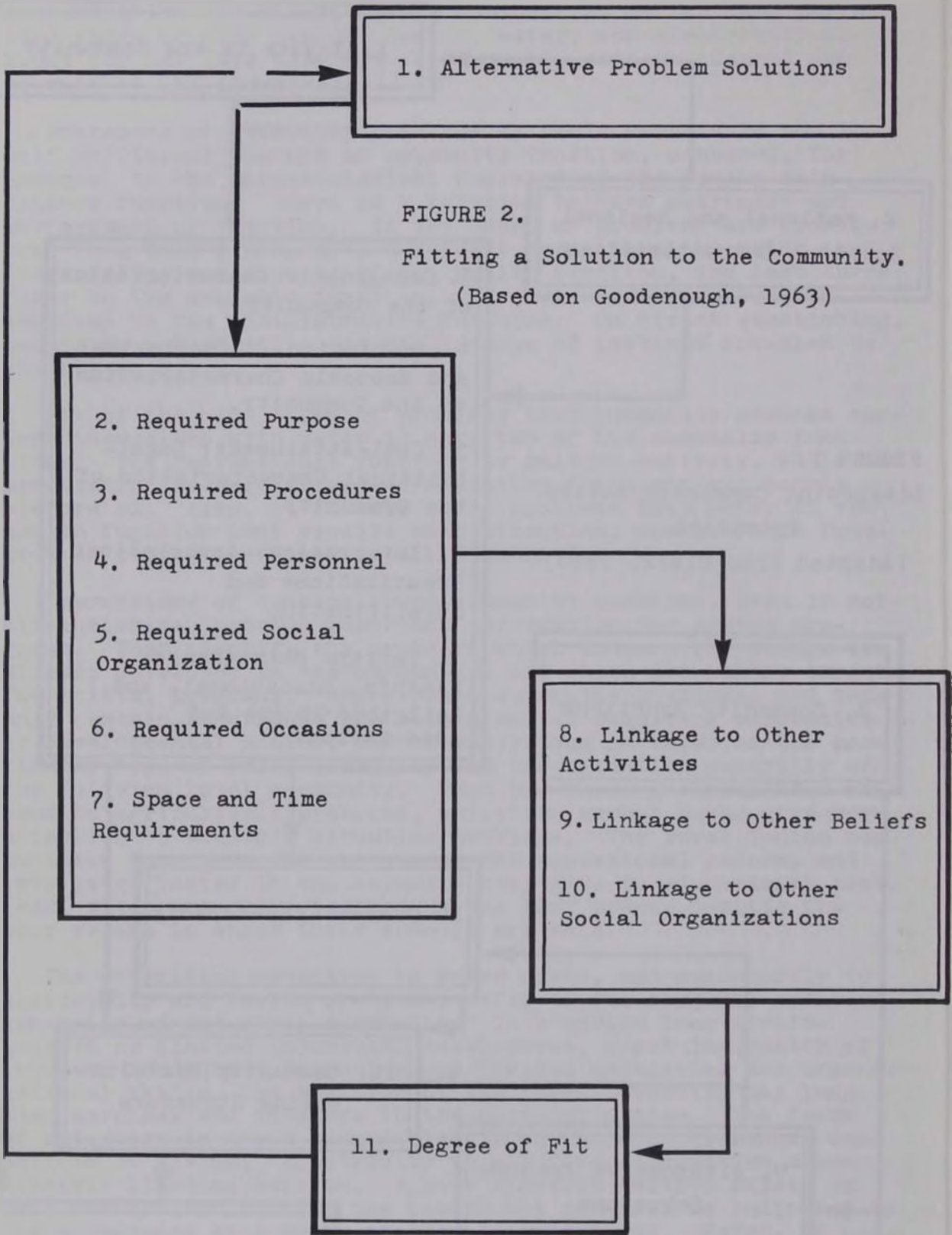


FIGURE 2.

Fitting a Solution to the Community.

(Based on Goodenough, 1963)



taminated water, no water at all during the dry season, illumination by candle or an open wick in kerosene, refuse thrown in the streets along with human waste, all drastically affect the conditions of living and most affect life itself.

The remedies for such problems are not readily available to these communities. The drilling of wells and adequate protection of them require equipment and technical supervision. Reservoirs, aqueducts and piping systems require considerable material and engineering direction. Electricity means generating plants. The only two communities with some lighting own a hydroelectric plant, made possible by their favorable physical location, but both are sorely pressed to maintain them. In Reyes the matter is not even discussed, because of the town's impractically great distance from any existing electric power facility. But there is interest in the Indian villages, because they are not too distant from urban centers that have electricity. However, both Oruro and La Paz have their own considerable problems in obtaining adequate electrical power, so this makes extension of electricity into the villages less than likely.

This review of community problems indicates the dependence of the rural areas on the larger nation for assistance. The facilities of health, potable water, and electricity cannot be improved to any great extent by the communities themselves. They can take action, as has been described earlier in several cases, but they inevitably fall far short of success. Solutions demand skills and materials not generally available because the communities are relatively isolated, because they are powerless vis-a-vis the national government, and because of internal forces that frequently divide a community against itself. The internal community structure and its relation to the larger society is consequently the major concern of this volume. It is possible for forces external to the community to modify local conditions, and in so doing resolve (as well as create) community problems. Solution of many of the problems that have been discussed will require external support. On the other hand, the availability of external support will not automatically lead to a constructive response by the community. Internal divisions, exclusive interests, struggles for prestige, and other aspects of internal community social structure may lead to ineffective community response. The Peace Corps is a form of external support, and is in a position to alter some local conditions, through the introduction of middle-level manpower more than by material assistance. Where the solution to a community problem requires materials as well as skilled manpower, this places limitations on Peace Corps efforts. Trained personnel, plus command of even a few materials, can significantly aid these rural communities if the problem and its solution have been correctly analyzed in relation to potential community response.

### Community Analysis

Underlying the preceding discussion of community functions is the concept of the community as a problem-solving entity.

It has been pointed out that communities vary in their problem-solving performance, and that their functional effectiveness may be assessed. There are internal as well as external limitations to the problem-solving capacity of the communities. Just as the epidemiological research was designed to evaluate one of the major community functions, the anthropological research was designed to delineate and appraise the community organization that carries out these functions. The anthropological research has broader applicability, since it is pertinent to all the major functions of community organization. In presenting the results of the anthropological research (Parts II-VI) emphasis has been placed on the organizational structure of each community, or the key parts of the organization, and to a lesser extent on relations between parts. Finally, how each community performed in an actual problem-solving effort was examined. This way of organizing the anthropological research, as in discussion of community functions, is facilitated by the use of an analytical model. Such a model is of considerable utility for the planning and initiating of community action. It not only specifies what is important to examine in a community, but how different parts of the community are linked. More importantly, such a model presents a dynamic view of community organization. It indicates how something happens, and is a prerequisite to initiating community action programs. A quasi-system model has been adopted for the purpose of showing how anthropological community studies can inform community action. Figure 1 presents a diagram of the model. The following discussion describes the model, and illustrates it from the preceding sections on the six communities.

1. Inputs. Inputs concern what comes into the community from the outside. They can be goods, people, money, or orders -- in short, all the variety of forces emanating from the external environment to which the community reacts. From a different perspective, this is the question of independence versus dependence of the local community. It is relevant concerning inputs in general to Bolivia's rural communities to enquire about existing barriers to inputs. Barriers can be best appreciated if inputs are conceived of as a form of communication. Viewed this way, the barriers are of variable significance for the different communities. This variation follows from differences in environmental topography, distances from other places, and position within its national system. These variables determine whether there may be planes, trains, vehicles, roads, telegraph and postal services by which inputs can enter a community. In these terms, Reyes and San Miguel have the highest barriers, while Coroico and Compi tend toward the lower, with Sorata and Villa Abecia in the intermediate range. Communities with high barriers necessarily function more independently. They are less subject to outside pressures, but so are they restricted from outside support.

All the communities studied, and probably all rural communities, receive external inputs that affect the internal organization. Inputs come by routes that are a form of supra-community organization. One set of routes is formally organized. These carry the governmental inputs, the laws, the orders for tax

collection, and the appointments and dismissals of local government officials. Also included here are the educational inputs (provision of financial support for local public schools, edicts concerning curricula, and the appointing of local school personnel) and religious inputs (assigning of personnel, transmission of edicts on matters of religious belief and practice). Another set of inputs, equally important, is informally organized. These are the economic inputs, such as the provision of capital, trade relations, the hiring of local residents and the setting up of local economic enterprises by external capital. Then there are the political inputs, primarily those of influence through *muneca* networks, and social inputs that enter through kin and friendship networks. The reason for distinguishing formal from informal inputs is that the former are matters of public information, and thus more accessible to evaluation of their impact on the community.

This sketch of the input factor is designed to draw attention to the susceptibility of community action to forces external to the community. Even small communities like San Miguel and Villa Abecia offer a sufficient range of impressions to the observer on the scene to occupy him completely. In the effort to understand the microcosmic community it is easy to lose sight of the macrocosm that contains and conditions it. This conditioning is most marked for the four towns. This follows from their administrative importance, because of which they receive a generally larger share of formal inputs, but since the formal input support of community function is rarely decisive, and because the magnitude of problems is often greater in the towns, there is no consistent relation between inputs and community performance. On the other hand, the presence of these inputs consistently subjects the towns to greater external influence. Coroico illustrates this situation. It is a town with low barriers to inputs and a dense organization of input routes into the community. Consequently, little of importance concerning major community functions occurs that is not affected by external inputs. The potable water project was started as a local effort, but immediately became subject to external forces; the visits of General Barrientos, the visit of the sub-prefect, the soliciting of funds from AID and support from General Ovando. Community interest, organization, and activity around the potable water project were very considerable. Yet most of this internal output was irrelevant; the decisive forces were all external to the community. Failure of the original planning group to recognize this, to see that in a community like Coroico external inputs would be decisive, resulted in an extravagant waste of community action. This could have been foreseen and prevented.

Towns like Villa Abecia, but especially Reyes, though they may have high input barriers, are likely to receive more inputs than the administratively less important villages. But the organization of inputs that connects these towns to the outside is less dense and more fragile. Reyes is generally completely cut off from the outside for parts of each year, and at such times all inputs cease. Such towns tend to be less dependent on external forces, though not less subject to them in the long run. For example, in towns like Coroico and Sorata, which initiated chan-

ges in local government officials internally after the coup of 1964, the new officials immediately sought confirmation from La Paz. In Reyes, on the other hand, the local decentes met in open meeting and chose a new set of officials who immediately took office with only the local mandate. The Reyesanos were aware that the central government eventually would have to pass on such action, but that might be in the distant future, and in the meantime the community had to function. It is important to remember that inputs can be both positive (support inputs) and negative (control inputs).

2. National and Regional Societal Characteristics. Inputs are penetrating external forces. The source of these forces is the national society and its regional subdivisions. Societal characteristics refers to pervasive elements common to the whole society that act to define or condition local community action. They do not enter the local community, as inputs do, but are already and invariably present as part of the local community. They are what makes these communities Bolivian rather than Brazilian or Indonesian. An adequate appraisal of societal characteristics as a factor would require studied comparison of Bolivia with other societies, to isolate the features specific to Bolivia. Over-all, some of the features that stand out are the low levels of education; extreme governmental centralization, often coupled with ineffective control; governmental instability; low integration of much of the population into the larger society; the marginal efficiency of the economy; very limited industrial development; the precarious economic situation of much of the population, and the very modest importance of organized religion. These are some of the general features of Bolivian society that are reflected in local communities. They can be seen in lack of work skills, the constant changing of government officials, the lack of responsiveness to appeals to community self-interest, and the beggarly condition of much of the local population.

In most societies, and certainly in Bolivia, there are regional subdivisions, and these add further conditioning elements to the local community. The regional subdivision known as the Bolivian oriente is vast, low in population density, and poorly provided with means of communication. Its population is primarily mestizo and monolingual. Except for the newly-formed area of western Santa Cruz, the regional economy is poorly developed and there is widespread poverty. Reyes, a prominent regional center, reflects all of these characteristics. That it ranks so high on so many of the indicators of health problems is symptomatic of the low levels of community function, attributable in large part to regional characteristics.

The altiplano, the northern valleys, in which the Yungas is a zone of sufficient individuality to be considered a separate sub-region, and the southern valleys, are other major regions. There is at least one community of the series studied in each of these four regions. Each region has a set of characteristics that distinguishes it from the others, and that gives its communities a shared character. This is not to suggest that all communities in a region are alike, or even almost alike, but

only that they all have some identical or similar characteristics. An appreciation of this point will prevent the error of thinking that what works in one community will work in another.

Most, if not all, of these national and regional characteristics of Bolivian society are subject to change. Since the special importance of these characteristics is their pervasiveness, any such change is likely to be far-reaching in its implications. This point has a very special importance for Bolivia, as well as for other nations attempting to alter basic features of the national society. The Revolution of 1952 represents the beginning of a program of national change. The character of this program has been sketched in Part I. Emphasis was placed there on the political, economic, and educational reforms introduced by the MNR. In varying degrees, often depending on regional characteristics, such as the population density and the predominantly Indian character of the altiplano, these reforms have altered some of the over-all features of Bolivian society.

The single most dramatic effect of the reform program has been to alter the position of the Indian in Bolivian national society. In varying degrees the Indian has been freed of earlier restraints that assigned him to a servile position. This fundamental change has had ramified repercussions. It has brought the Indian more into contact with the larger society, has given him a position of some political importance, has provided him with more time that is his own to dispose of, and has opened new areas of economic activity for him. These changes in the position of the Indian have had an ineluctable impact on the position of the blanco and the cholo. While the reforms intended to improve the position of the Indian have not solved all or even most of the special problems of the Indian communities, they have created a new set of national conditions which cannot but affect their solution. In addition, the reforms have created a greater receptivity to change in the nation. As old interests, alliances, and relations have disappeared under the impact of reform measures, new ones must be formed.

The two communities that best illustrate the impact of these national changes are Compi and Sorata, the one an Indian village of a former hacienda and the other a former mestizo town. At Compi the hacienda is gone, along with the hacendados, for the Compeños now own the former hacienda land. Gone also is a good part of the traditional Indian government of Compi. In its place is the sindicato, the new political organization that not only has replaced local Indian government in many areas but also is a major new link between the local Indian community and the national society. Gone also are the rigid limitations of subsistence agriculture. Instead, the entrepreneurial function of the hacienda has been adopted by the individual Indian, and he has become involved with the urban markets of La Paz. Changing economy, changing government and changing society are everywhere visible in Compi. In all these respects, Compi contrasts markedly with San Miguel. The program of national reform has not been very relevant to San Miguel, has not had much effect, so this is

still a very traditional Indian village. Nevertheless, the national momentum of change created in 1952 has had some effect even on San Miguel, which eagerly seeks certain kinds of change, such as improved and expanded public education, but only within the framework of its traditional community organization.

The impact of national change on Sorata presents a very different picture. On the haciendas that surround Sorata the kinds of changes described for Compi have occurred. Sorata, however, was not Indian, but a mestizo and cholo town. It therefore reveals a different part of the effect of national change on the Indian, namely the consequences for him vis-a-vis blancos and cholos. Equally important, it reveals something of the fate of the blancos and cholos themselves in the rural communities of Bolivia. One striking change is the demographic. The majority of the town population is now Indian, the town campesino. Most are immigrants from the surrounding haciendas. Many of these move to Sorata only after a transitional period in the Tipuani mines. Now that the Indian is freed of hacienda labor obligations, the nearby mines offer him quick and occasionally very large financial gains. Those who do modestly are likely to move to town, and from there commute to the mines for the season. Those who do well buy property in town and start new business enterprises, like trucking or retail commerce. Since the revolution, a large new agricultural middleman enterprise has developed to move products from the now numerous small producers. Rugged terrain, transport problems, and the small scale of agricultural and related enterprises, have resulted in the development of several stages of middlemen who move produce from outlying parts of the Sorata valleys region to La Paz. Indians, especially Indian women, have entered these wholesaling occupations in large numbers. In all of these economic activities the Indians have become rivals of town cholos who formerly dominated small-scale trade, transport and skilled jobs in the region. However, the distinction between indios and cholos is rapidly blurring.

The cholos as well as the indios have been presented with their own new economic opportunities by the disappearance of blanco monopoly of large-scale commerce and land ownership. Large scale commerce and land ownership have both almost disappeared, and this decline in blanco economic dominance has enabled some cholos to enlarge their commercial activities and to buy agricultural land. The economic decline of the blancos, which began before the revolution, but which was accelerated and brought to a climax by national reform, is best seen in the virtual disappearance of the town's blanco population. Now scattered to the cities of Bolivia and beyond, only a small, not very visible, and generally dispirited remnant remains. Perhaps the most radical change has occurred in local government, where the position of indio and blanco is now completely reversed. It is the former indio, now campesino, who occupies the government building and fills local government offices, while the blancos remain on the outside, subject to orders. This situation can be contrasted with that in Villa Abecia, a mestizo town little affected by the revolution. There the patrons, the landowning elite, continue their total and rigid control of the town in all

respects, and the peons who work the vineyards, though not Indians, are no less servile toward the patrons than the pre-revolutionary hacienda Indians of the altiplano.

Comparison of the communities clearly shows the range and depth of the changes wrought by the national reform program in some parts of Bolivia. It also shows the great variation in the impact of these reforms. This reflects the intent of the laws, accessibility of an area, regional differences, such as the small proportion of Indians in the oriente, the turmoil and conflict engendered by swift radical change, and other factors. Now, more than a decade later, continuing reform effort is still strongly evident. One reason is that the changes that were begun have not been completed. There still exist illegal haciendas, though far fewer than might be expected. There still exist many former hacienda peons without legal title to their land. Another reason is that the planned changes set in motion many unplanned changes. The classic, traditional social order of the rural town, such as can be seen in Villa Abecia, has been completely overturned in Sorata. However, the situation there is still clearly transitional, as seen in the extensive disagreement and inconsistency in how members of the community view and understand the new status order.

Change is itself a particularly relevant feature of communities with respect to planned community action. Such communities are likely to be more open to innovation, more receptive to continued change. But this statement too can be over-generalized. Both Compi and Sorata, as greatly changed and still changing communities, exhibit continued interest in change. However, the internal factionalism in Compi severely compromises this potential. In Sorata, with its disaffected, declining former elite, its large, new and relatively mobile campesino population, and its community government leaders embroiled in campesino sindicato politics, the promise is even less. Such limits point up the importance of structural elements internal to the community that affect community actions, which are discussed next.

3. Demographic Characteristics of the Community. This factor number 3 -- plus the four following factors; adaptation, goal-attainment, integration, and pattern-maintenance -- constitute a set. They are the organizational base for goals and action. These are the elements of the model that are internal to the community, the already described first two (Inputs and Societal Characteristics) being external factors that link the community system to its larger environment. Through assessment of these five internal factors the major organizational properties that determine or condition the development and movement of community action become apparent.

Demographic characteristics refers to the features that define the population of each community. Despite the considerable differences in size of the six communities, all are small. Size itself affects both community organization and functioning. While the lines of demarcation are difficult to draw, it is clear enough that communities of a few hundred differ from those of several thousand, which differ further from those of hundreds

of thousands. The physical possibilities for contact, and therefore of direct interpersonal communication, influence, and exchange, are drastically affected by size increases. This is likely to lead to a very different structure of community decision-making and action. Thus the various arrangements for open participation in decision-making that exist in social theory, if not social practice, in most of these communities, such as the open community meeting, cannot work in far larger societies except under conditions of extreme selectivity. That such selectivity also occurs in many of these small communities is a reflection of other parts of the community organization, not size.

Other demographic characteristics of general importance are growth, mobility, origin, sex and age distribution, and ethnic and educational character. Communities experiencing rapid growth are likely to encounter problems of integration, which then require some redirection of community action and resources, and may impair community functioning. Rapid growth does not appear to be taking place in any of the six communities, but extensive mobility has the same effect, and this has occurred. The major example is Sorata, in which as much as two-thirds of the population has been replaced. Population replacement is only one form of mobility. Sorata also illustrates two others. One is the continual export of a particular segment of the population, in this case young men, many of whom are going away for advanced education. Few of them will return. This represents a specially critical problem with respect to community problem-solving action, for it drains off some of the most promising manpower. Emigration characterizes all of the four towns. It can also be seen in the Indian village of Compi as this community becomes more closely linked to the larger society. Another form of mobility is the seasonal migration to the mines that occurs in Sorata and its surrounding villages. This has ramified effects on the community, as discussed in the analysis of Sorata, such as decreasing family integration. On a smaller scale it also occurs in Villa Abecia, but has considerably less effect on that community because of the small numbers involved and the fact that they are of marginal importance to community functioning.

4. Adaptation. Adaptation refers primarily to the economic organization of the community and its arrangements for the production and distribution of goods and services. Comparison of the communities indicates considerable variation in this factor. A general distinction has been drawn between the towns and the two agricultural villages. The towns have been pictured as marketing centers with populations organized around trade and the related services. Villa Abecia is a partial exception to this generalization. It is a market center for its region, but most of its population is directly involved in grape and wine production, either as owner-managers or workers. As marketing centers, the towns generally command greater financial resources and are better able to deal with community problems requiring financial investment. Marketing centers are also characterized by considerable work differentiation, which becomes the basis for special groups that attempt to influence community function-



ing in their own interests. The organized truckers in Sorata who threaten to refuse transport unless certain roads are repaired are an example. In this case the interests of the truckers may coincide with the interests of the community, enhancing community functioning rather than distorting it. The latter effect is better seen in Villa Abecia, where the small group of patróns tend to resist community efforts to improve functional performance -- as in the attempts to better the physical environment of the town -- because they already enjoy a more favorable environment and the benefits would go mainly to other members of the community.

Another important characteristic of rural economic organization is its marginal and unstable productivity, which provides meager livelihoods and severely constrains community functioning. In this and in other characteristics each of the communities reveals its own special features, though it shares others with one or more of the six communities. Compi and San Miguel are communities of agriculturalists, but Compi has shifted away from mainly subsistence production to market production, which brings more money into the community, makes the younger men more independent at an earlier age, and creates a new network of external relations to the outside society, all of which have effects on the internal community organization. One effect is an increased individualism; another, a greater dependence on outside authority. Neither of these effects is pronounced in San Miguel. The more important economic characteristics are described in the earlier community analyses, which provide the information needed for interpreting this factor in the community action model.

5. Goal-Attainment. This factor concerns the organization of collective effort for community goals. It is the formal framework within which community problem-solving takes place. The framework of goal-attainment consists primarily in the community governmental and legal organization. Thus, local community government, or the larger governmental structure to which it is related, is formally responsible in whole or part for three of the five major community functions, and has some regulatory responsibility for the other two. This gives this factor a central importance in analyzing the potential for community action.

This does not mean that the goal-attainment function in the community system is always an effective factor. One of the major findings of the research is that performance in many rural communities is so low that it greatly impairs community functions. Problems of wide range and severity in the governmental and legal structures of the four towns have been catalogued in such detail in earlier chapters that further elaboration is unnecessary. In this case there is great uniformity among the towns. In all of them, problems of organization, personnel and financing tend to subvert the purposes of these structures. They verge on being irrelevant to their formal functions. Instead, they have frequently become vehicles mainly for asserting special interests, even private individual interests, and for developing and sustaining political factionalism, and for

diverting community resources into individual hands. Community government, however, cannot be held solely responsible for deficiencies in community action.

Local government, as planner, initiator, organizer, supervisor, evaluator, stimulator, and supporter in community problem-solving, is severely affected by the interacting peculiarities of its own structure. The two Indian villages provide an instructive contrast. Compi is exceptional because of the strains and antagonisms engendered by the land reform, which has seriously affected government, but San Miguel has a governmental structure that is functioning effectively in community problem-solving. It is a highly integrated community with a traditional authority system, an absence of power inequalities, high community participation in governmental decision-making, and wide community responsibility for such decisions. But even in this community there are signs of problems, arising primarily from competition among its four ayllus. In Compi, in contrast, other community structures exercise the goal-attainment function and provide a viable alternative to a traditional system. One such structure is the sindicato, which in Compi has almost replaced traditional government. The truckers' sindicato in Sorata also serves this purpose. Another structure is the Civic Association. When a strong Civic Association develops, as in Reyes, it parallels the sindicato in influencing, even absorbing government responsibility.

6. Integration. A key structure in the community organization system is that of integration, which serves to link individual and small social units through participation and membership into larger, community-wide units. The effect of this action is to mobilize commitment to the community organization. The units that carry this function can assume a variety of forms. What they have in common is that they identify community interests as their interests and thus the loyalty they build tends to accrue to the larger community organization. However, it not infrequently develops that the relation of unit to community goals is reversed, and those of the unit are taken to be those of the community. As a result, integrative structures may divide the community when they should be uniting it.

Typical integrative structures are voluntary associations, political parties, and social strata. All of these types of structures are found in the four towns, few of them in the two villages. Yet one of the most striking results of research is how poorly integrated, in comparison with the villages, the towns generally are. The reason is not difficult to locate. While all of these integrating structures are well represented in the towns, they have a minimal effect on community integration. As can be seen in the preceding analyses, they tend to have low attraction for their members and others in the community, demonstrate little sense of purpose, show little activity, are often strongly divided internally, and consequently have little visible impact on the community. This describes most of the voluntary associations and also the political parties. The formal organization of associations, including political parties, distinguishes them sharply from social strata, which are gener-

ally not formally organized at all. However, the sense of identification with a given stratum, allegiance to a stratum code, and the sharing of interests that produce an integrative effect, are lacking in the towns, although for given strata it may be less pronounced. In Coroico, and especially Sorata, this condition is a result of the changed situation of the social strata and the widespread instability that has followed. The one major exception to this generalization concerning the towns is Villa Abecia. And the major factor in the integration of that community is the persistence of the old, traditional, cohesive stratification order. In Villa Abecia, all members of the community know their position, which is defined and legitimized by the stratification code. In the villages, a single cohesive stratum of small size strongly contributes to community integration.

Integration has a major effect on community action. Low integration impedes the mobilization of the community. It tends to reduce the effectiveness of all the other parts of the organization. As integration decreases, adaptation, goal-attainment and pattern maintenance are likely to decrease, and these developments in turn will reduce or disrupt community decision-making. This, then, is also an important factor in evaluating the community system.

7. Pattern Maintenance. The major institutions responsible for pattern maintenance are the family, school and church. They inculcate the values, beliefs and norms which cover a very great range of topics, even in a small community. Many of these are of limited relevance to community action and problem-solving. However, values, beliefs and norms will determine the attention given to the various community functions, as well as to the means that will be acceptable in any effort to solve problems.

Poor attendance at regular church activities, lack of responsiveness to appeals from religious authorities, difficulty in recruiting members for the various religious associations, are some of the problems of church organization in the towns. In the two villages, which have almost no church organization, religious belief and practice are considerably stronger, carried mainly through the family structure. Again, family structure in the towns is weaker and less influential. The contrast between town and village, however, should not be overstressed, and a further comparison should be made between towns. For many contrasts there is a consistent trend running from Villa Abecia, the most traditional town, to Reyes as an intermediate town, and then to Coroico and finally Sorata, as radically changed towns.

The pattern-maintenance function of the church and school is circumscribed within the community because both of these institutions are local extensions of society-wide organizations. There is considerable variation in their range of independence, but both are subject to external direction that can and does ignore the local community. This limits their potential for performing strictly community-relevant functions. Relation to the community is further strained in the case of the church in that most local priests are foreigners, mainly North American

and European. As a result, the local church is apt to introduce and support values that are quite inconsistent or even antagonistic to those of the local community. In Sorata, a priest has waged a campaign for several years to eliminate the lavish community drinking and dancing parties that are traditional in observance of religious festivals. He has succeeded in part, but at the cost of antagonizing a large part of the community and dividing the town against itself. There is a similar problem, in education, one of the many that plague the public schools and greatly compromise their effectiveness. Most local teachers come from the urban centers, find little that attracts them in the small communities, and spend much of their time traveling to and from the city. Many are novice teachers. Their salaries are meager, they are provided limited and often inadequate materials and aids for their teaching, the physical plant is often a make-shift affair. Nation-wide teachers' strikes are one response. It may be a stand-off whether teachers or students are worse off in contemporary rural Bolivia. There is no doubt at all that the pattern-maintenance function for the community is severely weakened.

8. Community Functions. Community functions affect two other factors in the model. One is the factor of solution selection in resolving a problem. The other is the type of community action initiated. These factors are discussed below.

9. Alternative Problem Solutions. This refers to the specific ideas and plans for resolving problems or carrying out functions. Adequate response to the community health function, for example, means adequate measures to eliminate, if possible, or alleviate current illness and prevent further illness from developing. The specific measures needed would be many, the establishment of nutrition programs, the initiation of insect and rodent control, vaccination against infectious diseases, the establishment of treatment clinics, and so on. These measures involve very specific technical procedures, known and theoretically available.

In this research it is recognized, naturally, that there may be seemingly obvious measures by which community problems may be solved, but there are often interfering factors that make the 'how' of implementation difficult. The 'how' is an organizational matter, but not without important cultural dimensions. Any likely community problem solution obviously must fit the existing community culture. Communities have rejected a new tool because its use required an unfamiliar physical posture, and a new food because it had a strange taste, or blood testing because it is thought to weaken a person. Though there are several excellent analyses of just this topic,\* it is too important to community action to neglect it, and therefore it has been incorporated into the community system model. The model shows that this cultural factor bears both on community decision-making and community action.

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\* Foster, 1962; Goodenough, 1963.

There is generally not one solution to a given community problem, but a range of solutions, each with different requirements, different consequences, different degrees of attractiveness. This often greatly complicates community decision-making and action. Witness the idea of redesigning the canton settlement of San Miguel because trucks are unable to enter the settlement's narrow, irregular passageways. Various alternatives were discussed, ranging from modest proposals to one that the entire settlement be rebuilt to a grid pattern. Some argued that surveyors or engineers were required, because technical skills were not on hand. A compromise plan was adopted that would leave much of the original settlement intact, but would expand the community around its perimeter along grid lines. At issue in this discussion were many vital matters and some not so vital. Among the former was the need to give up farm land if the settlement were allowed to expand, the cost of building new houses, and especially of taking apart and rebuilding an existing one. The people had to consider the advantages that better transport would offer the community and the importance of an improvement of the canton settlement in maintaining San Miguel's competitive position in relation to neighboring settlements, against the changes in social relations that would occur in the settlement if it were enlarged. They had also to consider the anger of families forced to move. These were some of the major considerations that influenced a compromise solution. In Figure 2 a conceptual model illustrates how solutions of community problems are fitted to the community culture.

The elements of the fitting diagram are very largely self-explanatory. What the model asserts is that a problem solution, like tearing down all the existing houses and rebuilding them along grid lines in San Miguel, must first be specified and then evaluated in terms of six requirements. What is the purpose, or value, of the solution? What procedures, or activities, does it entail? How many skills of what kinds are needed? What kind of organization is involved? When do the procedures and organization have to come into play (weekly, yearly, every morning)? How much space and time are needed? These specifications must then be evaluated against current community culture. Is the purpose or value consistent with other community values? The consistency question must be applied to all six requirements. Consistency, though, is not the end of the matter. There is a second stage of evaluation. This concerns the ramifications of the solution, how it may link to other areas of the community culture. Three have been enumerated (8-10); the linkages to other activities, other beliefs, other social organizations. The rebuilding of San Miguel's canton settlement threatens some of the family and inter-family organization that existing housing arrangements support. The grid pattern is an idea that has little meaning or importance to some in the community, and is not the symbol of higher social status as that is understood by others. The magnitude of the task would greatly disrupt regular farming and herding activities, which some families can little afford. A similar evaluation can be carried out on any proposed solution to a community problem if it can be specified at all. If it cannot be given adequate specification to permit this type of evaluation, it is probably a spurious solution.

10. Community Leadership. This and the following factor, Community Decision-Making Structure, are the most immediately relevant to the initiation of community action. All of the previously discussed factors, as shown in Figure 1, can be viewed as ultimately conditioning the exercise of leadership and decision-making. These are the decisive elements in the model. Here is where an idea for solving a community problem or for initiating a course of action on a community problem will either stop or go forward. The leadership function in the community organization consists in orienting the community to appropriate system goals, which of course will derive in large part from the basic community functions. In a well-functioning community the leadership mechanism performs as a kind of system governor. It identifies potential or developing problems, alerts the community to these, and attempts to mobilize community resources to meet these problems. In poorly functioning communities the leadership mechanism is likely to be disoriented and press for irrelevant or damaging goals. Furthermore, in such communities its effectiveness is often greatly impaired.

While the leadership function is carried by community groups and organizations, it is also a peculiarly individual activity. One of the few shared characteristics of the six communities is the limited extent to which any community groups of formal organizations exercise this function. By default, it falls on individual community members, generally only certain classes of members. Once more the organization of the towns is so different from that of the two villages that they must be separately discussed. In the towns the exercise of community leadership by individuals is greatly affected by social status. While community deficiencies may bear heaviest on those of low status, their lowly position disqualifies them from speaking out, from suggesting remedies and from trying to stimulate community action. This is most true of Villa Abecia and least true of Sorata, but even in the latter town, barring certain exceptions, it is largely the case. In the same social terms, women and young people are generally disqualified. A partial exception is the social category of young men, the coming generation of leaders. In anticipation of their future prominence young men are frequently extremely sensitive to possibilities for exercising leadership and very active in promoting such activities. Their zeal is often recognized by their being allowed to act with senior leaders in the community. However, this potential is seriously weakened in most of the towns by the continual emigration of the young men, generally those most qualified for leadership activity. Still, this is a specially strategic category of community members, for it is generally the most responsive to appeals for assistance in community action.

In the towns that have experienced great change, one of the important changes has been the general decline in social status of the former elite. Their position has been generally threatened and often even completely destroyed. The remnants of this social category, once the primary source of leadership activity, now tend to withdraw from community activities or greatly restrict their participation. Their place has not been filled yet, though the situation is now more open for leadership par-

icipation by prominent cholos, as in Coroico and Sorata, as well as by persons moving up from cholo and indio status positions. The disruption of the status order in these communities, and the weakening of the effect of status on leadership, give exceptional opportunity and prominence to forastero professionals in town. These are the doctors, dentists, lawyers, and engineers, many serving in the towns as representatives of national agencies. Though their position as outsiders would normally restrict opportunity for leadership, this limitation ceases to carry much importance in relation to the many other changes occurring in these towns, and they are in fact very active in both Coroico and Sorata. In Coroico it was the dentist who regularly made speeches on behalf of the community, rather than any of the remaining social elite. It was the foreign priest who stood out in organizing the potable water project. In Sorata it was the agronomist, the young judge, and one of the school teachers. Reyes occupies an intermediate position. A few outside professionals, like the first doctor, were prominent in leadership activities, but they did not overshadow local leaders, as was the case in Coroico and Sorata. In Villa Abecia it is still clearly the local status elite, the local patrons, who provide community leadership.

The difference between leading and deciding, between influence and power, is much less sharp in the two villages than in the towns. The absence of fixed status distinctions that make some persons more important members of the community than others contributes to this. Other differences are the form of village organization, which enjoins all members, specifically adult males, to take part in important decisions, and the acceptance by village officials that they are not to hinder this responsibility. Nevertheless, the villages too exhibit status differentiation in the cargo system of the fiestas and political offices, but it is not an exclusive system, such as occurs in the towns, because it applies to all men in the community, and most will take part in it. One of the effects of cargo is to distinguish those of higher and lower prestige. And it is those of high prestige, who have filled many cargos, who are expected to provide more leadership, but it is not an exclusive mandate, as in the towns. This system works most effectively in San Miguel, but even here the national environment of change is having some effect by introducing new ideas, mainly through the younger men, who are beginning to develop as an alternative source of leadership in the community. In Compi, so changed by the revolution, other changes in the leadership structure have occurred. New leadership requirements, such as literacy, force the community to turn to young men and to bypass older men, the once acknowledged leaders. New occasions and new structures of leadership have intruded into the community. An example is the national political party organization, which seeks local representatives and supports them in ways that are vague or little understood in the community. This support is really quite minimal, but its vagueness can be exploited by the local person to gain attention and influence. Sindicato offices have been incorporated into the cargo system, adding new offices, while some of the old ones have disappeared. Formal separation of some of the hacienda settlements has resulted in their retaining only

part of the complete set of traditional political offices. National requirements of political officeholders not infrequently resulted in propelling men low in the office system into high offices. All of these symptoms of the changing organization of Compi are reflected in the disaffection of some community members from leadership responsibility, and in a decline in the social control of leadership, which now permits young and old, insiders and outsiders, more leadership opportunity than they ever had before. This has both benefited and damaged the community problem-solving capacity.

In general, community responsibility for exercising leadership is strongest in the traditional communities, San Miguel and Villa Abecia, and to a somewhat lesser extent in Reyes. But even in these communities it is doubtful whether such leadership is very effective. Certainly it has not led to solutions to community problems. Frequently, it does not even lead to recognition of problems. The first doctor in Reyes was strongly oriented to community improvement, but he was relieved of his post without a word of protest from the community. The doctor in Villa Abecia provides minimal services and the local hospital is quite inadequate. This arouses no concern. Only in San Miguel does community leadership appear to benefit the community consistently. In the rapidly changing communities the situation is generally worse, though more easily understood. Changing population, changing restraints on leadership, changing social relations, increasing apathy, estrangement and friction, make the exercise of leadership increasingly difficult, and erratic with respect to community problems.

11. Community Decision-Making Structure. If leadership is a mechanism for alerting the community system, decision-making controls the system. Decision-making is another way, a more dynamic way, of referring to power. The more traditional communities reveal a greater centralization of decision-making. In Villa Abecia there are virtually no alternatives to the power of the patrons. Other groups and organizations, local government, law agencies, the church, the schools, national agency representatives, are weak. The patrons are few, homogeneous, cohesive. They think they are the community, despite their small numbers, and from the standpoint of power they are. Only in a crisis situation, when the patrons were divided among themselves, as in the case of the hail disaster and the pipe repair effort, were other members of the community allowed to participate in a community decision. This, however, was a very unusual situation, and has not altered the traditional structure. In Reyes there is somewhat less centralization. The ganaderos there are comparable to the patrons in Villa Abecia, but they must share their power with the large merchants. In addition, the national CBF agency is a powerful organization in the community. The policy of the CBF, however, is to stay out of community affairs so far as possible, and it is therefore not as prominent in community decision-making as it might be. When its own interests are involved, though, it is an important element in the community power structure, as seen in its central role in the community project to rebuild the road from the town to the Rio Beni. In San Miguel, power is spread because of the basic



political equality of all adult males and their equal access to forms of power. Those who temporarily hold political office make decisions as a group on behalf of the community, but most of these are limited. Important considerations are submitted to the entire community for decision.

In the two radically changed towns the major concentrations of wealth have been greatly reduced and new centers of power have developed. Professionals, like the lawyers and tinterillos, once mere appendages of the powerful hacendados, are now independent sources of power in the changing community scene. These changes have introduced persons from a variety of social backgrounds and with varied interests. Thus, while power is still differentially held by members of the community, those with greater power are a heterogeneous class, and not infrequently in conflict. The most extreme example is the intense hostility and continual conflict between the old vecinos and new politicos of Sorata, the latter mainly campesinos. This conflict is symbolic of changing power conditions brought about by the revolution. Specifically, the organizing of the Indian peasants into campesino sindicatos tied to regional and national federations, and the use of the sindicato as a device for mobilizing electoral strength, have politicized the campesinos and provided them with means for challenging local power structures. Coroico has been spared the intra-community conflict because of the preoccupation of Yungas sindicatos with the new campesino communities, but the sindicatos are an ever-present consideration in Coroico decision-making. In Compi, the local sindicato has virtually become the decision-making structure; but the uncertainty, the changing economic conditions, the struggles and conflict over land redistribution have all worked against stabilization of the new structure. Further, as in San Miguel, the basic equalitarian rights of all Compi community members further diffuse decision-making.

The confused power structure in the changing communities causes greater dispersion of decision-making. That those with power are sometimes also in conflict, or at least not in agreement, aggravates the difficulties in undertaking effective decision-making in these communities. A proposal from one sector is automatically suspected by another. Every decision is an opportunity to score on an opponent. Every decision is a test of power relations. In Sorata, a public school teacher criticized his colleagues, including the school director, for taking unauthorized holidays. Such criticism would have meant nothing in local conversation, but he had it written up in a newspaper in the national capital. He was immediately suspended by the director for unprofessional conduct. Some residents of the town rallied to his support, mainly prominent vecinos. Local government officials responded by denouncing the teacher and complimenting the director. The local priest was asked to announce his support of the teacher and he did. Meetings were called by both sides to enlist support throughout the community. Under these circumstances no satisfactory outcome was possible. The Ministry of Education eventually intervened, for the problem was their formal responsibility. The Ministry attempted to mollify tempers. However, the issue had gone far beyond the two immediate antagonists and had become a test between campesino politicos

and old vecinos, between whom lies a virtually unbridgeable gulf. In the end, both director and teacher were removed from the community. This ended the immediate problem but pleased no one and left matters much as they were. The case illustrates the difficulties that community decision-making faces in such a setting. It emphasizes some of the hazards confronting the initiation of community action in towns like Sorata.

12. Community Action on Community Problems. This is the end result of the operation of the other eleven elements of the community action model. What actually happens within community action? Each community report discusses this, but the springs of community action are often hidden, and could not always be observed to the extent desired. The more traditional communities generally produce better performances. They undertake more community projects and complete more of them. The projects also tend to be more relevant to community problems. Roads and schools in Reyes, for example; but a swimming pool, uncompleted, in Sorata. In general, it is difficult to make a thorough evaluation of community action. The problems are there that require attention, but the magnitude of these problems and the very great limitations on local resources prevent much effective action. There are real constraints on action that are beyond the control of the local community, and these must be kept in mind when limited performance is examined. Similarly, this point must be kept very much in the forefront when the potential for community action is assessed. The death of the Coroico project to reconstruct its water supply system is a sober reminder of this important point. Only after a considerable expenditure of work by the community did project officials face the fact that extensive financing would have to come from the community, at which point the project died. Careful assessment of resources in relation to problems, and distinguishing manageable from unmanageable problems, would greatly reduce such failures.

In many of the projects examined there is a serious lack of planning and evaluation. Often the major emphasis is only on setting the action in motion. What will be required, how things should be done, what consequences may develop, are often given little or no attention. Admittedly, some of the requirements and likely consequences are not within the experience of the community. The Reyes road, the rebuilding to end the annual rebuilding, is a good example. The consulting engineers who arrived in the midst of the effort quickly observed that the reconstruction, under the supervision of a road grader driver, was only moving dirt around. When the rains came the road would again be washed out and become rutted beyond use.

Some systematic evaluation of the proposed community action, such as is outlined in Figure 2, with whatever technical detail would be necessary, would make action planning more realistic. Interestingly, San Miguel, with its many successful projects, appears to have little planning trouble; but then their projects tend to be less technically complex, reflecting the more rudimentary technological level of this community. Technical consultation could probably benefit all community projects; however, even with technical consultation, many problems are beyond the

reach of these communities because of the lack of trained manpower.

### Plans and Programs

The concept of planned change is spreading as pressures to ameliorate human problems have mounted throughout the world.\* The planning of change emphasizes analysis, the careful appraisal of the factors that contribute to a problem and the development of courses of action. This research has concentrated on the community as a particular setting within which many problems must be solved. The community studies reported here attempt to provide the kind of information relevant to an understanding of this setting, the community organization. They also illustrate a way of presenting and analyzing such data. Finally, a particular conception of the community has been set out, and a model for analyzing the factors that contribute to community action on community problems has been presented.

The community studies and the community action model are both intended as aids in the planning and initiating of community action by Peace Corps Volunteers. The consequences of poor planning and preparation in local community projects have already been noted. Volunteers should give more attention to planning and analysis because many more aspects of a community will be problematical for them than for local residents. Volunteers should be encouraged to analyze their communities and to continue such analyses throughout their period of community work. The kinds of information needed have been described and illustrated (see also Appendix II). Other general discussions of change and development are available to supplement this presentation.\*\* The information presented here is based on careful observation and interviewing. As the Volunteer establishes his position by meeting people and getting around the community he should regard similar activities as his sources of essential information. To learn what information is important and relevant to his community work, he must know how to use conversations and the observation of situations as means to his becoming informed.\*\*\* The importance of understanding his community and the forces at work in it is too vital to his own success to be left to casual reflection after his "important" work is done.

The analyses and models presented here have been related to a specific nation, Bolivia, and specific communities, six rural towns and villages. The form of the community analyses and the action model present general concepts and are applicable beyond Bolivia's rural communities to virtually any rural community.

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\* Myrdal, 1960.

\*\* Arensberg and Neihoff, 1964; Foster, 1962; Lippitt, Watson and Westley, 1958.

\*\*\* Epstein, 1967; Jongmans and Gutkind, 1967; Junker, 1960.

Though some of the specific problems discussed have restricted application, few relate only to Bolivia. The prevalence of serious community problems is an especially dominant element, surely not unique to Bolivia, but one that must weigh heavily in planning assistance to her rural communities. A major element on the Bolivian scene is national reform and the radical change that it set in motion. The national reforms created an atmosphere of change throughout many parts of rural Bolivia. This current of change is a feature of Bolivia that must figure in assistance planning. Another is the diversity of types of rural communities, although this makes broad generalization hazardous and limits the specific applicability of general planning. Attention to the diversity of rural community types will enable a more informed planning of Peace Corps programs for the rural areas and improved preparation of Volunteers for their assignments.

Peace Corps planning by its very nature is concerned with relevant forms of community assistance. Attention has been called repeatedly to the general lack of skilled manpower in rural communities and how critical this often is to community projects, which fail for lack of adequate skills. Other projects cannot be started or even considered, for lack of training manpower. Further, all these communities need major financial, material, and manpower aid. Some of their problems are probably quite intractable within the community system, and are only subject to resolution by changes in the community environment. Given this situation in rural Bolivia, and it is one common to the rural communities of many of the developing countries, an agency that, like the Peace Corps, has mainly manpower to offer, can be more effective by concentrating its programs on certain kinds of community problems, of limited scope. Examples are specific public health and preventable disease problems, like insect control or tuberculosis control; specific agricultural problems, like land erosion or afforestation; specific educational problems, like literacy training; and programs in nutrition and child care.

Selection of any specific problem depends on its relevance to a reasonably large rural area or type of rural community. What these problems have in common is that they are clearly specifiable and there are known technologies for their solution, which can be learned with relative ease, and thus do not pose highly complex training difficulties. To gain the maximum for the rural communities from the time spent by Volunteers in their assignments it is important that they work on specifiable, discrete, manageable problems. There are many projects that would be important in Bolivia's rural communities, all within the reach of Peace Corps effort. An integral element to ensure some program effectiveness would be adequate technical supervision of tasks for which Volunteers may not be completely qualified.

These various points can be illustrated from one of the Peace Corps programs in Bolivia. This is the tuberculosis control program begun in 1966 in the Yungas zone. [Coroico, which is a Yungas community, and part of the surrounding area, were included in the epidemiological survey conducted in 1965 as part of the

present research.] The epidemiological survey recorded tuberculous reactions in the local population as an indicator of disease prevalence. The conclusion was that "Tuberculous infection dominates all other health problem indicators in Coroico...."\*

The tuberculosis control program is being carried out by 26 Volunteers distributed throughout the Yungas in 15 communities under the supervision of two Peace Corps physicians. The work of the Volunteers consists in testing for tuberculosis, in giving preventive vaccination when tests are negative, and in treating with drugs those whose tests show the presence of tubercle bacilli. Drug treatment is also given to certain high risk groups who do not have the disease, such as children who are in contact with active tuberculosis. The tests, drug administration, finding and follow-up of cases, are all the responsibility of Volunteers. It is a complex, exacting task, especially under rural Bolivian conditions. This program was evaluated in 1968 by an outside medical consultant. He noted some areas where the program might be strengthened, but concluded that it was well within Peace Corps capacity. His summary evaluation was that the program had been well planned, was being smoothly executed, and that it should produce a "significant reduction in tuberculosis in the Yungas, lasting far beyond the period of the program...."\*\*\*

The evaluation of this program in the Yungas suggests that it can serve as a model for tuberculosis control in similar areas. It also illustrates some of the essential ingredients of the limited development program. It takes a specific problem in which skilled manpower is the critical new ingredient. The skills required are those in which Volunteers can be trained. Technical supervision is employed to ensure that technical quality is maintained. There are other community problems that can be approached in similar fashion. However, specific technical programs cannot serve as a general prototype, without including the information and insights gained by community analysis. The history of community development is replete with technical aid projects that went awry because the specialist limited his concern to his specialty. This includes the public health expert who built latrines that became storehouses for food, and the engineer whose water pump rusted from disuse while villagers continued to carry their water from a polluted stream. Here it is instructive to quote what has been said by an FAO expert of the need for social science understanding in technical assistance programs:

En América Latina, sólo en época relativamente reciente, se ha abierto paso el convencimiento de que los ingenieros agrónomos y demás profesionales y técnicos agropecuarios, deben ser capacitados obligadamente en ciencias sociales, tanto como en tecnología agraria.

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\* Omran, McEwen, and Zaki, 1967, p. 237.

\*\* Daniel, 1968, p. 14.

La dura experiencia traducida en una trayectoria de fracasos, esfuerzos infructuosos o éxitos limitados, de estos profesionales y técnicos en el ejercicio de sus cargos, más los progresos hechos en la valoración del hombre en el proceso de producir, han conducido a ese convencimiento.\*

Increasing administrative experience in the problems of implementing technical assistance has led to the realization that multi-causal factors are involved in both the failure and success of technical aid programs. There is a broadening view of technical assistance which recognizes the interlinked environmental, social, political and cultural systems of community life. For example, protein and calorie malnutrition is now receiving increasing attention as one of the leading problems of underdeveloped areas. Various technical and administrative problems are involved in providing food supplements and assuring their adequate distribution.

Malnutrition increases susceptibility to infectious disease and the two together are the major cause of high infant mortality rates. To raise health levels, there must be combined efforts to introduce measures to control infection as well as to improve nutrition. The administration of vaccines alone, supplementary feedings alone, or building latrines alone, may not be sufficient to reduce high morbidity and mortality rates. Therefore many health problems require a multi-faceted approach.

The institution of effective measures may depend on the interest and zeal of local officials and the support of active groups in the community, as much as on the availability of money, materials or manpower. For many problems, manpower inputs may be more important than money inputs, given the interest, awareness and readiness of the community to respond.

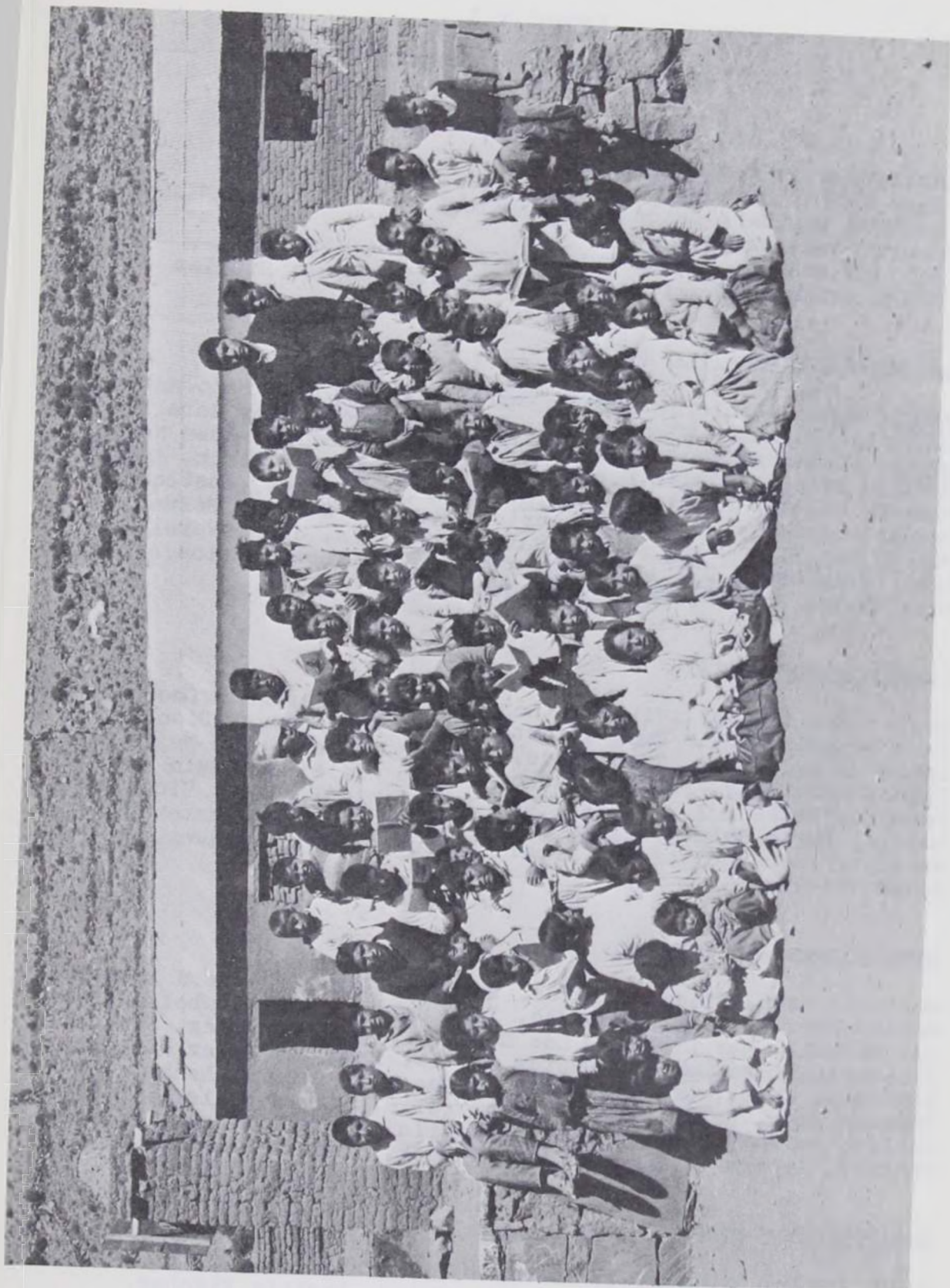
This study of rural communities provides a framework for understanding the internal and external factors that underlie problems of community action. They are not a blueprint for instant change, but offer a guide for community analysis, which can further the work of the Peace Corps and its Volunteers and ultimately benefit the rural communities of Bolivia.

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\* Briceño, Ramon [experto en extensión agrícola de la FAO, y asesor de Mision Andina del Ecuador], La Orientación Indigenista Específica a Especialistas en Otras Disciplinas, Anuario Indigenista, Vol. XXVIII, Dec. 1968.

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## Appendix I

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## Appendix II

### COMMUNITY STUDY OUTLINE

1. Description of the geographic environment, including territorial location, accessibility, climate, physical lay-out and structure of the community.
2. Population demography (restricted to Cédula A operations).
3. History and development (collection of information relevant to the developmental history of the community, roughly before 1950).
  30. Significant historical developments (changes in one or more of the major community institutions, e.g., change in governmental status, economic crisis, basic communication change like a road, etc.).
  31. Position of the community in the region over time, especially in relation to neighboring communities and centers of power.
4. Background institutional systems.
  40. Economics.
    400. Major and minor material resources of the community plus limitations.
    401. Principal economic activities (production, distribution, consumption).
    402. Economic organizations and their operations.
    403. Social organization of economic enterprises.
    404. General profile of the economically active population.
    405. Meaning of work to the different segments of the community.
    406. Temporary work groups (how they are formed, how they operate, what goals).
    407. Levels of remuneration plus differentiation of economic activity, e.g., wages, profit in terms of time and labor.
    408. Labor organizations, e.g., sindicatos, protective associations.
    409. Labor conflict and mechanisms for resolving such conflict.
    4010. Seasonal fluctuation in economic activity and its effects on economic organization as well as the social structure, e.g., weekly market day, planting and harvest periods, etc.
    4011. Organization of finance (who loans money, to whom, what obligations are incurred, the flow of money in and out of town as well as within it).

- 41. Education (formal systems and types of vocational training),
  - 410. General characteristics of formal instruction (objectives, curricula, organization of formal education).
  - 411. Educational differences characteristic of the different segments of the community (e.g., level of education, choice of school and reason for choice).
  - 412. Material aspects of teaching (e.g., physical plant, endowment and support, educational aids).
  - 413. Attitudes of students, teachers and the different segments of the community toward education and the school system.

42. Religion.

- 420. The system of religious ideas and their variation in relation to the different segments of the community.
- 421. Social organization of the church (ecclesiastical organization and jurisdiction, religious and community service and activity).
- 422. Social organization of the fiesta complex.
- 423. Religious participation and roles in ceremonies, services, and ritual.
- 424. Differences in religious attitudes in relation to the social structure.
- 425. Concepts of morality, philosophy, values.

43. Recreation.

- 430. Types of recreation and entertainment; recreational facilities.
- 431. Culture of recreation, their patterned occasions and cycle of development.
- 432. Use of free time and related sociocultural norms.
- 433. Commercial and professional recreation-entertainment and its organization.

5. The sociopolitical system.

50. The structure of the system (identification of the stable sets of more and less differentiated social relations).

500. Describing group structure.

5000. What are the groups (the distinctive relational sets, e.g., kin and fictive kin groups, age-sex groups, various interest groups -- sports, religious, political as well as more complex and formalized structures like parents' educational associations, political parties, etc.)?

5001. Position structure.

50010. The "parts" of the group structure are here represented by a series of positions, which can be described in terms of distinctive sets of

- expected, permitted and prohibited behaviors. Of special interest are the types of power and communication positions.
50011. The positions of a group are in turn linked by several types of "bonds" (which may be more or less interrelated):
- 500110. authority; recognized rights to command, which may be hierarchical, equalitarian, anarchical, etc.
  - 500111. communication: flow of information, which may be open, one-way, distorted, etc.
  - 500112. prestige: degree of importance assigned a position, e.g., commands deference, permits certain license, etc.
  - 500113. mobility: movement between positions, which may be open, closed, partial, etc.
5002. Interpersonal relations. (Instead of describing positions and their relations, the approach here is to describe the relations between pairs or sets of individuals. This approach is especially suited to less formalized groups where clearly identifiable positions are lacking, but it also applies to more formal types.)
- 50020. What are the types of attraction-repulsion patterns characteristic of the group (e.g., patterns of play, helping, discussing, avoiding, arguing, etc.)?
  - 50021. What is the communication network, i.e., who can communicate to whom, when, what, under what conditions?
  - 50022. What is the power structure, i.e., who has power (actually orders, commands) over whom, when, to do what, under what conditions?
  - 50023. What other social relations exist (kinship, sexual, political, friendship, exchange, etc.) that are important in organizing interpersonal behavior, how strong are they, how stable are they?
5003. Ranking within group structure.
- 50030. What are the attributes by which group members are ranked, or assigned a standing in the group (e.g., degree of control over other

persons, degree of access to important resources, degree of identification with the group, degree to which a person possesses prestige or other sociocultural traits)?

50031. How stable is the ranking process, how does ranking operate (what are the mechanisms, the symbols, e.g., titles, special privileges), what are its effects on social relations?
501. What is the degree of formalization of group structure, i.e., the explicitness of definition (e.g., written regulations, explicit sanctions, commonly known prescriptions, etc.)?
5010. What kinds of informal structures develop alongside the formal ones, what organizational problems or limitations have stimulated their development?
5011. How much tension or conflict is generated by the juxtaposition of formal and informal structures, what forms does it take, how is it resolved, how does such juxtaposition affect the functioning of the group?
502. What are the factors promoting and diminishing structure (i.e., what organizes regularity in social relations)?
5020. Efficiency of group operation (e.g., division of work, regularity of assignments and responsibilities, regular means of internal communication).
5021. Use of differential abilities and experiences.
5022. Physical and sociocultural environment (e.g., physical distance or proximity, physical problems of communication, social stratification).
503. Effects of group structure. What consequences appear to follow from occupying one position rather than another or being linked in one form rather than another (e.g., degree of activity, interest in change, mobility efforts, etc.)? (Thus solidarity of the individual to the group appears to be a function of occupying a more central position in the communication structure of the group.)
504. Further queries on structural bonds.

5040. Authority.
- 50400. How is authority defined, and how much variation in definition occurs?
  - 50401. How is authority achieved, augmented, diminished?
  - 50402. What are the instruments of authority?
  - 50403. What are the restraints on the exercise of authority?
5041. Communication.
- 50410. What are the forms of communication within the community (e.g., radio, rumor, grapevine)?
  - 50411. How much specialization of forms in terms of content is there, and how much do forms differ in their effectiveness and their accessibility?
  - 50412. Who has access to, who controls the instruments of, communication and the channels of communication (including both informal means plus formal roles, e.g., gate-keepers)?
5042. Prestige.
- 50420. How is prestige defined by different segments of the community, and how stable are the definitions?
  - 50421. How much agreement exists on ascribing prestige?
  - 50422. How is prestige acquired and lost?
5043. Power.
- 50430. What are the different bases of power in the social structure (e.g., reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, referent power, expert power)?
  - 50431. How stable are positions of power?
  - 50432. How much concentration of power exists, what trends can be observed, what are the forces behind the concentration and the trends?
  - 50433. How is power amassed, applied and with what kinds of effects, lost and with what resulting consequences for groups?
505. Intergroup relations and strata.
- 5050. How are intergroup relations defined? (Apply the same scheme described in section 500.)
  - 5051. Social strata. (Of special interest are social strata or horizontal segments, which

are not groups, though often termed "reference groups," but social categories with no social structure whose possession of common attributes serves to define expected, permitted, or proscribed behavior for members of the strata and/or members of other groups or strata, e.g., the elite, the disenfranchised, the business interests, the poor, etc.) How are such strata defined, what patterns of behavior are characteristic of strata members?

- 50510. How is membership in different strata defined (e.g., cultural differences, status prerogatives, group affiliation, etc.)?
- 50511. How much opportunity for mobility in or out is present, and what are the pressures for such mobility?
- 50512. Are the strata expanding, contracting, stable?
- 50513. What relative importance does strata membership have in relation to group membership?
- 50514. What are the relations between strata?
- 50515. What are the bases of the social strata (e.g., race, occupation, religion, etc.), how stable are they, how have they changed, how does the base affect the position of the strata in the social structure?
- 50516. What belief systems are associated with different strata?

51. Working of the system.

510. Group action.

- 5100. What manifest objectives are associated with different groups, and what latent objectives can be discovered?
- 5101. What forms and systems of action are associated with different groups and with different objectives, how much internal differentiation of action is there within groups, how much formalization?
- 5102. What is the impact of different group activities on the structure and working of the other groups?
- 5103. What systems of belief are associated with different group action systems, how much tension, how much disparity is there between belief and action?

511. Group cohesion.



5110. The significance of group cohesion is its importance in the influence a group has on its members as well as its relevance to maintaining the personnel of a group and thus the group itself. Group attraction can be viewed as a function of two sets of conditions:
- 51100. Properties of the group: its goals, program, size, type of structure, rank in the community, etc.
  - 51101. Needs of the individual: affiliation, recognition, security, etc.
5111. What are the sources of attraction of the different groups in the community?
- 51110. Within the group itself as well as the group viewed as a means?
  - 51111. How do changing group properties, changing individual needs (e.g., with age), and changing environmental conditions alter group attraction and with what consequences?
  - 51112. What are the consequences of different sources of attraction for group structure, group action, group continuity?
  - 51113. How do groups attempt to enhance their cohesion? What factors enhance group attraction or reduce it (e.g., size, type of activity, rank)?
  - 51114. How do differences in group attraction affect member participation, pressures for conformity, malleability of members' behavior?
5112. What are the qualifications for membership in different groups? How do qualifications for membership differ from qualifications for continued participation? Do these qualifications vary with different positions in the group?
5113. What are the mechanisms and rituals for inducting members, what ideas are expressed in these activities, what is the impact on participants, what is the social significance of these ceremonies?
5114. Exactly how are new groups formed (e.g., families, fictive kin, recreational groups, work groups, political groups, etc.), which requires detailed decision-making data?
5115. How stable is membership in different groups? What factors account for differences in membership stability (e.g., a

- transitional group, a declining group, an embattled group, etc., specifying the conditions operating in each case)?
5116. How much movement is there between groups, how does it differ for different groups, what are the apparent causes of such movement?
5117. How much multiple-group membership is there, what groups are linked in this manner, what are the consequences for the groups as well as the members?
512. Group norms and pressures.
5120. What are the social effects of maintaining uniformity of group norms (or standards) (e.g., helps the group accomplish its goals, helps the group maintain itself, helps define social and cultural reality for group members)?
5121. What factors affect group pressure to maintain its norms (e.g., salience of the group, achievement of the group, cohesion of the group, certainty of group sanctions, degree of individual self-confidence)?
5122. What happens when members begin to deviate from the norms? Which positions or persons with what combinations of relations, seem more prone to deviate and which are more disposed to conform?
5123. What are the incentives to conform (e.g., rewards, reciprocity, punishment -- here and now, future, material or supernatural, etc.)?
5124. What are the techniques used to induce conformity (e.g., precept, praise, warnings, threats, sorcery) as well as more informal procedures (ridicule, gossip, ostracism)? Are there specialists in such techniques, under what conditions are which techniques used, how effective are they, what conditions diminish their effectiveness?
5125. What happens when deviants do not respond to pressure? What kinds of reactions occur in different groups and segments of the community, with what social effects?
5126. Under what conditions does continued deviancy result in:
51260. Redefinition of the deviant behavior

as non-deviant?

51261. Change in the norm?

51262. Ejection of the deviant from the group?

5127. How do pressures for uniformity differ between groups of voluntary and non-voluntary membership?

5128. What are the different forms of deviant behavior, including crimes, under what circumstances do they occur, how are they defined and popularly regarded, what are their social effects?

513. Leading and influencing.

(Section 50 includes a description of the formal positions of authority as well as the more informal network of power relations that characterizes the community social structure. In this section the emphasis shifts to the more amorphous dynamic aspect of power and authority, i.e., how people are led and influenced in a given situation. Power implies the threat of sanctions and authority the recognized right to command, while influence implies willing compliance, which may have other bases than power or authority.)

5130. What bases of influence can be detected in different types of groups, within social strata, within the larger community social structure?

51300. Personal characteristics (e.g., empathy; or the suggestion that leaders are persons with qualities needed to solve whatever problems the group is confronting).

51301. Social characteristics (e.g., prestige; or the idea that leaders are persons most representative of group norms, or perhaps are extremely accurate in judging group opinion).

51302. Cultural characteristics (e.g., possession of symbols of importance or value, possession of characteristics culturally defined as requisite of leadership, e.g., age, physical prowess, oratorical skill, etc.).

5131. How do persons acquire influence (the cultural symbols, the social perceptiveness and knowledge), how formalized are the procedures for acquiring influence, how available are they, how are they obtained?

5132. Are the different bases of influence compatible, do they engender antagonism and conflict, do they provide equally strong and stable sources of influence?
5133. What kinds of competition, antagonism, conflict occur in the community (not necessarily restricted to leading and influencing), what social positions are involved, to what extent do groups and strata become involved, what are the issues (both manifest and latent), what are the social consequences of these divisive tendencies?
5134. Can influence be transformed into authority, how, with what effects on group structure and intergroup relations?
5135. How much of the leader's influence is dependent on a network of supporters who facilitate his influencing through their own social behavior (e.g., spreading information favorable to the leader or his proposals, criticizing and otherwise undermining the position of his opponents)?
5136. How much are leadership and influence efforts affected by cultural climates of different groups (e.g., a climate of spontaneity, of free or open participation, of a spirit of competition, of an atmosphere of hostility, etc.)?
5137. What is the effect on influence efforts of multiple-group membership and multiple reference group identification? How much conflicting allegiance is thus created and how is such conflict resolved in responding to influence efforts.
5138. How do leaders use the existing communication structure, authority structure, power structure, prestige structure to influence the community?
5139. How much concentration of influence is there in given persons or given positions (e.g., some evidence indicates that persons are influenced by different people depending on the problem or interest at hand as in voting, making a purchase, selecting a form of entertainment. Another kind of differentiation to document occurs in a stratified system, where each stratum and each vertical segment may have its own leaders who act as gate-keepers between strata, seriously attenuating pyramiding tendencies)?

5140. How is influence characteristically exercised, what forms does it take in different groups and segments of the community, how much influence is self-fulfilling (people attribute great influence to X and so look to X for guides to action though X has no substantial base of power), how stable is influence (or is the leader just one of many persons trying to influence action, but his attempts are more often successful for a given situation only)?
5141. Can a secondary influence structure be discerned, i.e., persons who take cues from a leader and are themselves the instruments of influencing the wider public or members of a group? (In analyzing influence attempts, it is probably necessary to note what kind of objective is in view for influencing and then note who originates the idea, who sanctions it or places a stamp of approval on it, and who carries the idea through by suggesting, advising, telling others what to do.)
5142. What are the discernible aspects of group structure that promote or permit influence efforts (e.g., position of contact between groups and mobility between strata, centrality in the communication network or peripherality in linking the group to other groups or the group's environment)?
52. Some institutional components of the sociopolitical system.
520. Family.
5200. Types of families (in numerical composition, social structure, culture).
5201. Family differences that reflect community stratification and segmentation.
5202. Family material culture (housing, budget and income, food consumption, dress, etc.).
5203. Family cultures (characteristic habits, customs, norms that predominate and distinguish).
5204. Family education activities.
5205. How are families established: marriage rules and rituals.
52050. What are the rules, or norms, governing the selection of partners, as well as the contact of sexes,

- restrictions of possible partners, etc.?
52051. How are the rules applied, what are the exceptions, what conditions are associated with exceptions, what reactions are produced by stretching the rules or trying to evade them?
52052. How are marriages arranged, what factors are taken into account, what persons figure in the arrangements (and what positions do they occupy in the social structure)?
52053. What kinds of social bonds are involved in marriage, what bonds are created beyond the couple to other groups, segments, strata, and what is the consequent impact of a marriage on these other social units?
52054. What factors promote the dissolution of marriages, what counteractions are set in motion by dissolving marriages, what social accommodations are required by broken marriages?
5206. Family group.
52060. What kinds of social relations characterize family members, how much differentiation and formalization is there, how do these relations change over time (in relation to increasing age, growing number of children, changing position of the family in the community social structure, etc.)?
52061. What are the characteristic activities of the family group, how much specialization is there, what are the changes over time?
52062. What is the influence of the family in defining a member's social position in the larger social structure, and how influential is family membership in influencing member's behavior in other groups or social settings?
521. Kin and kinship plus fictive kin groups.
5210. How is kinship defined, what are the bases for kin designations, and what is the vocabulary of kinship?
5211. What are the local kinship positions and relations, how important are they in local belief, what kinds of behaviors do they define (and in what terms: permissive, ex-

- pected, required, prohibited), and how much allegiance do they actually command, especially in relation to competing demands or interests?
5212. What kinds of social groups, networks, cliques, cabals are based on or influenced importantly by kinship?
5213. In what areas of community activity are kinship considerations important, and in what areas have they little importance?
5214. What changes in the importance of kinship can be seen in comparing generations?
522. Local government and public administration.
5220. Local offices of the state (alcaldia, registro civil, etc.), their organization, jurisdiction and functions.
52200. What are the official objectives; what are the actual as well as latent objectives?
52201. What is the personnel complement and organization of work?
52202. How does the public participate and to what degree in these agencies, what are the public attitudes of different groups and strata?
52203. What is the official morality of office-holder, as well as private venality?
52204. What is the relation (formal and informal, legal and extra legal) of local offices and government to the national government and its agencies?
5221. What is the social position of local government officials, how is it influenced by their official positions (and vice versa)?
5222. How are government positions obtained, how much interest and competition is there, what are the job qualifications and how flexible are they, how much control is exerted over local government positions by community political and social groups?
5223. Taxation, sources of public income, and governmental regulation.
52230. What are the types of taxes levied locally by different governmental agencies?
52231. What kinds of exemptions can be obtained, how much differential ap-

- plication of both taxes and regulations exists, how much evasion occurs, what are the differential public attitudes toward taxation, regulation, evasion, etc.?
52232. How much governmental regulation is there, what spheres of activity does it cover (geographic movement, marriage, business activity, political activity, etc.)?
52233. What methods of evading taxation and regulation are employed, who is able to employ them, what is the effect on public morality, governmental morality, social positions?
52234. What fines (multas) are levied by local offices of the state, what is their size and range of application, the use to which they are put (e.g., supplement a government official's income, finance local public programs, etc.), what is the differential application of fines to groups and strata?
5224. Public works and programs.
52240. What kinds of public programs are operating on the local scene (construction, sanitation, civic betterment, special training, etc.)?
52241. What is their personnel, activities, organization?
52242. What is the differential public attitude, and more generally what is the public sense of community problems and needs in relation to public enterprise?
52243. What are the social effects of these programs?
5225. Citizenship.
52250. What is the public image of the rights and duties of citizenship; how does it differ between different groups and strata?
52251. What is the actual definition of citizenship rights and duties that follows from one's position in the community power and prestige structure?
5226. What are the instruments of governmental power?
52260. What are the formal law enforcement and/or informal para-military groups, how are they organized, how are they commanded, who are their



personnel and how are they recruited, how are they used -- especially in relation to the law?

52261. What are the relations of these groups to the community social structure, what are public attitudes toward them, what parts of the community are they supposed to represent and what parts do they represent, and whose interests do they protect, with what consequences for the social structure?

52262. How stable are these groups, where is their allegiance, how rapid is personnel turnover, how dependent are they on changing political fortunes, how politicized are they as opposed to being professional?

5227. Justice.

52270. What are the community concepts of justice: formal and informal, ideal and real?

52271. What are the formal agencies of justice, how are they organized, how do they operate, how are they influenced, how are they connected to the community social structure, over what spheres of action do they have jurisdiction?

52272. What are the informal means of securing justice, what is the degree of their elaboration and systematization, for what kinds of problems are they applied, are they more distinctive of some groups than others, what is their position re: the formal legal structures (feuds, assassinations, mediation, negotiation)?

52273. What groups or relations are most often involved in legal action, what are the most frequent or typical litigations, and what social effects do legal controversies have?

523. Political parties and movements.

5230. What are the local political parties, what are the objectives of these parties (stated and unstated), how are they organized locally, what do they do, how are they connected to national parties, on the one hand, and the community social structure, on the other, how much interest, support and allegiance do they command, what are their extra-community connections (especially informal types), what influence do they have

on community life, affairs and government?

5231. How much political factionalism is there, is it abetted by other tensions or rifts in the local social structure, what forms does this conflict take, what is its impact on the community social structure and its functioning?
5232. What other kinds of political groups are encountered (clubs, cabals, cliques), what are their idea or ideological orientations, how are they organized, what parts of the community do they represent, how stable are they, what influence do they have on community affairs?
5233. How much political awareness is characteristic of different parts of the social structure, what are the formal information media and how do they operate in relation to forming public opinion, how much centralization and governmental control is there of information sources and the spread of information, what kinds of sociopolitical ideologies are found and in what groups and/or strata?
5234. What is the relation of local political groups to the agencies of local as well as national government?
5235. What form does the political struggle for power take, what parts of the community are involved, how intense is the group struggle or competition, what limits are set by community-wide understandings and values, by the differential availability of resources, by the application and control of police-military force?

54. The external environment of the community.

540. What have been the effects of wider economic, political, religious and social forces (throughout the province, the department, the nation) on local community affairs and social structure, currently as well as since about 1950?
541. What has been the significance of this larger environment not only as a source of external pressures producing local effects and reactions, but also as an outlet for internal pressures and contradictions, both currently as well as since 1950?

6. Community and private health.

60. Concepts of health and illness.
  600. How is illness defined by persons in different groups and strata?
  601. How is illness explained (e.g., material, supernatural or psychological reasons; why this person at this time)?
  602. What are the complementary ideas and standards of health?
  603. What are the attitudes toward illness?
    6030. What value is placed on health?
    6031. Is there a moral component to illness and health?
    6032. What is the range of attitudes toward sick people and kinds of illness (e.g., pity, fear, awe, contempt, anger, repulsion, etc.)?
61. How do attitudes toward illness affect the social position, social expectations, social relations and activities of the sick person and those related to him (brings into action different expectations, alters usual expectations, intensifies some relations and attenuates others, etc.)?
62. Treatment of illness.
  620. What is the range of treatments for the most important health problems (e.g., home remedies, informal treatment, traditional practitioners, etc.)?
  621. How is a given form of treatment selected, who is involved in the selection, what factors are taken into consideration, and how do they differ for persons in different social positions.
  622. What is the ritual and magic component of treatment?
  623. What beliefs are associated with different illnesses and their treatments?
63. What concepts and techniques of prevention are encountered and how are they distributed throughout the community?
64. Organization of medical care.
  640. What kinds of formal positions are found that either specialize or relate importantly to the treatment of illness, and how are they defined culturally and socially?
  641. How are persons recruited to "medical" positions, what are the requirements, what are the rewards and costs, what are the social characteristics of these positions, especially in the wider arena of community influence and prestige?
  642. How are "medical" positions interrelated, what kinds of social relations bind them, what are the effects of these relations on their use by the public?
65. Environmental health conditions (e.g., information on

sanitation, animal vectors, housing conditions, etc.).

66. Types and prevalence of disease (both individual as well as community-wide, such as descriptions of an individual's health problems, course of disease, symptoms, or information on numbers of cases, impressions of prevalence of diseases).

7. The Peace Corps program.

70. What has been the history of PC activity, community participation in PC work, and community understanding of and attitudes toward the program and its personnel?

71. Who are the present Volunteers, what has been their education and training, what Latin American experiences have they had, how long have they been in the community, what is their orientation to the community and its members, the different groups and strata?

72. PC program.

720. What are the Volunteers trying to do?

721. How are they trying to accomplish their goals, what is the program of work?

722. What kinds of activities are they typically involved in, how is their activity organized?

73. Community connections.

730. What parts of the community are involved with the PC program, and in what ways?

731. What kinds of attitudes are held by different parts of the community toward the Volunteers and their work?

732. What are the attitudes of the Volunteers toward different parts of the community, community problems, community affairs?

733. What kinds of relations do Volunteers have with different parts of the community social structure, what are the consequences for PC work, what effects do Volunteers have on community affairs and social life, how do Volunteer social relations affect their participation in the community, their social activities, their outlook on the PC program and the community?

### Appendix III

#### PROJECT AND PROJECT-ASSOCIATED PUBLICATIONS

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1966 Local Health Study of Sorata, Bolivia. Department of Community Medicine, College of Medicine, University of Kentucky.

- McEwen, William J.  
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## Appendix IV

### GLOSSARY

actas: "Acts", generally referring to any official governmental or legal action.

adventista: An Adventist, a member of one of the Protestant religious denominations in Bolivia.

agente auxiliar: One of two chief officials in San Miguel ayllu.

agente municipal: A canton official in San Miguel.

aguayos: Woven woollen cloths made by both Indians and cholitas and used to enwrap a small child, or farm produce; a bundle wrap.

ahijado: Godchild.

alberja: A variety of bean.

alcalde: Mayor of a town.

alcalde de campo: The inspector of fields in San Miguel, also assistants to judges.

alcalde de campo auxiliar: San Miguel ayllu official.

alcalde escolar: The inspector of schools, San Miguel.

alcaldia: City hall.

alferado: One of the two most important sponsors of fiestas in San Miguel.

aljiri: A supervisory position of obligatory labor service for peons on hacienda Compi.

altiplano: High plateau; the high basin area of western Bolivia in which the population is concentrated.

amañarse: Trial marriage among peasants.

amigos de confianza: Confidential friend; friend who can be trusted.

a partir: By shares, sharecropping.

arrendero: "Renter"; a peasant who pays money in rent for land; also may pay part in labor.



arroba: Unit of weight, equivalent to 25 pounds.

atrio: Enclosed terrace in front of a building.

ayllu: Quechua word for freehold Indian communities.

barranca: Ditch, gully.

blanco: "White"; those of highest status in provincial society, claiming direct descent from the Spanish.

boliviano: Old monetary unit of Bolivia. One was equivalent to .008 cents; one thousand have become the new Bolivian peso, worth eight cents, U.S.

caballero: Gentleman, of highest social stratum of provincial society.

cacique cobrador: Canton tax collector, San Miguel.

campesino: Rural dweller, a peasant, used since 1952 for all Indians.

campesino dirigente: Leader of peasant union, often the top official.

canton: The lowest unit of regional government in the Bolivian national system.

capilero: San Miguel church servant.

cargo: A traditional Indian office, in either the political or fiesta system.

chacra: From the Spanish "chacara", farm, meaning a small piece of land or cultivated peasant parcel.

chacrita: Diminutive of chacra, "little parcel".

chicha: Indian beer made from masticated maize flour, plus fermentation and boiling.

cholo: Social status between mestizos and Indians in pre-1952 Bolivia.

chuño: Dehydrated form of potato, prepared by Aymara and Quechua Indians.

coca: The boxwood-like bush from which cocaine is derived; the leaf, which is chewed.

colono: Hacienda peon.

comando: The militia arm of the MNR.

comerciantes: Merchants of all kinds.

conisario: Aide to judges in San Miguel.

compadrazgo: Godparenthood.

compadre: Used by parents of a child to refer to his godfather; term of respect and endearment in widespread use.

comunario: Indian community peasant.

copal: Resin used for incense.

corregidor: One of the main government officials in canton San Miguel; a minor official in canton Jank'o Amaya.

corregidor auxiliar: Ayllu corregidor in San Miguel.

correo: San Miguel mailman.

criado: Foster child who may act as house servant.

de vestido: "Of dress", meaning European dress, not native costume.

empleados: Employees.

encomienda: Royal land grant, Spanish period.

esaña: A small edible tuber.

estancia: Ranch, in Reyes comparable to hacienda, and in Coroico and Sorata, a finca; also a farm. In San Miguel, populated area with a given name. In Sorata and Villa Abecia, the upper, marginal lands, usually in desert or high mountain country, previously attached to the haciendas.

faena: A traditional agricultural work obligation.

feria: Fair.

fiesta patronal: Saint's Day celebration of the patron saint of an hacienda or town.

finca: Hacienda, farm or ranch (estancia).

flotas: Buses and bus lines.

forastero: "Foreigner"; any outsider or person who, living in a provincial town, is not native to that town.

ganadero: Cattle rancher.

generalá: A dice game commonly played in the cantinas of the towns.

gente decente: "Decent people"; refers to the highest stratum of provincial society, the vecinos, blancos, patróns, caballeros and propietarios.

gremiales: Semi-skilled workers and artisans, including carpenters, metalsmiths, shoemakers, tailors, etc.

hacendado: The owner of an hacienda, the patrón. Synonymous with caballero, gente decente and propietario, and prior to 1952, with vecino.

hacienda: An agricultural property of the feudalistic system which prevailed in Bolivia until 1952.

hectare: Equivalent to 2.4 acres.

hijo: "Son", a term of endearment; slang, used familiarly.

hijo de crianza: Adopted child.

imillas: "Young girl"; also written, emillas.

indio: Substitute term for Indian, which is now pejorative.

intendente: Police official.

intendente municipal: Supervisor of municipal services.

jilakata: Aymara term for chief, the highest traditional official of Indian communities.

juez parroquial: The major judicial post in San Miguel.

junta de vecinos: A survival of colonial town government, consisting of the leading citizens of the town, advisory body to officials.

latifundia: Large feudalistic agricultural estate in pre-1952 Bolivia; now, unused estate; so used in law.

llocallas: "Youth" in Quechua, generally used to demean a cholo peasant by a person of another social class.

madrina: Godmother.

maestro: "Teacher", also a term of respect for an artisan, or skilled worker.

mayordomo: In pre-revolutionary period, an overseer of peons. In the areas studied, invariably a mestizo or blanco.

mestizo: "Mixed" blood, or cross between Spaniard and Indian; a social status between blancos and cholos in pre-1952 Bolivia.

minoristas: "Small-timers", petty merchants.

mita: Colonial obligation of Bolivian Indians to work in the mines, later extended to agricultural service.

mozo: Term for male servant, but also applied by townspeople to demean cholos or refined peasants.

muñeca: Influence with public officials.

negociantes: Traders in small wares, clothing and staples.

notario: Registrar of vital statistics.

novio: Sweetheart, fiancé.

oficial mayor: Deputy mayor.

oka: An edible tuber.

padrino: Godfather.

pagos: Payments.

pampa: Grassy plain.

papalisa: A small, sweet, edible tuber.

parientes: Relatives.

pasante: Traditional sponsor of fiestas.

patrón: Landlord.

peon: Semi-serf on the haciendas who, for usufruct rights to a small parcel was obligated to provide three days of labor a week for the patrón and perform other personal services.

peso: Unit of Bolivian currency, equal to eight cents, U.S.

poke lomanake: Gypsum, used to make stucco.

pollera: The full, colorful skirt of chola women.

prestacion vial: The obligation of male citizens to contribute three days a year to public works.

propietario: "Proprietor", in provincial Bolivia synonymous with patrón.

quina: Cinchona bark.

quintal: Unit of weight, one hundred pounds.

quinua: An edible grain.

rescatador: Middleman trader in coffee, coca and fruits.

sapo: "Toad"; game similar to ski-ball.

sindicato: Peasant or labor union.

Sindicato Central: The major regional sindicato organization, made up of affiliated local unions and union centrals.

singani: Distillation from grapes.

sot'a: A supervisory post at hacienda Compi.

sub-central: The first grouping of local peasant or labor unions.

tambo: Unloading place in La Paz markets.

thola: Evergreen shrub.

tienda: General store.

tinterillo: Street corner lawyers, untrained.

tatora: Water reed.

tramites: Legal paperwork.

transportistas: Transporters, usually with trucks.

turno: Turn, the order of turns to be taken in receiving irrigation water.

utawawa: A foster child.

vecino: "Neighbor"; in Spanish, a citizen of the town, those able to vote and participate in civic life; also used to distinguish townspeople from campesinos.

viñatero: A peasant who works in the vineyards.

Vitichis: People from the town of Vitichi.

zafra: Sugar cane harvest or field.

zafreiros: Workers in the zafra.

## Appendix V

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Kaatas: community in  
Blood of the Condor.



**"LIKE MIRRORS THEY BREAK": INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S IDENTITIES AND THE POLITICS OF  
CULTURAL REPRODUCTION IN THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON**

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These young girls look at themselves  
through the television looking glass, but  
only mirror the whites. And then...like  
mirrors they break

These poignant metaphors of gendered identities and social and cultural change in the Upper Napo area of the Ecuadorian Amazon in the 1990s, were spoken by an elder Napo Quichua woman as an incisive comment on the sexual self-images and social behavior of young women, most of whom belong to the same generation as her teenage granddaughters. This paper is an attempt to unravel some of the many social and cultural complexities embedded in this set of metaphors through an interpretation of women's narratives and contemporary experiences.

For some time now, during my periodic visits to the town of Tena and surrounding indigenous communities, I have been involved in the everyday life of women and, more specifically, in recording the life histories of a small group of elder women I have come to know very well.<sup>1</sup> During the last two summers, the problem of adolescent women's uncontrolled, and indiscriminate, infatuation and sexual liaisons with young men, as well as the consequent unsought pregnancies, have complicated

the grandmothers' lives, and dominated their conversations. They are deeply concerned with the predicament of these young women who are "running out of hand," or literally running away to other booming towns in the region or to the capital city of Quito. An increasing number of girls from previously isolated and remote settlements are now coming to live in Tena, eagerly looking for the excitement provided by urban modern attractions such as television and discotheques, but even by more established ones, such as the possibility of attending high schools where they are able to socialize with people their own age. This relatively small urban centre is then increasingly becoming a contested space of emergent identities where local and global cultural practices intersect.

What specially worries their elders is that this young crowd now includes non-indigenous people, even foreigners, and that the sexual liaisons are often initiated by the young women themselves. These teenage women are locally being called carachamas, the name of an abundant, and easy to catch, small native fish. The "wild period" of adolescent women's sexuality, usually regarded as normal, and in the past controlled within the constraints and intimacy of the kin groups, is now becoming a matter of public scandal and often exposes these young women to serious threats to their safety and well-being. This is the present focus of the older women's distress, and not the pregnancies per se, since in most cases, once the baby is born, both the young mother and her child will be accepted either in her mother's or her grandmother's families, whether she marries or not. The larger critical question that underlies these older women's narratives is not just the quality and pace of modern change, but the very essence of social and cultural reproduction

and the role they are going to play in it. This explains why the issue of indigenous women's identities, and their future cultural reproduction, is the one I shall address here.

My choice to concentrate on an intergenerational conflict over images and practices of gendered identities was prompted by other analytical questions that warrant some consideration here. First, in two recent overviews of anthropological studies on gender relations in Amazonian societies, Seymour-Smith (1991) and Bellier (1993) point out that the prevailing theoretical explanations of this issue have been grounded on generalizing theories of social structure, myth, or psychoanalytic profiles. Both authors argue for further studies centered in the actual content of women's life experiences situated in the wider framework of the socio-economic changes now taking place in Amazonian societies. My objective here is to address these issues by exploring gender differences in the construction of personhood, as they are experienced in the context of a particular process of change. I shall examine how Napo Quichua women reminisce, talk about, and negotiate, in everyday life, the multiple meanings of being an indigenous woman in an increasingly complex inter-ethnic society.

My second aim is to explore how everyday narratives of intra-cultural struggles (Sider 1991; Smith 1991) are able to reveal women's histories as they are being produced in the present. What matters in considering these narratives is not so much the historical origin of the different cultural elements with which the women construct their identities but how, through their recollections of the past, they are able to reshape and reinterpret the social meanings of those elements

and experiences to deal with contemporary events they feel are beyond their control. I want to argue here that these indigenous grandmothers create their ethnohistories by telling thoughtful and emotional stories about the domestic sphere of their lives (cf., Sider 1991). This everyday space offers women ways of seeing the past which links the personal and familiar with their continuing active engagement in the wider world.

Finally, while there have been excellent studies of the contemporary complexities of cultural reproduction in other Amazonian societies (see Sp., Jackson 1995; Turner 1991), they have failed to address directly the issue of gender. I suggest that this intergenerational conflict, here narrated as women's struggle over gender imageries and practices, offers a privileged local stage from where to have a better insight into the dominantly verbal scripts of indigenous cultural reproduction being played, largely by men, in national and international scenarios. Napo Quichua women's scripts need a subtle and processual reading without the Western blinders that, as Strathern (1984) has argued, denigrates domesticity to a second rate space of confinement, or imposes notions of personhood that equates it with an often painful disengagement from culturally meaningful social relations.

### The Larger Background to the Women's Arguments

The Napo Quichua of the Pano and Tena areas share with thousands of other Lowland-Quichua speakers a traditional tropical forest culture based on hunting, fishing, gathering, and swidden agriculture. However, unlike other Amazonian

indigenous groups, very early on in the Colonial period the Napo Quichua were forced to adapt their subsistence strategies and symbolic worlds first to the economic, political, and cultural demands of Spanish conquistadors and Catholic missionaries, and later to the different efforts by the State and local government administrators to incorporate them into the national society. Enforcing a policy of sedentarization was the key to that endeavor of turning "savagery" into "civilization." Although the Napo Quichua resisted this policy in many different ways, in the long run it was decisive in eroding their land base and their ability to practice their traditional subsistence activities.

In terms of sexuality and gender relations, Catholic missionaries regarded the Napo Quichua as lacking any sense of morality and as being affected by "unnatural" sexual urges that had to be controlled within marriage. Early in this century, the Liberal State also intervened directly into the indigenous domestic domain, particularly with legislation about civil marriage and divorce, and with universal schooling (Moscoso 1996; Goetschel 1996). Since then, the state regulation and discipline of sexuality and socialization practices have contributed, along with the economic transformations, to the changes in power and authority families and kin groups are experiencing today. For several centuries then, in this particular Amazonian society, gender subjectivities have been contested dialogues, not only between men and women, but between indigenous peoples and the wider non-indigenous world. However, both men and women were able to negotiate gender identities that did not merely reflect hegemonic constructions by Church and State, but incorporated or subverted them to suit their own cultural projects (Muratorio



1995a).

But in the last twenty years the pace of change has accelerated dramatically in the whole Ecuadorian Amazon. Oil exploitation provided the main incentives for a massive inflow of colonists, for the growth of frontier towns and internal migrations, for the increasing incorporation of most indigenous peoples into the market economy, and finally for the consolidation of the State and military presence in this region. As in many other parts of the world, new communication technologies, specially television and radio, have been decisive in the incorporation of the younger generation of Napo Quichua into global modernity. Furthermore, in the 1990s, the international environmental concern for the Amazon rainforest, attracted a large number of foreign environmentalists with different versions of sustainable development projects, particularly indigenous ecotourism (Muratorio 1995b).

The most important factor in shaping the politics of ethnic difference has been the now autonomous voice of the indigenous political organizations. Nationally, and locally in the Amazon region, these organizations have been almost exclusively led by men. Indigenous intellectuals have constructed a discourse of generic Indianness with claims to a common history of ethnic revindication. Like other indigenous discourses since Colonial times, this one strategically relies upon Western categories of history and modernity (Brown 1993; Jackson 1995), and has been very successful in opening up significant political spaces for indigenous peoples in confronting the State. However, the homogeneous character of the ethnic identity projected by the indigenous federations silences the complexities of group and gender differences internal to the local societies; a problem that is just beginning to

surface. Culturally, this discourse espouses a form of essentialist conservatism that naturalizes women's identities, most commonly by stereotypical female identification with Mother Earth, and marginalizes their voices by providing very few spaces for their actual political participation. While both men and the few indigenous women national leaders still proclaim all women to be the bearers of cultural tradition, they have until now failed to openly admit and address the conflicts and contradictions young and older women confront in the daily enactment of that tradition.<sup>2</sup>

In general, Napo Quichua elder women simply ignore, or otherwise tease local male leaders about the precise meanings and boundaries of this disjuncture between modernity and tradition. The ironic and mocking questioning –or sometimes just staring silences– directed at those leaders, constitute cogent ways in which the elder women challenge the indigenous federations' assumed monopoly on cultural memories and the redefinition of indigenous history. Some young people, however, are stumbling to recover a presumed "pristine" culture, while others are eagerly engaged in cultural amnesia. What the cultural contents of tradition are or should be, and who has control over selective cultural memories and interprets their meanings, in sum, the daily problems of cultural reproduction and the construction of identities, are then a matter of endless discussions and one of the bases of intergenerational conflicts. These internal arguments over which language to speak or what food to eat at home, over the white role models offered by the soap operas in television, over conceptions of feminine beauty and sexuality, convey the specific cultural meanings that get lost in the reified political categories used by the indigenous organizations.

Women's arguments represent the local manifestations of the global processes of modernity that have transformed all questions of ethnic identities and cultural reproduction into highly politicized issues.<sup>3</sup>

Like other indigenous peoples in Ecuador and elsewhere, Dano and Tena young women are going through the growing pains of becoming full sexual, social subjects. In developing individual and group cultural consciousness they are involved in a complex process of identity formation where old and new models of femininity and modernity are partially resisted, incorporated, or discarded. To deal with the experiences of selfhood they have to walk through the uncertain and shifting boundaries of at least three main identity paths: the contested one already traveled by their elders, the glamorous and appealing one drawn by the mass media and shared with their peers, and the politically compelling one offered by the indigenous organizations. Here I only have space to examine the first one in some detail. I will concentrate on the conflict over gender ideologies and practices as seen primarily from the point of view of the older women. This emerged in the series of recent conversations that this small group of grandmothers shared among themselves and with me during the time when the problems with their own granddaughters came to a head. To further contextualized the substance of these conversations, it is necessary to point out that in 1995 the Ecuadorean government issued the Law Against Violence to Women and the Family, which now provides women with an effective legal recourse in cases of domestic violence and sexual abuse. This new encounter with the different instances of the state is still full of ambiguities and poses complex personal and cultural contradictions with which indigenous women

are just beginning to grapple.

These grandmothers have a very tender and close relationship with their granddaughters; they work, travel, and socialize together. Due to the recent socio-economic changes, many young Dano and Tena women have been forced to migrate to distant places, thus depriving their mothers not only of their work in the garden and the home, but also of the closeness and affection that characterizes most mother/daughter relationships. This is why grandmothers often ask for a granddaughter to come and live with them. Consequently, grandmothers feel particularly responsible for the raising and nurturing of these girls and for the problems they are now confronting. I do not want to convey the idea that these adult women are indulging on a romantic remembrance of their pasts to recreate some authentic version of feminine culture. They are using their memories of selfhood to cope with what they presently feel is a pressing crisis in their families. From the rich store of memories Quichua women's dialogues usually evoke, the grandmothers selected the themes, events, songs, and reminiscences that allowed them to construct a coherent sense of self (Linde 1993) portraying them as agents of their own lives rather than as victims. In these conversations women relive and reenact the events and experiences talked about. Thus, the images of femininity they communicate do not exhaust themselves in words, but incorporate the richness of visual imagery and other sensory experiences of smells, tastes, and sounds.<sup>4</sup> If these narratives of identity seem to be transparently self-congratulatory, it is because they contain many silences. They are as much about remembering as they

are about forgetting and repressing other more painful memories I have heard evoked in several other occasions. They engage not only other local women and myself as anthropologist, but the past and present voices of the dominant white society, now additionally mediated by the foreign voices embodied in the mass media. In this context, the women's self-assertive stories may be regarded as a strategy of resistance against what they perceive as new forms of domination over themselves, and particularly over the young girls. The narratives are intended to provide moral guidance in the hope that the young girls will reflect on how those meanings apply to their own lives. But these elder women also communicate an almost inevitable sense of loss, the consciousness that they will be unable to adequately reproduce for the next generations the cultural codes that shaped them as women. They impressed me as experiencing a real feeling of nostalgha, in the Greek sense of the term, which as Serematakis so adequately explains, evokes all the sensory dimensions of memory, tying spiritual and bodily memories with notions of estrangement and growing old (1994:4). Moreover, as many other writers of oral histories have done, I introduce here my own version of the grandmothers' narratives with the familiar cautions about the complexities involved in translating and editing the spoken word into a written text (see e.g., Patai 1988).

### **Grandmothers' Images of Femininity**

Older women often talked about ideals of femininity, not only to scrutinize the behavior of their granddaughters, but also because they are concerned about how

their future daughters-in-law might live up to those standards. The first thing that is emphasized in being this ideal woman is not her motherhood, but her adherence to an elaborate work ethic and aesthetics considered essential for the full realization of a woman's personal and social self. The loving care of children is one of those unspoken premises that women share and take for granted, but they do not see the domestic domain primarily in terms of their reproductive roles and motherhood. Women's work, however, is a matter of ceaseless contention. Here great differences are recognized among women in terms of knowledge, skills, and social attitudes, primarily about the production, preparation, and consumption of food. The subtleties of the symbolic meanings involved in each task are always elaborated at length in the conversations. But even more so, are the complexities of the social skills and graces women need to display in performing these tasks to perfection, as well as the great psychological and physical harm that can come to them if, in some way, they fail. Except for jealousy, a woman's perceived failings in performing all the household duties expected of her is the most common excuse given by the husband for physically abusing her. Most women are keenly aware of the potential for gender conflict and violence within the domestic space.

A woman's reputation as good worker starts to be shaped when she is very young and blooms when she reaches middle-age. By then, at least, other women acknowledge her reputation. The 'paju transfer' ceremony is just one of the more open manifestations of that recognition. In this very domestic ritual, a younger or less competent woman purchases the powers or pajus of an avowed expert on growing good manioc, on preparing "sweet" manioc beer, or on curing a specific

ailment. The ceremonial "begging" and the payment involved in this transaction is part of the recognition of the donor's status. A mature woman's reputation also serves to enhance the value of her daughters as marriageable partners and "good wives," an important reason why these reputations are also celebrated in autobiographical songs or in those sung by the woman's daughters. These songs are highly personalized and include the singer's name and a reference to her kin group or ayllu, like in this one:

Mi Mariaqutu  
 a Cerda woman,  
 she moves like a hummingbird  
 from flower to flower.  
 She knows how to work the garden  
 All women admire her,  
 she never bought food in town.

It is the sociality of a woman's work that is crucial for her identity, first as daughter, and then as wife and daughter-in-law. The young daughter is expected to awake much before dawn to prepare and serve the huayusa tea to all men and women in the household, as well as to help her mother in the preparation of the asua (manioc beer), to accompany her to the garden, and to take care of her younger siblings. When married, preferably very young, her immediate duties as a new daughter-in-law are quite the same although, away from her mother's love, emotionally much more onerous. Her autonomy as a wife is now symbolized by her

right to her own garden, which allows her to enter into the process of production and circulation of food, but her mother-in-law and her husband are expected to complete her socialization into full adulthood, usually considered achieved when she has had her second child and the couple may choose to move to a separate household. Her performance in her in-laws' home, however, is also a test of her mother's and grandmother's own competences in shaping her selfhood at an early age. Women's reputations have to be tested continuously, and are done so publicly by both women and men. It is because the stakes are so high, that the grandmothers are so distressed about the young women's refusal to perform women's tasks, or content to do them grudgingly. Like some other women of her generation, Francisca, the most vocal of the grandmothers, successfully resisted living with her in-laws after her arranged marriage at an early age, not without paying a high price for her defiance (Muratorio 1997). Although this form of marriage is not longer practised, the grandmothers are aware of the control mothers-in-law and other of the husband's relatives may still have over a young bride's reputation. Spoken from the distance of adulthood, the grandmothers' comments may be read more as a warning to the young girls about future pain, than as harsh criticisms of their understandable, and familiar present rebelliousness.

Both the historically constructed character of the domestic sphere and its ethnographic diversity have been discussed at length in the feminist literature. It has also been noted that in some societies, the dividing line between work and leisure may be less rigid than Western capitalism requires and that, consequently, the evaluative categories frequently used to characterize women's domestic labor like



"drudging" or "oppressive" also become historically contingent and may be, if not always ethnocentric, at least controversial (e.g., Harris 1981; Moore 1988). Most Dano and Tena women I know do not usually complain about their work as being boring or repetitive, nor about the nursing of children as interfering with their mobility or their capacity to participate in social activities, for they carry their babies with them everywhere, or may leave their elder children in the care of other women. The domestic space is not perceived as one of confinement since it is not constrained by the four walls of the house, nor by the Western conception of the household as a bounded and socially isolated unit. These women obviously do not think of repetitive and exhausting work such as weeding as "entertaining;" they just do not complain about this form of hard labor in the Christian missionaries terms as atonement for an original sin. They rather choose to emphasize their physical strength in performing this and other tasks in the fields and to talk about the beauty of a well socialized -and productive- garden as an attribute of their own identity, a metaphor of self.

The garden plot and the hearth are primarily female domains; certainly sites of a women's hard work, but also spaces where times are set aside for the transmission of knowledge, the exchange of gossip, or the recounting of stories and dreams, shared with daughters, granddaughters, and daughters-in-law. In order to perform the most important domestic task which -except for the caring of children, of course- consists of the preparation of food, women have to venture out of the house. Even forest areas, cleared around the house for daily activities, are considered to be populated by spirits beings (supais) with whom women may have interesting encounters, often wrapped in eroticism. This is also particularly true for

women while going fishing, gold-panning, or further into the forest, where these beings may appear most readily. Through these spiritual encounters a woman acquires specific powers, to cure, to fish, to pan gold, or to attract men. In her songs, for instance, Francisca speaks of incorporating, not only the power of spirits, but the behavioral and aesthetic characteristics of other sentient beings like birds. Thus she "becomes the bird," by referring to herself as "toucan woman," or "hummingbird woman." These powers are highly personalized and engage a woman's self-reflexion. They are important in endowing and forging her own samai (spiritual power, breath); and form an integral part of her identity. However, if those powers distinguish her as a unique individual, they are only realized when socialized among humans: when they are used to heal and comfort others, or when the products of those spiritual encounters are shared with kin and visitors. Because the transfer of all these powers to the future generations constitutes a crucial element in their socialization, in their stories, the grandmothers convey a sad feeling of their own inadequacy to pass on these experiences to create a lasting bond with the young girls.

Women also expand their domestic domain by traveling in search for particular types of food. This usually involves visiting close kin or fictive kin in other areas of the tropical forest where game or fish may be more abundant. Part of the food obtained in this way is always brought back for circulation and consumption at home. It has been reciprocated by women's labor in the particular garden belonging to a woman in the place where the visit was made, or will be reciprocated with presents of another type of food at a future time. As Gow (1989:572-574) has argued for the

tropical forest people of the Bajo Urubamba in Peru, this form of food circulation is primarily carried out by women and involves social relations of respect with those who "love, think about, and remember" another person. Among the Napo Quichua, this "caring/memory" circulation, as well as the now more frequent participation in the town weekly fair to sell the products of their gardens and of their gathering, are regarded by women as an expression of their relative autonomy from men's control. They resent when, primarily out of jealousy, their husbands "unfairly" and "unreasonably" try to curtail their freedom in any way with the excuse that women always go to those places "to laugh" with other men. When women were comparing these experiences in one of our conversations, it was not surprising that Juanita, a long-time widow, was the one who joyfully remarked how she enjoys that freedom to travel anywhere, anytime, without being controlled by a man:

This is how I search for food, going places. No men dare to bother me. I travel to remember and to have things to talk about when I'm old; to remember all the good things people have given me to eat.

For many years now, the Pano and Tena Quichua have not lived exclusively on wild game or on food they cultivate themselves. They regularly need to buy many items of food in town, including meat and fish. But they make a clear evaluative distinction between these two types of food, in part because town food is also "foreign," white's food which, devoid of women's knowledgeable labour, is culturally meaningless. Reminiscing about her return from a long trip to the Coastal region (a "land of foreign tastes" according to her), Francisca vividly recalled the scene of her mother waiting for her at home with a pot of manioc beer, in the following words:

"Mother, I said, I was made to forget the taste of asua (manioc beer). Now I come back to get drunk with the love of your hands, and my mouth remembers." This example, and that of the widow quoted above, support Seremataki's argument that commensality has to be seen as encompassing more than the mere social organization of food and drink consumption to include "the exchange of sensory memories and emotions, and of substances and objects incarnating remembrance and feeling" (1994:37). The memories of these Napo Quichua women are literally interwoven with the smells and tastes of other people's love and labor. Like the Greek grandmother and her grandson sharing food and fairytales, (Seremataki 1994) the indigenous women create an alternative world of cultural memories as a shield against the sensory invasion of the new culture of modernity. This older generation of women think that by relying on and acquiring an exclusive taste for town food, the young women will become more and more dependent on their future husbands' wages, and lose the symbolic autonomy of their productive work. By rejecting this form of knowledge they will repress the memories that speak of cultural continuity.

Specially in terms of commensality a woman's self-identity is tied to the image others have of her, but it is also embedded in the specific material artifacts and practices she uses to display it. Reliance on town food may diminish a woman's public reputation and her authority within the home, but also the texture and colour of her cooking pots can reveal her character and ability. Unlike Western stereotypes of shining cooking pots as a sign of women's cleanliness and ensuing virtue as a housekeeper, it is the blackness of a Napo Quichua woman's pots that speaks for her feminine virtues: it means that her pots are continuously being used to feed others,

to socialize, and to give generously. When kin or other visitors come to her house, the quality of the objects in it, the textures and smells of her cooking, the tone and pace of the sounds she makes while working, the grace of her movements, all have to testify for her hard-working and generous self. Not only her present, but her future reputation may be at stake, since those who are mean with food are thought to be punished in the afterlife by being stuffed with it until they burst, time and time again.

The local term most often used to describe the ideal woman is pichihuarmi, a woman who resembles a light, and very quick-moving small bird. She is described as light-footed, quick-witted, and humorous but wise. This bird is the symbol of the two essential qualities of female agency: hard-work and generosity. Its meanings are far removed from the ideas of passive and submissive femininity used by the local nuns to discipline and moralize indigenous women. Two other terms come close to describing this ideal woman: allihuarmi and sabiruhuarmi, beautiful and wise woman, in whom knowledge, skill, and physical beauty complement each other as expressed in her everyday practices. On the contrary, a "bad" woman is always talked about primarily as "lazy." Laziness is considered degrading mainly because it represents the quintessential anti-social behavior. Not surprisingly, the Quichua term used to characterize such a woman is carishina (man-like) since, of course, men are not expected to be able to perform, much less excel, at women's tasks. Carishina is often used as an admonition when disciplining young girls, but always as an insult when referring to an adult woman. She is not only being recriminated for incompetence, but also shamed for her indulgence and lack of self-respect. As one grandmother complained:

Now women are only good to sleep with their husbands; they are keen to show their buttocks to men. Then, they become very upset when their husbands beat them up under the pretense they thought they had married a hard-working woman.

The analogy implied in the term carishina between a "bad woman" and men's incompetence at performing women's tasks does not signify the denigration of men's labor. In some of their songs or in ordinary speech, women sometimes use the term cari-huarmi (man-woman) to proudly refer to themselves as having the strengths needed for hunting, fishing, cutting down trees, or carrying logs; all skills attributed to men in the accepted conception of gender complementarity in the division of labor.

### The Mirrors of Sexuality

The main matter of contention among these two generations of women is, of course, how to represent and express sexuality. This essential issue in the construction of personhood is highlighted through narratives about the body: how is it clothed and adorned; how does it look; how does it move; and how does it sound. The shape of a woman's body is regarded as a language by which she communicates, whether willingly or not, significant messages about herself and her male companion. If a woman is thin, she will be seen by others as someone who is not well provided by her husband; and her thinness may be regarded as a sign that she is being physically abused by him. By contrast, having a "rounded figure," without fat, is seen as evidence of a woman well fed by her husband, and having the muscle strength

acquired through her hard labour in the garden plot and by traveling on foot. In general, a woman's well-rounded body is a statement of her well adjusted marriage and of her contentment with herself and her life. As Turner has argued for the Kayapó, dress and bodily adornment constitute not only one of the most significant cultural mediums in shaping and communicating personal and social identity, but are also a primary language of socialization (1980: 112-114), as I will equally propose regarding the case of Dano and Tena women.

When commenting on how young women dress nowadays, one subject the adult women often brought up was the wearing of shoes. Since all women regularly wear shoes, what really puzzled me at first was the fact that they seem to insist in attaching some kind of general negative symbolic meaning to women's wearing any kind of footwear. Talking about shoes, as I came to realize soon enough, was just a pretext to expand upon the favorite topic of "walking" and "going places." This is an experience of being, expressed in Quichua by the verb purina, which is vital in defining these tropical forest women's identity (Harrison 1989:159-160). This is how one of the grandmothers explained it to me:

Shoes make your feet soft, and soft feet are useless to walk long distances and to stand for long hours on hot pebbled beaches [panning gold]. How are young women ever going to learn to walk if they never take their shoes off and always travel by bus?

Soft feet become a symbol of lack of freedom of movement, of sedentarization, of the fact that young women now spend hours sitting, or otherwise immobilized, in the confined spaces of a school, an office, or a bus. What the older women seem to

find objectionable is that these items of transportation (shoes or buses) are now being used as exclusive alternatives to colonize indigenous modes of communication and mobilization. Roads or any of the new technologies of transportation create different times and spaces (Boyarín 1994) than traveling by foot; they also fashion different audiovisual languages and landscapes. For instance, spaces and times of visions, dreams, and memories, so vital in Napo Quichua sense of personal fulfillment and social belonging, cannot be traversed by new technologies. As Francisca expressed it in a song, sung to her mother when she returned from a long trip to a distant place, the memories of the mind travel faster than the modern means of communication:

I return from this distant place,

I return to you, my mother.

As surely as the rain after the storm,

my happiness arrives in the wind.

My body might be in the bus,

but my mind returns to you in the wind.

It is an acknowledged reality that the body becomes weaker with age. Mainly because of a life of gold panning, many women in this area suffer from severe arthritis. The mind, instead, becomes sharper as people age. A strong *samai* embodies intelligence and social skills, both considered to be the product of time. It encapsulates the experiences of a lifetime, and is expressed through words and practices endowed with meaning. Elder women excel at giving advice, a language of socialization that still remains relatively ritualized among the Napo Quichua. When



advising a younger person, the tone of voice has to be low, and the manner calm. Nurturing is a slow process, it requires patience, like women's work of plant domestication. Most women consider themselves better at it than men. Gender complementarity in plant domestication is acknowledged, but men's role in it is associated with physical strength and with the more "predatory" labor of clearing the forest to start the garden. Men are also regarded as having louder voices and as being more prompt to shout, two characteristics that, in the eyes of women, makes men's advising speech "less intelligent and effective." On one occasion, when criticizing her husband for the "bad," loud advice he was giving to his daughter, I heard Catalina, the youngest grandmother, saying: "You can never grow plants with violence, you always have to talk softly to them."

Parental guidance and advice continues even after death in dreams, when the soul (aya) of the dreamer is believed to meet and talk with the soul of the deceased person. Older women's conversations are frequently interspersed with the vivid recounting of dreams; particularly those where their mothers and grandmothers appear to suggest paths of action, to warn about dangers, or just to bring back the remembrances and feelings of shared experiences. The older women also "perform" those memories of kin<sup>5</sup> when they engage in a form of ritual wailing that may take place in the course of a normal conversation.<sup>6</sup> This expressive narrative form is always accompanied by crying, and can be triggered unexpectedly when looking at a photograph, or when evoking an event which involved close kin. Women use this medium not only to relive their relationships with the deceased, but also to reflect on their present feelings about themselves without them. In the Catholic patriarchal

ideology, suffering is believed to be a virtue to forge women's moral character and to redeem their "impure" nature (Moscoso 1996: 98-100). As an expression of suffering, crying is considered the most appropriate expression of women's redemption, while it signals men's lack of virility. When wailing, Quichua women actually invert this meaning by turning crying into an expression of life and continuity, since it evokes memories of shared experiences with close kin and is a way to relive and reassert social relations, not to assume guilt for individual or collective and gendered sins.

Songs, like the ones quoted above, are another way in which women express their feelings of closeness to significant female others who were crucial in shaping their selves. Through memories, those selves become embodied in songs. Harrison (1989 :147) points out that in the lowlands of Ecuador the term llackichina, used to refer to the reasons for singing these songs and to the emotional states involved in transmitting them, is synonymous with "loving and to cause love," rather than with the more restricted sense of "causing pain or sorrow" to another person. The grandmothers regret the fact that both their daughters and granddaughters do not care to learn these songs anymore and prefer the loud contemporary music, heard almost anywhere young people socialize nowadays. But there is an ironic twist to this situation. When now some of their granddaughters, who work in ecotourist programs, want to learn their songs from them, the older women refuse to teach them in that context. Using their own culture for economic advancement is one thing indigenous people of this area have recently discovered, but they get caught in the ambiguities and contradictions of the cultural market. On the one hand, these

grandmothers are not yet ready to accept the commodification of their own memories and personal histories; and on the other, the young girls are being paid to represent for foreigners the very elements of the elders' culture they rebel against in their daily lives.

### The Screen Mirror

As all other Quichua elders, the grandmothers were raised in an oral culture and in the intimacy and relative autonomy of their kin groups. They regard television primarily as an invasion of the white Other into their own homes. Although for them it remains a foreign grammar, they recognize its compelling visual allurements, and precisely because of that power, they see it as "unfair" competition in relation to their own language of socialization. The grandmothers' main objection to television originates in their belief that the young girls imitate the white foreign models too closely, and try to mold their whole selves in their image. As I already noted, these adult women, as their mothers and grandmothers before them, were quite capable of reshaping their ethnic and gendered identities by accommodating and resisting previous racial aesthetic and moral models imposed by state officials, nuns, or local white colonists. These individual people, however, could be talked back, sabotaged, or eventually emulated, as a process of daily interaction. Instead, the television images do not provide the cultural clues to create meaning because the characters embodied in them do not engage in dialogue with the audience, they just talk "to" themselves. They are mute to social interaction, and therefore their language is considered more

difficult to challenge.

In Tena, the choice of television programs is rather limited, and Ecuador imports shows from the United States, and specially from Brazil's giant TV Globo network. In national television, indigenous peoples are represented primarily as a group in the news coverage of folkloric events and mass political rallies or protest marches. The large majority of the television images internalized by the young girls are racially coded to represent the aesthetic and social superiority of whiteness. For example, the most popular TV show among Tena teenagers is a Brazilian one who stars Xuxa, a former Playboy blond and blue-eyed model, surrounded by children and teenage look-alikes, who markets carefully crafted and glamorous images of provocative sexuality coupled with scenes of joyful and compliant domesticity, and a culture of modernity based on high-class consumerism (Simpson 1993). This show, like many others, projects ideals that are far beyond the reach of these marginalized indigenous teenagers, whose cultural agency is subject to structural constraints that limit their real choices. In a globalized economy, teenage styles in clothing, cosmetics, music, and food move more easily across national borders than the structural advantages that make that consumption possible. Some Tena young girls are selling themselves for the price of a hamburger and a soft drink in the local discotheque. And if they get pregnant, they will be forced to become full adults at a much younger age than the majority of teenagers who appear in the TV ads.

When discussing what aspects of their personal appearance young women imitate from the role models they see on television, the older women often refer to the use of make-up, and almost inevitably compare it with traditional face-painting

done with vegetable dyes. Face-painting, as another form of knowledge transmitted through bodily practices, was an integral part of socialization, since usually older women painted younger ones in the process of forming their social and sexual selves. Sometimes women painted one another when going to the garden to plant manioc, and always for ritual celebrations when dancing was involved. In these occasions, older women remember the beautiful designs they created on their faces, specially to attract men; and how these designs became highlighted by the movements of their long, black hair. A woman's long and shining hair is another sign of her beauty and strength. When dancing, the hair moves with the rhythm of the music "like a strong wind," and carries to the male partner the message of sexuality and strength of the dancer. Now, of course on hindsight, the grandmothers firmly proclaim that language of sexuality to have been "subdued," "discreet," and "modest."

In contrast, the strident colours of today's make-up used on a daily basis, make young women appear to be sexually available all the time, which is considered immodest. Here one can invoke Berger's explanation of the real function of the mirror in European oil painting of women, as making "the woman connive in treating herself as, first and foremost, a sight" (1972:51), and therefore objectified, not being really herself. The fact that in order to put on make-up now, a young woman looks at herself in the mirror and attempts to create an image of the woman she wants to be, all by herself, is another main reason why the grandmothers find this form of bodily adornment objectionable. Its indulgent individuality challenges accepted forms of traditional women's sociality and their assumptions about the nature of personhood. By cutting their hair and putting on make-up, the young girls defamiliarize themselves

with their own cultural image, and end up rejecting it by trying to reconstruct their bodies according to alien ideals. The visual realism of the television images, reinforced by peers' pressure competes with their mothers' and grandmothers' narratives of socialization and ends up by delegitimizing them. Some of these young women are actually repressing, at least publicly, quite recent memories of their own childhood, as when they reject the taste of indigenous foods or, even worst, when they claim ignorance of the Quichua language and refuse to speak it.

Finally, there are even more serious aspects of sociality that the grandmothers feel are being threatened by the images in the mass media: the very ties of kinship. Here I can only briefly discuss the significance of these emotional relationships in an attempt to explain the last sentence in the older woman's statement that started my discussion. Among the Napo Quichua, sexuality and demonstrations of love and affection are kept extremely private. Married couples and lovers usually use the privacy of the river banks, or the forest for engaging in sexual relations. Holding hands, kissing, or embracing in public is very rare, even among young people today. The open and unashamed display of all those aspects of sexuality in the mirror of the television screen are seen as quite offensive by the older women or, at least, as an embarrassment in front of others. The grandmothers worry about the fact that younger women are mirroring from that screen, not only uncomely appearances, but worst, highly objectionable social practices. They display a degree of familiarity and open sexuality that is dangerously breaching all the codes of etiquette that kept kinship hierarchies into place. The most clear statement of this concern was voiced by one of the older women, whose fourteen year old

granddaughter had just run away to Quito after a series of scandalous sexual affairs in Tena. When asking me if I could look for her when returning to Quito, the outraged grandmother tried to explain:

Now women learn from television of people who embrace and kiss each other in public; who only live off their husbands' money, or with the money they earn with their bodies. That is why women are losing respect for kin, they let themselves be embraced by cousins and brothers-in-law. They address both of them by their first names! [instead of using the proper kin-terms] as if they were married to them. They don't address older people with respect either; they think they can shut them off in the same way they push that little button in the television set and 'click'...the gringo [foreigner] is gone.

Grandmothers are troubled because they feel that young women are falling, if not into sin<sup>7</sup> into a perilous cultural vortex full of uncertainties that contributes to the insecurities and anxieties they feel about themselves. The strongest reason I can give for the older women's own anxieties, is their belief that the fracturing of vital interpersonal kin ties, does not allow those fragile young selves (otherwise considered normal in adolescents) to be supported and nurtured back to "health" by the knowledge, closeness, and affection provided by older kin. Lonely, insecure selves are vulnerable: like mirrors they break.

### Conclusions

I am aware that in this essay I have offered only a partial account of a complex issue by focusing on the grandmothers' side of the ongoing controversy

with their granddaughters over gender imageries and relations. The elder women talk about their memories and experiences of personhood as a way of making sense and making history in the present, reaching out from within their domestic domain. Their voices reveal internally complex subjects whose self-consciousness and social practices reflect often paradoxical and conflicting intents and emotions, particularly because now they believe they are losing out in the struggle for cultural reproduction. They experience their own fragile selves through feelings of separation and loneliness. When her last daughter left to live in town, one of the older women gave a brief expression of those feelings with this sighing question: "And now... who is going to gather my thoughts?" These feeling memories speak of the intersubjective character of selfhood and of its deep roots in social relations; those that are now rapidly changing, as is so eloquently suggested in the metaphor of the young selves as broken mirrors. The elder women narratives of themselves and their granddaughters have then to be interpreted in the changing fields of power brought about by the new agents of metropolitan economic and cultural paradigms. How are these young indigenous women going to incorporate modernity through the many neo-colonial mirrors, and at the same time reinvent their gendered indigenous identities, is one crucial question facing many indigenous women, and men, in Latin America to-day.

Through the eyes of their grandmothers, I tried to show how some Napo Quichua young women are straggling through the everyday realities of their adolescent peer groups at school and the consumer culture offered by the mass media on the one hand, and on the other, by what they view as the old-fashioned ideas



of their parents and grandparents. A few politically committed ones uneasily let themselves be guided by the rather typified discourses of the indigenous organizations. The young women are using these symbolic resources to construct a bridge between the cursory known, and often self-repressed, culture of their elders and the borrowings from dominant and oppositional discourses. These attempts by the young girls to reformulate their ethnic identities may be interpreted as strategies of empowerment in the increasingly complex scenarios of political struggles for ethnic survival. But we should also consider the fact that those same attempts may lead them into the ugly realities of alienation, prostitution, and sexual abuse. The pains encountered in this latter path are the center of the grandmothers' concerns that cannot be comfortably dismissed. They reflect the often overlooked violence indigenous women may face in their search for what in the recent literature on Latin American popular culture has been characterized -and sometimes too hastily celebrated- as "hybrid identities." <sup>8</sup> By primarily focusing on cultural objects, this conceptualization of identities often overlooks the internal conflicts experienced by the subjects who produced them. What we call traditional cultures, one of the components of the mixture, have never been static, nor have they totally disappear, even if they are being reformulated: hybridity has a long history in the Americas. As Platt (1992:144) has rightly argued, indigenous peoples have always been engaged in a constant and painful process of self-modernization.

It is of course not my intention to offer the reader a definite optimistic or pessimistic answer to this difficult dilemma. Based on the insights of a historically oriented anthropological research on Napo Quichua culture, I can only conclude that

For these particular indigenous peoples, the challenge is not new. Their history shows that both men and women were able to negotiate their own dynamic cultural "authenticity" out of the violence of domination which was very much a part of their lives. The structural and ideological conditions of a globalized and homogenizing economy and society may make the task more difficult for younger selves, but certainly not impossible. Maybe the mirrors won't break, after all.

## Notes

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1. These conversations involved a core of three, sometimes four elder women, often accompanied by their granddaughters; all from the areas along the Pano and Tena rivers. Since 1994, in Tena, the capital of Napo province with around 12,000 inhabitants, I am collaborating with Dolores Intriago in establishing a Women's Advisory Office, under the auspices of the Municipal Government and UNICEF. In dealing with the problems of indigenous women of all ages, we have documented the live stories of more than 50 cases.

2. For example, even when confronted with undeniable instances of domestic violence in their own communities, indigenous leaders tend to dismiss local women's complaints and to explain them away with traditional arguments about gender roles. This attitude has prompted women from Napo and other Amazon provinces to

form their own women's organizations. See Warren (1992) for a comparative discussion of cultural essentialism in the discourses of Mayan indigenous leaders. Wilson (1988) directly addresses the issue of gender in Bolivian indigenous discourses. The symbolic ties between women and Pachamama (Mother Earth), recognized among Highland indigenous women in Ecuador does not easily translate into Napo Quichua women's relations to the spirits of the garden plot (cf., Harris 1988; Descola 1994: 215).

3. Several recent anthropological studies have dealt with the cultural complexities involved in intergenerational conflicts between tradition and the trappings of modernity, but few have focused on women's narratives. An insightful exception is Abu-Lughod's work (see sp., 1990).

4. Cruikshank (1992, 1995) argues for an analytical approach that takes into account the confluence between the spoken word and material culture. From the perspective of the anthropology of the senses, Serematakis (1992) suggests that historical representation and experience should be seen as embedded in material culture. In the Ecuadorian Amazon, the work of Dorothea and Norman Whitten (see esp., 1985, and Norman Whitten 1993) with Canelos Quichua women potters, demonstrates the richness of such an approach.

5. Several anthropologists working on different ethnographic areas have elaborated the connections between kinship, death, and memories in the constitution of personhood (see sp. Gow 1991; Taylor 1993; Serematakis 1994).

6. This form of wailing is similar to that perform in wakes, but the latter is also common among men, while the former I have heard only among women. In a recent

article, Briggs (1992) has pointed out how, among the Amazonian Warao, women use a public form of wailing as a critical social voice on male authority.

7. Despite centuries of missionization, the Napo Quichua never accepted the Christian idea of original sin. In this particular case, women's pre-marital sexual relations are not regarded as "sinful," since virginity is not considered a value per se (See Muratorio 1995a).

8. By focusing on texts, art, and popular music as inter-cultural experiences, that literature often misses the complexities of the issues involved in the so-called "hybrid cultures;" complexities that are better revealed in the historically informed discussion of this concept in the work of Rowe and Schelling (1991) or Garc a Canelini (1995), for instance.

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## **ABSTRACT**

**This essay explores the current problems of cultural reproduction and identity politics in the Ecuadorian Amazon through the personal memory narratives of a group of elder indigenous women facing difficulties with their granddaughters. It argues that women's histories and their conceptions of self are inscribed in their experiences in a self-defined "domestic space." This intra-cultural struggle provides a better understanding of the scripts of cultural reproduction being played, largely by men, in other scenarios.**



**"LIKE MIRRORS THEY BREAK": INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S IDENTITIES AND THE POLITICS OF CULTURAL REPRODUCTION IN THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON**

These young girls look at themselves through the television looking glass, but only mirror the whites. And then...like mirrors they break.

These poignant metaphors of gendered identities and social and cultural change in the Upper Napo area of the Ecuadorian Amazon in the 1990s, were spoken by an elder Napo Quichua woman as an incisive comment on the sexual self-images and social behavior of young women, most of whom belong to the same generation as her teenage granddaughters. This paper is an attempt to unravel some of the many social and cultural complexities embedded in this set of metaphors through an interpretation of women's narratives and contemporary experiences.

For some time now, during my periodic visits to the town of Tena and surrounding indigenous communities, I have been involved in the everyday life of women and, more specifically, in recording the life histories of a small group of elder women I have come to

know very well. During the last two summers, the problem of adolescent women's uncontrolled, and indiscriminate, infatuation and sexual liaisons with young men, as well as the consequent unsought pregnancies, have complicated these grandmothers' lives, and dominated their conversations. They are deeply concerned with the predicament of these young women who are "running out of hand," or literally running away to other booming towns in the region or to the capital city of Quito. An increasing number of girls from previously isolated and remote settlements are now coming to live in Tena, eagerly looking for the normal excitement provided by urban modern attractions such as television and discotheques, but even by more established ones, such as the possibility of attending high schools, where they are able to socialize with people their own age. What specially worries their elders is that this young crowd now includes non-indigenous people, even foreigners, and that the sexual liaisons are often initiated by the young women themselves. These teenage women are locally being called *carachamas*, the name of an abundant, and easy to catch, small native fish. The normal "wild period" of adolescent women's sexuality, in the past controlled within the constraints and intimacy of the kin groups, is now becoming a matter of public scandal, and this is the center of the older women's worries. The larger critical controversial question that underlies these older women's narratives is not just the quality and pace of



modern change, but the very essence of social and cultural reproduction and the role they are going to play in it. This explains why the issue of indigenous women's identities, and their future cultural reproduction, is the one I shall address here.

In addition, my choice to focus on an intergenerational conflict over images and practices of gendered identities was prompted by three analytical considerations. First, in two recent overviews of anthropological studies on gender relations in Amazonian societies (Seymour-Smith 1991; Bellier 1993), it is pointed out that the prevailing theoretical explanations have been grounded on generalizing theories of social structure, myth, or psychoanalytic profiles. Both Seymour-Smith and Bellier see the need for further studies centred in the actual content of women's everyday life experiences situated in the larger context of the economic, social, and political changes now taking place in Amazonian societies. My objective here is to address these issues by exploring gender differences in the construction of personhood, as they are experienced in the context of a particular process of change. I shall examine how Napo Quichua women reminisce, talk about, and negotiate, in everyday life, the multiple meanings of being an *indigenous* woman in an increasingly complex inter-ethnic society. In these conversations women relive and reenact the events and experiences talked about. Thus, the representations of femininity they

communicate do not exhaust themselves in words, but incorporate the richness of visual imagery and other sensory experiences of smells, tastes, and sounds.<sup>1</sup> By concentrating on personal memory narratives of individual women, and by incorporating the process by which culture is negotiated among women through time, I would like then to shift the theoretical focus away from previous explanatory models of gender roles and identities that tend to homogenize women into unitary categories locking them into long-gone ethnographic presents (cf., Mohanty 1991; Abu-Lughod 1991).

My second aim is to explore how everyday *intra-cultural struggles* (Sider 1991; Smith 1991) are able to reveal gendered histories as they are being produced, rather than hiding them under a polished composite text. The indigenous grandmothers' narratives are not articulated into transparent statements about "culture" as a pristine legacy from the past, but as self-conscious, thoughtful, and emotionally charged reflections embedded in their own representations and practices in the "domestic space," where their ethnohistories are inscribed (cf., Sider 1991). Besides, as it became obvious to me some time ago while working on a life-history of an elderly indigenous man (Muratorio 1991), Napo Quichua men and women, both young and old, entertain conflicting and often contradictory discourses on gender. These discourses have changed over time, and continue to do so, even if one can always detect in all of them the

traces of common, if unspoken, cultural premises.

Finally, while there have been excellent studies of the contemporary complexities of cultural reproduction in other Amazonian societies (see sp., Jackson 1989, 1995; Turner 1991, 1992), they have failed to address directly the issue of gender. I will argue that this intergenerational conflict, here narrated as women's struggle over gender imageries and practices, offers a privileged local stage from where to have a better insight into the dominantly verbal scripts of indigenous cultural reproduction being played, largely by men, in national and international scenarios. Napo Quichua women's scripts need a subtle and processual reading without the Western blinders that, as Strathern (1984) has argued, denigrates domesticity to a second rate space of confinement, or imposes notions of personhood that equates it with an often painful disengagement from culturally meaningful social relations. Conscious and still wary about the difficulties of embracing such an approach for reading women's practices without falling into the same mistakes we argue against, I will nevertheless propose here that a deep involvement with women's autobiographical accounts and other forms of personal expressions in their own self-defined domestic space, provide an important key to unlock the hidden historicities of women's cultural identities.

### **The larger background to the women's argument**

The Napo Quichua of the Tena-Archidona area share with thousands of other Lowland-Quichua speakers a traditional tropical forest culture based on hunting, fishing, gathering, and swidden agriculture. However, unlike other Amazonian indigenous groups, very early on in the Colonial period the Napo Quichua were forced to adapt their subsistence strategies and symbolic worlds first to the economic, political, and cultural demands of Spanish conquistadors and Catholic missionaries, and later to the different efforts by the State and local government administrators to incorporate them into the national society. Enforcing a policy of sedentarization was the key to that endeavor of turning "savagery" into "civilization." Although the Napo Quichua resisted this policy in many different ways, in the long run it was decisive in eroding their land base and their ability to practice their traditional subsistence activities.

Most contact agents conveyed to indigenous peoples the message that their way of life was "inferior," and that it had to be substituted by whichever was the current hegemonic conception of "civilized" customs. This was specifically true regarding sexuality and gender relations. Catholic missionaries perceived Amazonian peoples' physical bodies as particularly "uncivilized." They regarded the Napo Quichua as lacking any sense of morality and as

being affected by "unnatural" sexual urges that had to be controlled within marriage. Advocating early marriages for indigenous women, or temporarily confining them into convents, were the two most consistent policies the Catholic missionaries tried to enforce in this area to regulate and control the indigenous domestic domain. Early in this century, the Liberal state also intervened directly into indigenous private and family life, particularly with legislation about civil marriage and divorce, and with universal schooling (Moscoso 1996; Goetschel 1996). Since then, the state regulation and discipline of sexuality and socialization practices have contributed, along with the economic transformations, to the changes in power and authority families and kin groups are experiencing today. For several centuries then, in this particular Amazonian society, gender subjectivities have been contested dialogues, not only between men and women, but between indigenous peoples and the wider non-indigenous world. However, both men and women were able to negotiate gender identities that did not merely reflect hegemonic constructions by Church and State, but incorporated or subverted them to suit their own cultural projects (Muratorio 1995a).

But in the last twenty years the pace of change has accelerated dramatically in the whole Ecuadorian Amazon, primarily due to the exploitation of considerably large oil reserves in this region. The

new road infrastructure, added to the demand for labor and services by the oil industry, provided the main incentives for a massive inflow of colonists, for the growth of frontier towns, and for the increasing incorporation of most indigenous peoples into the market economy. These economic transformations, plus the periodic border conflicts between Ecuador and Peru in their Amazon frontier, have also contributed to the consolidation of the State and military presence in this region, as well as to the long overdue recognition of its cultural and social realities in the national consciousness. As in many other parts of the world, new communication technologies, specially television and radio, have been decisive in the incorporation of the younger generation of Napo Quichua into the global cultural economy. Furthermore, in the 1990s, the international concern for the environmental degradation of the Amazon rainforest attracted a large number of foreign environmentalists with different versions of sustainable development projects, particularly ecotourism. Quite a few of these ecotourist projects are being managed by indigenous peoples and promise, not only virgin forests, but "interesting inter-cultural experiences" (Muratorio 1995b). The presence of Europeans and North Americans, many of whom reside in the area for long periods of time, is also having a profound effect on the everyday lives of both Napo Quichua men and women, as well as in the local politics of ethnic

difference.<sup>ii</sup>

The most important factor in shaping the politics of ethnic difference has been the now autonomous voice of the indigenous peoples themselves through their political organizations. Nationally, and locally in the Amazon region, these organizations have been almost exclusively led by men. Indigenous intellectuals and professionals have constructed a discourse of generic Indianness with claims to a common history of ethnic revindication. Like other similar indigenous discourses since Colonial times, this one strategically relies upon Western categories of history and modernity, such as the concepts of "culture" and "environmentalism" (Brown 1993:319-320; Jackson 1995), and has been very successful in opening up significant political spaces for indigenous peoples in confronting the state. However, the homogeneous character of the ethnic identity projected by the indigenous federations silences the complexities of group and gender differences internal to the local societies; a problem that is just beginning to surface.<sup>iii</sup> Culturally, this discourse espouses a form of essentialist conservatism that naturalizes women's identities, most commonly by stereotypical female identification with the Earth Mother, and marginalizes their voices by providing very few spaces for their actual political participation. While it proclaims women to be the bearers of cultural tradition, it fails to provide the everyday

guidelines for the enactment of "politically correct" ethnicity.<sup>iv</sup>

In general, Napo Quichua elder women simply ignore, or otherwise tease local male leaders about the precise meanings and boundaries of this disjuncture between modernity and tradition. The ironic and mocking questioning -or sometimes just staring silences-directed at those leaders, constitute cogent ways in which the elder women challenge the indigenous federations' assumed monopoly on cultural memories and the redefinition of indigenous history. Some young people, however, are stumbling to recover a presumed "pristine" culture, while others are eagerly engaged in cultural amnesia. What the cultural contents of tradition are or should be, and who has control over selective cultural memories and interprets their meanings, in sum, the daily problems of cultural reproduction and the construction of identities, are then a matter of endless discussions and one of the bases of intergenerational conflicts. These internal arguments over which language to speak or what food to eat at home, over the white role models offered by the soap operas in television, over conceptions of feminine beauty and sexuality, may seem trivial or inconsequential, but they are the local manifestations of the global processes of modernity that have transformed all questions of cultural reproduction into highly politicized processes.<sup>v</sup>

Like other indigenous peoples in Ecuador and elsewhere, young



Napo Quichua women are going through the growing pains of becoming full sexual, social subjects. In dealing with the experiences of selfhood they have to walk through the uncertain and shifting boundaries of at least three main identity paths: the contested one already traveled by their elders, the most appealing one drawn by the mass media, and the politically compelling one offered by the indigenous organizations. Here I only have space to examine the first one in some detail. I will concentrate on the conflict over gender ideologies and practices as seen primarily from the point of view of the older generation of women. This emerged in the series of conversations I already mentioned, and in the songs and reminiscences, that this small group of grandmothers shared among themselves and with me during the time when the problems with their own granddaughters came to a head. Grandmothers have a very tender and close relationship with their granddaughters. After her daughters marry and go to live elsewhere, a grandmother will almost always ask for a granddaughter to come and live with her. Grandmothers then, feel particularly responsible for the raising and nurturing of those girls and for the problems they are now confronting. I do not want to convey the idea that these adult women are indulging on a romantic remembrance of their pasts, or trying to recreate some "authentic" version of feminine culture to countervail an alleged "false cultural consciousness" of the younger generation. They are

using their memories of selfhood to cope with what they presently feel is a pressing crisis in their families. But these elder women also communicate an almost inevitable sense of loss, the consciousness that they will be unable to adequately reproduce for the next generations the cultural codes that shaped them as women. They impressed me as experiencing a real feeling of *nostalghía*, in the Greek sense of the term, which as Serematakis so adequately explains, evokes all the sensory dimensions of memory, tying spiritual and bodily memories with notions of estrangement and growing old (1994:4).

### **Grandmothers' images of femininity**

Older women often talked about ideals of femininity, not only to criticize the behavior of their own granddaughters, but also because they are concerned about how their future daughters-in-law might live up to those ideals. The first thing that is emphasized in being this ideal woman is not her motherhood, but her adherence to an elaborate work ethic and aesthetics considered essential for the full realization of a woman's personal and social self. Loving and the caring of children is one of those unspoken premises that women share and take for granted, but they do not see the domestic domain primarily in terms of their reproductive roles and motherhood. Women's work, however, is a matter of ceaseless contention. Here

great differences are recognized among women in terms of knowledge, skills, and social attitudes, primarily about the production, preparation, and consumption of food. The subtleties of the symbolic meanings involved in each task are always elaborated at length in the conversations. But even more so, are the complexities of the social skills and graces women need to display in performing these tasks to perfection, as well as the great psychological and physical harm that can come to them if, in some way, they fail.<sup>vi</sup>

A woman's reputation as good worker starts to be shaped when she is very young and blooms when she reaches middle-age. By then, at least, other women acknowledge her reputation. The '*paju* transfer' ceremony is just one of the more open manifestations of that recognition. In this very domestic ritual, a younger or less competent woman purchases the powers or *pajus* of an avowed expert on growing good manioc, on preparing "sweet" manioc beer, or on curing a specific ailment. The ceremonial "begging" and the payment involved in this transaction is part of the recognition of the donor's status. A mature woman's reputation also serves to enhance the value of her daughters as marriageable partners and "good wives," an important reason why these reputations are also celebrated in autobiographical songs or in those sung by the woman's daughters. These songs are highly personalized and include the singer's name and a reference to her kin group or *ayllu*, like in this one:

Mi Mariaquitu  
a Cerda woman,  
she moves like a hummingbird  
from flower to flower.  
She knows how to work the garden  
All women admire her,  
she never bought food in town.

It is the sociality of a woman's work that is crucial for her identity, first as daughter, and then as wife and daughter-in-law. The young daughter is expected to awake much before dawn to prepare and serve the *huayusa* tea to all men and women in the household, as well as to help her mother in the preparation of the *asua* (manioc beer), to accompany her to the garden, and to take care of her younger siblings. When married, preferably very young, her immediate duties as a new daughter-in-law are quite the same although, away from her mother's love, emotionally much more onerous. Her autonomy as a wife is now symbolized by her right to her own garden, which allows her to enter into the process of production and circulation of food, but her mother-in-law and her husband are expected to complete her socialization into full adulthood, usually considered achieved when she has had her second child and the couple may choose to move to a separate household. Her performance in her in-laws' home, however, is also a test of her mother's and grandmother's own competences

in shaping her selfhood at an early age. Women's reputations have to be tested continuously, and are done so publicly. It is because the stakes are so high, that the grandmothers are so distressed about the young women's refusal to perform women's tasks, or doing them grudgingly.

Both the historically constructed character of the "domestic sphere" and its ethnographic diversity have been discussed at length in the feminist literature. It has also been noted that in some societies, the dividing line between work and leisure may be less rigid than Western capitalism requires and that, consequently, the evaluative categories frequently used to characterize women's domestic labor like "drudging" or "oppressive" also become historically contingent and may be, if not always ethnocentric, at least controversial (e.g., Harris 1981; Moore 1988). Napo Quichua women usually do not complain about their work as being boring or repetitive, nor about their caring of children as interfering with their mobility or their capacity to participate in social activities, for they carry their babies with them everywhere, or may leave their elder children in the care of other women. The domestic space is not perceived as one of confinement since it is not constrained by the four walls of the house, nor by the Western conception of the household as a bounded and socially isolated unit. Women obviously do not think of repetitive and extenuating work such as

weeding as "entertaining;" they just do not complain about this form of hard labor in the Christian terms of "redemption" for an original sin. They rather choose to emphasize their physical strength in performing this and other tasks in the fields and to talk about the beauty of a well socialized -and productive- garden as an attribute of their own identity, a metaphor of self.

The garden plot and the hearth are primarily female domains; certainly sites of a women's hard work, but also spaces where times are set aside for the transmission of knowledge, the exchange of gossip, or the recounting of stories and dreams, shared with daughters, granddaughters, and daughters-in-law. In order to perform the most important domestic task which -except for the caring of children, of course- consists of the preparation of food, women have to venture out of the house. Even forest areas, cleared around the house for daily activities, are considered to be populated by spirits beings (*supais*) with whom women may have interesting encounters, often wrapped in eroticism. This is also particularly true for women while going fishing, gold-panning, or further into the forest, where these beings may "materialize" most readily. Through these spiritual encounters a woman acquires specific powers, to cure, to fish, to pan gold, or to attract men. In her songs, for instance, a woman would speak of incorporating, not only the power of spirits, but the behavioral and aesthetic characteristics of other sentient

beings like birds, who are themselves the announcers of the presence of spirits. Thus the woman "becomes the bird," by referring to herself as "toucan woman," or "hummingbird woman." These powers are highly personalized, and engage a woman's self-reflexion. They are important in endowing and forging her own *samai* (spiritual power, breath);<sup>vii</sup> and form an integral part of her identity. However, if those powers distinguish her as a unique individual, they are only realized when socialized among humans: when they are used to heal and comfort others, or when the products of those spiritual encounters are shared with kin and visitors.

It goes without saying, that a woman who is a good provider of fish, or cash, not only complements the productive activities of her husband, but gains a large measure of autonomy from his authority. Besides, products that women gather in the forest, such as mushrooms and fiddle-head greens, or small fish they are able to catch, wrapped and cooked in leaves, are used to prepare the *huarmi uchu* (women's chili). This is a type of food that a wife can make by herself, "independently" of her husband's household contribution. Since all meals include manioc, whose production involves men's labor, and *huarmi uchu* is not considered a meal that would regularly feed a family, that independence is primarily symbolic. Women prepare *huarmi uchu* to stay hunger for the day, but also explicitly use it

to shame the husband for not being a "good provider." Women also expand their domestic domain by traveling in search for particular types of food. This usually involves visiting close kin or fictive kin in other areas of the tropical forest where game or fish may be more abundant. Part of the food obtained in this way is always brought back for circulation and consumption at home. It has been reciprocated by women's labor in the particular garden belonging to a woman in the place where the visit was made, or will be reciprocated with presents of another type of food at a future time. As Gow (1989:572-74) has argued for the tropical forest people of the Bajo Urubamba in Peru, this form of food circulation is primarily carried out by women and involves social relations of respect with those who "love, think about, and remember" another person. Among the Napo Quichua, this "caring/ memory" circulation (Gow 1989:574), as well as the now more frequent participation in the town weekly fair to sell the products of their gardens and even of their gathering, are regarded by women as an expression of their relative autonomy from men's control. They resent when, primarily out of jealousy, their husbands "unfairly" and "unreasonably" try to curtail their freedom in any way with the excuse that women always go to those places "to laugh" with other men. When women were comparing these experiences in one of our conversations, it was not surprising that a widow was the one who joyfully remarked how she



enjoys that freedom to travel anywhere, anytime, without being controlled by a man:

This is how I search for food, going places. No men dare to bother me. I travel to remember and to have things to talk about when I'm old; to remember all the good things people have given me to eat.

For many years now, the Napo Quichua have not lived exclusively on wild game or on food they cultivate themselves. They regularly need to buy many items of food in town, including meat and fish. Increasing market dependence both in production and consumption is restructuring yet again the complementarity of gender roles in Napo Quichua society and the ideological reevaluation of women. But they make a clear evaluative distinction between these two types of food, in part because town food is also "foreign," white's food which, devoid of women's knowledgeable labour, is culturally meaningless. Reminiscing about her return from a long trip to the Coastal region (a "land of foreign tastes" according to her), one of the women vividly recalled the scene of her mother waiting for her at home with a pot of manioc beer, in the following words: "Mother, I said, I was made to forget the taste of *asua* (manioc beer). Now I come back to get drunk with the love of your hands, and my mouth remembers." This example, and that of the widow quoted above, support Serematakis's argument that commensality has to be seen as

encompassing more than the mere social organization of food and drink consumption to include "the exchange of sensory memories and emotions, and of substances and objects incarnating remembrance and feeling" (1994:37). The memories of these Napo Quichua women are literally interwoven with the smells and tastes of other people's love and labor. Like the Greek grandmother and her grandson sharing food and fairytales, (Serematakis 1994) the indigenous women create an alternative world of cultural memories as a shield against the sensory invasion of the new culture of modernity. This older generation of women think that by relying on and acquiring an exclusive taste for town food, the young women will become more and more dependent on their future husbands' wages, and lose the symbolic autonomy of their productive work. By rejecting this form of knowledge they will repress the memories that speak of cultural continuity.

Specially in terms of commensality a woman's self-identity is tied to the image others have of her, but it is also embedded in the specific material artifacts and practices she uses to display it. Reliance on town food may diminish a woman's public reputation and her authority within the home, but also the texture and colour of her cooking pots can denounce her character and ability. Unlike Western stereotypes of shining cooking pots as a sign of women's cleanliness and ensuing virtue as a housekeeper, it is the blackness

of a Napo Quichua woman's pots that speaks for her feminine virtues: it means that her pots are continuously being used to feed others, to socialize, and to give generously. When kin or other visitors come to her house, the quality of the objects in it, the textures and smells of her cooking, the tone and pace of the sounds she makes while working, the grace of her movements, all have to testify for her hard-working and generous self. Not only her present, but her future reputation may be at stake, since those who are mean with food are thought to be punished in the afterlife by being stuffed with it until they burst, time and time again.

The local term most often used to describe the ideal woman is *pichihuarmi*, a woman who resembles the small, light, and very quick-moving *pichi* bird.<sup>viii</sup> She is described as light-footed, quick-witted, and humorous but wise. She sings and serves manioc beer promptly, is hard-working, and always feeds others. This bird is the symbol of the two essential qualities of female agency: hard-work and generosity. Its meanings are far removed from the Christian ideology of passive and receptive femininity. Two other terms come close to describing this ideal woman: *allihuarmi* and *sabiruhuarmi*, beautiful and wise woman, in whom knowledge, skill, and physical beauty complement each other as expressed in her everyday practices. On the contrary, a "bad" woman is always talked about primarily as "lazy."

Laziness is degrading mainly because it is regarded as the quintessential anti-social behavior. Not surprisingly, the Quichua term used to characterize such a woman is *carishina* (man-like) since, of course, men are not expected to be able to perform, much less excel, at women's tasks. *Carishina* is often used as an admonition when disciplining young girls, but always as an insult when referring to an adult woman. She is not only being recriminated for incompetence, but also shamed for her indulgence and lack of self-respect. As one grandmother complained: Now women are only good to sleep with their husbands; they are wise to show their buttocks to men. Then, they are upset when husbands beat them up under the pretense they thought they had married a hard-working woman.

The analogy implied in the term *carishina* between a "bad woman" and men's incompetence at performing women's tasks does not signify the denigration of men's labor. In some of their songs or in ordinary speech, women sometimes use the term *cari-huarmi* (man-woman) to proudly refer to themselves as having the strengths needed for hunting, fishing, cutting down trees, or carrying logs; all skills attributed to men in the accepted conception of gender complementarity in the division of labor. The degrading moral attributes of laziness also apply to men who are not good providers of game, fish or, more commonly now, of cash-remunerated labor.

However, I do not know of a positive or negative term that refers to these men as incorporating the qualities of female-designated labor. This is an aspect of gender relations that needs further research in this area of the Amazon because of its early insertion in the national society. The existing evidence, however, is enough to demonstrate the need for contextualizing dualistic and hierarchical gender discourses in order to understand their different cultural meanings as they are being produced, reproduced, and transformed over time.

### **The mirrors of sexuality**

The main matter of contention among these two generations of women is, of course, how to represent and express sexuality. This essential issue in the construction of personhood is highlighted through narratives about the body: how is it clothed and adorned; how and where does it look; how does it move; and how does it sound. The shape of a woman's body is regarded as a language by which she communicates, whether willingly or not, significant messages about herself and her male companion. If a woman is thin, she will be seen by others as someone who is not well provided by her husband; and her thinness may be regarded as a sign that she is being physically abused by him. By contrast, having a "rounded figure," without fat, is seen as evidence of a woman well fed by her husband, and having

the muscle strength acquired through her hard labour in the garden plot, and by traveling on foot. In general, a woman's well-rounded body is a statement of her well adjusted marriage and of her contentment with herself and her life. As Turner has argued for the Kayapó, dress and bodily adornment constitute not only one of the most significant cultural mediums in shaping and communicating personal and social identity, but are also a primary language of socialization (1980: 112-14), as I will propose regarding the case of Napo Quichua women in the section that follows.

The long-sleeved cotton blouse (*maquicutun*) and the ankle length skirt (*pampanilla*), which became the "traditional" dress of Napo Quichua women of this area, were an integral part of the gendered and racially explicit code of modesty, decency, and bodily shame established by male Catholic missionaries, and supervised by nuns (Muratorio 1994). Today that dress is worn only to represent "female Indianness" in festive occasions, school parades, or beauty-queen contests. It can also be rented by non-Indians for those same purposes. As most standardized dresses designed by institutions, this one was, and continues to be, barren of personalized meanings. The one item of that outfit that retains a strong symbolic value in adult women's memories is the bead necklace (*huallcamuyu*). It was made of imported beads of many colours and the woman's pride and beauty were at its peak when the necklace reached her waist.

The colours of the beads evoked the brilliance of birds' feathers, and mirrored the woman's embodiment of the characteristics of particular birds. It also marked the status of a woman as a married one but, most importantly, the fact that her husband was a good provider, since those beads had to be bought from merchant-patrons with hard labour.

When commenting on how young women dress nowadays, one subject the adult women often brought up was the wearing of shoes. In one or two occasions, they specifically criticized one or the other indigenous woman for trying to look like *señoras* (white women) by wearing high-heel shoes. But what really puzzled me at first was the fact that, more often, they seem to insist in attaching some kind of general negative symbolic meaning to women's wearing anykind of footwear. Since all indigenous women regularly wear shoes, one has to go beyond simple arguments, such as "rejection of modernity," to understand the meaning of women's objections. Talking about shoes, as I came to realize soon enough, was just a pretext to expand upon the favorite topic of "walking" and "going places." This is an experience of being, expressed in Quichua by the verb *purina*, which is vital in defining these tropical forest women's identity (Harrison 1989:159-60). This is how one of the grandmothers explained it to me:

Shoes make your feet soft, and soft feet are useless to walk

long distances and to stand for long hours on hot pebbled beaches [panning gold]. How are young women ever going to learn to walk if they never take their shoes off and always travel by bus?

Soft feet become a symbol of lack of freedom of movement, of sedentarization, of the fact that young women now spend hours sitting, or otherwise immobilized, in the confined spaces of a school, an office, or a bus. What the older women seem to find objectionable is that these items of transportation (shoes or buses) are now being used as exclusive alternatives to colonize indigenous modes of communication and mobilization. Roads or any of the new technologies of transportation create different times and spaces (Boyarin 1994) than traveling by foot; they also fashion different audiovisual languages and landscapes. For instance, spaces and times of visions, dreams, and memories, so vital in Napo Quichua sense of personal fulfillment and social belonging, cannot be traversed by new technologies. As one woman expressed it in a song, sung to her mother when she returned from a long trip to a distant place, the memories of the mind travel faster than the modern means of communication:

I return from this distant place,

I return to you, my mother.

As surely as the rain after the storm,



my happiness arrives in the wind.

My body might be in the bus,

but my mind returns to you in the wind.

It is an acknowledged reality that the body becomes weaker with age. Mainly because of a life of gold panning, many women in this area suffer from arthritis, which particularly affects their knees, believed to be the axle of the "body's motor"- as a woman referred to the legs. The mind, instead, becomes sharper as people age. A strong *samai* embodies intelligence and social skills, both considered to be the product of time. As I indicated before, a woman's *samai* encapsulates her experiences of a lifetime, and is expressed through narratives and practices endowed with meaning. Elder women excel at giving advice, a language of socialization that still remains relatively ritualized among the Napo Quichua. When advising a younger person, the tone of voice has to be low, and the manner calm. Nurturing is a slow process, it requires patience, like women's work of plant domestication. Women consider themselves better at it than men. Gender complementarity in plant domestication is acknowledged, but men's role in it is associated with physical strength and with the more "predatory" labor of clearing the forest to start the garden. Men are also regarded as having louder voices and as being more prompt to shout, two characteristics that, in the eyes of women, makes men's advising speech "less intelligent and

effective." On one occasion, when criticizing her husband for the "bad," loud advice he was giving to his daughter, I heard the mother saying: "You can never grow plants with violence, you always have to talk softly to them."

Parental guidance and advice continues even after death in dreams, when the soul (aya) of the dreamer is believed to meet and talk with the soul of the deceased person. Older women's conversations are frequently interspersed with the vivid recounting of dreams; particularly those where their mothers and grandmothers appear to suggest paths of action, to warn about dangers, or just to bring back the remembrances and feelings of shared experiences. The older women also "perform" those memories of kin<sup>ix</sup> when they engage in a form of ritual wailing that may take place in the course of a normal conversation.<sup>x</sup> This expressive narrative form is always accompanied by crying, and can be triggered unexpectedly when looking at a photograph, or when evoking an event which involved close kin. Women use this medium not only to relive their relationships with the deceased, but also to reflect on their present feelings about themselves without them. In the patriarchal Christian ideology of "suffering," crying is considered the most appropriate expression of women's redemption, while it signals men's lack of virility. Suffering is said to be a virtue to forge women's moral character and to redeem her "impure" nature (Moscoso 1996: 98-100). In the

context of wailing, Napo Quichua women actually invert this meaning by turning crying into an expression of life and continuity, since it evokes memories of shared experiences with close kin and it is a way to relive and to reassert social relations, not to assume guilt for individual or collective and gendered sins.

Songs, like the ones quoted above, are another way in which women express their feelings of closeness to significant female others who were crucial in shaping their selves. Through memories, those selves become embodied in songs. Harrison (1989 :147) points out that in the lowlands of Ecuador the term *llackichina*, used to refer to the reasons for singing these songs and to the emotional states involved in transmitting them, is synonymous with "loving and to cause love," rather than with the more restricted sense of "causing pain or sorrow" to another person. The grandmothers regret the fact that both their daughters and granddaughters do not care to learn these songs anymore and prefer the loud contemporary music, heard almost anywhere young people socialize nowadays. But there is an ironic twist to this situation. When now some of their granddaughters, who work in ecotourist programs, want to learn their songs from them, the older women refuse to teach them in that context. Using their own culture for economic advancement is one thing indigenous people of this area have recently discovered, but these grandmothers are not yet ready to accept the commodification of their

own memories and personal histories.

### **The screen mirror**

As all other older Napo Quichua I know, the grandmothers whose conversations I am discussing were raised in an oral culture and in the intimacy and relative autonomy of their kin groups. They regard television primarily as an invasion of the white Other into their own homes. Although for them it remains a foreign grammar, they recognize its compelling visual allurements, and precisely because of that power, they see it as "unfair" competition in relation to their own language of socialization. The grandmothers' main objection to television originates in their belief that the young girls imitate the white foreign models too closely, and try to mold their whole selves in their image. As I noted above, these adult women, as their mothers and grandmothers before them, were quite capable of reshaping their ethnic and gendered identities by accommodating and resisting previous racial aesthetic and moral models imposed by state officials, nuns, or local white colonists. These individual people, however, could be talked back, sabotaged, or eventually emulated, as a process of daily interaction. Instead, the television images do not provide the cultural clues to create meaning because the characters embodied in them do not engage in

dialogue with the audience, they just talk "to" themselves. They are mute to social interaction, and therefore their language is considered more difficult to challenge.

When discussing what aspects of their personal appearance young women imitate from the role models they see on television, the older women often refer to the use of make-up, and almost inevitably compare it with traditional face-painting done with vegetable dyes. Since as far as people can remember, the Napo Quichua always used some type of clothing, their body painting was never as elaborate as that of other Amazonian groups. However, face-painting was an integral part of socialization practices, since usually older women painted younger ones in the process of forming their social and sexual selves. Sometimes women painted one another when going to the garden to plant manioc, and always for ritual celebrations when dancing was involved. In these occasions, older women remember the particular beautiful red and blue designs they created on their faces, specially to attract men; and how these designs became highlighted by the movements of their long, black hair. A woman's long and shining hair is another sign of her beauty and strength. When dancing, the hair moves with the rhythm of the music "like a strong wind," and carries to the male partner the message of sexuality and strength of the dancer, like a strong wind carries the leaves of the trees. Now, of course on hindsight, the grandmothers firmly proclaim that

language of sexuality to have been "subdued," "discreet," and "modest."

In contrast, the strident colours of today's make-up used on a daily basis, make young women appear to be sexually available all the time, which is considered inmodest. Here one can invoke Berger's explanation of the real function of the mirror in European oil painting of women, as making "the woman connive in treating herself as, first and foremost, a sight" (1972:51), and therefore objectified, not being really herself. The fact that in order to put on make-up now, a young woman looks at herself in the mirror and attempts to create an image of the woman she wants to be, *all by herself*, is another main reason why the grandmothers find this form of bodily adornment objectionable. Its indulgent individuality challenges accepted forms of traditional Napo Quichua women's sociality and their assumptions about the nature of personhood. By cutting their hair and putting on make-up, the young girls defamiliarize themselves with their own cultural image, and end up rejecting it by trying to reconstruct their bodies according to foreign role models. The visual realism of the television images competes with their mothers' and grandmothers' narratives of socialization, and ends up by delegitimizing them. Some of these young women are actually repressing, at least publicly, quite recent memories of their own childhood, as when they reject the taste of

indigenous foods or, even worst, when they claim ignorance of the Quichua language and refuse to speak it.

Finally, there are even more serious aspects of sociality that the grandmothers feel are being threatened by the images in the mass media: the very ties of kinship. Surely, this is an intricate issue I cannot properly discuss here. But I would like to briefly examine its significance in explaining the last sentence in the older woman's statement that started my discussion. Among the Napo Quichua, sexuality and demonstrations of love and affection are kept extremely private. Married couples and lovers usually use the privacy of the river banks, or the forest for engaging in sexual relations. Holding hands, kissing, or embracing in public is very rare, even among young people today. The open and unashamed display of all those aspects of sexuality in the mirror of the television screen are seen as quite offensive by the older women or, at least, as an embarrassment in front of others. The grandmothers worry about the fact that younger women are mirroring from that screen, not only uncomely appearances, but worst, highly objectionable social practices. They display a degree of familiarity and open sexuality that is dangerously breaching all the codes of etiquette that kept kinship hierarchies into place. The most clear statement of this concern was voiced very recently by one of the older women, whose fourteen year old granddaughter had just run away to Quito, after a series of scandalous

sexual affairs in Tena. When asking me if I could look for her when returning to Quito, the outraged grandmother tried to explain:

Now women learn from television of people who embrace and kiss each other in public; who only live off their husband's money, or with the money they earn with their bodies. That is why women are losing respect for kin, they let themselves be embraced by cousins and brothers-in-laws. They address both of them by their first names! [instead of using the proper kin-terms] as if they were married to them. They don't address older people with respect either; they think they can shut them off in the same way they push that little button in the television set and 'click'...the *gringo* [foreigner] is gone.

Grandmothers are troubled because they feel that young women are falling, if not into sin,<sup>x1</sup> into a perilous cultural vortex full of uncertainties that contributes to the insecurities and anxieties they feel about themselves. The strongest reason I can give for the older women's own anxieties, is their belief that the fracturing of vital interpersonal kin ties, does not allow those fragile young selves (otherwise considered normal in adolescents) to be supported and nurtured back to "health" by the knowledge, closeness, and affection provided by older kin. Lonely, insecure selves are vulnerable: like mirrors they break.



## Conclusions

I am aware that in this essay I have offered only a partial account of a complex issue by focusing on the grandmothers' side of the ongoing controversy with their granddaughters over gender imageries and relations. The elder women talk about their memories and experiences of personhood as a way of making sense and making history in the present. Their voices reveal internally complex subjects whose self-consciousness and social practices reflect often paradoxical and conflicting intents and emotions, particularly because now they feel they are losing out in the struggle for cultural reproduction. This is experienced as a sense of loss and separation; a feeling of loneliness. When her last daughter left to live in town, one of the older women gave a brief expression of those feelings with this sighing question: "And now... who is going to gather my thoughts?" These feeling memories speak of the intersubjective character of selfhood and of its deep roots in social relations; those that are now rapidly changing, as is so eloquently suggested in the metaphor of the young selves as broken mirrors. The elder women narratives have then to be interpreted in the changing fields of power brought about by the new agents of a globalized political and cultural economy. How are these young indigenous women going to incorporate modernity through the many neo-colonial mirrors, and at the same time reinvent their gendered indigenous identities, is

one crucial question facing many indigenous women, and men, in Latin America to-day.

Through the eyes of their grandmothers, I tried to show how some Napo Quichua young women are straggling through the everyday realities of their adolescent peer groups at school and the consumer culture offered by the mass media on the one hand, and on the other, by what they view as the old-fashioned ideas of their parents and grandparents. A few politically committed ones uneasily let themselves be guided by the rather typified discourses of the indigenous organizations. The young women are using these symbolic resources to construct a bridge between the cursory known, and often self-repressed, culture of their elders and the borrowings from dominant and oppositional discourses. These attempts by the young girls to reformulate their ethnic identities may be interpreted as strategies of empowerment in the increasingly complex scenarios of political struggles for ethnic survival. But we should also consider the fact that those same attempts may lead them into the ugly realities of alienation, prostitution, and sexual abuse. The pains encountered in this latter path are the center of the grandmothers' concerns that cannot be comfortably dismissed. They reflect the often overlooked violence indigenous women may face in their search for what in the recent literature on Latin American popular culture has been characterized -and sometimes too hastily

celebrated- as "hybrid identities."<sup>xii</sup>

It is of course not my intention to offer the reader a definite optimistic or pessimistic answer to this difficult dilemma. Based on the insights of a historically oriented anthropological research on Napo Quichua culture, I can only conclude that for these particular indigenous peoples, the challenge is not new. Their history shows that both men and women were able to negotiate their own dynamic cultural "authenticity" out of the violence of domination which was very much a part of their lives. The structural and ideological conditions of a globalized and homogenizing economy and society may make the task more difficult for younger selves, but certainly not impossible. *Maybe* the mirrors won't break, after all.









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NOTES

i. Drawing from her work among indigenous women in the Yukon, Cruikshank (1992, 1995) argues for an analytical approach that takes into account the confluence between the spoken word and material culture. From the relatively new perspective of the anthropology of the senses, Serematakis (1992:vii) emphasizes the need to see "historical representation and experience [as] embedded in material culture." In the Ecuadorian Amazon, the insightful ethnographic work of Dorothea and Norman Whitten (see esp., 1985, and Norman Whitten 1993) with individual Canelos Quichua women potters, provides ample demonstration of the richness of such an approach.

ii. A few recent inter-ethnic marriages between Napo Quichua and foreigners are causing great concern in this area of the Amazon, especially among indigenous women. This problem raises other issues about changes in marriage practices that I am currently analyzing.

iii.. A few recent inter-ethnic marriages between Napo Quichua and

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foreigners are causing great concern in this area of the Amazon, especially among indigenous women. This problem raises other issues about changes in marriage practices that I am currently analyzing.

iv. See Warren (1992) for a discussion of similar forms of cultural essentialism present in the discourses on ethnicity espoused by contemporary Mayan indigenous leaders. Wilson (1988) is one of the few studies I know that directly addresses the issue of the representation of gender in the indigenous discourses (*pensamiento indigenista*), focusing on the case of the Highlands in Bolivia. In Ecuador the indigenous intellectuals also come primarily from the Highlands, from agricultural societies where symbolic ties are recognized between women and *Pachamama* (Mother Earth), an association that has no equivalent among the Napo Quichua. In her study of the meaning of *Pachamama* in the Andes, Harris (1988) points out that in tropical and sub-tropical areas and among other hunting and gathering societies, there is no emphasis on the mothering aspects of the land. For example, in the Ecuadorian Amazon, among the Achuar, Descola (1994: 215) argues that the mythical spirit Nunkui represents the tutelary spirit of the gardens and the mother of cultivated plants, but a figure that only bears a marginal semblance to the Andean Mother Earth.

v. Several recent anthropological studies have dealt with the



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cultural complexities involved in intergenerational conflicts between tradition and the trappings of modernity, but few have focused on women's discourses. An excellent exception is Abu-Lughod's work (see sp., 1990).

vi. Except for jealousy, a woman's perceived failings in performing all the household duties expected of her is the most common excuse given by the husband for physically abusing her.

vii. Sometimes, *muscui*, or the power to make somebody else dream, is ambiguously compared with *samai*, or recognized as a separate power altogether. The transfer of all these powers to the next generation is a crucial element in Napo Quichua socialization (cf., Macdonald 1979). These encounters with spirit beings who are credited with human form and intention, differ in several ways I am unable to explain here, from those that happen under the influence of hallucinogenic drugs such as *ayahuasca* (Banisteriopsis) or *huanduj* (Datura).

viii. I have not yet been able to find the scientific identification for this particular bird.

ix. Several anthropologists working on diverse ethnographic areas have elaborated the connections between kinship, death, and memories in the constitution of personhood (see sp. Gow 1991; Taylor 1993;

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Serematakis 1994)

x. This everyday form of wailing is similar to that performed in wakes, but the latter is also common among men, while the former I have heard it only among women. In a recent article, Briggs (1992) has pointed out how, among the Amazonian Warao, women use a public form of wailing as a critical social voice on male authority.

xi. Despite centuries of missionization, the Napo Quichua never accepted the Christian idea of original sin. In this particular case, women's pre-marital sexual relations are not regarded as "sinful," since virginity is not considered a value per se (see Muratorio 1995a).

xii. By focusing on art and popular music as inter-cultural experiences, that literature often misses the complexities of the issues involved in the so-called "hybrid cultures;" complexities that are otherwise revealed in the historically informed discussion of this concept in the work of Rowe and Schelling (1991) or García Canclini (1995), for instance.

## **Imágenes y voces en el debate por la modernidad y el proceso cultural en Quito**

### **Introducción a sección Memoria y Vida Cotidiana/Narrativas de Vida Introducción**

Esta sección quiere abrir un espacio para imágenes y palabras de mujeres y hombres cuyas vidas no son necesariamente objeto de la Prensa o la Historia oficial. De alguna u otra forma, estas vidas han cruzado nuestro camino y como artistas y/o científicos sociales la intención es dejar un registro, una memoria de la contribución de estas personas a la sociedad en que les tocó vivir. Citamos las palabras de Alessandro Portelli (1997)\* acerca de las relaciones que se establecen en el proceso de recoger y relatar las historias de otros individuos, como elocuente resumen de este objetivo:

“Respeto por el valor e importancia de los individuos es una de las lecciones éticas más inmediatas de la experiencia de trabajo de campo en historia oral. No son sólo los santos, los héroes, los tiranos- o las víctimas, los pecadores, los artistas los que tienen una resonancia única. Cada persona está en la encrucijada de muchas historias *potenciales*, de posibilidades imaginadas pero no cumplidas, de peligros esquivados y apenas evitados”. Para Portelli, como para Luisa Passerini (1985),\*\* todos y cada individuo tienen derecho a una autobiografía, a narrar y dar así significado a sus propias vidas.

\*Portelli, Alessandro, *The Battle of Valle Giulia. Oral History and the Art of Dialogue*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press. 1997

\*\* Passerini, Luisa, *Storia e soggettività. Le fonti orali, la memoria*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1985

### **Las cajoneras (s.xix al xxi)**

#### **Marco de referencia**

*Algunos aspectos del comercio urbano*

“El comercio estaba distribuido por toda la ciudad, pero existían determinadas calles en las que se daba una mayor concentración de esta actividad. En 1842 existían unas 150



tiendas de comercio en la parroquia de San Blas, en el extremo norte de la ciudad, zona en la que habitaban muchos indios....La venta al detalle de pequeños artículos se realizaba en los portales de la plaza Mayor y de Santo Domingo en donde existían *cajoneras* y puestos de “cachivacherías”...

Santo Domingo constituía un lugar de regateo, ya que era la entrada sur de la pequeña urbe. En esta plaza se podía tratar con los mercaderes que venían del litoral y encontrar vestidos y artículos destinados a indios y cholos...”

(Kingman Garcés 2006:113)

**Mercado de San Blas hacia 1900 (Hoffenberg 1982:27)**



**Cajoneras en Santo Domingo hacia 1910**

(Kingman Garcés 2006:200)



**Cajonera Rosa Paredes con una cliente indígena. 2002 (foto B.M.)**

“Era justamente el comercio el que permitía la circulación de una producción artesanal y manufacturera destinada a un uso indígena y cholo (cintas, peinetas, naipes, juguetes, telas baratas, imagería) /ejmplos graficos\*\* ... [El mercado] incorporaba a su dinámica a las mujeres, quienes aparentemente sólo estaban en condiciones de ejercer como comerciantes previa la autorización expresa o tácita de sus maridos pero en la práctica

habían pasado a ser las que dominaban en esa rama ocupacional, al punto de que en la mayoría de los documentos se habla de buhoneras, cajoneras, recatonas y pulperas en sentido femenino antes que masculino.” (Kingman Garcés 2006: ¿? Paper:19)

Las cajoneras se ubicaban principalmente en los portales de las plazas principales, lugares de gran confluencia de público donde también operaban dueños de almacenes que representaban otro importante estrato social en el Quito de fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX. Los conflictos entre estos dos sectores sociales a través de sus representantes en el Concejo Municipal nos permitirán, más adelante, recuperar en parte las voces de los distintos participantes.



**Dueño de almacén de zapatos. Quito hacia 1900**  
(Hoffenberg 1982: 25)

### *Algunos aspectos de la estructura social de esa época*

Si bien el acceso y la propiedad de la tierra era la base fundamental del poder y el privilegio de la clase considerada “aristócrata” o “decente”, la ciudad también jugó un rol importante la forma en que esta clase podía adquirir más poder económico, pero principalmente proveía de los espacios públicos para desplegar y acumular el capital social y simbólico. (Kingman Garcés 2006:150-151)

## El poder de cuatro muñecas de trapo



Hacia finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX, la presencia de las cajoneras (o buhoneras) en los principales portales del centro de Quito desata una serie de debates de clase entre los intereses del gran capital y el pequeño comercio que, en la superficie, parece ser un mero altercado doméstico sobre la legislación del espacio urbano. En realidad, los argumentos de ambos lados del debate revelan, con la fresca transparencia del discurso prevaleciente en esa época histórica, las diferencias más profundas entre los valores sociales, políticos y culturales de las elites por un lado y de las clases populares por otro.

A través del examen de una serie de documentos del Archivo Histórico Municipal (de 1883 a 1909??) y de algunas imágenes relevantes, nos proponemos recuperar en lo posible las voces y la presencia de los sujetos sociales en conflicto.

## Las voces de la elite

**“¿El comercio de la capital y de la República estarán vinculados al espendio (sic) de cuatro muñecas de trapo y otras baratijas de la laya?”**

Qué maravilla que cuatro muñecas de trapo tienen el poder de amenazar nada menos que todo el comercio de la República!! Las palabras, arriba citadas, del Vicepresidente del Consejo Municipal ( AHM Copiadora de Actas 1883-84 No. 577 ) son suficientes para desatar nuestra curiosidad y examinar más de cerca sus temores.



En esta sesión del Concejo se decide rechazar el proyecto relativo a prohibir la colocación de cajones en los portales públicos, obviamente a pesar del fervor del Vicepresidente del Concejo quien presenta los argumentos para prohibirlos “a favor del bien público” y de “las muchas personas respetables” que piden la reforma. Según los denunciante, las cajoneras “ensucian y afean” los andenes y portales en el centro de la ciudad y “corrompen a los domésticos de las casas contiguas a sus puestos públicos.” También interrumpen el paso de personas que transitan por allí para tratar “asuntos importantes.”

En resumen, la costumbre de permitir la existencia de “semejantes buhoneras” pugna con “la cultura y la civilización de la época” y por lo tanto se pone en duda “qué interés de alguna importancia puede impedir su abolición.”



Si bien desde su posición conservadora (menciona a García Moreno con “feliz memoria”), el Sr. Vicepresidente se plantea el problema del cambio social con argumentos que apelan a valores patrióticos republicanos y progresistas. Les pregunta a los demás miembros del Concejo si la falta de discusión sobre el tema se debe a la dificultad de estos congresistas de “cambiar una costumbre antigua” y de negarse a aceptar el hecho de que “el entronizar la República” significó “sacudir” el muy antiguo yugo del Rey.” Negar eso, en la opinión del Vicepresidente, es no ver que la Banca, el gran comercio, y la industria del país están estrechamente “vinculadas” a las instituciones políticas y sociales “de provecho.” Y todo este edificio social, económico y político está puesto en peligro por “cuatro muñecas de trapo y otras baratijas de la laya.” Pero el poder de estas cuatro muñecas de trapo también parece amenazar otro importante pilar de la estabilidad de clases existente. De acuerdo al Vicepresidente, la presencia de las cajoneras y sus “baratijas” ayuda a “corromper” a los domésticos, otros miembros numerosos de las clases populares en esa época. Aquí podríamos preguntarnos quiénes serán estos domésticos: serán clientes, amigos o amigas, o tal vez parientes de las que el Vicepresidente llama con un dejo despectivo las “semejantes buhoneras”? Podemos imaginar qué ideas de movilidad social u otras posibles libertades estarán estas últimas “instigando” en aquéllos cuyo trabajo consistía precisamente en crear y mantener la cultura material que hacía posible la “respetabilidad,” “el ornato,” “el aseo,” y la misma “cultura y “civilización” de las así designadas “personas respetables” por el Sr. Vicepresidente?.



### Las voces del pueblo

**“Hace más de cien años que los hijos del pueblo de Quito han gozado del derecho de ocupar los portales de la plaza de la Independencia...derecho que tiende a dar aliento y vida a la parte menesterosa de la sociedad, así como la más honrada y laboriosa...”**

Años más tarde, en 1899, (cita documento) las cajoneras Toribia Velasco y Feliza Jaramillo, orgullosas miembros de esas clase “más honrada y laboriosa,” están todavía luchando

contra sus enemigos quienes, “por complacer con ciertos capitales,” quieren despojarlas del derecho inmemorial de ocupar con sus cajones los portales de la plaza de la Independencia.

Estamos ahora en el período del gobierno del Gral. Eloy Alfaro y el representante de las cajoneras se puede permitir apelar a todas las autoridades nacionales y municipales para que “atajen” los avances de aquéllos que “atacan” las mismas bases de los valores republicanos representados por las cajoneras. Mientras que los miembros de la elite invocaban a la república en nombre del modernismo y del progreso del capital en contra del absolutismo real, las cajoneras afirman su derecho al espacio simbólico de la plaza de la Independencia como “legítima compensación de los servicios prestados por (nuestros) esposos é hijos, para el sostenimiento del orden público, y de la sangre derramada en los campos de batalla, para la defensa de las instituciones republicanas...”

No sólo hay entre la elite y las clases populares profundas diferencias sobre los fundamentos del sistema republicano sino también distintas concepciones sobre lo que

constituye el “orden público” y la estética del “ornato” urbano. Como ya vimos, en 1883 el Vicepresidente del Concejo Municipal, y la elite que él representaba, opinaban que los cajones “ensuciaban” y “afeaban” el espacio público y atentaban contra la cultura y la civilización. Por el contrario, dieciséis años más tarde, el representante de las cajoneras argumenta que “lejos de impresionar a la vista [los cajones y sus rentas de mercaderías] presentan un conjunto simpático de objetos variados graciosa y singularmente distribuidos.”

Por último, mientras los miembros de la elite acusan a las cajoneras de aferrarse a la tradición y así impedir el cambio social y el progreso del capital, las cajoneras por su parte demuestran una actitud flexible y realista hacia el necesario cambio urbano al declarar: “Y si para consultar las exigencias del verdadero progreso es necesaria alguna reforma compatible con nuestra situación, ofrecemos introducirla previa orden del mismo Concejo.”



## VIDAS DE LA CALLE

### Memorias alternativas: Las cajoneras de los portales<sup>1</sup>

Blanca Muratorio

FLACSO, Ecuador, Junio 2008



Foto de la autora

Este ensayo sobre las cajoneras de los portales es parte de un proyecto más amplio de biografías visuales que tratan de dejar un registro histórico y etnográfico de las voces e imágenes de mujeres de la calle en el debate por la modernidad y el proceso cultural en el Centro Histórico de Quito.

Mi aproximación a este tema es desde varias perspectivas. Primero la que he seguido en mis trabajos anteriores de dar relieve prioritario a las vidas y las voces individuales para entender las sutilezas y la profundidad histórica de un proceso social y cultural determinado. Segundo, un enfoque analítico todavía experimental, que a través de la representación visual, intenta evocar las otras experiencias sensoriales del olor, el gusto,

el tacto, y el sonido. Con mayor o menor intensidad estos sentidos, junto con la visión, forman parte integral de la experiencia y agencia individual y cultural y son repositorios de conocimiento y evocadores de memorias. Por último una aproximación antropológica a la cultura material y a los espacios donde se produce y consume que los sitúa en un contexto complejo y cambiante de relaciones sociales de clase, jerarquía y poder.

Las personas organizan sus vidas creando e interactuando con el mundo material y éste constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Los dominios privados o públicos de la vida cotidiana, como el hogar, o el lugar de trabajo pueden ser vistos como espacios donde los seres humanos tienen la posibilidad de construir, articular y desplegar un “ser de género” femenino o masculino en los diferentes y cambiantes ambientes sociales, culturales y materiales en los cuales a cada individuo le toca vivir.



Doña Judith Enríquez 1999

Foto de la autora

En el presente, sólo quedan dos mujeres cajoneras en el portal de Santo Domingo. Pero muchas de sus predecesoras, desde el siglo XIX hasta bien entrado el siglo XX, ocuparon y lucharon por ocupar otros portales aún más estratégicos alrededor de la Plaza Grande.

A través del tiempo, todas ellas han sobrevivido varios procesos de modernización urbana y las más recientes políticas de intervención económica, social y de

“reactivación” cultural en el Centro Histórico dirigidas a reglamentar lo que se supone es

un incontrovertible consenso sobre el “patrimonio cultural auténtico” como símbolo identitario. La incursión de la globalización es el último desafío que estas mujeres están afrontando.

Por el contrario, otras mujeres, y hombres, que vendían sus productos y desplegaban sus coloridas imágenes y texturas, los olores de los inciensos y las fritadas, los sonidos de sus charlas y pregones y los gustos de sus comidas en las calles y plazas del Centro Histórico, hace ya 5 años fueron excluidas o confinadas al olvido de los “no-lugares”, tales como los antiguos baños públicos debajo de San Francisco o los “centros comerciales populares” que también podríamos llamar “malls para pobres”. Esta es la misma exclusión que las cajoneras de los portales han desafiado a lo largo de su historia y una de las razones por las cuales nos interesa presentar aquí sus historias y memorias.

No es una nostalgia sentimental la que motiva esta investigación, sino mi encanto estético e intelectual por el arte y la cultura popular y el respeto por sus agentes, que están siendo cada vez más desplazados de los espacios urbanos y reemplazados por la reinención del pasado. Cuando se trata así de imponer una memoria e identidad desde una concepción esencialista de “lo culto”, necesariamente se dejan de lado otras memorias populares alternativas. Con este ensayo sobre las cajoneras intento contribuir a ese proyecto etnográfico e histórico que mis colegas de aquí ya han comenzado para documentar esas memorias alternativas, sean éstas de los albañiles, los panaderos, las confiteras, las vendedoras de santos, velas y herraduras de la suerte, o las que venden los betunes, cintillos de terciopelo azul, fajas multicolores, collares, peinillas, cascabeles, trompos y muñecas de trapo como las cajoneras de los portales.

Son precisamente las muñecas de trapo las que constituirán el hilo conductor de los discursos de clase y las memorias de identidad que paso a analizar a continuación.

### **El poder de cuatro muñecas de trapo**



Foto de la autora

Como ya dije, desde que hay antecedentes históricos de su presencia en el Centro Histórico en el siglo XIX, las cajoneras se ubicaban principalmente en los portales de las plazas principales, centro en esa época de las prácticas sociales, económicas y culturales de la aristocracia que se autodefinía como “gente decente”, así como del ir y venir de todos los otros grupos sociales que de una manera u otra conducían allí sus asuntos cotidianos.



Cajoneras en Santo Domingo hacia 1910. Foto del Archivo Histórico del Banco Central (en Kingman 2006:200)

Si bien en esa época, el sector aristocrático seguía gozando de sus rentas agrarias y de su participación en las altas finanzas, se aprovecha de las nuevas oportunidades del desarrollo urbano, arrendando los bajos de sus viviendas principales en la zona del centro para el establecimiento de pequeños almacenes, negocios o talleres. Por su parte, este nuevo estrato social de comerciantes urbanos en ascenso, se ve motivado a compartir con la aristocracia los mismos valores hacia la propiedad y hacia la “exclusividad” moral y estética del uso del espacio público en su esfuerzo por alcanzar, no sólo su prosperidad económica, sino también el más elusivo capital cultural de “la decencia”.



Dueño de almacén de zapatos. Quito 1900 (En Hoffenberg 1982:25)



En 1902, por ejemplo, el comerciante César Mantilla solicita desalojar a una cajonera de la primera tienda del portal Salinas porque desea “levantarla a mejor decencia y prestigio, adornándola convenientemente para un establecimiento mercantil de venta de libros, útiles de escritorio y agencia de periódicos importantes” Convencido de “el carácter civilizador y miras levantadas de los jóvenes que actualmente componen el Municipio” el Sr. Mantilla no duda que aceptarán su propuesta “extirpando así con mi nueva empresa la venta de baratijas o cajonerías que no tienen ninguna importancia ni decencia apropiadas a la localidad de esa tienda“

Es en contra de estos dos estratos sociales, la aristocracia y los comerciantes urbanos, que las cajoneras deben luchar por sus derechos a ocupar los portales para sus ventas. Los argumentos en este debate entre el gran capital y sus acólitos y el pequeño comercio informal revelan, con la fresca transparencia del discurso de clase prevaleciente en esa época histórica, las diferencias más profundas entre los valores sociales, políticos y culturales de los patricios y la burguesía por un lado y de las clases populares por otro. A través del examen de una serie de documentos del Archivo Histórico Municipal y de algunas imágenes relevantes, lo que me propongo aquí es recuperar en lo posible las voces y la presencia de esos sujetos sociales en conflicto intentando establecer un precedente para entender los intereses que están por detrás de los más recientes debates por la ocupación material y social del espacio urbano y por las memorias históricas.

## Las voces de la elite

La elite en la  
Calle García Moreno, circa 1900  
(En Hoffenberg 1982: 21)



En una sesión del Concejo Municipal en 1883, por ejemplo, su Vicepresidente argumenta con fervor que prohibir la colocación de cajones es “favorecer el bien público” y a “las muchas personas respetables” que piden la reforma en bien del “aseo”, “el ornato”, “la salubridad” y “la moral pública”. Según los denunciantes, las cajoneras “ensucian y afean” los jardines, andenes y portales en el centro de la ciudad e impiden el tránsito de los que usan ese “foro” para tratar “asuntos importantes”. Aquí es necesario recordar que en esa época en Quito, así como en el foro romano, sólo los hombres de cierta clase social eran considerados suficientemente “importantes” para tratar asuntos igualmente “importantes” en público. Por lo tanto, de acuerdo al Sr. Vicepresidente, impedir la abolición de los cajones es negar el progreso de la República y no ver que la Banca, el gran comercio, y la industria del país están estrechamente “vinculadas” a las instituciones políticas y sociales “de provecho.” Y reitera, todo este edificio social, económico y político está puesto en peligro por “cuatro muñecas de trapo y otras baratijas de la lava”.

Qué maravilla que cuatro muñecas de trapo tuvieran el poder de amenazar nada menos que todo el comercio de la República!!!

Pero el poder de estas cuatro muñecas de trapo también parece amenazar otro importante pilar de la estabilidad de clases existente. De acuerdo al Vicepresidente, las cajoneras y sus “baratijas” dan escándalo y “corrompen a los domésticos de las casas contiguas a sus puestos públicos”. Considerando que la servidumbre que habitaba en esas casas formaba una parte considerable de las familias patriarcales de las clases acomodadas el temor de “los señores” podía no ser totalmente injustificado. Aunque por supuesto no existe evidencia de sus conversaciones, podemos imaginar qué ideas de movilidad social u otras posibles libertades las cajoneras pueden haber “instigando” en aquéllos otros miembros de las clases populares, cuyo trabajo doméstico consistía precisamente en crear y mantener la cultura material que hacía posible la “respetabilidad,” “el ornato,” “el aseo,” y la misma “cultura y “civilización” de las así designadas “personas respetables” por el Sr. Vicepresidente. Específicamente, es relevante citar aquí un documento de 1902 donde se aboga por el derecho a su cajón de “la Jaramillo”, “madre de seis hijos y que a fuerza de trabajo se ha elevado de la condición de criada [] reivindicándose a ser buhonera”. Más aún, tres años antes, “la Jaramillo”, junto con su colega Toribia Velasco, ya han hecho oír su protesta contra las políticas que favorecían a las elites, presentándose como la voz del pueblo.

## Las voces del pueblo



La Cajonera. Acuarela de Joaquín Pinto  
Siglo XIX  
(Foto en Samaniego: 1977)

En 1899 estas dos cajoneras, orgullosas miembros de esas clase “más honrada y laboriosa” están todavía luchando contra los enemigos de “la parte menesterosa de la sociedad” que quieren despojarlas del derecho “inmemorial” de ocupar con sus cajones los portales de la plaza de la Independencia “so pretexto de mejoramiento y progreso”. Mientras que los miembros de la elite invocaban a la república en nombre del modernismo y del progreso del capital en contra del absolutismo real, las cajoneras afirman su derecho al espacio simbólico de la plaza de la Independencia como “legítima compensación de los servicios prestados por (nuestros) esposos é hijos, para el sostenimiento del orden público, y de la sangre derramada en los campos de batalla, para la defensa de las instituciones republicanas....”

No sólo hay entre la elite y las clases populares profundas diferencias sobre los fundamentos del sistema republicano sino también distintas concepciones sobre lo que constituye el “orden público” y la estética del “ornato” urbano, así como sobre las reformas pertinentes de implementar los cambios necesarios. )argumentos que no tengo tiempo de presentar aquí)

Este conflicto de intereses entre los dos sectores sociales continúa casi ininterrumpido con idénticos argumentos de ambos lados a todo lo largo del siglo XX. Recién en 1992 parece haber evidencia de que las cajoneras han sido clasificadas como “vendedoras estables y permanentes” en el portal de Santo Domingo.

En el presente, la ingenua y transparente retórica de los discursos de clase que caracterizaron a los debates de antaño, son encubiertas por el lenguaje técnico y supuestamente neutral de los expertos nacionales e internacionales del patrimonio cultural del Centro Histórico. Pero, a mi ver, los *intereses de clase* que sustentan este nuevo discurso entre lo “culto” hegemónico y lo popular no han cambiado significativamente en Quito en lo que va del Siglo XXI. (aunque reconozco que esta afirmación puede ser objeto de debate)

Muchas de las cajoneras heredaron sus puestos de sus madres. Obviamente la combinación de ese fuerte sentimiento de identidad familiar, orgullo de clase, sentido común y espíritu de lucha por su supervivencia han sido los atributos que han permitido a las cajoneras mantenerse en sus puestos de trabajo. Actualmente las cajoneras se extinguen, no por la violencia y el desalojo que sufren otras mujeres de la calle, sino por el desgaste de la globalización que arrasa con los consumos tradicionales, los copia y estandariza en plástico “Made in China” y los vende en los shopping malls.<sup>7</sup>

Las dos cajoneras que logramos entrevistar a lo largo de unos años en el portal de Santo Domingo reconocen la inevitabilidad de este proceso ya que sus ganancias disminuyen día a día y ellas están, de todas maneras en edad de retirarse. Ya no hay razón para que demuestren el mismo espíritu de lucha de sus madres y abuelas. Sus narrativas de vida, sin embargo, revelan el mismo sentido de identidad familiar y el orgullo por la

independencia de la “tutela” masculina que les ha permitido su profesión. Así nos dice Judith Enríquez en 1999:

“Yo hago muñecas. Mi abuelita inventó las muñecas. Se llamaba Aurora Vargas y se separó del abuelito. Un día él le dijo: “Pongamos mejor una licorería” pero ella no quería y él se fue a Manabí y no regresó más. Mi abuelita vivía entonces con una mujer que hacía muñecas y las vestía con papel. Mi abuelita encontró pedazos de tela y así con eso empezó a vestirlas. Tenía una demanda tremenda de sus muñecas. Se murió de 100 años hace ya 50 años. Mi mamá se llamaba Carmen Martínez y siguió haciendo muñecas y ahora soy yo la primerita. Algunas de las muñecas que hizo mi mamá están en el Banco Central.



Yo hago mis muñecas “limpias” (de brujería). Otras hacen muñecas pero así no más porque son para maldades. Mi hermana Zoila hace buenas muñecas y las

vende a otras cajoneras.



Mi hija y la hija de mi ñaña también hace cosas bonitas muñecas: payasos, monjas, el niño Jesús, José, María, un gentío de muñecas.”



Oigamos ahora el testimonio de identidad más reciente (2002, 2003 y 2007) de la otra cajonera Doña Rosa Paredes:



“Soy viuda y soy cajonera desde 1976. Fui la última con el número 16. En esa época todo el portal (de Santo Domingo) estaba completo y no había espacio.. Le compré el cajón a una señora Jesusa que era la madre de la otra cajonera que ahora queda en este portal. Yo me jubilé de un trabajo anterior con una señora como ayuda de ventas en el mercado de Ipiales.

Luego compré el cajón y vendía a toda clase de personas desde “los de la Hi hasta los indiecitos”.



Antes se vendía mucho, especialmente las muñecas. Incluso yo antes hacía las mías. Ahora no se vende lo que antes, las ventas no son buenas y el comercio ha bajado con la ciudad que se ha modernizado.



Todas las mujeres se van afuera ahora. La hermana de esa cajonera (la otra que todavía queda) se fue a España.





Por su parte en 1999, la Sra. Judith recordaba así a sus colegas



Antes estaba la Mariana, la Sra. Rosario, la Alegría y la Marita que se murió hace poco. Las otras eran “las copetonas” de apellido Galiano. Le decían “las copetonas” porque se hacían unos moños. La Helena puso un bazar por El Inca. Dos más se han ido a poner un bazar. Antes había envidias entre las cajoneras y se peleaban por los puestos, ahora ya no. Por eso, ahora, estos señores que dicen que organizan lo bonito no nos han molestado como a otras vendedoras. No molestan mucho. Estamos solitas...

Al final del siglo XIX y durante la mayor parte del siglo XX para muchas mujeres, convertirse en cajoneras significó una fuente de seguridad económica y ascenso social. Los testimonios de Doña Judith y Doña Rosa muestran la dignidad de un trabajo duro y respetable que ellas consideran como la “decencia” de su clase. Es interesante señalar también aquí que como otras mujeres en posiciones vulnerables, las cajoneras tienen recelo de ser acusadas de “agentes de brujería” y su discurso de respetabilidad y decencia incluye el hecho de que, por tradición familiar, sus muñecas han permanecido siempre “limpias” de tales acusaciones.

Sin embargo, desde las últimas décadas del siglo XX, las cajoneras comienzan a abandonar su profesión para invertir sus ganancias en poner tiendas o bazares. Y en los

últimos años, una de ellas al menos, como tantas otras mujeres de la clase popular, ha migrado al exterior con la ilusión de ascenso económico y social, irónicamente tal vez para entrar al servicio doméstico del cual salieron sus abuelas.

Las cajoneras son no sólo miembros de una clase popular con memorias alternativas sobre la economía, la decencia y el ornato urbano, sino también “vendedoras” de memorias- de objetos que ahora evocan otras memorias alternativas de sonidos, gustos e imágenes familiares en la niñez de muchos. Como nos cuenta en su historia la Sra. Judith:



En los cajones de antes había collares legítimos que ya no se venden. Eran de corales. Antes también me acuerdo de las muñecas de aserrín, de los trompos, de unas pelotitas de agua y especialmente de los juguetes, balancitas, baldecitos de lata y cocinitas enteras como las nuestras.



A veces cuando la gente pasa dice: “Ah! Qué lindo! Aquí mi mamá me compraba todos los juguetes y todavía existe! Para recordar me voy a comprar esos juguetes. Esas muñecas eran las que me daban para Navidad.”

### **Vendedoras de recuerdos....**



Lo que más recuerdan son los caballitos de madera, esos que tienen una sola tira... Sonaban bonito cuando los guaguas los arrastraban por el empedrado de los portales.

## El corcel de la memoria



Según el testimonio de Doña Zoila Landeta, ella permanecía en su puesto en 1997 sólo “para no dejar morir la tradición de las muñecas de trapo”



A través de esta historia, las muñecas de trapo se han transformado en un símbolo del conflicto por el capital material y simbólico en los discursos de clase entre lo culto y lo popular. Para la elite las muñecas de trapo simbolizan el Otro, no el Otro exótico lejano sino el Otro pobre, tal vez demasiado familiar. Significan el supuesto y a veces temido

“poco refinamiento”, el “mal gusto”, en fin como lo dicen la “cachivachería” de las clases populares. Por el contrario, para las mujeres de los cajones, las muñecas son un objeto de identidad y orgullo personal y familiar. Constituyen una trama de texturas y colores que las une a sus madres, abuelas y bisabuelas en una línea casi ininterrumpida de creatividad femenina desplegada en sus cajones de trabajo para el placer, la alegría y las memorias suyas y de otros.



“Trabajo de lunes a sábado –dice Doña Rosa- desde las 10 de la mañana hasta las 5 de la tarde. A veces hace mucho frío en este portal y el trabajo es duro, sobretodo cuando se vende poco pero aquí todavía estoy. Sólo cuando tengo alguna invitación no trabajo.



Al final del día Doña Rosa guarda su cajón y las memorias que quedan en una bodega frente a la plaza de Santo Domingo.



Retornando al objetivo que mencioné al comienzo de recoger las memorias alternativas de mujeres de la calle quiero terminar afirmando que todas y cada una de ellas, como todos y cada individuo, tienen derecho a una autobiografía, a narrar y dar así significado a sus propias vidas y a sus memorias.

## NOTAS

1 Agradezco a Rocío Pazmiño por su valiosa colaboración en esta investigación histórica y etnográfica. También agradezco a Eduardo Kingman y Ana María Goetschel por compartir conmigo sus vastos conocimientos de historia social de Quito. Cualquier error en la presentación o interpretación de los datos es totalmente de mi responsabilidad.

2. Por ejemplo, en una reciente experiencia etnográfica en la Plaza Grande con un grupo de jubilados, María Augusta Espín (en Kingman 2007?) cita una serie de refranes que estas personas recuerdan sobre la importancia del pan en la vida diaria. En estos dichos populares es obvio el uso de metáforas que evocan todos los sentidos y diversas emociones: el olor del pan fresco, la dureza del pan viejo, el color blanco del pan casero, en refranes como "Buena hambre no hay pan duro", "quien quiera más blanca la hogaza que amase en su casa" "pan caliente, hambre mete".

3. En un trabajo pionero con un enfoque histórico y estético hacia los objetos populares en el ámbito urbano, Pablo Barriga y Rocío Rueda (1997) presentan un estudio de las cajoneras y otros personajes callejeros del Centro Histórico. Mi presente ensayo quiere en parte retomar ese enfoque poniendo el énfasis en las voces de las mujeres y en el significado social de esa cultura material en sus vidas.

4. Por ejemplo, ver el artículo "Quito, 5 años sin comerciantes en las calles" donde se afirma que "preocupa [ a las autoridades de Quito] la posibilidad de que los comerciantes informales vuelvan a ocupar las calles de Quito y de otras ciudades del país." (Al Día. Periódico Urbano 20 Mayo 2008) Ver también "Los informales protestan en las calles del centro de Guayaquil (El Comercio, 22 Mayo 2008).

5. Por ejemplo, en el año 2002, en la ceremonia de celebración del Domingo de Ramos con misa, palmas y burrito en la Plaza de San Francisco, irrumpió de improviso un conocido Ballet Folklórico contratado, erróneamente presentando un grupo de personajes vestidos de penitentes del Viernes Santo. Irónicamente, la explicación que el director del conjunto dio de esa interrupción a un acontecimiento tradicional de la cultura religiosa popular en Quito, fue que la intención era "preservar la cultura". El sacerdote que oficiaba la ceremonia interrumpió la misa y les pidió que se retirasen. Esta fue una interesante experiencia etnográfica de un intento oficial de convertir las manifestaciones

populares urbanas en mercancía y a sus agentes en meros espectadores (notas de campo de la autora 2002).

6. La misma actitud parece haber prevalecido más de un siglo después entre las vendedoras de objetos religiosos en la iglesia de San Francisco, quienes se vieron obligadas a modificar las especificaciones de sus puestos de trabajo diseñados y estandarizados por FONSAL. Según la vendedora María Mercedes Osorio, estos puestos no respondían a las necesidades del oficio, razón por la cual “han realizado una serie de adecuaciones y arreglos con el fin de presentar al público sus productos de una manera llamativa y con buen gusto. (citado en Barriga y Rueda 1997:29)

7. Desde 2003 aproximadamente ya es extremadamente difícil, por ejemplo, encontrar los tradicionales santos y vírgenes populares de madera y yeso. Son ahora en su mayor parte de fibra de vidrio y fabricados en China. Más y más los adornos de tortas de bodas, bautismos y quinceañeras antes fabricados de azúcar están siendo reemplazados por figuras de plástico.



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## VIDAS DE LA CALLE

### Memorias alternativas: Las cajoneras de los portales<sup>1</sup>

Blanca Muratorio

FLACSO, Ecuador, Junio 2008



Foto de la autora

Este ensayo sobre las cajoneras de los portales es parte de un proyecto más amplio de biografías visuales que tratan de dejar un registro histórico y etnográfico de las voces e imágenes de mujeres de la calle en el debate por la modernidad y el proceso cultural en el Centro Histórico de Quito.

Mi aproximación a este tema es desde varias perspectivas. Primero la que he seguido en mis trabajos anteriores de dar relieve prioritario a las vidas y las voces individuales para entender las sutilezas y la profundidad histórica de un proceso social y cultural determinado. Segundo, un enfoque analítico todavía experimental, que a través de la representación visual, intenta evocar las otras experiencias sensoriales del olor, el gusto,

el tacto, y el sonido. Con mayor o menor intensidad estos sentidos, junto con la visión, forman parte integral de la experiencia y agencia individual y cultural y son repositorios de conocimiento y evocadores de memorias. Por último una aproximación antropológica a la cultura material y a los espacios donde se produce y consume que los sitúa en un contexto complejo y cambiante de relaciones sociales de clase, jerarquía y poder.

Las personas organizan sus vidas creando e interactuando con el mundo material y éste constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Ciertos objetos forman parte integral de narrativas de identidad que son conformadas y reconfiguradas de memorias de una vida vivida. Los dominios privados o públicos de la vida cotidiana, como el hogar, o el lugar de trabajo pueden ser vistos como espacios donde los seres humanos tienen la posibilidad de construir, articular y desplegar un “ser de género” (gendered self) femenino o masculino en los diferentes y cambiantes ambientes sociales, culturales y materiales en los cuales a cada individuo le toca vivir. Estas experiencias son frecuentemente expresadas con metáforas lingüísticas que manifiestan emociones y evocan memorias referentes a todos los sentidos.<sup>2</sup>



Doña Judith Enríquez 1999

Foto de la autora

En el presente, sólo quedan dos mujeres cajoneras en el portal del Colegio Sagrados Corazones, mejor conocido como el Portal de Santo Domingo. Pero muchas de sus

predecesoras, desde el siglo XIX hasta bien entrado el siglo XX, ocuparon y lucharon por ocupar otros portales aún más estratégicos como el del Palacio Arzobispal, el de Salinas en los bajos del viejo Municipio, y otros en la Plaza Grande. A través del tiempo, todas ellas han sobrevivido varios procesos de modernización urbana y las más recientes políticas de intervención económica, social y de “reactivación” cultural en el Centro Histórico dirigidas a reglamentar lo que se supone es un incontrovertible consenso sobre el “patrimonio cultural auténtico” como símbolo identitario. La incursión de la globalización es el último desafío que estas mujeres están afrontando.

Por el contrario, otras mujeres, y hombres, que vendían sus productos y desplegaban sus coloridas imágenes y texturas, los olores de los inciensos y las fritadas, los sonidos de sus charlas y pregones y los gustos de sus comidas en las calles y plazas del Centro Histórico, hace ya 5 años fueron excluidas o confinadas al olvido de los “no-lugares”, tales como los antiguos baños públicos debajo de San Francisco o los “centros comerciales populares” que también podríamos llamar “malls para pobres”. Esta es la misma exclusión que las cajoneras de los portales han desafiado a lo largo de su historia y una de las razones por las cuales nos interesa presentar aquí sus historias y memorias.

No es una nostalgia sentimental la que motiva esta investigación, sino mi encanto estético e intelectual por el arte y la cultura popular y el respeto por sus agentes, que están siendo cada vez más desplazados de los espacios urbanos y reemplazados por la reinención del pasado. Cuando se trata así de imponer una memoria e identidad desde una concepción esencialista de “lo culto”, necesariamente se dejan de lado otras memorias populares alternativas. Con este ensayo sobre las cajoneras intento contribuir a ese proyecto etnográfico e histórico que otros colegas de aquí ya han comenzado para documentar

esas memorias alternativas, sean éstas de los albañiles, los panaderos, las confiteras, las vendedoras de santos, velas y herraduras de la suerte, o las que venden los betunes, cintillos de terciopelo azul, fajas multicolores, collares, peinillas, cascabeles, trompos y muñecas de trapo como las cajoneras de los portales.

Son precisamente las muñecas de trapo las que constituirán el hilo conductor de los discursos de clase y las memorias de identidad que paso a analizar a continuación.

### **El poder de cuatro muñecas de trapo**



Foto de la autora

Como ya dije, desde que hay antecedentes históricos de su presencia en el Centro Histórico en el siglo XIX, las cajoneras se ubicaban principalmente en los portales de las plazas principales, centro en esa época de las prácticas sociales, económicas y culturales de la aristocracia que se autodefinía como “gente decente”, así como del ir y venir de todos los otros grupos sociales que de una manera u otra conducían allí sus asuntos cotidianos.



Cajoneras en Santo Domingo hacia 1910. Foto del Archivo Histórico del Banco Central (en Kingman 2006:200)

La densificación y el desarrollo urbano que se producen en Quito en las últimas décadas del siglo XIX, traen aparejado el incremento importante de las actividades comerciales y nuevas disputas sobre la ocupación del espacio. Si bien el sector aristocrático seguía gozando de sus rentas agrarias y de su participación en las altas finanzas, se aprovecha de las nuevas oportunidades económicas arrendando los bajos de sus viviendas principales en la zona del centro para el establecimiento de pequeños almacenes, negocios o talleres. Por su parte, este nuevo estrato social de comerciantes urbanos en ascenso, se ve motivado a compartir con la aristocracia los mismos valores hacia la propiedad y hacia la “exclusividad” moral y estética del uso del espacio público en su esfuerzo por alcanzar, no sólo su prosperidad económica, sino también el más elusivo capital cultural de “la decencia”.





Dueño de almacén de zapatos. Quito 1900 (En Hoffenberg 1982:25)

En 1902, por ejemplo, el comerciante César Mantilla solicita desalojar a una cajonera de la primera tienda del portal Salinas con el siguiente argumento: “deseo que la Municipalidad me la ceda para arrendarlo, con el objeto de levantarla a mejor decencia y prestigio, por el fin especial a que quiero destinarla, adornándola convenientemente para un establecimiento mercantil de venta de libros, útiles de escritorio y agencia de periódicos importantes” Convencido de “el carácter civilizador y miras levantadas de los jóvenes que actualmente componen el Municipio” el Sr. Mantilla no duda que aceptarán su propuesta “extirpando así con mi nueva empresa la venta de baratijas o cajonerías que no tienen ninguna importancia ni decencia apropiadas a la localidad de esa tienda”

Es en contra de estos dos estratos sociales, la aristocracia y los comerciantes urbanos, que las cajoneras deben luchar por sus derechos a ocupar los portales para sus ventas. Los argumentos en este debate entre el gran capital y sus acólitos y el pequeño comercio informal revelan, con la fresca transparencia del discurso de clase prevaleciente en esa época histórica, las diferencias más profundas entre los valores sociales, políticos y culturales de los patricios y la burguesía por un lado y de las clases populares por otro.

A través del examen de una serie de documentos del Archivo Histórico Municipal y de algunas imágenes relevantes, me propongo recuperar en lo posible las voces y la presencia de esos sujetos sociales en conflicto. El objetivo es así establecer un precedente para entender los intereses que están por detrás de los más recientes debates por la ocupación material y social del espacio urbano y por las memorias históricas.

### **Las voces de la elite**

La elite en la  
Calle García Moreno, circa 1900  
(En Hoffenberg 1982: 21)



En una sesión del Concejo Municipal en 1883, por ejemplo, se decide rechazar el proyecto relativo a prohibir la colocación de cajones en los portales públicos, obviamente a pesar del fervor del Vicepresidente de dicho Concejo, quien presenta los argumentos para prohibirlos “a favor del bien público” y de “las muchas personas respetables” que piden la reforma en bien del “aseo”, “el ornato”, “la salubridad” y “la moral pública”. Según los denunciantes, las cajoneras “ensucian y afean” los jardines, andenes y portales en el centro de la ciudad e impiden el tránsito de los que usan ese “foro” para tratar “asuntos importantes”. Aquí es necesario recordar que en esa época en Quito, así como en el foro romano, sólo los hombres de cierta clase social eran considerados suficientemente “importantes” para tratar asuntos igualmente “importantes” en público.

Por lo tanto, el Sr. Vicepresidente pone en duda que algún otro interés de importancia puede impedir la abolición de los cajones. De acuerdo a él, negar el progreso de la República es no ver que la Banca, el gran comercio, y la industria del país están estrechamente “vinculadas” a las instituciones políticas y sociales “de provecho.” Y reitera, todo este edificio social, económico y político está puesto en peligro por “cuatro muñecas de trapo y otras baratijas de la laya”.

Qué maravilla que cuatro muñecas de trapo tuvieran el poder de amenazar nada menos que todo el comercio de la República!!!

Pero el poder de estas cuatro muñecas de trapo también parece amenazar otro importante pilar de la estabilidad de clases existente. De acuerdo al Vicepresidente, las cajoneras y sus “baratijas” dan escándalo y “corrompen a los domésticos de las casas contiguas a sus puestos públicos”. Considerando que la servidumbre que habitaba en esas casas formaba una parte considerable de las familias patriarcales de las clases acomodadas el temor de “los señores” podía no ser totalmente injustificado. Aunque por supuesto no existe evidencia de sus conversaciones, podemos imaginar qué ideas de movilidad social u otras posibles libertades las cajoneras pueden haber “instigando” en aquéllos otros miembros de las clases populares, cuyo trabajo doméstico consistía precisamente en crear y mantener la cultura material que hacía posible la “respetabilidad,” “el ornato,” “el aseo,” y la misma “cultura y “civilización” de las así designadas “personas respetables” por el Sr. Vicepresidente. Específicamente, es relevante citar aquí un documento de 1902 donde se aboga por el derecho a su cajón de “la Jaramillo”, “madre de seis hijos y que a fuerza de trabajo se ha elevado de la condición de criada [] reivindicándose a ser

buhonera”. Más aún, tres años antes, “la Jaramillo”, junto con su colega Toribia Velasco, ya han hecho oír su protesta contra las políticas que favorecían a las elites, presentándose como la voz del pueblo.

### Las voces del pueblo



La Cajonera. Acuarela de Joaquín Pinto  
Siglo XIX  
(Foto en Samaniego: 1977)

En 1899 estas dos cajoneras, orgullosas miembros de esas clase “más honrada y laboriosa” están todavía luchando contra los enemigos de “la parte menesterosa de la sociedad” que quieren despojarlas del derecho “inmemorial” de ocupar con sus cajones los portales de la plaza de la Independencia “so pretexto de mejoramiento y progreso”. Mientras que los miembros de la elite invocaban a la república en nombre del modernismo y del progreso del capital en contra del absolutismo real, las cajoneras afirman su derecho al espacio simbólico de la plaza de la Independencia como “legítima compensación de los servicios prestados por (nuestros) esposos é hijos, para el sostenimiento del orden público, y de la sangre derramada en los campos de batalla, para la defensa de las instituciones republicanas....”

No sólo hay entre la elite y las clases populares profundas diferencias sobre los fundamentos del sistema republicano sino también distintas concepciones sobre lo que

constituye el “orden público” y la estética del “ornato” urbano. Si en 1883 el Vicepresidente del Concejo Municipal, y la elite que él representaba, opinaban que los cajones “ensuciaban” y “afeaban” el espacio público, quince años más tarde, el representante de las cajoneras argumentaba que “lejos de impresionar a la vista [los cajones y sus rentas de mercaderías] presentan un conjunto simpático de objetos variados graciosa y singularmente distribuidos.”

Por último, mientras los miembros de la elite acusan a las cajoneras de aferrarse a la tradición y así impedir el cambio social y el progreso del capital, estas últimas demuestran, por su parte, una actitud flexible y realista hacia el necesario cambio urbano al declarar: “Y si para consultar las exigencias del verdadero progreso es necesaria alguna reforma compatible con nuestra situación, ofrecemos introducirla previa orden del mismo Este conflicto de intereses entre los dos sectores sociales continúa casi ininterrumpido con idénticos argumentos de ambos lados a todo lo largo del siglo XX. Recién en 1992 parece haber evidencia de que las cajoneras han sido clasificadas como “vendedoras estables y permanentes” en el portal de Santo Domingo.

En el presente, la ingenuidad y claridad de los discursos de clase que caracterizaron a los debates de antaño, son encubiertas por el lenguaje técnico y supuestamente neutral de los expertos nacionales e internacionales del patrimonio cultural del Centro Histórico Pero, a mi ver, los *intereses de clase* que sustentan este nuevo discurso entre lo “culto” hegemónico y lo popular no han cambiado significativamente en Quito en lo que va del Siglo XXI. (aunque reconozco que esta afirmación puede ser objeto de debate)

Muchas de las cajoneras heredaron sus puestos de sus madres. Obviamente la combinación de ese fuerte sentimiento de identidad familiar, orgullo de clase, sentido

común y espíritu de lucha por su supervivencia han sido los atributos que han permitido a las cajoneras mantenerse en sus puestos de trabajo. Actualmente las cajoneras se extinguen, no por la violencia y el desalojo que sufren otras mujeres de la calle, sino por el desgaste de la globalización que arrasa con los consumos tradicionales, los copia y estandariza en plástico “Made in China” y los vende en los shopping malls.<sup>7</sup>

Las dos cajoneras que logramos entrevistar a lo largo de unos años en el portal de Santo Domingo reconocen la inevitabilidad de este proceso ya que sus ganancias disminuyen día a día y ellas están, de todas maneras en edad de retirarse. Ya no hay razón para que demuestren el mismo espíritu de lucha de sus madres y abuelas. Sus narrativas de vida, sin embargo, revelan el mismo sentido de identidad familiar y el orgullo por la independencia de la “tutela” masculina que les ha permitido su profesión. Así nos dice Judith Enríquez en 1999:

“Yo hago muñecas. Mi abuelita inventó las muñecas. Se llamaba Aurora Vargas y se separó del abuelito. Un día él le dijo: “Pongamos mejor una licorería” pero ella no quería y él se fue a Manabí y no regresó más. Mi abuelita vivía entonces con una mujer que hacía muñecas y las vestía con papel. Mi abuelita encontró pedazos de tela y así con eso empezó a vestirlas. Tenía una demanda tremenda de sus muñecas. Se murió de 100 años hace ya 50 años. Mi mamá se llamaba Carmen Martínez y siguió haciendo muñecas y ahora soy yo la primerita. Algunas de las muñecas que hizo mi mamá están en el Banco Central.



vende a otras cajoneras. Mi hija también trabaja muy rápido haciendo muñecas. Cuando se dedica, la hija de mi ñaña también hace cosas bonitas: payasos, monjas, el niño Jesús, José, María, un gentío de muñecas.”

Yo hago mis muñecas “limpias” (de brujería). Otras hacen muñecas pero así no más porque son para maldades. Mi hermana Zoila hace buenas muñecas y las





Fotos de la autora

Oigamos ahora el testimonio de identidad más reciente (2002, 2003 y 2007) de la otra cajonera Doña Rosa Paredes:



Doña Rosa Paredes 2002 Foto de la autora

“Soy viuda y soy cajonera desde 1976. Fui la última con el número 16. En esa época todo el portal (de Santo Domingo) estaba completo y no había espacio.. Le compré el cajón a una señora Jesusa que era la madre de la otra cajonera que ahora queda en este portal. Yo me jubilé de un trabajo anterior con una señora como ayuda de ventas en el mercado de Ipiales. Luego compré el cajón y vendía a toda clase de personas desde “los de la Hi hasta los indiecitos”.



Fotos de la autora  
Doña Rosa Paredes y una cliente 2002



Antes se vendía mucho, especialmente las muñecas. Incluso yo antes hacía las mías. Ahora no se vende lo que antes, las ventas no son buenas y el comercio ha bajado con la ciudad que se ha modernizado. Todas las mujeres se van afuera ahora. La hermana de esa cajonera (la otra que todavía queda) se fue a España.







Por su parte en 1999, la Sra. Judith recordaba así a sus colegas



Antes estaba la Mariana, la Sra. Rosario, la Marita que se murió hace poco y la Alegría que murió después de la Marita. Donde es mi puesto ahora había otra Sra. que vendía muñecas y las otras eran “las copetonas” de apellido Galiano. Le decían “las copetonas” porque se hacían unos moños. Una era Isabel Galiano y la Helena puso un bazar por El Inca. Dos más se han ido a poner un bazar. Antes había envidias entre las cajoneras y se peleaban por los puestos, ahora ya no. Por eso, ahora, estos señores que dicen que organizan lo bonito no nos han molestado como a otras vendedoras. No molestan mucho. Estamos solitas...

Al final del siglo XIX y durante la mayor parte del siglo XX para muchas mujeres, convertirse en cajoneras significó una fuente de seguridad económica y ascenso social. Los testimonios de Doña Judith y Doña Rosa muestran la dignidad de un trabajo duro y respetable que ellas consideran como la “decencia” de su clase. Es interesante señalar también aquí que como otras mujeres en posiciones vulnerables, las cajoneras tienen recelo de ser acusadas de “agentes de brujería” y su discurso de respetabilidad y decencia incluye el hecho de que, por tradición familiar, sus muñecas han permanecido siempre “limpias” de tales acusaciones.

Sin embargo, desde las últimas décadas del siglo XX, las cajoneras comienzan a abandonar su profesión para invertir sus ganancias en poner tiendas o bazares. Y en los últimos años, una de ellas al menos, como tantas otras mujeres de la clase popular, ha migrado al exterior con la ilusión de ascenso económico y social, irónicamente tal vez para entrar al servicio doméstico del cual salieron sus abuelas.

Las cajoneras son no sólo miembros de una clase popular con memorias alternativas sobre la economía, la decencia y el ornato urbano, sino también “vendedoras” de memorias- de objetos que ahora evocan otras memorias alternativas de sonidos, gustos e imágenes familiares en la niñez de muchos. Como nos cuenta en su historia la Sra. Judith:



Doña Judith Enríquez Foto de la autora

En los cajones de antes había collares legítimos que ya no se venden. Eran de corales. Antes también me acuerdo de las muñecas de aserrín, de los trompos, de unas pelotitas de agua y especialmente de los juguetes, balancitas, baldecitos de lata y cocinitas enteras como las nuestras.



Cuando la gente pasa... Cajón de Doña Rosa

Paredes Foto de la autora

A veces cuando la gente pasa dice: “Ah! Qué lindo! Aquí mi mamá me compraba todos los juguetes y todavía existe! Para recordar me voy a comprar esos juguetes. Esas muñecas eran las que me daban para Navidad.”

## Vendedoras de recuerdos....



Fotos de la autora

Lo que más recuerdan son los caballitos de madera, esos que tienen una sola tira... Sonaban bonito cuando los guaguas los arrastraban por el empedrado de los portales.

## El corcel de la memoria



Según el testimonio de Doña Zoila Landeta, ella permanecía en su puesto en 1997 sólo “para no dejar morir la tradición de las muñecas de trapo”



A través de esta historia, las muñecas de trapo se transforman en un símbolo del conflicto por el capital material y simbólico en los discursos de clase entre lo culto y lo popular. Para la elite las muñecas de trapo simbolizan el Otro, no el Otro exótico lejano sino el Otro pobre, tal vez demasiado familiar. Significan el supuesto y a veces temido “poco refinamiento”, el “mal gusto”, en fin como lo dicen la “cachivachería” de las clases populares. Por el contrario, para las mujeres de los cajones, las muñecas son un objeto de identidad y orgullo personal y familiar. Constituyen una trama de texturas y colores que las une a sus madres, abuelas y bisabuelas en una línea casi ininterrumpida de creatividad femenina desplegada en sus cajones de trabajo para el placer, la alegría y las memorias suyas y de otros.



Doña Rosa Paredes 2007 Foto Rocío Pazmiño

“Trabajo de lunes a sábado –dice Doña Rosa- desde las 10 de la mañana hasta las 5 de la tarde. A veces hace mucho frío en este portal y el trabajo es duro, sobretodo cuando se vende poco pero aquí todavía estoy. Sólo cuando tengo alguna invitación no trabajo.

Al final del día Doña Rosa guarda su cajón y las memorias que quedan en una bodega frente a la plaza de Santo Domingo.



Retornando al objetivo que mencioné al comienzo de recoger las memorias alternativas de mujeres de la calle quiero terminar con una cita de Alessandro Portelli y Luisa Passerini, dos conocidos historiadores sociales de las clases populares que han inspirado mi trabajo:

No son sólo los santos, los héroes, los tiranos- o las víctimas, los pecadores, los artistas los que tienen una resonancia única. Cada persona está en la encrucijada de muchas historias *potenciales*, de posibilidades imaginadas pero no cumplidas, de peligros esquivados y apenas evitados.

En resumen, creo que todas y cada una de las mujeres de la calle, como todos y cada individuo tienen derecho a una autobiografía, a narrar y dar así significado a sus propias vidas y a sus memorias.

## NOTAS

1 Agradezco a Rocío Pazmiño por su valiosa colaboración en esta investigación histórica y etnográfica. También agradezco a Eduardo Kingman y Ana María Goetschel por compartir conmigo sus vastos conocimientos de historia social de Quito. Cualquier error en la presentación o interpretación de los datos es totalmente de mi responsabilidad.

2. Por ejemplo, en una reciente experiencia etnográfica en la Plaza Grande con un grupo de jubilados, María Augusta Espín (en Kingman 2007?) cita una serie de refranes que estas personas recuerdan sobre la importancia del pan en la vida diaria. En estos dichos populares es obvio el uso de metáforas que evocan todos los sentidos y diversas emociones: el olor del pan fresco, la dureza del pan viejo, el color blanco del pan casero, en refranes como "Buena hambre no hay pan duro", "quien quiera más blanca la hogaza que amase en su casa" "pan caliente, hambre mete".

3. En un trabajo pionero con un enfoque histórico y estético hacia los objetos populares en el ámbito urbano, Pablo Barriga y Rocío Rueda (1997) presentan un estudio de las cajoneras y otros personajes callejeros del Centro Histórico. Mi presente ensayo quiere en parte retomar ese enfoque poniendo el énfasis en las voces de las mujeres y en el significado social de esa cultura material en sus vidas.

4. Por ejemplo, ver el artículo "Quito, 5 años sin comerciantes en las calles" donde se afirma que "preocupa [ a las autoridades de Quito] la posibilidad de que los comerciantes informales vuelvan a ocupar las calles de Quito y de otras ciudades del país." (Al Día. Periódico Urbano 20 Mayo 2008) Ver también "Los informales protestan en las calles del centro de Guayaquil (El Comercio, 22 Mayo 2008).

5. Por ejemplo, en el año 2002, en la ceremonia de celebración del Domingo de Ramos con misa, palmas y burrito en la Plaza de San Francisco, irrumpió de improviso un conocido Ballet Folklórico contratado, erróneamente presentando un grupo de personajes vestidos de penitentes del Viernes Santo. Irónicamente, la explicación que el director del conjunto dio de esa interrupción a un acontecimiento tradicional de la cultura religiosa popular en Quito, fue que la intención era "preservar la cultura". El sacerdote que oficiaba la ceremonia interrumpió la misa y les pidió que se retirasen. Esta fue una interesante experiencia etnográfica de un intento oficial de convertir las manifestaciones populares urbanas en mercancía y a sus agentes en meros espectadores (notas de campo de la autora 2002).

6. La misma actitud parece haber prevalecido más de un siglo después entre las vendedoras de objetos religiosos en la iglesia de San Francisco, quienes se vieron obligadas a modificar las especificaciones de sus puestos de trabajo diseñados y estandarizados por FONSA. Según la vendedora María Mercedes Osorio, estos puestos no respondían a las necesidades del oficio, razón por la cual "han realizado una serie de



adecuaciones y arreglos con el fin de presentar al público sus productos de una manera llamativa y con buen gusto. (citado en Barriga y Rueda 1997:29)

7. Desde 2003 aproximadamente ya es extremadamente difícil, por ejemplo, encontrar los tradicionales santos y vírgenes populares de madera y yeso. Son ahora en su mayor parte de fibra de vidrio y fabricados en China. Más y más los adornos de tortas de bodas, bautismos y quinceañeras antes fabricados de azúcar están siendo reemplazados por figuras de plástico.

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## VIDAS DE LA CALLE

### Memorias alternativas: Las cajoneras de los portales<sup>1</sup>

Blanca Muratorio

FLACSO, Ecuador, Junio 2008



Foto de la autora

Este ensayo sobre las cajoneras de los portales es parte de un proyecto más amplio de biografías visuales que tratan de dejar un registro histórico y etnográfico de las voces e imágenes de mujeres de la calle en el debate por la modernidad y el proceso cultural en el Centro Histórico de Quito.

Mi aproximación a este tema es desde varias perspectivas. Primero la que he seguido en mis trabajos anteriores de dar relieve prioritario a las vidas y las voces individuales para entender las sutilezas y la profundidad histórica de un proceso social y cultural determinado. Segundo, un enfoque analítico todavía experimental, que a través de la representación visual, intenta evocar las otras experiencias sensoriales del olor, el gusto,

el tacto, y el sonido. Con mayor o menor intensidad estos sentidos, junto con la visión, forman parte integral de la experiencia y agencia individual y cultural y son repositorios de conocimiento y evocadores de memorias (Pink 2006:41-42, Seremetakis 1994). Por último una aproximación antropológica a la cultura material y a los espacios donde se produce y consume que los sitúa en un contexto complejo y cambiante de relaciones sociales de clase, jerarquía y poder.

Las personas organizan sus vidas creando e interactuando con el mundo material y éste constituye así un marco de experiencia e identidad personal y social. Ciertos objetos forman parte integral de narrativas de identidad que son conformadas y reconfiguradas de memorias de una vida vivida. Los dominios privados o públicos de la vida cotidiana, como el hogar, o el lugar de trabajo pueden ser vistos como espacios donde los seres humanos tienen la posibilidad de construir, articular y desplegar un “ser de género” (gendered self) femenino o masculino que, como demuestra Sarah Pink (2004) en un estudio reciente, se hace en negociación con los ambientes sociales, culturales y materiales en los cuales a cada individuo le toca vivir. Estas experiencias están también históricamente condicionadas y son frecuentemente expresadas con metáforas lingüísticas que manifiestan emociones y evocan memorias referentes a todos los sentidos.<sup>2</sup>



Doña Judith Enríquez 1999

Foto de la autora

Las narrativas de identidad que voy a presentar aquí son las de las cajoneras o “buhoneras” de los portales del Centro Histórico de Quito.<sup>3</sup>

En el presente, sólo quedan dos mujeres en el portal del Colegio Sagrados Corazones, mejor conocido como el Portal de Santo Domingo. Pero muchas de sus predecesoras, desde el siglo XIX hasta bien entrado el siglo XX, ocuparon y lucharon por ocupar otros portales aún más estratégicos como el del Palacio Arzobispal, el de Salinas en los bajos del viejo Municipio, y otros en la Plaza Grande. Son precisamente las voces de estas cajoneras que quiero rescatar de los documentos históricos y de las memorias para entender porqué en el presente, las pocas mujeres que quedan todavía afirman dignamente su derecho a desplegar sus cajones en ese espacio público.

A través del tiempo, todas ellas han sobrevivido varios procesos de modernización urbana y las más recientes políticas de intervención económica, social y de “reactivación” cultural en el Centro Histórico dirigidas a reglamentar lo que se supone es un incontrovertible consenso sobre el “patrimonio cultural auténtico” como símbolo identitario. La incursión de la globalización es el último desafío que estas mujeres están afrontando.

Por el contrario, otras mujeres, y hombres, que vendían sus productos y desplegaban sus coloridas imágenes y texturas, los olores de los inciensos y las fritadas, los sonidos de sus charlas y pregones y los gustos de sus comidas en las calles y plazas del Centro Histórico, hace ya 5 años fueron excluidas o confinadas al olvido de los “no-lugares”, tales como los antiguos baños públicos debajo de San Francisco o los “centros comerciales populares” que también podríamos llamar “malls para pobres”. Esta es la misma exclusión que las cajoneras de los portales han desafiado a lo largo de su historia y una de las

razones por las cuales nos interesa presentarlas aquí. Tal vez, la trama de sus historias nos ayude a entender el todavía continuo debate económico y cultural entre los comerciantes informales populares y las burocracias nacionales e internacionales de los Municipios y del Patrimonio.<sup>4</sup> No es una nostalgia sentimental la que motiva esta investigación, sino el encanto estético e intelectual por el arte y la cultura popular y el respeto por sus agentes, que están siendo cada vez más desplazados del espacio urbano y reemplazados por la reinención del pasado y la disneyficación de la cultura.

En recientes discusiones sobre el patrimonio, tanto Salgado (2004) como Kingman (2004) han señalado que las políticas actuales de patrimonio tratan de imponer en el Centro Histórico una cultura unidimensional del espectáculo “histórico”, “religioso” o “de tradiciones ancestrales” en escenarios controlados cada vez más por las burocracias de la cultura.<sup>5</sup> Cuando se trata así de imponer una memoria e identidad desde una concepción esencialista de “lo culto”, necesariamente se dejan de lado otras memorias populares alternativas. Con este ensayo sobre las cajoneras intento contribuir a ese proyecto etnográfico e histórico que otros colegas ya han comenzado para documentar esas memorias alternativas, sean éstas de los albañiles, los panaderos, las confiteras (Kingman y Espín La vida popular el pan y los panaderos 2008?), las vendedoras de santos, velas y herraduras de la suerte, o las que venden los betunes, cintillos de terciopelo azul, fajas multicolores, collares, peinillas, cascabeles, trompos y muñecas de trapo como las cajoneras de los portales.

Son precisamente las muñecas de trapo las que constituirán el hilo conductor de los discursos de clase y las memorias de identidad que paso a analizar a continuación.

## El poder de cuatro muñecas de trapo



Foto de la autora

Como ya dije, desde que hay antecedentes históricos de su presencia en el Centro Histórico en el siglo XIX, las cajoneras se ubicaban principalmente en los portales de las plazas principales, lugares de gran confluencia de público y centro en esa época de las prácticas sociales, económicas y culturales de la aristocracia que se autodefinía como “gente decente”, así como del ir y venir de todos los otros grupos sociales que de una manera u otra conducían allí sus asuntos cotidianos.



Cajoneras en Santo Domingo hacia 1910. Foto del Archivo Histórico del Banco Central (en Kingman 2006:200)



La densificación y el desarrollo urbano que se producen en Quito en las últimas décadas del siglo XIX, traen aparejado el incremento importante de las actividades comerciales y nuevas disputas sobre la ocupación del espacio. Si bien el sector aristocrático ya gozaba de sus rentas agrarias y de su participación en las altas finanzas, se aprovecha de las nuevas oportunidades económicas arrendando los bajos de sus viviendas principales en la zona del centro para el establecimiento de pequeños almacenes, negocios o talleres (Kingman 2006:192-193). Por su parte, este nuevo estrato social de comerciantes urbanos en ascenso, se ve motivado a compartir con la aristocracia los mismos valores hacia la propiedad y hacia la “exclusividad” moral y estética del uso del espacio público en su esfuerzo por alcanzar, no sólo su prosperidad económica, sino también el más elusivo capital cultural de “la decencia”.



Dueño de almacén de zapatos. Quito 1900 (En Hoffenberg 1982:25)

En 1902, por ejemplo, el comerciante César Mantilla solicita desalojar a una cajonera de la primera tienda del portal Salinas con el siguiente argumento: “deseo que la Municipalidad me la ceda para arrendarlo, con el objeto de levantarla a mejor decencia y prestigio, por el fin especial a que quiero destinarla, adornándola convenientemente para un establecimiento mercantil de venta de libros, útiles de escritorio y agencia de

periódicos importantes” Convencido de “el carácter civilizador y miras levantadas de los jóvenes que actualmente componen el Municipio” el Sr. Mantilla no duda que aceptarán su propuesta “extirpando así con mi nueva empresa la venta de baratijas o cajonerías que no tienen ninguna importancia ni decencia apropiadas a la localidad de esa tienda”

(subrayado de la autora).

Es en contra de estos dos estratos sociales de la aristocracia y los comerciantes urbanos que las cajoneras deben luchar por sus derechos a ocupar los portales para sus ventas. Los argumentos en este debate entre el gran capital y sus acólitos y el pequeño comercio informal revelan, con la fresca transparencia del discurso prevaleciente en esa época histórica, las diferencias más profundas entre los valores sociales, políticos y culturales de los patricios y la burguesía por un lado y de las clases populares por otro.

A través del examen de una serie de documentos del Archivo Histórico Municipal (de 1883 a 1909??) y de algunas imágenes relevantes, nos proponemos recuperar en lo posible las voces y la presencia de los sujetos sociales en conflicto como un precedente para entender los intereses que están por detrás de los recientes y futuros debates por la ocupación material y social del espacio urbano y por las memorias históricas.

### **Las voces de la elite**

La elite en la  
Calle García Moreno, circa 1900  
(En Hoffenberg 1982: 21)



En una sesión del Concejo Municipal en 1883 se decide rechazar el proyecto relativo a prohibir la colocación de cajones en los portales públicos, obviamente a pesar del fervor del Vicepresidente de dicho Concejo, quien presenta los argumentos para prohibirlos “a favor del bien público” y de “las muchas personas respetables” que piden la reforma en bien del “aseo”, “el ornato”, “la salubridad” y “la moral pública”. Según los denunciadores, las cajoneras “ensucian y afean” los jardines, andenes y portales en el centro de la ciudad e impiden el tránsito de los que usan ese “foro” para tratar “asuntos importantes”. Aquí es necesario recordar que en esa época en Quito, sólo los hombres de cierta clase social eran considerados suficientemente “importantes” para tratar asuntos igualmente “importantes” en público. En resumen, la costumbre de permitir la existencia de “semejantes buhoneras” pugna con el poder la cultura patriarcal y erosiona supuesta civilización de la época”. Por lo tanto, el Sr. Vicepresidente pone en duda que algún otro interés de importancia puede impedir su abolición.

Negar el progreso de la República que se ganó al “sacudir” el “muy antiguo yugo del Rey”, es-de acuerdo al Sr. Vicepresidente- no ver que la Banca, el gran comercio, y la industria del país están estrechamente “vinculadas” a las instituciones políticas y sociales “de provecho:” Y reitera, todo este edificio social, económico y político está puesto en peligro por “cuatro muñecas de trapo y otras baratijas de la laya” (subrayado de la autora). ( AHM Copiadores de Actas 1883-1884 No. 577). Qué maravilla que cuatro muñecas de trapo tuvieran el poder de amenazar nada menos que todo el comercio de la República!!!

Pero el poder de estas cuatro muñecas de trapo también parece amenazar otro importante pilar de la estabilidad de clases existente. De acuerdo al Vicepresidente, las cajoneras y

sus “baratijas” dan escándalo y “corrompen a los domésticos de las casas contiguas a sus puestos públicos”. Considerando que la servidumbre que habitaba en esas casas formaba una parte considerable de las familias patriarcales de las clases acomodadas (Kingman 1992: 134) el temor de “los señores” podía no ser totalmente injustificado. Aunque por supuesto no existe evidencia de sus conversaciones, podemos imaginar qué ideas de movilidad social u otras posibles libertades las buhoneras pueden haber “instigando” en aquéllos otros miembros de las clases populares, cuyo trabajo doméstico consistía precisamente en crear y mantener la cultura material que hacía posible la “respetabilidad,” “el ornato,” “el aseo,” y la misma “cultura y “civilización” de las así designadas “personas respetables” por el Sr. Vicepresidente. Específicamente, es relevante citar aquí un documento de 1902 (AHM Copiadora de Actas 1902, f523) donde se aboga por el derecho a su cajón de “la Jaramillo”, “madre de seis hijos y que a fuerza de trabajo se ha elevado de la condición de criada []reivindicándose a ser buhonera”. Más aún, tres años antes, “la Jaramillo”, junto con su colega Toribia Velasco, ya han hecho oír su protesta contra las políticas que favorecían a las elites, presentándose como la voz del pueblo.

### **Las voces del pueblo**

La Cajonera. Acuarela de Joaquín Pinto  
Siglo XIX  
(Foto en Samaniego: 1977)



En 1899 estas dos cajoneras, orgullosas miembros de esas clase “más honrada y laboriosa” están todavía luchando contra los enemigos de “la parte menesterosa de la sociedad” quienes, “por complacer con ciertos capitales,” quieren despojarlas del derecho “inmemorial” de ocupar con sus cajones los portales de la plaza de la Independencia “so pretexto de mejoramiento y progreso” (AHM Oficios y Solicitudes Mayo 17 1899, ff 86,87,88). Mientras que los miembros de la elite invocaban a la república en nombre del modernismo y del progreso del capital en contra del absolutismo real, las cajoneras afirman su derecho al espacio simbólico de la plaza de la Independencia como “legítima compensación de los servicios prestados por (nuestros) esposos é hijos, para el sostenimiento del orden público, y de la sangre derramada en los campos de batalla, para la defensa de las instituciones republicanas....”

No sólo hay entre la elite y las clases populares profundas diferencias sobre los fundamentos del sistema republicano sino también distintas concepciones sobre lo que constituye el “orden público” y la estética del “ornato” urbano. Como ya vimos, en 1883 el Vicepresidente del Concejo Municipal, y la elite que él representaba, opinaban que los cajones “ensuciaban” y “afeaban” el espacio público y atentaban contra la cultura y la civilización. Por el contrario, quince años más tarde, el representante de las cajoneras argumenta que “lejos de impresionar a la vista [los cajones y sus rentas de mercaderías] presentan un conjunto simpático de objetos variados graciosa y singularmente distribuidos.” (AHM Copiadora de Actas 1898-1899, No.585).

Por último, mientras los miembros de la elite acusan a las cajoneras de aferrarse a la tradición y así impedir el cambio social y el progreso del capital, estas últimas demuestran, por su parte, una actitud flexible y realista hacia el necesario cambio urbano

al declarar: “Y si para consultar las exigencias del verdadero progreso es necesaria alguna reforma compatible con nuestra situación, ofrecemos introducirla previa orden del mismo Concejo.”(AHM Oficios y Solicitudes Mayo 17 1898-1899 f.88).<sup>6</sup>

Este conflicto de intereses entre los dos sectores sociales continúa casi ininterrumpido con idénticos argumentos de ambos lados a todo lo largo del siglo XX. Recién en 1992 parece haber evidencia de que las cajoneras han sido clasificadas como “vendedoras estables y permanentes” en el portal de Santo Domingo (Barriga y Rueda 1997:21-26). En la actualidad, la ingenuidad y claridad de los discursos de clase que caracterizaron a los debates de antaño, son encubiertas por el lenguaje técnico y supuestamente neutral de los expertos nacionales e internacionales del patrimonio cultural del Centro Histórico (ver Kingman 2004, 2006). Pero los *intereses de clase* que sustentan este nuevo discurso entre lo “culto” hegemónico y lo popular no han cambiado significativamente en Quito en lo que va del Siglo XXI.

Muchas de las cajoneras heredaron sus puestos de sus madres. Obviamente la combinación de ese fuerte sentimiento de identidad familiar, orgullo de clase, sentido común y espíritu de lucha por su supervivencia han sido los atributos que han permitido a las cajoneras mantenerse en sus puestos de trabajo. Actualmente las cajoneras se extinguen, no por la violencia y el desalojo que sufren otras mujeres de la calle, sino por el desgaste de la globalización que arrasa con los consumos tradicionales, los copia y estandariza en plástico “Made in China” y los vende en los shopping malls.<sup>7</sup>

Las dos cajoneras que logramos entrevistar a lo largo de unos años en el portal de Santo Domingo reconocen la inevitabilidad de este proceso ya que sus ganancias disminuyen

día a día y ellas están, de todas maneras en edad de retirarse. Ya no hay razón para que demuestren el mismo espíritu de lucha de sus madres y abuelas. Sus narrativas de vida, sin embargo, revelan el mismo sentido de identidad familiar y el orgullo por la independencia de la “tutela” masculina que les ha permitido su profesión. Así nos dice Judith Enríquez en 1999:

“Yo hago muñecas. Mi abuelita inventó las muñecas (aproximadamente en las últimas dos décadas del siglo XIX?). Se llamaba Aurora Vargas, de descendencia Colombiana. Ella se separó del abuelito. Un día el abuelito le dijo: “Pongamos mejor una licorería” pero ella no quería y él se fue a Manabí y no regresó más. Mi abuelita vivía entonces con una mujer que hacía muñecas y las vestía con papel. Mi abuelita encontró pedazos de tela y así con eso empezó a vestir las. Tenía una demanda tremenda de sus muñecas. Se murió de 100 años hace ya 50 años. Mi mamá se llamaba Carmen Martínez y siguió haciendo muñecas y ahora soy yo la primerita. Algunas de las muñecas que hizo mi mamá están en el Banco Central.

Doña Judith Enríquez  
Foto de la autora



Yo hago mis muñecas “limpias” (de brujería). Otras hacen muñecas pero así no más porque son para maldades.

Mi hermana Zoila hace buenas muñecas y las vende a otras cajoneras. Mi hija también trabaja muy rápido haciendo muñecas. Cuando se dedica, la hija de mi ñaña también hace cosas bonitas: payasos, monjas, el niño Jesús, José, María, un gentío de muñecas.”



Fotos de la autora



Oigamos ahora el testimonio de identidad más reciente (2002, 2003 y 2007) de la otra cajonera Doña Rosa Paredes:



Doña Rosa Paredes 2002 Foto de la autora

“Soy viuda y soy cajonera desde 1976. Fui la última con el número 16. En esa época todo el portal (de Santo Domingo) estaba completo y no había espacio ya que cada cajón mide aproximadamente tres metros. Le compré el cajón a una señora Jesusa que era la madre de la otra cajonera que ahora queda en este portal. Yo me jubilé de un trabajo anterior con una señora como ayuda de ventas en el mercado de Ipiates. Luego compré el cajón y vendía a toda clase de personas desde “los de la Hi hasta los indiecitos”.



Fotos de la autora

Doña Rosa Paredes y una cliente 2002





Antes se vendía mucho, especialmente las muñecas. Recuerdo que un señor Viteri compraba en grandes cantidades y a todas las cajoneras las muñecas. Incluso yo antes hacía las mías. Ahora vendo las muñecas que no son de mi agrado. Antes se hacían mejores pero hay una señora que todavía nos deja las muñecas. Ahora no se vende lo que antes, las ventas no son buenas y el comercio ha bajado con la ciudad que se ha modernizado. Todas las mujeres se van afuera ahora. La hermana de esa cajonera (la otra que todavía queda) se fue a España.



Fotos de la autora

Por su parte en 1999, la Sra. Judith recordaba así a sus colegas



Doña Judith Enríquez Foto de la autora

Antes había envidia entre cajoneras. Antes estaba la Mariana, la Sra. Rosario, la Marita que se murió hace poco y la Alegría que murió después de la Marita. Donde es mi puesto ahora había otra Sra. que vendía muñecas y las otras eran “las copetonas” de apellido Galiano. Le decían “las copetonas” porque se hacían unos moños. Sólo por “las copetonas” las conocíamos. Una era Isabel Galiano y la Helena puso un bazar por

El Inca. Dos más se han ido a poner un bazar. La de al lado mío, la Míche, tiene un bazar. Desde que había nacido era dueña del portal pero hace como dos años que no viene por cuidar el bazar. En ese tiempo no teníamos gremio y los puestos los daba el Municipio. Había que pedir permisos con el récord policial. Pero antes se peleaban por los puestos, ahora ya no. Por eso, ahora, estos señores que dicen que organizan lo bonito no nos han molestado como a otras vendedoras. No molestan mucho. Estamos solitas...

Al final del siglo XIX y durante la mayor parte del siglo XX para muchas mujeres, convertirse en cajoneras significó una fuente de seguridad económica y ascenso social. Los testimonios de Doña Judith y Doña Rosa muestran la dignidad de un trabajo duro y respetable que ellas consideran como la “decencia” de su clase. Es interesante señalar también aquí que como otras mujeres

Portal de Santo Domingo 2003 Foto de la autora



en posiciones vulnerables, las cajoneras tienen recelo de ser acusadas de “agentes de brujería” y su discurso de respetabilidad y decencia incluye el hecho de que, por tradición familiar, sus muñecas han permanecido siempre “limpias” de tales acusaciones. Sin embargo, desde las últimas décadas del siglo XX, las cajoneras comienzan a abandonar su profesión para invertir sus ganancias en poner tiendas o bazares. Y en los últimos años, una de ellas al menos, como tantas otras mujeres de la clase popular, ha migrado al exterior con la ilusión de ascenso económico y social.

Las cajoneras son no sólo miembros de una clase popular con memorias alternativas sobre la economía, la decencia y el ornato urbano, sino también “vendedoras” de memorias- de objetos que ahora evocan otras memorias alternativas de sonidos, gustos e imágenes familiares en la niñez de muchos. Como nos cuenta en su historia la Sra. Judith:



Doña Judith Enríquez Foto de la autora

“Antes en los cajones había collares legítimos que ya no se venden. Eran de corales. Antes también me acuerdo de las muñecas de aserrín, de los trompos, de unas pelotitas de agua y todo para los sastres: hilo de hilván, reglas, tambores y botones de toda clase. En

los cajones de antes también había juguetes, balancitas, baldecitos de lata y cocinitas enteras como las nuestras.



Cuando la gente pasa... Cajón de Doña Rosa

Paredes Foto de la autora

A veces cuando la gente pasa dice: “Ah! Qué lindo! Aquí mi mamá me compraba todos los juguetes y todavía existe! Para recordar me voy a comprar esos juguetes. Esas muñecas eran las que me daban para Navidad.”

**Vendedoras de recuerdos....**



Fotos de la autora

Lo que más recuerdan son los caballitos de madera, esos que tienen una sola tira... Sonaban bonito cuando los guaguas los arrastraban por las calles.

## El corcel de la memoria



Fotos de la autora

Según el testimonio de Doña Zoila Landeta, ella permanecía en su puesto en 1997 sólo “para no dejar morir la tradición de las muñecas de trapo” (citado en Barriga y Rueda 1997: 26)



Foto de la autora

A través de esta historia, las muñecas de trapo se transforman en un símbolo del conflicto por el capital material y simbólico en los discursos de clase entre lo culto y lo popular. Para la elite las muñecas de trapo simbolizan el Otro, no el Otro exótico lejano sino el Otro pobre, tal vez demasiado familiar. Significan el supuesto y a veces temido “poco refinamiento”, el “mal gusto”, en fin como lo dicen la “cachivachería” de las clases populares. Por el contrario, para las mujeres de los cajones, las muñecas son un objeto de identidad y orgullo personal y familiar. Constituyen una trama de texturas y colores que las une a sus madres, abuelas y bisabuelas en una línea casi ininterrumpida de creatividad femenina desplegada en sus cajones de trabajo para el placer, la alegría y las memorias suyas y de otros.



Doña Rosa Paredes 2007 Foto Rocío Pazmiño

“Trabajo de lunes a sábado –dice Doña Rosa- desde las 10 de la mañana hasta las 5 de la tarde. A veces hace mucho frío en este portal y el trabajo es duro, sobretodo cuando se vende poco pero aquí todavía estoy. Sólo cuando tengo alguna invitación no trabajo.

Al final del día Doña Rosa guarda su cajón y las memorias que quedan en una bodega frente a la plaza de Santo Domingo.



Foto de la autora 200

Retornando al objetivo que mencioné al comienzo de recoger las memorias alternativas de mujeres de la calle quiero terminar con una cita de dos conocidos historiadores sociales de las clases populares que han inspirado mi trabajo:

“Respeto por el valor e importancia de los individuos es una de las lecciones éticas más inmediatas de la experiencia de trabajo de campo en historia oral. No son sólo los santos, los héroes, los tiranos- o las víctimas, los pecadores, los artistas los que tienen una resonancia única. Cada persona está en la encrucijada de muchas historias *potenciales*, de posibilidades imaginadas pero no cumplidas, de peligros esquivados y apenas evitados”.(Portelli 1997:

Para Alessandro Portelli (1997), como para Luisa Passerini (1985), todos y cada individuo tienen derecho a una autobiografía, a narrar y dar así significado a sus propias vidas y a sus memorias.

## NOTAS

1 Agradezco a Rocío Pazmiño por su valiosa colaboración en esta investigación histórica y etnográfica. También agradezco a Eduardo Kingman y Ana María Goetschel por compartir conmigo sus vastos conocimientos de historia social de Quito. Cualquier error en la presentación o interpretación de los datos es totalmente de mi responsabilidad.

2. Por ejemplo, en una reciente experiencia etnográfica en la Plaza Grande con un grupo de jubilados, María Augusta Espín (en Kingman 2007?) cita una serie de refranes que estas personas recuerdan sobre la importancia del pan en la vida diaria. En estos dichos populares es obvio el uso de metáforas que evocan todos los sentidos y diversas emociones: el olor del pan fresco, la dureza del pan viejo, el color blanco del pan casero, en refranes como "Buena hambre no hay pan duro", "quien quiera más blanca la hogaza que amase en su casa" "pan caliente, hambre mete".

3. En un trabajo pionero con un enfoque histórico y estético hacia los objetos populares en el ámbito urbano, Pablo Barriga y Rocío Rueda (1997) presentan un estudio de las cajoneras y otros personajes callejeros del Centro Histórico. Mi presente ensayo quiere en parte retomar ese enfoque poniendo el énfasis en las voces de las mujeres y en el significado social de esa cultura material en sus vidas.

4. Por ejemplo, ver el artículo "Quito, 5 años sin comerciantes en las calles" donde se afirma que "preocupa [ a las autoridades de Quito] la posibilidad de que los comerciantes informales vuelvan a ocupar las calles de Quito y de otras ciudades del país." (Al Día. Periódico Urbano 20 Mayo 2008) Ver también "Los informales protestan en las calles del centro de Guayaquil (El Comercio, 22 Mayo 2008).

5. Por ejemplo, en el año 2002, en la ceremonia de celebración del Domingo de Ramos con misa, palmas y burrito en la Plaza de San Francisco, irrumpió de improviso un conocido Ballet Folklórico contratado, erróneamente presentando un grupo de personajes vestidos de penitentes del Viernes Santo. Irónicamente, la explicación que el director del conjunto dio de esa interrupción a un acontecimiento tradicional de la cultura religiosa popular en Quito, fue que la intención era "preservar la cultura". El sacerdote que oficiaba la ceremonia interrumpió la misa y les pidió que se retirasen. Esta fue una interesante experiencia etnográfica de un intento oficial de convertir las manifestaciones populares urbanas en mercancía y a sus agentes en meros espectadores (notas de campo de la autora 2002).

6. La misma actitud parece haber prevalecido más de un siglo después entre las vendedoras de objetos religiosos en la iglesia de San Francisco, quienes se vieron obligadas a modificar las especificaciones de sus puestos de trabajo diseñados y estandarizados por FONSAL. Según la vendedora María Mercedes Osorio, estos puestos no respondían a las necesidades del oficio, razón por la cual "han realizado una serie de



adecuaciones y arreglos con el fin de presentar al público sus productos de una manera llamativa y con buen gusto. (citado en Barriga y Rueda 1997:29)

7. Desde 2003 aproximadamente ya es extremadamente difícil, por ejemplo, encontrar los tradicionales santos y vírgenes populares de madera y yeso. Son ahora en su mayor parte de fibra de vidrio y fabricados en China. Más y más los adornos de tortas de bodas, bautismos y quinceañeras antes fabricados de azúcar están siendo reemplazados por figuras de plástico.

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